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BALTIC WORLDS

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Memory maps from
survivors of the Holocaust

The Yugoslavian
Pavilion at
the Stockholm
Fair 1950

Vegetarian activism
in Odessa
1890s-1910s

Anti-Roma
propaganda
in Galicia 1941-1944

Understanding UKRAINE

Religious traces & political influences

also in this issue

RUSSIAN FASHIONISTAS / BLOGGERS IN BELARUS / MISSIONARY IN SIBERIA / HERO OF LATVIAN HISTORY

editorial

A flood of influences and inspirations

We start with an intriguing peer-reviewed article that sheds light on the vegetarian society in Odessa in the 19th-century. Its members had a vision of a meat-free society and were convinced that vegetarianism is a modern way of living; better for your own health and ethically fair towards animals. In the archives the author has, as it seems, studied all to be found about this movement: internal quarrels, visions and discussions, membership lists, costs, salaries etc. Even the dishes served at the canteen are listed. Details bring history to life.

Another way to communicate the past is given in the article on memory maps: emotional and personal presentations of scattered memories and experiences from survivors in Poland. Memory maps can be used to educate people about the Holocaust, the author argues: To present and describe sentiments and memories from the survivors in the form of maps expands the viewers' imagination.

In this rich issue of *Baltic Worlds* we also, amongst others, publish two essays that touch upon contemporary phenomena of social media and its power to influence: political bloggers in Belarus and Russia, and Russian female fashion- and trend-setters. In both cases the issue of freedom of expression is not unproblematic.

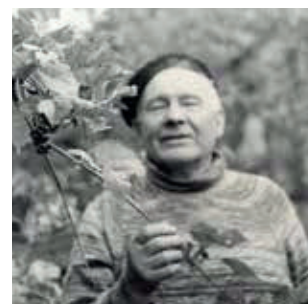
THIS ISSUE CONTAINS an interesting, extensive section on the theme of "The role of religion in the Ukrainian political landscape", guest edited by Yuliya Yurchuk and introduced by her in more detail. She shows "the importance of including religion in the studies of societies and looking more closely into complex entangle-

ments that reveal religious traces, sometimes in the most unexpected places." In Ukraine, several different religions are represented, and they all seem to have deep roots and impact on the perception of the nation Ukraine, both in the past and today. The Orthodox Church of Ukraine recently gained in importance when officially granted independence, *the Tomos*, by the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople in January 2019. The relationship between political and religious power is not uncomplicated, as is discussed in some articles in the special section. For instance social mobilization and resistance to authorities is often fueled by the church.

LASTLY, AS EDITOR for *Baltic Worlds*, I would like to express my concern for the freedom of speech and academic freedom in Belarus. On the web site we are covering the recent situation there, as well as reporting from the elections in the region. We are also running a Covid-19 Watch on the consequences, especially for democratic values, of the reaction by politicians in the region to the pandemic; a summary is to be found on this journal's last page. ✖

Ninna Mörner

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“The first Jew to be rescued was a close friend of the family.”

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“One people that won Lansdell's undisguised admiration was the Koryaks.”

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MEAT AND THE CITY IN THE LATE RUSSIAN EMPIRE



DIETARY REFORM AND VEGETARIAN ACTIVISM IN ODESSA, 1890s–1910s

by Julia Malitska

abstract

Unlike British or American vegetarian movements which arose during the 19th century, organized vegetarianism did not emerge in the Russian empire until the turn of the century. By the 1910s, a network of vegetarian circles flourished across the empire. Odessa presents a fascinating case study for examining dietary reform and vegetarianism. Using diverse sources, the article explores the evolution and implementation of grassroots vegetarian activism in the city of Odessa by focusing on its institutionalization and infrastructure, as well as on ideas, practices and activists. It scrutinizes the motives that guided actions, unfolds alliances and challenges that arose, and how these played out in practice, and identifies popularization strategies for vegetarian ideas, and forms of vegetarian consumption. The study sheds light on an unknown page of the history of Odessa and the Black Sea Region, as well as enriching existing knowledge of the histories of imperial and European borderlands.

KEYWORDS Dietary reform, vegetarianism, vegetarian society, Odessa, voluntary associations, Jews, Russian empire, Black Sea, Vasillii Zuev, Aleksandr Iasinovskii.

... Our canteen, now the only one – in future a whole chain of people's, workers' and pupils' canteens – is called to become the most reliable instrument in the practical implantation and propagation of vegetarianism; equally, in the immediate future, our ideological library, publishing organ, lectures, readings etc. will, by means of the live and printed word, strive to achieve the purposes and goals of our Society.¹

The epigraph to this article highlights a distinctive trend of activism that the city of Odessa² was a part of, and that blossomed across Europe.

During the 19th century, vegetarianism developed into a movement with organizational character in different parts of Europe: a global project of a reforming way of life. As in Britain and German-speaking Europe, vegetarian activism in the Russian empire was also an aspect of broader reformist environments, which addressed the issues of hygiene and dietary reforms, rational dress, natural cures, animal welfare, temperance and anti-vivisection, and called for a return to “natural ways of

living.” However, unlike the Anglo-American vegetarian movement and those in Central Europe, which arose earlier in the 19th century, organized vegetarianism did not emerge in the Russian empire until the turn of the century. By the 1910s, vegetarian enthusiasts had mobilized themselves into vegetarian societies and developed an infrastructure in the imperial cities of Saint Petersburg, Warsaw, Kiev, Moscow, Minsk, Odessa, Poltava, Ekaterinoslav, Saratov etc. Vegetarian activists primarily propagated a lacto-vegetarian diet with a ban on alcohol and smoking. However, the ideas of abstention from all animal-based products and a raw food diet were also part of the debate on dietary reform.

The aim of this study is to explore the evolution and implementation of grassroot vegetarian activism in the city of Odessa by focusing on its institutionalization and infrastructure, as well as ideas, practices and activists. How did collective action emerge and become institutionalized? What was its makeup? What alliances and challenges arose, and how did these play out in practice? What were the ideas, motivations, and actions behind it and what individuals engaged in it? What were the strategies to legitimize and popularize vegetarian ideas?

Previous research, sources and methodology of the study

The history of dietary reform activism in Eastern Europe and former territories of the Russian empire in its local, regional and transnational dimensions has not received enough attention, in contrast to other contexts. This may be partly explained by the politics of knowledge production, as well as ideologies and legacies of the Soviet era, when vegetarianism, according to Ronald LeBlanc’s observations, was demonized under Stalin as “a pernicious and ‘antiscientific’ doctrine promulgated by ideologues of the exploitative classes in the capitalist West,”³ and partly by the dispersal of potential sources across former empires. The historiography of vegetarianism in the Russian empire comprises Peter Brang’s study, and Darra Goldstein’s and Ronald D. LeBlanc’s contributions, as well as a handful of short articles. Due to the scope and focus of their inquiries, they acknowledged the emergence of the chain of vegetarian societies and canteens across the empire without looking at what lay behind the developments, such as the evolution, mobilization and institutionalization of activism.⁴

THE SOURCES FOR THIS STUDY comprise the reports of the Odessa Vegetarian Society, its charters, Russian imperial vegetarian periodicals – *The Vegetarian Review* (Vegetarianskoe obozrenie) and *The Vegetarian Herald* (Vegetarianskii vestnik), the local press – *The Odessa News* (Odesskie novosti) and *The Odessa Sheet* (Odesskii listok), as well as materials from the collec-

tions of the State Archives of Odesa Region: Collection 2: The Chancellery of Odessa City Governor (*Kantseliariia Odesskogo gradonachal’nika*); 39: The Odessa City Rabbinate (*Odesskii gorodskoi ravvinat*); 2147: The Odessa City Medical Institute named after N.I. Pirogov (*Odesskii gorodskoi meditsinskii institut im. N. I. Pirogova*). The reports of the Odessa Vegetarian Society are

an informative source, encompassing the protocols and reports of the society’s different commissions, reports of its board, financial reports, lists of members, bookkeeping and other economic materials. It is important to note that most sources utilized for this study were produced by activists or the society itself. Vegetarian periodicals openly proclaimed their ideological function in the popularization of a meatless diet, and should therefore be read critically. The reports of the Odessa Vegetarian Society and the archival materials are used here for scholarly purposes for the first time. One should bear in mind that public life and the press in the Russian empire at that time were under surveillance.

To explore *how* collective action emerges and develops in an urban milieu, my thinking, to the extent sources allow, is inspired by Alberto Melucci’s *collective identity*,⁵ and Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison’s *cognitive praxis*.⁶ The result of the process of constructing an action system is collective identity, which inter alia involves formulating cognitive frameworks concerning goals, means and the environment of action, and activating relationships among actors.⁷ A cognitive praxis, the core of collective action, includes: a new “cosmology”/ “utopian mission”, technique (specific concerns and practical activity), the mode of organization for the production and dissemination of ideas (interpersonal contacts, education, media), and the proliferation of intellectuals’ roles necessary to implement ideas in a given context.⁸

By virtue of microhistorical and bottom-up approaches and an interdisciplinary theoretical framework, the study brings to the surface new agents, ideas and practices, as well as shedding light on unknown pages of the history of Odessa and the Black Sea Region and enriching existing knowledge of the histories of imperial and European borderlands.

In the wake of life-reform “in the German style”

“Life-reform” (*Lebensreform*), the designation coined by contemporaries, was a complex of issue-oriented reform movements in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in German-speaking Europe whose common goal was lifestyle reform, particularly in the areas of nutrition, clothing, housing and healthcare, propagating a back-to-nature lifestyle. In the 1890s, the reform associations – temperance, sport, anti-vaccination, personal hygiene, nud-

**“DURING THE
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DIFFERENT PARTS OF
EUROPE: A GLOBAL
PROJECT OF A
REFORMING
WAY OF LIFE.”**



Illustration 1. Die Arteriennaht. Eine experimentell-chirurgische Studie by Alexander Jassinowsky. Published in Dorpat in 1889. Source: The Internet Archive's Open Library.



Illustration 2. Doctor of Medicine A. A. Iasinovskii. Source: *Vegetarianskoe obozrenie*, no. 1 (1914):3.

ism, natural healing, vegetarianism, anti-vivisection etc. – began to merge into a network that shared members, objectives and, sometimes, resources.⁹ At its peak in 1913–1914, the life-reform network may have counted as many as four million people in its ranks.¹⁰ The infrastructure of natural healing sanatoriums, open-air baths, and spas that arose in Europe at the turn of the century became very popular.¹¹

Odessa was an early bird in the empire in following this trend. In late July 1898, Semen Rabinovich, a physician, together with Aleksandr Iasinovskii, Doctor of Medicine, petitioned the Inspector of Odessa Medical Department concerning the adoption of the Charter of Hydropathic Sanatorium (*vodolechebnitsa*), which they intended to run. The Odessa City Governor and the Minister of Internal Affairs were surprisingly positive about the initiative and quick to react. As early as September 1898, the ministry approved the charter of a sanatorium with 10 permanent beds, with only some minor changes and suggestions. The hydropathic sanatorium was to be maintained at the founders' expense. In July 1899, the Odessa Medical Department inspector reported to the Odessa City governor about the proper functioning of the sanatorium on Kanatnaia 27.¹² It became popular. Neither Semen Rabinovich's nor Aleksandr Iasinovskii's personal files were discovered in Odessa archive. However, given the fact of Iasinovskii's education and connections to German-speaking Europe, he could have been inspired by *lebensreform*, bringing some of its forms and ideas to Odessa.

In the shadow of “the Sun of International Vegetarian World”¹³

In this section I showcase Aleksandr Iasinovskii, the ideological guru of the Odessa vegetarians, and his legacy.

Born in 1864 in a well-off Jewish family in Odessa, Iasinovskii studied at the University of Vienna, where he wrote his doctoral dissertation in medicine under the title “The Artery Suture” (*Die Arteriennaht*).

He took his final examination at the University of Dorpat and received the title of Doctor of Medicine. Prof. Theodor Billroth, Iasinovskii's teacher in Vienna, invited him to stay on at the university. However, he did not continue with surgery, supposedly because he could not stand the smell of a burnt body during

cauterization.¹⁴ A promising surgeon with career prospects at the University of Vienna, Iasinovskii returned to Odessa in 1890, where he began his medical practice. From 1906, he started working on the scientific aspects of vegetarianism.¹⁵ Apart from running a hydropathic sanatorium, he worked for some time as a doctor at Odessa city hospital and Odessa Jewish almshouse.¹⁶ Iasinovskii was devoted to the Jewish community of Odessa, Jewish culture and literature, as Iosif Perper, a co-founder of the *Vegetarian Review*, observed. According to Perper, Iasinovskii used to hand out his articles and brochures on vegetarianism free of charge, for propaganda purposes.¹⁷ Alongside his medical practice, he wrote about the treatment of scarlet fever, anemia, Carl von Voit's formula etc., as well as authoring a brochure, “About a slaughter-free diet” (*O bezuboinom pitanii*).¹⁸ In 1909, this brochure was translated into Yiddish and printed. The translation, titled “Down with meat and meaty” (*Doloi miaso i miasnoe*), was made under close supervision of the author. Aiming to propagate vegetarianism, the author priced the book cheaply at only 5 kopecks. In 1909, in the second issue of the *Vegetarian Review*, Samuil Perper hailed this book, as there was a lack of literature on vegetarianism in Yiddish:

Among my fellow tribesmen (*edinoplenniki*), vegetarianism is spreading with an incredible speed: there is not a single vegetarian society in the world that does not include Jews. Some of these societies consist entirely of Jews, such as Kishinev Vegetarian Society, Jaffa Vegetarian Club, etc.¹⁹

Both brochures sold out, however. Iasinovskii donated all the income from the brochure “Down with meat and meaty” to charities. As the *Vegetarian Review* reported, the income from the Russian brochure “About a slaughter-free diet” was donated partly to benefit needy children, and partly to the Kiev Vegetarian Society, of which he was an honorary member.²⁰ Iasinovskii attempted to reach a wider public through local media. In his posthumous feuilleton article “Meat ghost” (*Miasnoi prizrak*) also published in the *Odessa Sheet* in January 1913, he used emotionally loaded language to argue for plant-based food and invited readers to join the Odessa Vegetarian Society. Rhetoric

on the growing population, decreasing pasture lands, and rising meat prices are hyperbolized and instrumentalized to claim the inevitability of the disappearance of meat and all animals from the planet in future.²¹

His sudden death on 10 January 1913, at the age of 48, was a great loss for vegetarian activists and the medical world of Odessa. According to the Odessa Rabbinate's note, the cause of death was heart paralysis.²² Part of the first issue of the 1914 *Vegetarian Review* was devoted to his memory. Beside commemorative articles by colleagues, the article by one Ivan Shiptenko, where the author recounted his path to vegetarianism and his experience of Iasinovskii, catch the eye. In 1908, when Ivan Shiptenko lived in a village in Kherson county, an issue of the *Odessa News* fell into his hands accidentally, in his own words, where he read excerpts from Iasinovskii's speech at the first meeting of Odessa's vegetarian enthusiasts. This made a great impression on Shiptenko, and he became Iasinovskii's follower. In 1909, Shiptenko continued, he moved from his home Kherson county to artel²³ "Krinitsa" in the Caucasus. As a member of the artel's board, Shiptenko occasionally had the task of approving menus. These however, as Shiptenko pointed out, included meat dishes made of veal, pork, chicken and other fowl. Shiptenko recalled:

[...] Since this was in a contradiction to my beliefs and conscience, I often protested the compiled menu and crossed out everything undesirable. On the part of meat-eaters, this caused ridicule, grumbling and displeasure.²⁴

Shiptenko contacted Iasinovskii for advice and guidance, and received the following letter from him:

Gr. Iv. [citizen Ivan]! [...] The next time I go to the Caucasus, I will certainly visit you. You should in no way be involved in killing of animals, either directly or indirectly. No one has the right to impose such a job on you, as this is an anomaly and disgrace. We have already achieved a prominent evolution. [...] Now, by forcing you to kill animals, you are required to step back, return to a barbaric state. [...] If the members of the colony want to flog someone, let them do the flogging themselves; if they want to eat slaughtered foods, let them do the killing themselves; if they want to eat a hare, let them go hunting for it. What do you, vegetarians, have to do with it? On the contrary, you must counteract such abominations in every way and convince your comrades to fall in behind you. The question seems to be clear. I will send you brochures at the same time. In my brochures you find material for the struggle. Do not simply repeat the old mistake; do not rely on religion, ethics, aesthetics, etc. You won't catch anyone.

"ALEKSANDR IASINOVSKII WAS MADE AN IDEOLOGICAL MASTERMIND OF ODESSA VEGETARIAN ACTIVISM."

Strike with facts from the field of anatomy, physiology, chemistry and pathology. Success is then ensured. Be healthy, all the best.

Yours, A.A. Iasinovskii.²⁵

In August 1910, Shiptenko was in Odessa to visit the agricultural exhibition and thank Iasinovskii personally for the support provided. Shiptenko, as he wrote himself, was charmed by Iasinovskii's simplicity in interaction, as he invited him to listen to singing in a synagogue. He also asked Shiptenko to visit him in a hydropathic sanatorium and promised to come to the Caucasus.²⁶

ALEKSANDR IASINOVSKII advocated a meatless diet on rational or scientific grounds for reasons of health and hygiene. As a man of science, he contributed to what were considered as medical justifications for a meatless diet. He propagated complete abstention from slaughtered products, reasoned about the nutritional value of dairy and considered eggs a redundant component in a diet. In his article in memory of Aleksandr Iasinovskii, Iosif Perper described him as follows: "He deeply appreciated the ethical side of vegetarianism, but as a doctor, he always started with the hygienic justifications of vegetarianism, moving on to the moral motives."²⁷ According to the Odessa Vegetarian Society's 1912 report, "the majority of Odessa vegetarians are followers of doctor A. A. Iasinovskii", who was one of founders of the Odessa Vegetarian Society.²⁸ At the general meeting of the members of the society on March 31, 1913, Vasilii Zuev, chairman of the society, suggested that they "immortalize the memory of Doctor A. A. Iasinovskii, as an ideological preacher and promoter of vegetarianism" and name the Odessa Vegetarian Society after him. Ieguda Gershanskii's suggestion of hanging Iasinovskii's portrait in the premises of the Odessa vegetarian canteen was also ap-

proved by the general meeting of the society.²⁹ Unlike the Kiev and Moscow Vegetarian Societies' canteens where portraits of Leo Tolstoy hung, the Odessa Vegetarian Society's canteen was decorated with the portrait of Aleksandr Iasinovskii.³⁰ Moreover, in March 1915, the Council of the Odessa Vegetarian Society petitioned the Odessa City Governor to name the society's canteen after him; Governor Sosnovskii granted this in May 1915.³¹

All these steps were crucial and symbolic for the collective identity building and identity manifestation of the Odessa vegetarians, and

their ideological grounds. Aleksandr Iasinovskii was made an ideological mastermind of Odessa vegetarian activism. As Aleksandr Voeikov, once chairman of the board of Saint Petersburg Vegetarian Society, noted in 1909: "Our Russian vegetarianism consists of two currents: the one independent, of a strictly ethical kind, the Tolstoy stream, and the other, hygienic, predominantly German one."³² The rifts and differences between the two directions, as Ronald LeBlanc points out, intensified in the 1910s.³³ The core Odessa vegetarians identified themselves with



Illustration 3. The Charter of the Odessa Vegetarian Society, 1912. Note: DAOO, 2–7–469, sheet 16.



Illustration 4. Ieguda Gershanskii. Source: DAOO, 2147–1–5193, sheet 2.

vegetarianism derived from rational or scientific considerations of the time and advocated by Aleksandr Iasinovskii, rather than that based on moral and humanitarian convictions and associated with Leo Tolstoy.

The Odessa Vegetarian Society: Foundation and organization

Below, we take a closer look at the institutionalization of vegetarian activism in the city. Vegetarian society, as we see, turned into a mobilizing platform for dietary reform promotion.

The idea of founding a vegetarian society in Odessa most probably originated with the same Aleksandr Iasinovskii. Under his initiative in 1908, a constituent assembly of people sympathizing with the idea of vegetarianism was organized. The draft of the Charter of the Odessa Vegetarian Society was submitted to the Odessa City Governor Ivan Tolmachev for approval, which, however, did not occur at that time.³⁴ In the words of Iosif Perper, the local authorities “found some paragraphs of the charter wrong” to prevent legalization of the society in Odessa at that time.³⁵ The sources of the study don’t hint at the reasons why the Charter, which was a copy of the Saint Petersburg Vegetarian Society’s and other five vegetarian societies’ charters legalized in the Russian empire by that time, was not approved in 1908. It could have been a matter of Tolmachev’s personal preferences. Given the tense political situation and surveillance in the region and, according to Katherine Sorrels, because officials attributed subversive, conspiratorial intent to movements across the Jewish political spectrum, the Jewish background of the petitioner Iasinovskii might have caused concerns, to say the least.³⁶ Incidentally, the Chişinău Vegetarian Society, dominated by Jews, was legalized in 1908 and banned the same year. After all, as Kenneth B. Moss reminds us, there was growing Jewish involvement in the radical and socialist movements that flourished across the empire and beyond by this time.³⁷ However, in April 1912, Viktor Doks, Aleksander Iasinovskii, and Vasilii Zuev petitioned the new city governor Ivan Sosnovskii concerning the same matter.

On May 26, 1912, the Charter was finally approved and enacted, and the society was legalized.³⁸

The charter of the Saint Petersburg Vegetarian Society served as a basis for the charters of other vegetarian societies across the empire, and the Odessa Society was no exception. The societies’ legal framework and principles of functioning were similar all over the empire. The charter defined the society’s structure and management, the rights and obligations of its members, the competences of a general meeting and a board, the bodies running the society etc. A vegetarian society’s board was elected annually by a general meeting. According to the first paragraph of the charter, the Odessa Vegetarian Society, like other societies of the Russian empire, had three aims. First, it promoted a slaughter-free diet (*bezuboinoe pitanie*) based on fruit, vegetables, cereals, bread and other plant-based products, instead of consuming the meat of killed animals (meat, fowl and fish). Secondly, it aimed at spreading information about dietary reform via publications, lectures, articles in newspapers and journals, “pointing out the benefits of a vegetarian diet in physical, mental and moral respects.” Finally, the society aimed at facilitating closer communication between people interested in vegetarianism.

The society consisted of what were called full members, competitive members and honorary members. Full members might be people practicing vegetarianism and excluding from their diet all kinds of meat, fowl and fish, but also abstaining from alcohol and tobacco. Competitive members might be people sympathizing with vegetarianism and promoting it, but not necessarily practicing a meatless diet themselves. Honorary members were either sympathizers of vegetarianism or its promoters, who provided services to the society and vegetarianism in general or donated not less than 100 rubles to the society. Each type of membership was defined by certain rights and obligations, and only full members enjoyed voting rights. Actual and competitive members were obliged to pay a single entry-fee on admission to the society, the sum being annually defined by a general meeting. General meetings were composed of full and

honorary members. Honorary members were free of any payments, whereas full and competitive members were obliged to make the following payments: a one-off payment not less than 1 ruble when joining the society, and annual payments of 3 rubles.

The society had the right to acquire and alienate movable and immovable property, to make all kind of deals and contracts, to open reading rooms, libraries, book warehouses, clubs and canteens with the authorities' permission. Furthermore, the society's funds were made up of single entry-fees, compulsory annual membership fees, donations, interest from existing funds, and income from the above-mentioned enterprises. To gain more funds, the society could arrange public lectures, performances and other activities.³⁹

So, in early June 1912, the Odessa Vegetarian Society was finally opened and started its work. This was certainly an event of public interest, not omitted by the *Odessa Sheet*.⁴⁰ Media coverage of the Odessa Vegetarian Society's activities was comprehensive both in the local Odessa press and in the *Vegetarian Review*.

It may have been possible thanks to Osip Inber, litterateur, chief editor of Heinrich Graetz's multivolume of the history of Jews, and editorial board member of the *Odessa News* during 1912–1914. He was also a full member of the Odessa Vegetarian Society during its existence in 1912–1918. Thorough reporting about Odessa vegetarians, in line with the reports of the Odessa Society and Odessa local press coverage, used to appear in "Around the world" (*Po miru*) of the *Vegetarian Review*, the column compiled by "Old Vegetarian" (a pseudonym that most probably belonged to Aleksandr Zankovskii) and Samuil Perper.

The *Odessa Sheet* described the first meeting of the Odessa Vegetarian Society, that took place at the hall of the City Credit Society, as crowded and lively. The audience was diverse, officials, some workers, and local public figures with the intelligentsia being prevalent. The meeting was opened and chaired by Viktor Doks. Several speeches were delivered on vegetarianism, and its philosophical aspects, with an appeal to convert to slaughter-free food (*bezuboinaia pishcha*). Ieguda Gershanskii and Vasilii Zuev also promoted conversion to a meatless diet. The *Odessa Sheet* reported that each speech received applause and "it was clear that most people who came to this meeting were sincere supporters of vegetarianism."⁴¹

WE NOW TAKE A closer look at the structure of the society itself. The Odessa Society was run through its board that comprised 5 full members, elected annually by and from among the full members. During 1912, the chairman of the Odessa Society was Vasilii Zuev, Aleksandr Iasinovskii was vice chairman, Ieguda Gershanskii secretary, Samuil Fridman treasurer, and Ivan Spafaris board member. Viktor Doks was elected an honorary member of the society.⁴² It is important to present the leadership of the society,

as they were the architects of its collective action. Vasilii Zuev, the chairman of the society's board during its existence, was a city engineer. He appears never to have written anything on vegetarianism as such; however, he authored a book on bathhouses, their construction and historical development.⁴³ Viktor Doks, a nobleman and English by origin, occupied important positions in the city of Odessa. He was a member of Odessa City Council, as well as an honorary judge of the city during 1900–1915. Ieguda Gershanskii, secretary of the board, was of Jewish origin, born in March 1875 in Odessa. Having graduated from the Medical Faculty of Emperor University of St. Vladimir in Kiev in 1895, he became a dentist. Starting from 1906 and up to at least until 1920 he worked as a dentist for the southern-western railway. During 1920–1924, Gershanskii studied at the Medical Faculty of the Odessa State Medical Institute.⁴⁴

During 1912, the Odessa Society's 21 board meetings took place at Zuev's apartment.⁴⁵ Four general meetings of all members took place in the premises of the Odessa City Credit Society. The first

and second general meetings took place on June 7 and 11, 1912, where the society's board, candidates to membership of the board, and members of the audit commission and its candidates were elected.

A special commission was also appointed for organization of the public canteen, a primary step in the promotion of dietary reform in Odessa.⁴⁶ During the third general meeting on August 9, the decision was taken to open "an exemplary vegetarian canteen" with the budget of 4,750 rubles,

as well as to start a subscription to shares of 10 rubles among the society's members. Refunding of contributions was to be conducted from the first available funds of the society.⁴⁷ The society's board started looking for suitable premises for the canteen. The last general meeting of that year in November took several important decisions. It accepted the draft of the annual estimate, worked out by the Board, for the arrangement and maintenance of the vegetarian canteen (8,915 rubles). It was decided to open the canteen with minimum assets of 2,300 rubles. In order to get this sum of money, the board was to take out a loan of 1,000 rubles at a local bank. It was also instructed to take out a loan of 500 rubles at city shops for canteen equipment. To increase the society's funds, each member of the board donated 100 rubles, while members of the society donated between 10–50 rubles. In addition, a donation of 200 rubles for the organization of the canteen was received from Count Mikhail Tolstoy.⁴⁸ Apart from loans taken in bank and shops, the society's revenues comprised entry fees, membership fees, and donations. 34 members of the Odessa Vegetarian Society became creditors of the society's activities.⁴⁹

The society's board for 1913 was as follows: chairman Vasilii Zuev, deputy chairman Mikhail Dmitriev, and the board members – secretary Grigorii Rublev, treasurer Samuil Fridman, and member Aleksandr Van der Shkruf. In 1913, the meetings of the

"MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE ODESSA VEGETARIAN SOCIETY'S ACTIVITIES WAS COMPREHENSIVE BOTH IN THE LOCAL ODESSA PRESS AND IN THE VEGETARIAN REVIEW."

board took place in the premises of the society's first vegetarian canteen, situated in the International Restaurant at the Paris Hotel on Deribasovskaia Street 7. Vegetarian literature was also sold at the canteen. Both Mikhail Tolstoy and Viktor Doks were honorary members of the society in 1913. According to the board, the decrease in membership numbers by the end of the 1913 was due to non-payment of the membership fee,⁵⁰ which was a common problem for many associations across the empire.

BY 1914, THE CURRENT charter of the Odessa Vegetarian Society became obsolete. In November 1914, a draft charter, worked out by Sergei Poves, was approved by a general meeting of the society after several discussions, and submitted to the authorities for approval.⁵¹ After ratification, the charter came into force in 1915.⁵² The new charter extended the society's purposes to include "subsidization" to encourage the dissemination of ideas of vegetarianism. Beside libraries, book warehouses and clubs, the charter enabled the society to open hospitals, orphanages, bakeries, laundries, schools, kindergartens, and summer colonies. A new category, lifetime members, who donated not less than 50 rubles, was introduced. Management of the society's affairs, as well as powers, competences and obligations of its governing bodies, a general meeting and a board, were modified and specified. The structure and elections of the board were altered (6 members instead of 5 and elected for 2 years). However, board members, according to the paragraph 38, continued to perform their duties free of charge. To assist the board in running the society and its enterprises, the new charter legalized new commissions to be elected by a general meeting. The society's office work and accounting became bureaucratized and was supposed to be conducted in Russian. Questions directly related to the activities of society were defined by the charter and only those that were brought to the attention of the local police chief and the members of the meeting in advance were to be discussed at a general meeting of the society, as paragraph 29 stipulated.⁵³ The revision of the charter was welcomed in vegetarian circles of the empire, not to mention the delight of Odessa activists and of Sergei Poves personally:

With the implementation of the newly approved charter, the widest horizons and very attractive prospects of societal development (*otnoshenii obshchestvennogo stroitel'stva*) open in front of our society. The harmonious combination of reasonable and mindful economic activity, on the one hand, and spiritual educational work, on the other hand, should serve as the main and the best factor for implantation, development and the most widespread propagation of the ideas, purposes and goals of our society.⁵⁴

"WITH THE FOUNDATION AND CONSOLIDATION OF THE ODESSA VEGETARIAN SOCIETY, AN IMPORTANT PLATFORM FOR THE PROMOTION OF DIETARY REFORM WAS ESTABLISHED."

Apart from the establishment of Economic and Cultural Educational Commissions within the society in 1914, the position of housekeeper (*ekonomka*) at the canteen and new accounting methods were introduced.

In 1915–1918, Viktor Doks, Vasilii Zuev, and Mikhail Tolstoy were honorary members of the society. In those years, the board of the Odessa Society was headed by Vasilii Zuev, while Sergei Poves was the deputy chairman. In 1915–1916, Jews dominated the society's board, composing more than half of it. In 1917–1918, five out of six board members were Jews. Likewise, during 1915–1918, Jews dominated among members and candidates of Economic, Revision and Cultural Educational Commissions of the society, as the lists of these commissions show. In 1915–1917, a Revision Commission was headed by Karl Fishbein, the Economic Commission was headed by Sergei Poves, Iakov Brodskii was his deputy, and Vasilii Zuev headed the Cultural Educational Commission. In 1916 "permanent doctors of the society," with no mention of whether they exercised any function, were Dora Barskaia-Rashkovich, and Fanni Traub-Katsnel'son, joined in 1917 by Klara Veinberg, and in 1918 by Leonid Marakhovskii.⁵⁵

The lists of the society's members contain surnames and initials, and only rarely the professions and addresses of its members. In view of the widespread use of gender-neutral surnames on the lists, any judgements as to the gender of the members are hardly feasible. The word *madam* (*gospozha*) is inconsistently attached to females, complicating any statistical estimations. Considering all this, I would still dare to estimate that by the end of 1914, out of 132 full members, 11 were women, and out of 17 competitive members, 5 were women.⁵⁶ By the

end of 1916, out of 144 full members, 10 were women, and out of 35 competitive members, 7 were women.⁵⁷ Elena Podunenko was a full member of the Society in 1912 and a member of the commission for organization of the society's canteen. Among 14 members of this commission in 1912, 3 were females if one is to believe the consistency of usage of word *madam* with respect to women with gender-neutral surnames.⁵⁸ Men dominated among the members and also among the candidates to the society's board. An exception was Adel' Reiman. She was on the candidate list to the board members in 1913 and 1916. She was also a member of the board in 1915, as well as she was enlisted into the members and candidates of the Economic Commission in 1915. The members' lists presumably encompass couples or relatives under the same surname or registered at the same address. Interestingly, Lev Aleksandrovich Iasinovskii, probably a brother of Aleksandr Iasinovskii, was a full member of the society during 1913–1918. In 1915, he was on the candidate list to the society's board and Cultural Educational Commission. In 1916, he was on the candidate list to the society's board and became

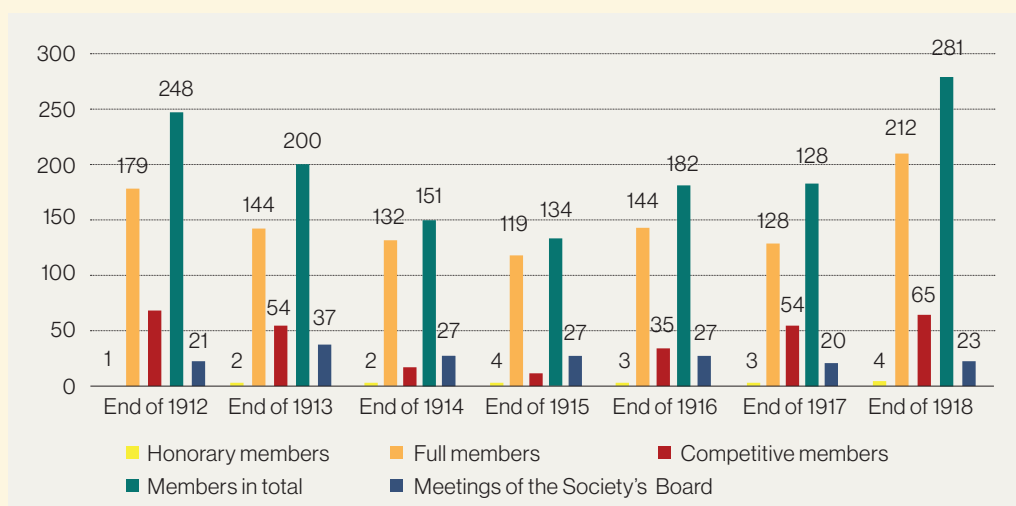


Illustration 5. Number of members in the Odessa Vegetarian Society and meetings of the society's board, 1912–1918. Source: The annual reports of the Odessa Vegetarian Society, 1912–1918.

its secretary. During 1917–1918, he was a board member and also secretary. A D. A. Iasinovskaia, possibly another relative to Aleksandr Iasinovskii, was a competitive member of the society in 1913, 1915 and 1916.

Despite fluctuations in the Odessa Vegetarian Society's membership, its number was high, if not the highest, compared to other societies of the empire. In the Saint Petersburg Vegetarian Society, on January 1, 1914, there were 51 members (3 honorary, 45 full and 3 competitive members); on January 1, 1915, the number was 80 (4 honorary, 65 full and 11 competitive members).⁵⁹ It is reasonable to suggest that both the social and ethnic composition of Odessa grassroot activists was quite diverse, with a prevalence of middle-class people and intelligentsia, and with a sizable proportion of Jews.

With the foundation and consolidation of the Odessa Vegetarian Society, an important platform for the promotion of dietary reform was established. Interested individuals and sympathizers were mobilized, and material resources were accumulated. Vasilii Zuev, the society's seemingly unchangeable chairman, enjoyed wide authority and trust among the members, which contributed to the stability of the organization. Due to extending its agenda and growing ambitions, the structure of the society became complex with time. As the *Vegetarian Herald* noted, innovations and modifications legitimized by the new charter of 1914 had de facto brought the Odessa Vegetarian Society closer to a trade-industrial type of association, with a division of its funds into primary, spare and reverse.⁶⁰

“Practical hotbeds” of activism or vegetarian public catering in Odessa

Various places in the city offered vegetarian meals as main dishes or sidelines. Vegetarians brought novelty to urban refreshment in Odessa. There were private vegetarian cafeterias run by private entrepreneurs for purely commercial purposes. My focus, however, is directed towards vegetarian canteens organized and run by the Odessa Vegetarian Society, as well as their role in collective action.

The first public vegetarian canteen, 1912–1913

By the end of 1911, there were five vegetarian eateries in Odessa, according to the *Vegetarian Review*.⁶¹ By the time the vegetarian canteen of the Odessa Vegetarian Society opened in May 1913, at least three private vegetarian eating places had been functioning in Odessa for a while. The first private vegetarian eatery was opened in January 1904 by Elena Podunenko.⁶² On January 15, 1914, the occasion of the ten-year anniversary of the first vegetarian canteen, the *Odessa News* reported that the leaders of the Odessa Vegetarian Society together with Zuev, some physicians and vegetarian enthusiasts, honored and celebrated Podunenko, “a pioneer in the practical implantation of vegetarianism in Odessa” who “had been promoting the interests of public nutrition (*obshchestvennoe pitanie*).” The celebration took place in the premises of the canteen on Sobornaia Street.⁶³

Now I turn to the process of establishment of the society's first vegetarian canteen, the visible sign of vegetarian collective action in the urban space of Odessa. How was the organization of the canteen set up?

THE ESTABLISHMENT of the canteen was seen by the leaders as a prime step in the promotion of dietary reform in the city. It was decided to open the canteen with capital from a bank loan, members' shares, donations and loans from the society's members. A vegetarian library, culinary school and club were also to be set up in connection to the canteen. According to the board, the fulfilment of all tasks depended on availability of premises for a canteen. However, it was not easy to find premises suitable for a canteen that would meet requirements as to centrality of location and number of rooms.⁶⁴ In November 1912, a renowned vegetarian activist, Jenny Schulz, offered her services in starting up a canteen as soon as premises were found.⁶⁵ Aiming at getting acquainted with the Moscow Vegetarian Society's experience in starting up and managing a vegetarian canteen, the board and the Commission for Organization of a Public Canteen invited Il'ia

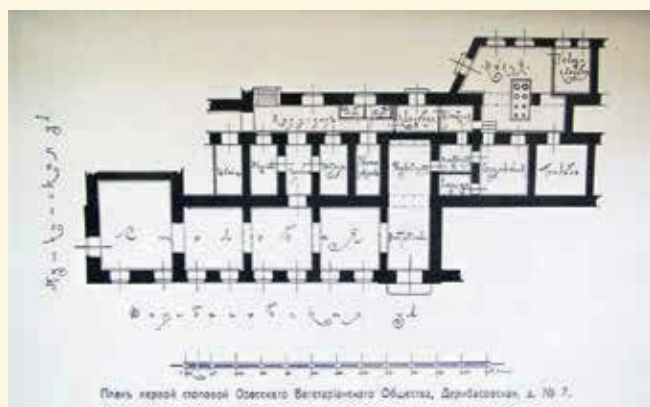


Illustration 6. The plan of the first canteen of the Odessa Vegetarian Society, Deribasovskaia 7. Source: Otchet Odesskago Vegetarianskogo Obshchestva za 1913 god (Odessa, 1914), 7.



Illustration 7. The group of guests attending the festive opening of the canteen of the Odessa Vegetarian Society on the 5 of May 1913. Source: Otchet Odesskago Vegetarianskogo Obshchestva za 1913 god (Odessa, 1914), 25.

Aleksandrovich, the secretary of the Moscow Vegetarian Society, to Odessa. In December 1912, the members of the commission went to Kiev to get acquainted with the running of the Kiev Vegetarian Society canteen. Grigorii Rublev composed a detailed report about the visit to the Kiev vegetarian canteen, its organizational, personnel and economic aspects, as well as the visit to the Vegetarian Review's editorial office.⁶⁶

More than 35 apartments were inspected before suitable premises were finally found by May 1, 1913.⁶⁷ The preparations for opening of the canteen were hastily begun.⁶⁸

THE OPENING OF the canteen in the premises of Paris Hotel on Deribasovskaia 7, on Sunday May 7, 1913, was a great public event, not omitted by the local press. The festive dinner started at the canteen at 12.30. Work in the kitchen was supervised by Jenny Schulz, who wrote a menu for the dinner. One could feast on different cold snacks and drinks, while warm dishes consisted of bouillon with pies and asparagus soup, stuffed potatoes and vegetable croquettes. The festive menu was topped off by ice-cream of two kinds and a cream pie.

After welcoming the guests, chairman Zuev read out greetings telegrams from the Kiev Vegetarian Society, co-workers of the *Vegetarian Review*, the Society of Russian Doctors, and doctor-obstetrician Piotr Ambrozhevich. Members of the society's board delivered short speeches on the benefits of vegetarianism and praised the opening of the canteen. Aleksandr Iasinovskii was commemorated. It was mentioned that Ivan Sosnovskii, the city governor, could not attend the opening due to work obligations. Leonid Levitsii, an Odessa medical inspector, argued for

the health benefits of a meatless diet, as well as shortcomings of the sanitary control of meat in slaughterhouses, and hygiene aspects in favor of adopting a plant-based diet. Compared to other speeches delivered that day, Levitskii's speech differed in its appeal and argument. According to Levitskii and in line with Iasinovskii's vision, uric acid diathesis, gout and arthritis, diseases common among the intelligentsia and well-off people, were caused by meat consumption. The festive dinner was concluded by the public appearance of Jenny Schulz, who was applauded and praised for the food cooked under her supervision.⁶⁹

The prices for food at the canteen, as reported, were moderate: a meal of two dishes cost 35 kopecks, while three dishes cost 45 kopecks.⁷⁰ In comparison, in 1911, the prices in one café in the center of Odessa were as follows: bouillon – 7 kopecks; fried eggs – 20 kopecks; fried eggs with sausages – 30 kopecks, sandwiches – between 6 and 10 kopecks, black coffee – 20 kopecks.⁷¹

Organizing a canteen from scratch and running it appears to have been a demanding venture for vegetarian enthusiasts who obviously had no experience in public catering and the restaurant business. In his report, Grigorii Rublev, a canteen supervisor, recalled the first six months of the canteen's work, shedding light on the backstage of this enterprise. Even

though the source tends to represent Grigorii Rublev's view, one gets a glimpse of the tensions, difficulties and challenges on the ground faced by the board.

According to the contract between the Paris Hotel and the Odessa Vegetarian Society, the premises of its restaurant with all equipment were leased to the society for one year from May 1,

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CROQUETTES.”**



Illustration 8. The canteen of the Odessa Vegetarian Society. Inside view, taken in January 1914. Source: Otchet Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1913 god (Odessa, 1914), 13.

with a possibility of extending the contract for two more years. The canteen opening on May 5 was obviously a success. However, as Rublev disclosed, problems already started the next day, when the canteen was opened to the public. When the canteen opened at 12.00 on May 6, it had to be closed at 14.00 since all the food was already consumed. During May 7–10, customer numbers increased constantly. In order to meet their needs, the staff was hastily expanded and twice as many goods were procured. Finding professional service-minded personnel for the canteen within a limited time was a real challenge. In the words of Rublev, due to the haste, hired people were “the first caught,” unsuitable, lazy and untidy, in his own words. The appointed canteen manager (*khoziaika stolovoi*) turned out to be “completely unsuitable” as well. Tensions arose between the canteen manager and Jenny Schulz, in charge of the kitchen (*khoziaika kukhni*). As a result, Schulz announced to the board that she was returning to Kiev. This conflict developed against the backdrop of the influx of customers. On top of that, some members of the society started interfering in canteen affairs, intensifying the chaos, in Rublev’s words. The tensions calmed down somewhat after Zuev’s appeal to the members of the society at the May board meeting, asking them not to use canteen affairs for personal attacks.⁷²

ANOTHER PROBLEM THAT Rublev addressed was that the spatial capacities of the kitchen did not correspond to those of the canteen’s dining room. The kitchen could hardly encompass 20

staff while the dining room could accommodate 150 customers. Rublev mentioned that the staff of 20 people was not enough, and that the dining room space was too small for all customers during the high season, when 700–800 people visited the canteen daily. Personnel and staff turnover was another headache. As Rublev hinted, hiring service-minded and professional workers had not been an easy task. Jenny Schulz, “who on demand obtained dictatorial powers, that is, complete non-interference in her affairs,” in the words of Rublev, caused concern for the board as well.⁷³ Finding a canteen manager was not an easy task either. Only on the third attempt, in August 1913, was a skillful, experienced manager hired, who built a strict but productive relationship with a staff of waitresses, rather than setting them against the society’s board as the first manager had done, as Rublev asserted.⁷⁴ He continued:

At the present moment [meaning by the end of 1913] the kitchen is run not so much by an experienced, as by a sensible person, who managed to subjugate and guide correctly the entire labor force of the kitchen. Henceforth, finding such a person will continue to be much easier than finding a specialist vegetarian.⁷⁵

Rublev concluded his report with an assessment of canteen’s clientele in 1913. According to him, the society’s vegetarian canteen was visited by many doctors and some professors of the medical faculty, bank and office clerks, men whose wives seasonally

left for summer cottages, by people of nearby hotels, and many sick people, both locals and guests, who were prescribed a vegetarian diet. Finally, he acknowledged seasonal fluctuations of customers, whose numbers, and therefore the canteen profit, increased twofold from May to October. The anonymous complaints about the high cost of food were judged as unfair, since, according to Rublev, the canteen was only profitable for five months, from May to October. During the rest of the year, the canteen was not a self-sufficient enterprise, incurring losses of not less than 300 rubles monthly.⁷⁶

SIMILAR TO THE SAINT PETERSBURG Vegetarian Society, in July 1913 the rules for employees of the Odessa Society's canteen were adopted by the society's board, laying the foundation for personnel policy at the canteen.⁷⁷ This document regulated the power balance of free-lance employees of the kitchen and canteen, the duration of their working day, the amount of salary and monthly tip, the right to a weekend and weekly pay for a visit to the bathhouse, two meals during the working day, etc. The document also specified the obligations and powers of different groups of employees of the canteen. Bearing in mind the conflict with Schulz and in order to make subordination clear as well as to avoid any confusion, the board included a paragraph saying that all employees were hired and fired by a canteen supervisor.

The First Public Vegetarian Canteen won popularity among locals. From the day of its opening on May 6 to December 31, 1913, 125,471 people visited it.⁷⁸ In comparison, 233,077 people visited the First Kiev Vegetarian Canteen in 1913, while 58,977 people visited the second one.⁷⁹ In 1913, three vegetarian canteens of the Moscow Vegetarian Society were visited by 560,831 customers.⁸⁰ When raising funds for the launch of the public canteen, vegetarian enthusiasts did not foresee the challenges they would face connected to finding premises, procurement of goods and hiring personnel. Looking at the background of the leading activists, none of them had had experience in public catering or the restaurant business.

Having overcome the initial difficulties, the canteen became a nodal point in the society's activities during 1912–1913. The vegetarian canteen became an important sign of the collective action's earnestness and the reformed diet's perceived commercial viability. A canteen prominently situated in the city center could not be ignored, as it proved the feasibility of the diet beyond the home circle.

A vegetarian missionary:

Jenny Schulz and her time in Odessa

Jenny Schulz, a well-known vegetarian expert in Central European and Russian imperial circles, arrived in Odessa in May 1913

to set up the society's first vegetarian dining room. There was no time for familiarization; she got straight to work. So how did she succeed in this task?

We start by taking a closer look at her vegetarian activity through the eyes of Iosif Perper. Schulz was born in 1855 in West Prussia. She graduated from Friedrich Fröbel's pedagogical courses. In 1889, while in Dresden, Jenny Schulz got acquainted with local vegetarian society, attended vegetarian lectures and studied vegetarian literature. In the same year she turned vegetarian and decided to devote herself to spreading the diet. In 1895, Jenny met a renowned Hungarian vegetarian figure, Prof. V. Weixlgärtner, and with his support she opened the first vegetarian canteen in Budapest, Hungary, in 1896. In the same year the first Hungarian Vegetarian Society was founded by Prof. Weixlgärtner.

Schulz went to Zurich in 1900, to run a public vegetarian kitchen there. After Zurich, she worked in vegetarian canteens in Berlin and Locarno. In 1901, she was invited by Leo Tolstoy and like-minded people to Moscow, where in October she opened the first vegetarian canteen in Russia, which functioned for a year or so. At least two more vegetarian canteens in Moscow, as Iosif Perper commented, were started up with Jenny's involvement. At the invitation of the Hungarian Vegetarian Society, she went back to Budapest to run a vegetarian

kitchen there. Having arrived in Budapest, she was impressed by the growth of activism there. After working there for a year, she was invited by Fiodor German and other like-minded people to Moscow in 1907 to run a vegetarian dining room there. However, according to Perper, the opening of the canteen dragged on and Jenny Schulz left for the Caucasus, to Essentuki, to run a vegetarian kitchen at the local sanatorium. When the Moscow Vegetarian Society finally opened its canteen in 1909, Jenny Schulz contributed to the project and worked there. Afterwards she worked for a vegetarian cause in Kiev for a while.⁸¹ In April 1913, during the first All-Russian Vegetarian Congress in Moscow, Schulz oversaw the conference's vegetarian menu.

WHEN THE ODESSA Vegetarian Society opened its First Public Canteen in the premises of the International Restaurant at the Paris Hotel on May 5, 1913, the canteen's kitchen was run by Jenny Schulz, now a well-known figure. Apparently, cooperation was difficult, and tensions occurred between Schulz and the society's board. It is hard to give details of the reasons for this due to lack of voices of all parties involved. In his report, Grigorii Rublev, member of the society's board and the canteen supervisor, mentioned Schulz's dictatorial powers, which together with her being a newcomer in an unknown city and a new setting, according to his judgement, created an insoluble conflict situation, as a result of which she decided to return to Kiev.⁸² The power struggle between two parties and the collision between Schulz's and the

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Illustration 9. The canteen kitchen of the Odessa Vegetarian Society. Inside view, taken in February 1915. Source: *Otchet Odesskago Vegetarian-skago Obshchestva za 1914 god* (Odessa, 1915), 17.

board's visions on the management of the canteen might be the bottom line of the conflict. Jenny Schulz was too experienced a manager and vegetarian expert to let others into "her" domain. The board, on the other hand, wanted to have a full power over the enterprise. However, before leaving for Kiev, Jenny Schulz recommended her sister to take her place. In June 1914, Minna Schulz came to Odessa. As Rublev claimed, Minna Schulz followed the same pattern as her sister, not letting anybody interfere in kitchen matters. After half a year of active search, the board had finally found a "sensible man," in Rublev's words, to run the vegetarian kitchen, who however was not a "specialist vegetarian."⁸³ Jenny Schulz presumably left Odessa for Kiev and then maybe for Moscow and never returned to Odessa.

Now we will take a closer look at the duties of a canteen manager (*ekonomka, khoziaika stolovoi*), and a kitchen manager (*khaziaika kukhni*), and how the powers of these positions were linked to each other. Being liable for finances and property, the canteen manager managed and controlled a warehouse of food and supplies daily. She was responsible for orderliness and tidiness in the canteen, as well as being obliged to strictly monitor and manage the staff of waitresses. She was to ensure that all visitors were attentively and politely served and take corrective measures when needed. She was also responsible for stocktaking.⁸⁴ What were Jenny Schulz's powers in the vegetarian canteen? As the kitchen manager (*khaziaika kukhni*), Schulz's job was to buy goods at a market every morning, ensuring and checking its high quality and preservation. She had to control all provision and goods consumption. Schulz had keys to the kitchen, larder and barn. Every day at 5 pm she was supposed to

discuss and compose a menu for next day with a cook and send it to the printer. As kitchen manager, she directed cooking assistants, cooks, pan-cooks and dishwashers, "distributing work accurately between them." Schulz's job entailed supervising the whole process of cooking, serving and cleaning of the kitchen and dishes. And of course, she was to be present and active during the work of the canteen, between 12 and 6 pm. She was required to report to the board of the vegetarian society about all shortcomings on daily basis.⁸⁵ As kitchen manager, she earned 50 rubles.⁸⁶ Basically, both managers were to work closely together, which could have created potential tensions between these two positions if the personal chemistry was poor.

In 1903, Posrednik publishing house in Saint Petersburg released a cookbook, *100 Vegetarian Dishes*, compiled by Larisa Nikolaeva and based on Jenny Schulz's work in German, Swiss, Hungarian and Russian vegetarian canteens. In 1909, the second edition was released, and the fourth came out in 1914. The book was a success, as the number of editions shows.⁸⁷ From 1905, Jenny Schulz occasionally published articles in *Vegetarische Warte*, and after 1909, she was employed by the *Vegetarian Review*.⁸⁸ She also wrote for the *Vegetarian Review* and this periodical published texts about her. With her experience of running vegetarian kitchens in Germany, Hungary and Switzerland, Jenny Schulz was seen in the Russian empire as a trendsetter in vegetarian cooking.

For Odessa vegetarian activists, the arrival of Jenny Schulz, I suppose, was a matter of prestige and symbolic legitimization. It marked their belonging to an imagined international progressive community, even though her stay did not last long. Odessa was not a vegetarian province, even if under Jenny Schulz's eye,

at least for a while, vegetables bought at Odessa markets were transformed into highly praised meals of “European” vegetarian gastronomy (for the dishes served in the Odessa Vegetarian Canteen, see Appendix 1 in the end of the article).

Vegetarian canteens in times of turmoil

1914 and the outbreak of the World War I brought both improvements and challenges to vegetarian activism. One innovation in 1914 was the introduction of the society’s Economic and Cultural Educational Commissions with specific powers, as well as the revision of its charter. In order to optimize the work and manage the canteen more effectively, the board, in its own words, decided to delegate the authority for the procurement of daily foods from the kitchen manager to the Economic Commission. This Commission was supposed to support the canteen supervisor (*zaveduiushchii stolovoi*).⁸⁹ It was composed of nine people, including the chairman of the society, his deputy and two members of the board; the remaining six members were to be elected annually by the general meeting from the society’s full members. The chairman of the Economic Commission was the chairman of the society’s board or his deputy. Beside the purchase of provisions, equipment, goods for the canteen, quality and pricing supervision of procured provisions, and the repair of premises and equipment, the Commission exercised “control over the rational menu design, as well as over improving the quality of dishes served and reducing their prices.”⁹⁰ According to Poves, a supervisor of the canteen from June 1914, the collective management of the canteen’s economy had positive effects, since it smoothed and secured thrifty and rational food procurement without compromising quality and despite food shortages and price rises.⁹¹ Moreover, the position of housekeeper (*ekonomka*) was introduced, whose responsibility was to account for, monitor and store food in pantry and cellar. It allowed the kitchen manager to focus exclusively on the work in the kitchen.

Besides the reorganization of food procurement, bookkeeping and stocktaking were also rearranged, as well as checking and assessing the nutritional value of the food. It was decided to systematically monitor the variety of food served at the canteen in order to ensure the nutritional value of the vegetarian dietary regimen. The scientific food classification system, encompassing 200 species of plants, was embraced and served as a basis for the development of menus. This, in the words of Poves, was to strengthen an argument about the variety of food served at the vegetarian canteen, and to discredit meat-eaters’ accusations of the poor nutritional value of vegetarian food.⁹² The ambition was to design and serve a varied and nutritionally rich menu based on scientific grounds, what was called a rational diet.⁹³ In Poves’ report on the management of the canteen in 1914, the rationalization and optimization of labor, improvements in the canteen’s work, and its assumed role in societal development, are rhetorically intertwined. As Poves maintained, the canteen’s activity could not be considered solely from a gastronomic and restaurant standpoint, designed to satisfy all the tastes of interested people, even in the sphere of vegetarianism. The canteen,

as Poves continued, was only one step in the fulfillment of the society’s goals, which, in his words, aimed to implant and propagate the idea of vegetarianism.⁹⁴

DUE TO CHANGES in the charter, the society’s board revised the rules for free-lance employees in December 1914.⁹⁵ The new document legitimized the Economic Commission and position of housekeeper and detailed some paragraphs of the previous document. As with its predecessor, the rules primarily focused on the delimitation of powers and the workers’ obligations, while attention was also paid to the employees’ working conditions and rights. Since the management of the canteen was collectively delegated to the Economic Commission, communication with and daily reporting of the canteen and kitchen managers to the commission were conducted via its chairman.

The outbreak of World War I did not diminish attendance at the vegetarian canteen. In 1914, around 152,928 customers were reported to have eaten there.⁹⁶ In 1915, the *Vegetarian Herald* reported in its spring issue about the huge popularity of the Odessa vegetarian canteen, when on April 5, 1915, according to the report, it was necessary to put a chain on the canteen door and restrict the intake. The queue stretched down the street outside the canteen, the waiting time was long, and the staff did not have time to serve all customers. Interestingly, the same issue reported that at least two private vegetarian canteens had either shifted to serving meat dishes or to a mixed menu. As the *Vegetarian Herald* maintained, the only canteen that served a purely vegetarian diet was the society’s, where the prices were higher than in the private canteens. This, together with a decline of competitive members of the society and no increase in full members, according to the *Vegetarian Herald*, was a sign of a decline in the vegetarian movement in Odessa.⁹⁷ In contrast to the *Vegetarian Herald*, Samuil Perper, Iosif Perper’s brother, who lived in Odessa for a time in 1915, provided a very positive picture of the activities of the Odessa Society in the spring issue of *Vegetarian Review*, listing its achievements and praising it for having “the one *vis vitalis*, which is so necessary for every public organization (*obshchestvennaia organizatsiia*) for its prosperity and development.”⁹⁸

The quantity of products consumed increased by 66% during 1915, which served as a proof of a general increase of customers in the canteen. Compared to 1914, the canteen’s income increased by 51%, but expenses also grew due to rising prices. Compared to 1914, some foodstuffs rose in price by as much as 230%.⁹⁹ Despite war time, the second canteen was opened in July 1916 on Koblevskaia Street. During 1916, the work of both canteens was at risk due to lack of fuel, supply outages, and very high prices for foodstuffs. The number of visitors to the first canteen did not drop due to the opening of the second one. The society’s board reported on the huge popularity of both canteens and the enthusiasm of the townspeople, who, according to the board, even sent their suggestions for the location of the new canteen. In the words of the board, the opening of the second canteen was of great public value, “since due to the high cost of foodstuffs, and difficulty in fuel production, large numbers even of families go

to our canteens with the whole household, where they could get healthy and tasty lunches for a cheap price and we fed almost two thousand people in our two canteens.”¹⁰⁰ 371,577 customers visited the canteens in 1917 and 482,416 people in 1918; 1,210,259 dishes were served in 1917, and 1,033,236 in 1918.¹⁰¹

In 1914, the management of the society’s public catering was collectively delegated to the Economic Commission. The position of housekeeper was introduced, which indicated that the society was embracing the logic of optimization of the enterprise, and further institutionalization of activism. At the same time, the rhetoric on rational diet, as well as an eagerness to offer nutritionally rich food, appeared among the leadership. The rise in the cost of basic foodstuffs was gigantic in 1916. Lack of fuel, as well as sporadic supply outages of potato, cabbage, butter, and sour cream, put the functioning of both canteens at risk. Nor was cultural educational work realized in 1916, due to the war. Instead the board directed all its energy and resources into the two canteens, which, in its view, were “the practical hotbeds (*rassadniki*) and the guides (*provodniki*) of ideas of vegetarianism.”¹⁰² In times of war, vegetarian canteens continued to offer their services for Odessa townspeople, and even made efforts to counteract the humanitarian disasters of the time.

On a mission: Propaganda and philanthropy

Today the word “propaganda” suggests the biased use of information, but, in the early 20th century, the term seems to have been synonymous with popularization and promotion. Propagating vegetarianism meant enlightening people on how to live and eat, as well as pursuing activities to influence people’s attitudes. The necessity of ideological work when it came to promotion of dietary reform and vegetarianism was acknowledged by the society’s leaders from the time of its foundation. The section below offers a closer look at the methods and strategies of popularization and dissemination of vegetarianism in Odessa.

In 1913, the board of the Odessa Vegetarian Society deliberately decided to publish 200 copies of the menu on a daily basis, since, as the board maintained, “most canteen visitors take away the ‘menu.’” The board saw this tendency rather positively, as a sign of interest. Therefore, the regular publication of the menu was seen as a way of promoting vegetarianism.¹⁰³ Besides, the sale of books, journals and brochures on vegetarianism was legalized in the canteen from October 1913, with the permission of the authorities.¹⁰⁴ In this way, the canteen became an information center for dietary reform.

Sometime in the first half of 1914, the earlier mentioned Osip Inber suggested to use a part of the society’s profits to promote vegetarian doctrine by organizing systematic lectures on vegetarianism. In his well formulated appeal to the Odessa Vegetarian Society, he called on it not to restrict the society’s activities

to the maintenance of canteens, given the fact of its ideological purposes, since otherwise, in his view, there would be no difference between the vegetarian society and private vegetarian canteens that also offered slaughter-free food. Every canteen, private or public, exists due to its clientele, exposed to seasonal fluctuations, yet remaining at approximately the same level. Hence, in Inber’s opinion, movement, growth, and progression were simply missed out. Restricting the society’s activity to the maintenance of canteens would thus lead to the society’s stagnation, depriving it of prospects. To avoid this, in Inber’s opinion, the society should take the path of “broad and accessible propaganda.” It must appoint a special commission, which should organize popular lectures on nutrition and vegetarianism, find proper premises for lectures and invite well-informed speakers, publish low-priced brochures and free flyers on the basics of vegetarianism, and in general, as Inber suggested, support by all means a broad popularization of vegetarian ideas in the society of Odessa.¹⁰⁵ It was reported that Inber’s suggestion was received with enthusiasm.

INTRODUCED IN 1914, the Cultural Educational Commission, comprising 12 members, aimed at “the most widespread implantation, development and systematic propagation of the idea of vegetarianism.”¹⁰⁶ The Commission declared its intention “to disseminate information about dietary reform through publications, lectures, articles in newspapers and magazines etc., indicating the benefits of a vegetarian diet in physical, mental and moral respects”; working with the help of “organizations of schools, kindergartens, libraries, reading rooms, clubs”, and “publications of books, brochures and periodicals.”¹⁰⁷ In 1914 the Commission organized two public lectures. On March 31, 1914,

the first of these was conducted by Ivan Lutsenko in the premises of the vegetarian canteen and entitled “On the Newest Scientific Grounds of Vegetarianism.” On December 16, 1914, Lev Kaplan, a student at the medical faculty of Imperial Novorossian University, gave the second lecture on nutrition and science. Both lectures illuminated medical justifications of dietary reform, and according to the Commission, attracted many listeners.¹⁰⁸ On April 17, 1914, Lutsenko delivered a lecture on the issue of nutrition in the premises of the Odessa Literature Artistic Club.¹⁰⁹ Some words should be said about Ivan Lutsenko, a homeopathic doctor and a political

leader of the Ukrainian national movement. He authored works on medicine, including the treatment of measles, hemorrhoids, scarlet and typhoid fever, and cholera, but none on dietary reform. A nobleman from Poltava province, he took his doctorate on night blindness at Saint Petersburg Imperial Medical and Surgical Academy in 1893. He was an organizer and a first chairman of the Board of the Odessa Ukrainian Cultural Society “Prosvita”. In 1905 he was elected to Odessa council as a deputy

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for the Ukrainian Democratic Party. In 1906, Lutsenko founded the *People's Cause* (Narodna sprava), the first Ukrainian newspaper, soon afterward closed by the authorities. In 1917 he became a member of the Central Council (*Tsentral'na Rada*) of the Ukrainian People's Republic. In April 1919, during the retreat of the Ukrainian People's Republic's troops, he died in a battle with Red Army cavalry.¹¹⁰ Vegetarian collective action, as this shows, attracted a range of people to the cause of its promotion.

Anniversaries were a good pretext for attracting public and media attention to the cause of dietary reform. On May 5, 1915, the second anniversary of the opening of the first public vegetarian canteen, the Odessa Society organized a gala dinner attended by many Society's members and 80 guests. This was covered by the *Odessa News* and was partly for promotional purposes, as the *Vegetarian Review* implied. A number of greetings and speeches were delivered at the event. Leonid Kaplan spoke about the hygienic, dietetic value of vegetarian food, as the only useful food for a human being. Sergei Poves spoke about social aspects of vegetarianism and Petr Ambrozhevich pointed out the usefulness of vegetarian diet for parturient woman.¹¹¹

The society planned to increase promotion and publishing activities in 1915, and 1,500 rubles were allocated for these purposes.¹¹² However, the breakthrough in the commission's activity did not happen and, as the board itself acknowledged, the Cultural Educational Commission did not meet even once in 1915.¹¹³ Nor was any of the planned cultural educational work, including lectures, and publications, realized in 1916, due to the ongoing war. Instead, the board redirected its focus on the canteens, as mentioned before.

APART FROM PURELY philanthropical intentions, charity was also seen by the Odessa Vegetarian Society as a way to publicize and promote the society's goals. The society offered lunch coupons for people in need as well as preferential lunches in the vegetarian canteen for the students of Novorossian University and Women's Higher Courses. For these types of charity, fixed sums of money were regularly allocated. During 1913, the Odessa vegetarian canteen provided a limited number of preferential lunches for the students of Novorossian University and Higher Women's Courses, as well as for people in need.¹¹⁴ The same policy was pursued during 1914 for the "development of propaganda of vegetarianism among young students and at the same time to help the poorest of them."¹¹⁵ On May 5, 1914, on the first anniversary of the opening of the first public vegetarian canteen in Odessa, the students of Odessa's higher educational establishments were provided with 150 free lunches.¹¹⁶ Students obviously constituted an important focus group for propagation of vegetarianism and made up a good share of the canteens' clientele.

With the outbreak of World War I, charitable activities were expanded, and new types were introduced with respect to refugees, and homeless children of conscripts, for example. In 1914, the board of the society met the request for help from the guard-

ianship society for Jewish children of reservists called up to fight, and decided to allocate 2% of the gross profit of the canteen for this society.¹¹⁷ In 1915–1916, charitable activities and donations continued to be pursued, along with student discounts and free lunches. Due to rising food prices and fuel shortages, prices in the canteen were raised twice during 1915. In 1915, the preferential discount for students' and pupils' lunches constituted 3,880 rubles 33 kopecks. To the board's delight, most visitors to the canteen were students of the medical faculty at the local university.¹¹⁸ Taking into consideration the local medical beau-monde's sympathy to the vegetarian cause, this fact also carried the potential replenishment of a future vegetarian flock with ideologically sound new converts: A new generation of medical vegetarians, so vital for the reproduction of activism!

Based on the socially significant activities exercised by the society and the fact that it pursued no commercial goals, in its board's words, it – unsuccessfully – petitioned the Odessa city council to reduce the city tax on the two canteens.¹¹⁹ Despite con-

tinuous rhetorical emphasis on commitment to the ideals of vegetarianism in the society's documentation, the outbreak of war brought some adjustments to its agenda and the realization of its purposes. In the horrors of war, it seems, the ideological work of spreading dietary reform by arranging educational and public events, as initially planned, became irrelevant, if not absurd. On the other hand, it is hard to say what vegetarianism activism and its ideological work would have been looked like if war had not broken out. Despite

economic hardships and hyperinflation, the society continued and even expanded its philanthropical activities.

Mission (not) completed? Concluding discussion

Odessa vegetarian activists appear to have been a well-organized, well-mobilized, ideologically united, self-sufficient and financially sustainable community with a vision, agenda and established institutions. Given the number of full and competitive members of the society, and despite occasional membership fluctuations, it was certainly one of, if not the most numerous among vegetarian societies in the Russian empire.

When it comes to its ideological grounds and collective identity, Odessa vegetarian activists proclaimed themselves followers of Aleksandr Iasinovskii, a Doctor of Medicine, an advocate of a meatless diet on scientific grounds, for reasons of health and hygiene. He was virtually canonized as the activism's guru. Dietary reform found a response and interest in the medical world of Odessa. Local doctors and physicians were members of the society and involved in collective action. Students of the medical faculty made up a good part of the customers of the vegetarian canteens. In view of the ideological stand of the Odessa cohort, this reciprocity was crucial for the activism's reproduction. Representatives of the local elite (Viktor Doks, Ivan Sosnovskii,

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Leonid Levitskii) also sympathized with vegetarianism.

Typically, this kind of activism was essentially upper middle-class and upper working-class, with some supporters among the lower classes. The core of the society and its members comprised of public figures, intellectuals, local elite, doctors, physicians, engineers, clerks, journalists. There are reasons to argue that women were underrepresented among the society's full and competitive members. When studying the lists of members of the society and other documentation, it becomes obvious that activists of Jewish origin constituted its sizable part. I did not come across evidence of anti-Semitic attitudes in Odessa vegetarian circles, although these occurred in other settings, but antisemitism certainly existed in the city of Odessa as previous research showed.¹²⁰ Unless new sources prove the opposite, one may suggest that Odessa vegetarian activism appeared as a space of interactive and multi-ethnic cooperation in an imperial public life, a space of contact among diverse people, and an ostensibly expanded space for Jewish agency.

The Vegetarian Society was legalized in 1912, turning into a mobilizing platform for passionate supporters and sympathizers of vegetarianism. Yet, the available sources are not particularly outspoken on why and how people actually got mobilized. The society underwent advancement of its institutions, as well as revision of its Charter in 1914, enabling all organizational innovations to be legalized. Jenny Schulz and her short stay in Odessa somewhat symbolically legitimized Odessa vegetarian activism, putting it on the map of her virtual European tour in service of new dietary regimen.

Despite the outbreak of the war, food shortages and inflation, the Odessa Vegetarian Society expanded its public catering. This would not have been feasible if there was no demand. Remarkably, the society's canteens managed to survive the outbreak of war and the second canteen was even opened in 1916. Vegetarian canteens were important signs of the activism's earnestness and the reformed diet's perceived commercial viability. With the ambition to serve a rational and nutritionally rich diet in line with the latest science, public canteens offered a varied European cuisine, encouraging their numerous customers to explore new tastes and combinations. As James Gregory reminds us, the promotional and practical value of vegetarian restaurants had long been appreciated, but for much of the period the vegetarian movement had to rely on the power of the platform and print.¹²¹ Vegetarian canteens turned into meeting places for converts and activists, hubs of enlightenment, where books and brochures were sold and lectures delivered, and locations where a reformed diet could be tasted by the uninitiated. The Odessa Society's promotional educational activities, discussed and started up in a small way in 1914, already died out the following year. The war still made corrections to the society's agenda, although it is hard to say how it would have been looked like if the war had not broken out.

Drawing attention to the cause in public could have borne fruit. Thanks to a journalist among its members, the Odessa Society enjoyed certain publicity. Media coverage of the society's activity both in local press and all-empire vegetarian press was thorough. The society's anniversaries and its media coverage,

and tactical publication of canteen's menus, were among the latent methods of, if not promotion, then at least conducting a groundwork for mobilization by making Odessa townspeople aware of the phenomenon. Philanthropic activities, such as free lunches for young students at the society's canteen, could be judged as both humanitarian measures and latent forms of popularization of the cause.

Based on the sources of the study, it is hardly possible to make any reliable estimates about how vegetarianism was taken up by wider society, or of the success of the dissemination strategies and tactics pursued. The popularity of the canteens is neither a measurement, nor a direct proof, of the success of propagation. People could have been attracted to canteens for other reasons than ideology: moderate prices and the good quality of food served at the canteens, and finally their locations, etc.

According to Ronald LeBlanc, the demise of the Russian imperial vegetarian movement can be attributed more to the altered social, political, ideological, and economic circumstances that followed the Bolshevik seizure of power rather than to the ideological polemics that took place within the movement between the "moralistic vegetarians" and the "hygienic vegetarians" during the pre-revolutionary period.¹²² 1918 was the last year of the Odessa Vegetarian Society's activity. The sources of the study are not outspoken about the closure of the society, which however survived the February and October Revolutions of 1917. Further research is required to shed light on the matter. Vegetarian activism in Odessa certainly had resources and important potential – precious knowledge, distinguished intellectuals and masterminds, eager managers, a financial and material base, middle-class radicals, willingness to act, as well as a critical mass of enthusiastic townspeople open for new tastes and experiences.

THE SUBJECT OF vegetarianism in imperial Russia, Darra Goldstein observes, "inevitably conjures up Leo Tolstoy, a guru for vegetarians of all stripes even today."¹²³ Historical studies of vegetarianism, as a rule, almost invariably contain a brief section on Tolstoy and the Dukhobors, the members of the peasant religious sect who shared his radically Christian principles, including vegetarianism, as Ronald LeBlanc notes.¹²⁴ This study shows how approaching vegetarian activism from the vantage point of the imperial borderlands, as well as introducing new sources from the former imperial provinces, can enrich and nuance our understanding of the phenomenon. It also introduces new dimensions and sets out to question established truths, as well as bringing to the surface new personalities who have not gained their place in the history of dietary reform in Eastern Europe. ✕

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Note: All translations are the author's unless otherwise indicated.

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APPENDIX 1

The list of dishes included in the "Menu" of the Vegetarian Society canteen from May 6 to December 31, 1913¹

Menu

SOUPS:

- Borsch Little Russian
» Lithuanian
» Naval (*Flotski*)²
» Polish with cabbage and little dumplings (*ushki*)
» Lean (*postnyi*) with mashed potato
» Green

Bouillon with pies
Botvin'ia
Kulesh

Okroshka
Pickle (*rassol'nik*)³
Soup made from tomatoes

- » » mushrooms
» » asparagus
» » cauliflower
» » beans
» » vegetables
» » buckwheat
» » lentils

» with semolina dumplings (*mannye kletski*)
» » noodles
» » green peas
» » mushrooms
» » oats
» » rice
» » pearl barley (*perlovyi*)
» » potato
» » lean (*postnyi*)
» » spring

30. Soup julienne
» purée
» fruit

Cabbage soup (*shchi*) chopped
» lazy (*lenivye*)
» sour

DIFFERENT VEGETABLES:

Beetroots (*burachki*)⁴ in sour cream

- » with cream (*slivki*)
» under sauce

Fried eggplant

40. Brussels sprouts Polish style
Bigos⁵
Peas with asparagus
» with croutons
» with carrot

Stuffed kohlrabi
Cabbage rolls
Mashed peas

Jardiniere with spring vegetables
Jerusalem artichoke Polish style
» with hollandaise sauce
Jerusalem artichoke roasted
Vegetable marrow stuffed
» roasted
» Polish style
» *agratan*⁶

Kohlrabi roasted
Black salsify roasted
» with hollandaise sauce
» Polish style

60. Beetroot croquette
Cabbage with apples
» in tomato
Red cabbage with apples
Boiled corn
Stuffed carrot
Cucumbers with hollandaise sauce
Cucumbers roasted
» stuffed
Tomatoes roasted

70. Tomatoes stuffed
Turnip stuffed
Stew made from mushrooms, eggplants etc.
Mixed vegetables
White bean sauce with apples

Green bean and potato sauce
Asparagus Polish style
Savoy cabbage with butter
Savoy cabbage stuffed
Roast pumpkin

80. Green beans Polish style
» with carrot
» in tomato
Cauliflower Polish style
» roasted
» *agratan*
Mushrooms roasted
» in sour cream
Spinach with egg
» with croutons

90. Sorrel with egg

WARM DISHES:

Mushroom cutlets (*bitki*)
Crazy⁷

Croquettes vegetable
» potato
» semolina
Cutlets rice
» barley
» semolina
» buckwheat
» Smolensk
» potato
» spinach
» with beans
» lentils
» cabbage

Levashniki⁸
Champignon paste
Pilaf⁹ with plums
» with raisins

110. Risotto
Rice with tomatoes
Sauce of mushrooms, beans, potatoes
Noisettes semolina
» potato
» beetroot
(*burachkovye*)

Schnitzel

FLOUR DISHES, PORRIDGES AND POTATO

Pancakes (*bliny*)

Pancakes (*blinchiki*) with cottage cheese

» » rice

120. Dumplings (*vareniki*) with cherries

» » cottage cheese

» » potato

» » porridge

» » cabbage

» » egg

» » jam

with plums

Vol-au-vent with mushrooms

» fruits

130. Dumplings (*galushki*)¹⁰ with cottage cheese

» potato

Casserole

Porridge buckwheat

» barley

» semolina

» Smolensk¹¹

» pearl barley

» rice

» millet

» pumpkin (*kabakovaia*)

» oat

Potato sauté

» fries

» mashed

» in sour cream

Lozanka¹² with cottage cheese

» » cabbage

» » mushrooms

» » porridge

150. Lezhni¹³

Lazy dumplings (*lenivye vareniki*)

Macaroni Italian style

Hominy with cottage cheese

Omelet with mushrooms

» » rice

» » tomatoes

» » onion

» » cauliflower

» » herbs

160. *Platsinda*¹⁴ with pumpkin

» » cottage cheese

Pies (*pirozhki*)

Cheese pancakes

Strudel with cabbage

» » porridge

» » potato

SWEET DISHES:

Biscuit roll

Jelly lemon

» orange

» raspberry

» black currant

Compote

Cream chocolate

» coffee

» lemon

» vanilla

Custard

Cream chestnuts

Kissel apple

» cranberry

» fruit

» milk

Noodles (*lapsha*) with nuts

*Muzhinki*¹⁵

Ice cream

*Nalistniki*¹⁶ with jam

Pudding rice

» semolina

» sago¹⁷

*Potishu*¹⁸

*Sambuk*¹⁹

Cake orange

Cake biscuit

» nuts

» chestnut

» almond

» poppy

200. Tartlets

*Tunel'ki*²⁰

Trubochki

Charlotte

Apples Bulgarian style

» Imperial

» *abaenom*²¹

Apple mousse

COLD SNACKS:

Artichokes Greek style

Eggplant Greek style

*Vinegret*²²

Spread (*Ikra*)²³

Sauerkraut

Black olives with onions

Small radish (*rediska*) in sour cream

Radish (*red'ka*) in sour cream

Chopped black olives with eggs

Green salad with cucumbers

» beans

» red cabbage

220. Salad with tomatoes

» with beetroots

(*burachki*)

» with chicory

» with potato

224. Stuffed pepper

Note: During her brief period of work in the Odessa vegetarian canteen, Jenny Schulz and a cook composed a daily menu. It is hard to say whether and to what extent daily menus changed right after Schulz's departure, since the texts of menus have not been discovered. Nor is it possible to say how far the list of dishes actually reflects Jenny Schulz's gastronomic concept, since it includes dishes from the period after her departure. This summary list of dishes, introduced into scholarly use for the first time in the present article, is translated and published unchanged and is to be the subject of a separate study. It showcases a wide range of dishes of European cuisine cooked and served at the canteen of the Odessa Vegetarian Society. The menu was recorded with some inaccuracies as to the spelling of the names of some dishes.

references (appendix)

- 1 "Perechen' bliud, voshedshikh v "Menu" Stolovoi Vegetarianskago Obshchestva s 6 Maia po 31 Dekabria 1913," in *Otchet Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1913 god* (Odessa, 1914), 37–40.
- 2 *Flotskii* borsch was a sort of vegetable soup.
- 3 *Rassol'nik* is a soup made from pickled cucumbers.
- 4 *Burachki*, written in Russian from Polish *buraczki* or Ukrainian *huriachky*, not from Russian *svekla*, is a diminutive form of the plural of beetroot.
- 5 Bigos is the usual name of a Polish dish of chopped meat of various kinds stewed with sauerkraut and shredded fresh cabbage. The meat can be replaced by mushrooms.
- 6 What is probably meant here is gratin.
- 7 *Zrazy* is a roulade dish popular in Eastern Europe; its origin can be traced back to the times of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.
- 8 *Levashniki* are fried dumplings obtained from thin dough with a filling.
- 9 *Pilaf* is a rice or wheat dish, which usually involves cooking in stock or broth, adding spices, and other ingredients such as vegetables or meat.
- 10 *Galushki*, a Ukrainian national pastry dish, consisting of pieces of dough boiled in water.
- 11 *Smolensk* porridge, popular before the revolution, was prepared from crushed buckwheat and was quite liquid. Porridge of this kind was considered as a traditional country dish in the Smolensk region.
- 12 What is meant here is probably *Lazanki*, a Polish pasta dish.
- 13 *Lezhni* are peculiar potato-flour pancakes with fillings.
- 14 *Plăcintă* is a Moldavian, Romanian and Ukrainian type of pie, resembling a flat cake of a round, or sometimes square, shape.
- 15 The closest connotation to the word is in Polish "murzynek," a kind of chocolate cake.
- 16 Polish *naleśniki* and Ukrainian *nalysnyky* are names for crepes.
- 17 Sago is a food product obtained from the trunk of sago and other tropical palm stems.
- 18 What is meant here is probably *petit chou*, a type of pastry, usually filled with cream.
- 19 *Sambuk* can be a sweet airy dessert, prepared of fruit puree and whipped egg whites.
- 20 *Tunel'ki* is similar to *trubochki* (tubules), a pastry dessert of tube-shaped shells of fried pastry dough filled, or not, with cream.
- 21 What is meant here is probably *zabaglione* (Italian) or *sabayon* (French), a dessert of light whipped cream with egg yolks, sugar, sweet wine or juice. This was originally an Italian desert, which was developed in a number of variations.
- 22 *Vinegret* is a salad of diced cooked vegetables (beetroots, potatoes, carrots), chopped onions, as well as sauerkraut and/or brined pickles.
- 23 *Ikra* is a spread used as an appetizer or dinner side dish with a few ingredients: sautéed zucchini or eggplant with other vegetables and tomato.

references

- 1 The epigraph is from Sergei Poves, a supervisor of the first vegetarian canteen of the Odessa Vegetarian Society, see: "Doklad Tovariishcha Predsedatelia Obshchestva po zavedyvaniiu stolovoi v 1914 godu," in *Otchet Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1914 god* (Odessa, 1915), 20.
- 2 The name of imperial cities (such as Odessa, Kiev), and newspapers (*Odesskie novosti* etc.) or streets are in Russian as they appear in the sources of the study. Russian was an official language of communication within the Odessa Vegetarian Society and between vegetarian associations. Educational activities and propagation were also pursued in Russian. The sources produced and left by the societies and activists are mainly in Russian, except for activists' books translated into other languages such as Bulgarian, Yiddish etc. The activists' names are transliterated from Russian as they appear in the sources. When it comes to the modern-day names of, for example, regional archives, the names are written in Ukrainian, as in the case of State Archives of Odesa Region.
- 3 Ronald D. LeBlanc, "Vegetarianism in Russia: The Tolstoy(an) Legacy," in *The Carl Beck Papers in Russian and East European Studies*, no.1507 (2001), 1.
- 4 Darra Goldstein, "Is Hay Only for Horses? Highlights of Russian Vegetarianism at the Turn of the Century," in *Food in Russian History and Culture*, ed. by Musya Glants and Joyce Toomre (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 103–123; Peter Brang. *Rossia neizvestnaia: istoriia kul'tury vegetarianskikh obrazov zhizni ot nachala do nashikh dnei*. Per. s nem. A. Bernol'd i P. Branga (Moscow: Iazyki slavianskoi kul'tury, 2006); LeBlanc, 1–39. Based solely on vegetarian periodicals and due to biased methodology, the research implementation and the results of Olena Pyvovarenko's study on the Odessa Vegetarian Society appear unreliable and limited. See: Olena Pyvovarenko, "Odesa Vegetarian Society at the Beginning of the XXth Century: Issues of Foundation and Main Activity Directions. On the Periodic Materials," *Skhidnoievropeiskyi Istorychnyi Visnyk*, issue 13, 2019, 77–83.
- 5 Alberto Melucci, *Nomads of the Present: Social Movements and Individual Agency in Contemporary Society* (London: Hutchinson Radius, 1989).
- 6 Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison, *Social Movements: A Cognitive Approach* (Penn State University Press, 1991).
- 7 Melucci, 34–35.
- 8 Eyermann&Jamison, 68–70.
- 9 From the huge amount of literature see: Alain Drouard, "Reforming Diet at the End of the Nineteenth Century in Europe," in Peter J. Atkins, Peter Lummel and Derek J. Oddy, eds. *Food and the City in Europe since 1800*. (England - USA: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2007), 215–225; Ulrike Thoms, "Vegetarianism, Meat and Life Reform in Early Twentieth-century Germany and their Fate in the 'Third Reich'," in David Cantor, Christian Bonah and Matthias Dörries, eds., *Meat, Medicine and Human Health in the Twentieth Century* (London and New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2015), 145–157.
- 10 Cited from: Avi Sharma, "Wilhelmine Nature: Natural Lifestyle and Practical Politics in the German Life-Reform Movement (1890–1914)," *Social History*, 37:1 (2012): 43–44.
- 11 Jill R. Steward, "Moral Economies and Commercial Imperatives: Food, Diets and Spas in Central Europe, 1800–1914," *Journal of Tourism History*, 4:2 (2012): 181–203.
- 12 State Archives of Odesa Region (Derzhavnyi arkhiv Odes'koi oblasti) (further DAOO), Collection 2, Inventory 1, File 2498. Ob utverzhenii ustava vodolechebnitsy s postoiannymi krovatiami vrachei Semena Rabinovicha i Aleksandra Iasinovskogo. 1898–1899, sheets 1–8; Ustav Vodolechebnitsy v g. Odesse vracha Semena Samoilovicha Rabinovicha

- i doktora meditsiny Aleksandra Aleksandrovicha Iasinovskogo: utv. 18 sent.1898 (Odessa, 1898).
- 13 This designation was assigned to Leo Tolstoy by his followers-activists in the vegetarian press, a purposeful act in a chain of other acts, as LeBlanc suggests, to fashion and shape Tolstoy's image as a vegetarian in a more appealing way, as a compassionate humanitarian vegetarian rather than religious, ascetic one. See: LeBlanc, 7, 17, 19.
- 14 Staryi Vegetarianets, "Doktor A. A. Iasinovskii," in *Vegetarianskoe obozrenie* (further VO), no.1 (1912): 3; Alexander Jassinowsky, "Die Arteriennahrt. Eine experimentell-chirurgische Studie." Dorpat, 1889. Accessed on January 21, 2020, from: <https://archive.org/stream/diearterieennahteoojass?ref=ol#page/1/mode/2up>
- 15 *Odesskoe vegetarianskoe obshchestvo. Otchet za 1912 god* (Odessa, 1913), 1.
- 16 V mire pechaty, in VO, no.1 (1913): 41.
- 17 Iosif Perper, "Pamiati druga," in VO, no.1 (1913): 2.
- 18 "Doktor meditsiny Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Iasinovskii (Nekrolog)," in *Odesskoe Vegetarianskoe Obshchestvo. Otchet za 1912 god* (Odessa, 1913), 2.
- 19 Staryi vegetarianets, "Po miru," in VO, no. 2 (1909): 30.
- 20 Staryi vegetarianets, "Po miru," in VO, no. 10 (1909): 36–37.
- 21 Aleksandr Iasinovskii, "Miasnoi prizrak. Posmertnaia stat'ia doktora A.A. Iasinovskogo," in VO, no.1 (1913): 6–9.
- 22 DAOO, Collection 39, Inventory 5, File 148. Metricheskaia kniga Odesskogo gorodskogo ravvinata za 1913, sheet 17.
- 23 In pre-revolutionary Russia, an artel was a cooperative association of craftsmen, farmers or agricultural laborers living and working together.
- 24 Ivan Shiptenko, "Pamiati doktora A.A. Iasinovskogo," in VO, no. 1 (1914): 2.
- 25 Shiptenko, 2–3. Bold letters by the author of this article.
- 26 Shiptenko, 3–4.
- 27 Iosif Perper, "Pamiati druga," in VO, no.1 (1913): 2.
- 28 "Doktor meditsiny Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Iasinovskii (Nekrolog)," in *Otchet za 1912 god*, 2.
- 29 *Otchet Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1913 god* (Odessa, 1914), 5.
- 30 Staryi Vegetarianets, "Po miru," in VO, no. 4–5 (1913): 202.
- 31 DAOO, Collection 2, Inventory 7, File 469. Delo Kantseliarii Odesskogo Gradonachal'nika. Ustav Odesskogo Vegetarianskago Obshchestva, 1912–1915, sheets 33–34.
- 32 Aleksandr Voeikov, "Pestrye zametki," in VO, no.2 (1909): 11.
- 33 LeBlanc, 11.
- 34 "Obshchemu Sobraniu g.g. Chlenov Odesskago Vegetarianskago O-va. Doklad Soveta o deiatel'nosti za 1912 god," in *Otchet za 1912 god*, 6–7.
- 35 "O sovremennom polozhenii vegetarianstva v Rossii. Doklad, chitannyi Iosifom Perperom 11 iulia 1909 goda v Moskovskom Vegetarianskom Obshchestve," in VO, no. 7 (1909): 22–26.
- 36 Katherine Sorrels, "Police Harassment and the Politicization of Jewish Youth in Interwar Bessarabia," *East European Jewish Affairs* 47:1 (2017): 62–84. Pyvovarenko claims that the Odessa Vegetarian Society was not registered in 1908 "primarily due to his [Tolmachev's] anti-Semitic views." This claim however is not grounded in the sources she refers to in her article, see: Pyvovarenko, *Odesa Vegetarian Society*, 78.
- 37 Kenneth B. Moss, "At Home in Late Imperial Russian Modernity - Except When They Weren't: New Histories of Russian and East European Jews, 1881–1914," *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. 84, no. 2 (2012): 403.
- 38 "Obshchemu Sobraniu g.g. Chlenov Odesskago Vegetarianskago O-va. Doklad Soveta o deiatel'nosti za 1912 god," in *Otchet za 1912 god*, 6.
- 39 *Ustav Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva* (Odessa: Tip. G. Borsutskago i Kh. Vulikhmana, 1912), 3–12.
- 40 See: "Zvuki dnia" and "Vegetarianstvuiushchaia Odessa," in *Odesskii listok*, no. 132, 8 June 1912, 2.
- 41 "Vegetarianstvuiushchaia Odessa," in *Odesskii listok*, no. 132, 8 June 1912, 2.
- 42 *Otchet za 1912 god*, 3.
- 43 Vasilii Zuev, *Bani i vanny. Ikh ustroistvo, gigienicheskoe znachenie i istoricheskoe razvitie* (Odessa: Tipografia Iuzhno-Russkogo Obshchestva Pechatnogo Dela, 1898).
- 44 In 1925, Gershanskii wrote and defended a diploma dissertation for the title of physician under the title "The Correlation Between Diseases of Teeth and the Tooth Cavity and Other Diseases of a Body." See: DAOO, Collection 2147, Inventory 1, File 5193. Sprava z dokumentamy hromadianyna Hershans'koho Iehudy Aronovycha pro skinchennia kursu Odes'koho meduniversitytetu, 1924–1926, sheets 1–2, 24–25, 28.
- 45 "Spravochnyi otdel," in *Otchet za 1912 god*, 22.
- 46 *Otchet za 1912 god*, 4–5.
- 47 DAOO, 2–7–469, sheet 9.
- 48 *Otchet za 1912 god*, 4–5; "Denezhnyi Otchet Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1912 god," in *Otchet za 1912 god*, 12–15.
- 49 "Denezhnyi Otchet Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1912 god," in *Otchet za 1912 god*, 12–16.
- 50 *Otchet za 1913 god*, 3–4.
- 51 DAOO, 2–7–469, sheets 8, 23–26, 28–32.
- 52 DAOO, 2–7–469, sheet 27.
- 53 "Ustav Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva, 1914," in DAOO, 2–7–469, sheets 9–15.
- 54 "Doklad Tovarishcha Predsedatel'ia Obshchestva po zavedyvaniiu stolovoi v 1914 godu," in *Otchet Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1914 god* (Odessa, 1915), 25.
- 55 "Odesskoe Vegetarianskoe Obshchestvo," in *Otchet Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1915 god* (Odessa, 1916), 3–7; "Odesskoe Vegetarianskoe Obshchestvo," in *Otchet Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1916 god* (Odessa, 1917), 3–7; "Odesskoe Vegetarianskoe Obshchestvo," in *Otchet Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1917 god* (Odessa, 1918), 3–5; "Odesskoe Vegetarianskoe Obshchestvo," in *Otchet Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1918 god* (Odessa, 1919), 3–5.
- 56 *Otchet za 1914 god*, 93–97.
- 57 *Otchet za 1916 god*, 55–61.
- 58 *Otchet za 1912 god*, 3
- 59 *Peterburgskoe vegetarianskoe obshchestvo. Otchet o deiatel'nosti obshchestva za 1914 god i spisok chlenov na 1 ianvaria 1915* (Spb, 1915).
- 60 *Vegetarianskii vestnik*, no. 3–4 (1915): 16.
- 61 Staryi Vegetarianets, S.O. Perper, "Po miru," in VO, no. 9–10 (1911): 52–58.
- 62 "Svedeniia o chastnykh Vegetarianskikh stolovykh v g.Odesse," in *Otchet za 1913 god*, 49.
- 63 Staryi Vegetarianets, "Po miru," in VO, no. 1 (1914): 36.
- 64 "Obshchemu Sobraniu Chlenov Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva. Doklad Soveta o deiatel'nosti za 1912 god," in *Otchet za 1912 god*, 6–8.
- 65 "Doklad chlena Soveta, zavedyvaiushchego stolovoi G.Ia.Rubleva," in *Otchet za 1913 god*, 28.
- 66 "Doklad ob osmotre stolovoi Kievskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva G.Ia. Rubleva," in *Otchet za 1913 god*, 41–48.
- 67 "Obshchemu Sobraniu g.g. Chlenov Odesskago Vegetarianskago O-va. Doklad Soveta o deiatel'nosti za 1912 god," in *Otchet za 1912 god*, 8.
- 68 "Otchet Soveta o deiatel'nosti Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1913 god," in *Otchet za 1913 god*, 9.
- 69 "Otkrytie Stolovoi," in *Otchet za 1913 god*, 15–23. Ivan Sosnovskii, Odessa

City Governor, accompanied by medical inspector Levitskii and Zuev, lunched at the vegetarian canteen for the first time on February 4, 1914. Both Sosnovskii and Levitskii left the best reviews of the canteen, food and service in the visitors' book, according to the society's report, see: *Otchet za 1914 god*, 15–16.

- 70 Staryi Vegetarianets, "Po miru," in *VO*, no. 4–5 (1913): 202.
- 71 *Adresnaia i spravochnaia kniga g. Odessy na 1911 g. Vsia Odessa* (Odessa: Izdanie i redaktsiia L.A. Lisianskago, 1911), 49.
- 72 "Doklad Chlena Soveta, zavedyvaiushchago stolovoi G.Ia. Rubleva," in *Otchet za 1913 god*, 27–30.
- 73 Ibid, 31–32.
- 74 Ibid, 30.
- 75 Ibid, 32.
- 76 Ibid, 34–35.
- 77 "Pravila dlia sluzhashchikh Stolovoi Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva, utverzhdeniia Sovetom togo zhe Obshchestva v zasedanii ot 5 iulia 1913," in *Otchet za 1913 god*, 73–77.
- 78 Staryi Vegetarianets, "Po miru," in *VO*, no. 3 (1914): 116.
- 79 Staryi Vegetarianets, "Po miru," in *VO*, no. 3 (1914): 115–116.
- 80 Staryi Vegetarianets, "Po miru," in *VO*, no. 2 (1914): 71.
- 81 Iosif Perper, "Zh.I.Shul'ts," in *VO*, no. 6–7 (1911): 38–41.
- 82 "Doklad Chlena Soveta, zavedyvaiushchago stolovoi G.Ia. Rubleva," in *Otchet Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1913 god* (Odessa, 1914), 32.
- 83 Ibid, 32.
- 84 "Pravila dlia sluzhashchikh Stolovoi Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva, utverzhdeniia Sovetom togo zhe Obshchestva v zasedanii ot 5 iulia 1913," in *Otchet za 1913 god*, 74–75.
- 85 Ibid, 75.
- 86 "Doklad ob osmotre stolovoi Kievskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva G.Ia. Rubleva," in *Otchet za 1913 god*, 44.
- 87 Staryi Vegetarianets, "Po miru," *VO*, no. 6 (1909): 36–38. See also: Nikolaeva, Larisa. *Sto vegetarianskikh bliud: Nastavlenie k prigotovleniiu kushanii dlia bezuboinogo pitaniia, sostavlennoe na osnovanii praktiki Zh.I. Shul'ts v germanskikh, shveitsarskikh, vengerskikh i russkikh vegetarianskikh stolovykh*. Izdanie 4-e (Moskva: Posrednik, 1914).
- 88 Iosif Perper, "Zh.I.Shul'ts," in *VO*, no. 6–7 (1911): 38–41.
- 89 "Otchet Soveta o deiatel'nosti Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1914 god," in *Otchet za 1914 god*, 13–14.
- 90 "Instruktsiia Khoziaistvennoi Komissii pri Odesskom Vegetarianskom Obshchestve," in *Otchet za 1914 god*, 87.
- 91 "Doklad Tovarishcha Predsedatel'ia Obshchestva po zavedyvaniiu stolovoi v 1914 godu," in *Otchet za 1914 god*, 21.
- 92 Ibid, 22.
- 93 Ibid, 22–23.
- 94 Ibid, 20.
- 95 "Pravila dlia sluzhashchikh po vol'nomu naimu lits v Odesskom Vegetarianskom Obshchestve, utverzhdeniia Sovetom O-va 5-go Iulia 1913 i 23-go Dekabria 1914," in *Otchet za 1914 god*, 79–84.
- 96 Staryi Vegetarianets, "Po miru," in *VO*, no. 3 (1915): 110.
- 97 Novyi Vegetarianets, "Odessa," "Upadok vegetarianskikh stolovykh v Odesse," in *Vegetarianskii vestnik* [further VV], no. 3–4 (1915): 16–18.
- 98 Staryi Vegetarianets, "Po miru," in *VO*, no. 5 (1915): 184–185.
- 99 "Doklad Khoziaistvennoi Komissii," in *Otchet za 1915 god*, 12–14.
- 100 "Otchet Pravleniia o deiatel'nosti Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1916 god," in *Otchet za 1916 god*, 9.
- 101 "Rost khoziaistvennoi deiatel'nosti," in *Otchet za 1918 god*, 24.
- 102 "Doklad Khoziaistvennoi Komissii," in *Otchet za 1916 god*, 12.
- 103 "Otchet Soveta o deiatel'nosti Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1913 god," in *Otchet za 1913 god*, 11.
- 104 Ibid, 11–12.
- 105 Staryi Vegetarianets, "Po miru," in *VO*, no. 8–9 (1914): 302–303.
- 106 "Instruktsiia Kul'turno-Prosvetitel'noi Komissii pri Odesskom Vegetarianskom Obshchestve," in *Otchet za 1914 god*, 91.
- 107 Ibid.
- 108 "Otchet Soveta o deiatel'nosti Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1914 god," in *Otchet za 1914 god*, 14–15. "The Instruction of the Cultural Educational Commission of the Odessa Vegetarian Society" was adopted by the general meeting on December 4, 1914.
- 109 Staryi Vegetarianets, "Po miru," in *VO*, no. 5 (1914): 196.
- 110 For example, see: Taras Vintskovs'kyi i Oleksandr Muzychko, *Ivan Lutsenko (1863–1919): ukrains'kyi natsietvorets'* (Kyiv: Hamazyn, 2013).
- 111 Staryi Vegetarianets, "Po miru," in *VO*, no. 5 (1915): 184.
- 112 Novyi Vegetarianets, "Odessa," in *VV*, no. 3–4 (1915): 16–17.
- 113 "Doklad Revizionnoi Komissii Obshchemu Sobraniu," in *Otchet za 1915 god*, 62.
- 114 "Otchet Soveta o deiatel'nosti Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1913 god," in *Otchet za 1913 god*, 11.
- 115 "Otchet Soveta o deiatel'nosti Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1914 god," in *Otchet za 1914 god*, 11.
- 116 Staryi Vegetarianets, "Po miru," in *VO*, no. 5 (1914): 196.
- 117 "Otchet Soveta o deiatel'nosti Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1914 god," in *Otchet za 1914 god*, 12–13.
- 118 "Otchet Pravleniia o deiatel'nosti Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1915 god," in *Otchet za 1915 god*, 9–10.
- 119 "Otchet Pravleniia o deiatel'nosti Odesskago Vegetarianskago Obshchestva za 1916 god," in *Otchet za 1916 god*, 9.
- 120 On the antisemitism in Odessa see: Robert Weinberg, "The Pogrom Of 1905 in Odessa: A Case Study." In *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History*, ed. by John D. Klier and Shlomo Lambroza (Cambridge University Press, 1992), 248–289.
- 121 Gregory, *Of Victorians and Vegetarians*, 141.
- 122 LeBlanc, 25.
- 123 Goldstein, 103.
- 124 LeBlanc, 2.



“There are many shades of grey in the history of Polish-Jewish relations”

An exhibition of memory maps of a lost culture

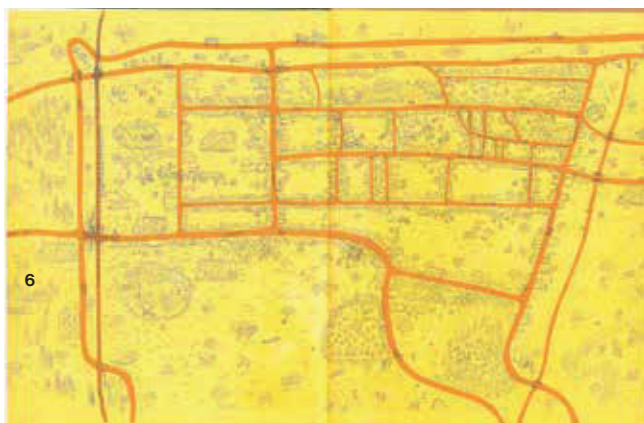
by **Martin Englund**

The Grodzka Gate-NN Theater in Lublin is displaying maps about the memory of Jewish Central and Eastern Europe in an online exhibition. Martin Englund from *Baltic Worlds* meets curator and educator Piotr Nazaruk in a conversation about the memory maps, educating people about the Jewish history of Poland, nostalgia, and anti-Semitism.

Soon after the Second World War, Holocaust survivors started to collect and write down their memories of their lost prewar environment. Memory books, *yizker-bikher*, were created and published to collect the memory of different Jewish communities destroyed in the Holocaust. Some of these books contained what are called ‘memory maps’ or ‘mental maps’, where the memories of survivors were recollected in the form of maps. A collection of these maps together with maps created by the oral history department at the Grodzka Gate-NN Theater in Lublin is now being shown virtually in an online exhibition by the Grodzka Gate-NN Theater, curated by Agnieszka Wiśniewska and Piotr Nazaruk. The maps depict destroyed Jewish communities in Poland, Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, Moldova and Slovakia. Piotr Nazaruk explains the concept of memory maps in the following way:

“A memory map or a mental map or whatever we wish to call it is something which looks almost like a map, but it is not meant to depict the area so much as the emotional connection of its author to the place: Someone’s perspectives, someone’s emotions, someone’s mind.”

The memory maps in the exhibition not only recollect the



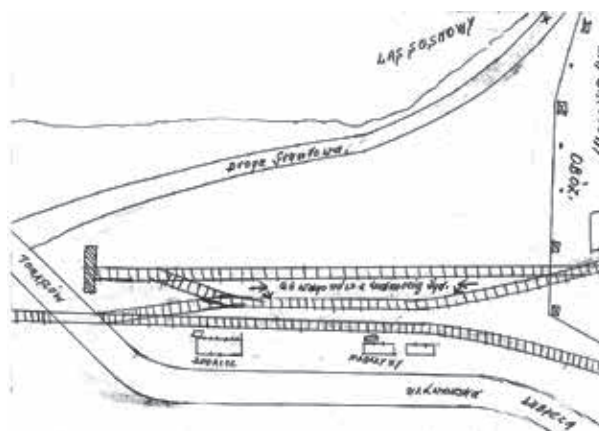
A map of Jonava by Larissa Bolnik. The map depicts both the detailed life of the town and its destruction, a monument commemorating killed Jews from Jonava is marked with number 6 (bottom left side of the map). Source: Sefer Jonava, Tel Aviv 1972.

memory of lost places; they also express painful moments in the history of Europe. Some of the maps have a dual aspect, in that they combine multiple time layers. These maps might make people reflect on Poland's Jewish past.

"It is another interesting way to educate people about the Jewish history of Poland. We have a lot of testimonies. We have thousands of books; we have thousands of researchers in the field. But usually they're boring. Who reads articles? Who reads books? If you have a map, it is an easy medium to use when talking about the Jewish history of Poland. You don't need any special tools or knowledge. You just use your eyes and your imagination to feel the area depicted by the people who created the maps."

BEFORE THE SECOND WORLD WAR, Poland had a Jewish population of more than three million people or about 10% of the population. There were also significant Jewish minorities in the neighboring countries of Central and Eastern Europe which together created the great Ashkenazi culture with the Yiddish language, the shtetl, the Hasidic tradition, klezmer music, and a range of political, religious and cultural movements that were coping with different approaches to modernity. This was a very diverse culture and the conditions of their social existence differed over time and between countries. Yet most of this culture and the people inhabiting it were destroyed in the Holocaust. The genocide and war crimes of the German aggressors have been forcefully and broadly condemned in Poland. However, the question of Poles taking part in the Holocaust is a topic that divides. One of the memory maps in the exhibition depicts Jedwabne. Piotr Nazaruk describes it in the following way.

"The map of Jedwabne is unique because it is a very cute map



A map of Belzec death camp railway connection during WWII as remembered by Jan Dzikowski in 2007 (during WWII a child), from the holdings of the Grodzka Gate-NN Theater Center.

in a way. It depicts a beautiful sentimental image of wooden architecture in a tiny town. On the other side there is a barn, which is on fire. But there are many such maps that combine similar cute, naïve elements with something that is extreme. There is a map of the town of Jonava in Lithuania. It is the only map I can think of with tiny figures of people, doing many things in the town: They are dancing, playing football etc. But on the other hand, the author included on the map a monument which was erected after the war to commemorate the murdered Jews of Jonava. Those tiny figures doing things on the map are very alive but also at the same time dead, killed. So, the map is very cheerful and very painful at the same time. Often you can find such combinations in these maps: For example, the pre-war state of a town, and at the same time, the borders of a ghetto. Or places where people were killed, mass-graves or similar. Jedwabne is

quite significant for us in Poland since it deals with the shameful pogrom in such a naïve graphical way, but it is astonishing, that the barn that was set on fire is also included in this map."

The example of Jedwabne is a difficult memory to cope with in Poland, since it was the Polish neighbors who killed the Jews of Jedwabne in the burning barn, not the German aggressors. Through the documentary films

by Agnieszka Arnold and the books by Jan Tomasz Gross (from 2001) and Anna Bikont (from 2004), the Jedwabne pogrom has created a great debate and has become the symbol of Poles taking part in the Holocaust. Yet Nazaruk discusses how Jedwabne is somehow getting in the way of a broader understanding.

"Most people have accepted the fact that Polish neighbors were those who killed the Jews in Jedwabne. It is not a topic any more in Poland, I think. The thing is that there were many places in Poland where some Poles were involved in the killings; that's the problem. Jedwabne was so famous that people forgot or

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were not interested in knowing that there were also other places with very shameful pasts. But of course there are people in Poland who wish to stop talking and stop researching things like Jedwabne, other pogroms or other violent acts against Jews. But on the other hand, there is a huge group of people in Poland that realizes that we can't escape from such topics. It is also, in a way, part of our heritage and our history."

Polish anti-Semitism is being made visible by the memory maps and Piotr Nazaruk tries to find a balanced position toward this topic.

"Polish anti-Semitism has a very long history. Polish pro-Semitism also has a very long and interesting history with figures in itself. Polish anti-Semitism is something everyone knows about, at least in Poland. It has been researched; it has been discussed many times. It's a well-known thing. You have a map of Jedwabne with a sign of a violent anti-Semitic pogrom, but you also have a map in our collection by a person who was awarded the Righteous Among the Nations medal. There are many shades of grey in the history of Polish-Jewish relations. I don't like to simplify it and say that there were either only anti-Semites or only Jew lovers in Poland."

THE POLAND THAT was created after the war was quite a different country from the Poland that existed in the interwar period. More than 90% of the Jews had been killed and the majority of the survivors did not stay in Poland. Other large minorities in Poland like Germans and Ukrainians were forced to leave the country due to the war and the political situation. The multicultural Poland of the interwar period evolved into a monocultural Catholic Polish nation state under the Soviet Union's sphere of influence. During the war, Poland was caught between the two most violent dictatorships of all times, described as part of the 'bloodlands' by Timothy Snyder. Under the occupation and terror of both these powers, the sufferings of the Polish people were enormous. The history of suffering goes back at least to what is called the Deluge in the 17th century, while the partition of Poland in the late 18th century is deeply rooted in Polish historical consciousness. Due to the country's painful history, and the historical consciousness it creates, history and commemoration is a hot topic in Poland and the political conflicts are reflected in the sphere of cultural memory.

In Piotr Nazaruk's words: "History in Poland is a very sensitive matter. Take the Swedish-Polish war: There are people in Poland who still can't forget about the Deluge, the books and other things taken by the Swedes. It's something very alive for people, even these days in the 21st century, because it is a part of the Polish soul. This was harmed many times in its history, and harmed itself many times."

Piotr Nazaruk reflects on the moral and political aspects of working with Jewish history in Poland. He tries to simply show people the Jewish life that existed there and leave the reaction up to them.

"To educate people does not mean that we need to make them feel guilty about the past. I am an educator at Grodzka Gate, but I never feel I have to convince people of something.



A map of Felsztyn (present-day Hwardijske) in Ukraine by Note Kozlowski, based on memories of Jojna Baum (1937). The Yiddish caption says: "Felsztyn looked like a skull". In 1919 the town was struck by a violent pogrom which resulted in desolation of Felsztyn's Jewish community. Source: Felshtin; zamlbukh tsum ondenk fun di felshtiner kedoyshim, New York 1937.



An anonymous map of Jedwabne depicting the burning barn where Jews were killed by their Polish neighbors (bottom right corner of the map). Source: Sefer Jedwabne; historia we-zikaron, Jerusalem 1980.

They can make up their own minds. They can feel their own emotions towards history. I don't want to make people ashamed of history, or guilty, or somehow unpleasant. It is not my goal. It is hard to predict what kind of reaction you provoke."

Still, he can see how his personal perspective and interest might affect the way he educates. On the question of whether it is possible to teach about Holocaust in an unpolitical way or not, he answers.

"Well, everything is probably political. For sure, you can use these maps to educate people about the Jewish history of Poland and the Holocaust. For example, you can show that Jews lived almost everywhere in Poland, which is the most important thing to educate people about. There were Jews in your hometown or in the place you live. You can show them Jewish names on such maps. They can understand that there were people there who felt that the place was their home. They had their own culture, their own specificity, in such places.

And you can also show them more unpleasant elements of our history thanks to these maps. But can we do that without making it political? Hard to say."

He continues on the same topic.

"For example, I consider myself rather a leftist. I realized at some point that when I guide people through our exhibition at Grodzka Gate, I focus mainly on political aspects, such as the activities of Bund for example. People who are more interested in the activities of Meir Shapiro and other religious figures are probably quite disappointed with my tours. So, there is no escape from your own personal views."

THE GRODZKA Gate-NN Theater started as an avant-garde theater in 1990. Over time, it has evolved into something bigger, and today it is a memory institution and museum where the theatrical component is one of many aspects of their activities. Their main focus is to exhibit the multicultural history of Poland and the city of Lublin and educate people about this. Grodzka Gate, which means city gate, was until the mid 19th-century the meeting point between the Christian dominated old city of Lublin and the Jewish neighborhood around the castle. In this sense, the building represents the multicultural Lublin that used to exist.

The memory of Polish Jewry is kept alive in many different ways, both in Poland and in other countries. In some cases, nostalgia for the lost Jewish world is reproducing old anti-Semitic stereotypes while other cases are commemorating the life of the Polish Jewry in its diversity. One obvious anti-Semitic aspect of Jewish nostalgia in Poland is the popular use of "lucky Jews", pictures or figurines depicting Jews with money. They are bought in order to bring economic luck. In other cases, this nostalgia leads to volunteer initiatives cleaning and reconstructing Jewish cemeteries. One aspect of this nostalgia is the growing interest in the Yiddish language, which is an aspect that Piotr Nazaruk returns to as the main path to the Jewish culture of Central and Eastern Europe.

"ONE ASPECT OF THIS NOSTALGIA IS THE GROWING INTEREST IN THE YIDDISH LANGUAGE."

"These maps are also a testimony of a lost language. Yiddish was a widely spoken language in our part of Europe. That's why it was obvious for their authors that they should also be captured in Yiddish, their language. We have thousands of issues of Yiddish newspapers in Poland being held in libraries, but almost nobody reads them. These maps are also such a testimony of a lost language that existed here, developed here, and flourished, but was destroyed. In my opinion you can't research Jewish history without the Yiddish language. You can't omit the Yiddish press, Yiddish books, Yiddish sources, etc."

Quite recently in Poland, two major museums have under-

gone a change of leadership for political reasons: The Museum of the Second World War in Gdansk and Polin in Warsaw. The Polish government has imposed a memory politics that emphasizes national heroism. The Grodzka Gate NN Theater is a municipal institution and Piotr Nazaruk tells me that he does not experience much

of the tension that exists in Polish memory politics.

"Well, it is quite complex. Regarding Grodzka Gate, we are a municipal institution depending on the local council. The Gdansk museum, from what I understand, was a state museum subordinated to the Ministry of Culture. So, from our perspective, central government policy does not affect us so much. I would say that the current government of Poland has no real conflict with the Jewish community. Their main issue is with the depiction of Poles as perpetrators. They want to reflect a more heroic view of the Polish nation – which also is true in a way; you cannot simplify and say that all Poles killed Jews. Central government policy does not affect us that much. Municipal policy is something we have to deal with. But fortunately, from what I understand, we have quite good relations with the city council and the president of Lublin. And our cooperation is very good."

PIOTR NAZARUK TELLS me how he seldom encounters the tensions between different historical views in his work due to the fact that he is working in the city of Lublin.

"In many smaller towns in Poland, there are still some kind of open conflicts. People remember that someone was hiding Jews, and someone was harming Jews; or someone was working with the Germans and someone was working with the Russians."

The battles of cultural memory in Poland seems somehow distant to the everyday work as an educator at Grodzka Gate. Throughout our conversation, Piotr Nazaruk stresses that he wants to give a balanced picture and not to press opinions upon people, but there is one statement that he clearly puts forward in talking about the memory maps. "There is no history of Poland without the Jewish history of Poland.", or even more clearly: "Jews were here". ❌

Martin Englund, PhD-candidate in History at Baltic and East European Graduate School BEEGS, Södertörn University.



"While the people of Europe work for the victory, Gypsies take little notice", claims this comment to the photograph supposed to show Roma as disorderly and antisocial, *Lemberger Zeitung*, June 4 1943.

"THE GYPSY QUESTION" AND ITS ANSWERS by Piotr Wawrzeniuk

ANTI-ROMA PROPAGANDA IN THE PRESS OF THE DISTRICT OF GALICIA 1941–1944

abstract

This study offers the first analysis of anti-Roma propaganda in the District of Galicia (Distrikt Galizien, the DG), a part of the General Government (Das Generalgouvernement, the GG), by studying the dailies and several periodicals published in the District. It constitutes the first step in studying anti-Roma propaganda in the GG. While the wartime anti-Roma propaganda employed the pre-war images of Roma, those were manipulated, distorted and radicalized in accordance to the needs of the Nazi regime in the DG. The radicalization in the press paralleled introduction of regulations with anti-Roma edge and scaling up of Roma persecution in the GG. By 1943, the propaganda pieces alluded to solving "the Gypsy question" in the way that "the Jewish question" had been solved.

KEYWORDS Genocide studies, propaganda studies, Second World War, the General Government.

In May and July 1943, two small groups of Roma in Lviv (Polish: Lwów), capital of the District of Galicia, were arrested and put to trial.¹ Those events were employed by the local press to produce negative images of Roma people with Lviv suburbs as settings.

Propaganda is about management of collective attitudes.² It can be defined as a way of influencing people into doing something they would not do if provided with all the relevant information.³ It appears more credible to the receivers if it builds on already existing perceptions, and operates within a social context.⁴ For instance, Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda in the GG press frequently exploited pre-war anti-Semitic templates, such as those of Jews as dangerous socioeconomic competitors and parasites.⁵ The anti-Semitic campaigns of the Nazi apparatus were paralleled in a number of underground leaflets and newspapers published by Polish center and right-wing parties.

This made the consequences of this propaganda particularly wide-ranging, according to Lucjan Dobroszycki.⁶ In the context of a totalitarian state, propaganda can also be viewed as a “strategically planned attempt to construct, spread and implement a certain collective identity, combined with the use of various forms of pressure or even violence”. In the context of the Nazi rule that built on race phantasms, the body was “indistinguishable from social status”,⁷ resulting in what one might call “ethnocracy”.⁸ Thus, the cognitive features of propaganda were supported by an omnipresent underlying threat of oppression and violence.

Propaganda is usually rooted in, and part of, a social and historical narrative. Its effect depends on propagandist’s ability to connect “past historical and cultural events with present emotional and cognitive reasonings”.⁹ For instance, Nazi sponsored racial science built on a pre-existing tradition going back to the 19th century; so did the anti-Roma propaganda in the Balkans.¹⁰

These findings suggest adopting a longer timeline than the war itself when it comes to the production and reproduction of anti-Roma stereotypes in the territory studied. Therefore, the analytic part of this study starts with a short enquiry into the perceptions of Roma as expressed by several interwar dailies (Polish, Jewish, and Ukrainian) in Lviv. It is followed by an analysis of war-time anti-Roma propaganda, and preceded by the presentation of the historical background and my analysis tools.

The General Government

The General Government (GG) comprised of parts of pre-war Poland not already incorporated into the Reich. It was a temporary creation, a quasi-statelet-in-waiting for the permanent solutions to be applied after the Nazi final victory. According to Hans Frank, the chief Nazi administrator in the GG, his mission was to “mercilessly loot this conquered war territory” and “turn its economic, social, cultural and political edifices into a pile of ruins.”¹¹ The region’s main function was to provide resources – foods, raw materials and manpower – to the Nazi war effort. The District of Galicia (DG) was added after Operation Barbarossa laid parts of Poland conquered by the Soviet Union in 1939 under Nazi occupation. It joined the districts of Cracow (capital of the GG), Warsaw, Lublin and Radom that had been established in 1939. Starting with a group of German Jews deported in 1939, and German Sinti deported from westernmost Germany before the invasion of the Low Countries and France in 1940, the GG became a veritable dumping ground for categories of unwanted population. The local Nazi administration fiercely opposed those measures, as its understanding was that the GG itself was to be cleansed of unwanted elements.¹² The GG was to be emptied of its pre-war population, with the exception of elements considered as “racially worthy”, being of “Nordic” origins. There were two general aims of the Nazi oppression: terrorizing the population in order to facilitate the management

of the territory, and the gradual decrease in numbers of the non-German population.¹³

Creation of propaganda outlets

The beginning of the Nazi occupation saw closures of pre-war press outlets; the regime saw no point in providing services not directly needed for the exploitation of the population. However, the lack of any information about the world and domestic developments proved potentially destabilizing. The need to influence the population by information management, to prevent rumors, and to stem potential unrest was realized. According to Hans Frank, the GG administration “could not just shoot 16,000,000 Poles in the back of their heads” in order to solve “the Polish question.” As long as Poles existed, his argument went, they should be made to work for Germany. Accordingly, the leadership of the GG was to somehow manage and direct the population. Propaganda disseminated by the press was one way of shaping popular attitudes. The late autumn of 1939 and the spring of 1940 saw the establishment of several propaganda outlets in the GG. As they were considered quite successful from the viewpoint of managing the population, the creation of the propaganda press in the DG immediately followed the creation of the district, its incorporation into the GG, and the introduction of the civil administration in the summer of 1941.¹⁴

The press, like all other propaganda outlets in the GG, was managed by the Department of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda in 1940, and from 1941 the Department of Propaganda at the GG’s central government in Cracow, with branches in all the five districts down to county level. In relation to the non-German population (a legal category encompassing mainly Poles and Ukrainians), its task was to explain the reasons for the war’s outbreak and to illuminate its progress, to mediate the ordinances and regulations of the GG, and to explain the historical bonds that justified Nazi German rule.¹⁵ From 1940 onwards, persistent propaganda was disseminated using leaflets, wall newspapers, and newspapers, the latter in print runs of hundreds of thousands. Cinemas and theatres soon joined the above outlets as propaganda tools.¹⁶

This propaganda’s first goal was the consolidation of power. Its receivers were shown Nazi Germany’s adversaries (mainly the Polish and the Soviet states) in a negative light, while a positive image of the emitter was given.¹⁷ At the height of Nazi rule, it was close to the goal of convincing the population that Nazi rule was forever, and the subjects of the Reich were to adapt.

The press also made it possible to simultaneously conceal and explain the ruthless exploitation of the GG’s resources.¹⁸ Another desired result was the realization that the Nazi regime would shape every aspect of life in the GG, including interethnic relations, in accordance to its will. Propaganda also aimed at establishing particular moral modes. In this

**“THE CAMPAIGN’S
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"According to court files, cannibalism took place in this Gypsy village close to Kosice in 1929", the comment reads. An example of propaganda device called "card stacking" (manipulation of information by distortion and/or omission); actually, the press reported that claims of cannibalism turned out to be ungrounded. *Lemberger Zeitung*, June 4 1943.

context one can mention the anti-Semitic propaganda that prepared the way for Operation Reinhardt (the extermination of the GG's Jews). The campaign's goal was to ensure that most people would remain passive bystanders, and perhaps even facilitate the genocide of Jews. Propaganda also promoted racial, national, class, and all other aspects of superiority of various groups (Germans above everybody else, Poles above Jews etc.).¹⁹

Anti-Semitic propaganda

No research on anti-Roma propaganda in the GG's press has been undertaken. However, as the working hypothesis is that Roma were also to be exterminated, it is reasonable to study anti-Semitic propaganda and to look for potential similarities between the two types. Jews were frequently accused of being "parasites", constituting a "plague", and transmitting diseases, particularly typhoid fever. When the situation with food supplies deteriorated, "Jewish usurers" and "parasites" were accused of having caused it. Labelled "parasites" (*Schmarotzer*) in 1940, Jews were forced to perform physical labor in public. Everyone was to see how radically the Nazi regime was transforming the GG. The exhibition "Jews, lice, typhoid fever" opened in Warsaw in early 1941, its goal being to link Jews to accumulating and transmitting diseases. The campaign extended to the end of 1942, and was a preamble to moving the Jewish population to ghettos. The extermination of Polish Jewry was accompanied by essays, comments and accounts of anti-Jewish measures elsewhere in Nazi-occupied Europe. Those writings were supposed to stem fears among the majority population that the developments the readership was witnessing were sequential; that the Poles' (or Ukrainians') turn would come once the GG disposed of its Jews.²⁰

The newspapers studied

The propaganda outlets analyzed in this study constituted the main local and regional newspapers in Lviv and the DG

in 1941–1944 – *Lvivski Visti* (The Lviv News, in Ukrainian), *Gazeta Lwowska* (The Lwów Gazette, in Polish) and *Lemberger Zeitung* (The Lemberg Newspaper, in German). Those dailies, published mainly for the population of the district capital, were complemented by outlets published for the provincial Ukrainians of the district, such as weekly *Ridna Zemlia*, and periodicals such as *Stanislavske Slovo*, *Holos Pidkarpattia*, and *Holos Pokuttia*, among several others. Identical or very similar articles were published simultaneously in those papers, distributing the word from the center of the district to the countryside. *Gazeta Lwowska*, *Lvivski Visti* and *Ridna Zemlia* were under the Department of Propaganda control (*Abteilung Propaganda*) of the DG Government. *Lvivski Visti* and *Ridna Zemlia* (along with most Ukrainian periodicals in the DG) shared an editor in chief in the person of Ostap Bodnaryovych, who made a name as the editor of various Ukrainian periodicals in the interwar period.²¹ Around 70,000 copies of *Gazeta Lwowska* were printed daily, making it the second largest newspaper in Polish in the GG. *Lvivski Visti* had an average of 45,000 copies printed daily in 1943.²² *Lemberger Zeitung* was a renamed incarnation of the main German outlet in the GG, *Krakauer Zeitung*. The former's content was somewhat adapted to the needs of the DG, referring to the activities of the local Nazi administration.²³ Material from Telepress, the GG news agency, was distributed to Polish and Ukrainian outlets. While it constituted between 50 and 60 percent of the material, the editorial staff was left with the task of filling the remaining space using a pattern mandatory for all newspapers.²⁴ The German Press Service in the General Government (*Deutscher Pressedienst Generalgouvernement*) produced materials for newspapers and journals in German.²⁵

The material presented above is compared with accounts on Roma in the main Polish daily published in the GG, *Nowy Kurier Warszawski* (200,000 copies). This Warsaw daily offers valuable perspectives on Roma in 1940–1941, as central Poland was con-



"Das Generalgouvernement", the General Government. Since the map encompasses Distrikt Galizien (in the south-east), it is from August 1941 or later, Biblioteka Narodowa ZZZK 18 760.

quered in September 1939, while what became the DG passed from Soviet to Nazi occupation in the summer of 1941.

Persecution of Roma in the General Government

Unlike in Weimar or Nazi Germany, there was no state definition or registration of Roma in interwar Poland. This posed a challenge to the rulers of the GG as they had to create their own categories and routines rather than building on institutional and judicial continuity.

The life of a Sinti or Roma was most threatened in the Reich and its incorporated territories, where up to 90 percent perished. Among German Sinti and Roma deported to the GG in 1940, around 50 percent survived. The policy shifted into sending German, Austrian and Czech Sinti and Roma to concentration camps rather than syphoning them off to the districts of the GG reluctant to receive them. Between March 1943 and August 1944, 22,600 Roma were sent to so-called *Zigeunerlager* ("Gypsy Camp") at Auschwitz-Birkenau, among them 1,273 Polish Roma. Of those Roma, 19,300 perished, 5,600 by the use of poisonous gas.²⁶

Most Polish Roma who perished in the GG were shot and/or executed in the open. They were shot by Wehrmacht, SS, police or gendarmerie, while Polish and Ukrainian police units seem to have played a minor role. Michael Zimmermann assumes that there were instructions concerning the persecution of Roma in the GG, as "the number of killings, their geographical

distribution, their timeline and the engagement of various German detachments" point to that. The killings of Roma peaked in 1942 (43 incidents) and 1943 (82 incidents), with 9 killings in 1939–1941 and 15 in 1944–1945. The peak in 1942–1943 occurs at the same time as several groups of Roma were placed in ghettos. Many were executed along with Jews when the ghettos were liquidated. All in all, the number of Polish Roma murdered or who perished as a result of harsh treatment and deplorable living conditions amounts to between 8,000 and about 13,000–14,000 individuals from a pre-war population of 28,000 or 18,000–20,000. There are no exact numbers of either the pre-war population or the total number of victims, and there is basically no way of reconstructing their numbers building on pre- and post-war censuses, as in the case of Kotljarchuk's estimates of numbers of Roma in Belarus and Ukraine on the threshold of the Second World War, and the number of victims of Roma persecution there.²⁷

In the DG, the local authorities along with police and gendarmerie shaped the policy towards Roma. A rough estimate claims a few hundred Roma were murdered in the district.²⁸ My own research shows that several hundred Roma survived in Lviv (German: Lemberg), the capital of the DG. Many of them were driven to the DG and Lemberg by persecution elsewhere in the GG. They inhabited marginal municipal areas, such as Zniesienie, that had constituted areas of Roma settlements since mid-19th century.²⁹

Secondary material: Roma in the newspapers

Newspaper content was organized according to its importance to the management of the occupied territories. For instance, the Cracow daily *Goniec Krakowski*, studied by Lars Jockheck, brought news about the military situation on the first and second pages, while regional and local news and developments were found on page 3. On the following page, there were ads. The weekend issue was usually somewhat longer, and contained more thematic columns and essays. Jockheck identifies between 26 and 43 percent of the content as "propagandistic".³⁰ The structure of *Gazeta Lwowska* and *Lvivski Visti* was similar to *Goniec Krakowski*. Ads filled page 4, war news was on page 1, sometimes spilling over to the second page, the rest of which was filled with accounts of regional and local developments, essays, and religious news that also occupied the third page.³¹ The articles on Roma appeared on pages 3 and 5 (the latter in the extended weekend issue); those were the pages with local and regional material along with essays. Ukrainian weeklies for the countryside numbered eight pages. Pieces on Roma were printed on pages 6 (local and regional developments) and 8 (news in brief, and medical advice) in *Stanislavske Slovo*. The DG regional weekly *Ridna Zemlia* published articles on Roma on page 7, reserved for miscellanea from around the world.³² In those periodicals, six pages out of eight were usually reserved for matters concerning agriculture (methods, mandatory food contingents, the need to work and contribute to the war effort) and the war effort (parts of pages 1, 2 or 3).³³

Lemberger Zeitung's articles on Roma were placed on page 3,

after the war developments on page 1 and various shorter news and notes on the second page. Page 3 was reserved for longer and supposedly analytic pieces on important issues. The political part of the newspaper ended with page 4. On further pages, regional and local news along with accounts of the doings of the German administration in the GG and the NSDAP, sport, and photos, followed.

Judging by the place assigned to them in the newspapers, the conclusion can be drawn that the Roma articles were not viewed as the most important information. However, in *Lemberger Zeitung* the pieces on Roma appeared on a page dedicated to inquiring into important issues concerning the war effort and connected topics.³⁴ This placed them in the focus of the readership. In *Gazeta Lwowska*, all pieces on Roma appeared on pages dedicated to local developments and history. This was likely to illuminate “the Gypsy problem” as a direct concern and a challenge to the readership.

The research questions and analytical tools

The approach of the study is diachronic, offering an analysis of the development of certain themes from the interwar years to the final days of the Nazi occupation.

The analysis starts by identifying the main themes found in articles on Roma before the war. Then, it goes on to analyze notes and articles about Roma in the district in 1941–1944. The questions aim at analyzing the propaganda as such, in relation to (dis)continuities with the pre-war period, the descriptions of Roma in the press, and the measures needed to come to grips with the group. What main themes in writings on Roma precede war-time Nazi propaganda? How, if at all, are they employed and modified by the propaganda outlets? What new themes appear during the war, if any? What measures, if any, should be taken? What was the intended outcome? The final question deals with the time of publication of the anti-Roma pieces. Are there attempts at radicalizing anti-Roma sentiments through the press that were synchronic with anti-Roma legislation, measures, and violence? Connecting the persecution of Roma with anti-Roma propaganda will illuminate whether the propaganda and persecution, words and deeds, went hand in hand. The period that appears will be compared with the pattern of the persecution of Jews in the GG and the DG, paving the way to understanding whether the mass killing of Roma proceeded in parallel with the mass killing of Jews.

Studying propaganda

The analysis takes as its starting point the claim that “communications in abnormal and extreme situations are characterized by generalizations combined with the use of stereotypes, labelling and value-weighted, emotionally charged attributes”.³⁵ In the analysis, the most common patterns, themes, and arguments used in the

texts are identified, and completed by showing the main tools employed by the writers-propagandists, along with the course of action inherent in the articles.

In the 1930s, the Institute of Propaganda Research (the IPR) identified a number of common propaganda devices. In this study, they are employed in order to identify the main types of the anti-Roma propaganda. The IPR analyzed propaganda in the USA, but also in other countries including Nazi Germany. Thus, the terminology applied by the IPR builds on sentiments and mentalities prevalent at the time, while also offering simplicity. Textual analysis constitutes the second step of the analysis. While the IPR propaganda devices point to the main tools employed by the propagandists, textual analysis operates on the intermediate level and explores how the problems supposedly posed by Roma were presented, and what implicit and explicit solutions could be applied. The combination of these two approaches constitutes the first attempt at formulating an analysis framework that also would be applicable in research on anti-Roma propaganda elsewhere in Nazi-occupied Europe.

There are four propaganda tricks that are of particular interest for this study. In the language of the IPR, we face phenomena such as *name calling*, *glittering generalities*, *card stacking* and *band wagon*. The first, *name calling*, refers to the condition when the propagandist wants to incite hate or fear by providing the objects of negative propaganda with unattractive labels and stigmatizing names. The audience is expected to react to the negative label, not to evidence. *Glittering generalities* means the propagandist associates himself with value-ripe “virtue words”. The emotional impression thus accomplished is supposed to trigger unthinking judgement and acceptance of the propagandist’s propositions without evaluation. The third propaganda device important for this study is *band wagon*: suggesting that the audience should accept an idea because an unspecified everybody supposedly subscribes to it. The underlying presumption is that it is more comfortable to be a member of a crowd rather than being deviant. *Card stacking* means manipulation of information by overemphasizing and underemphasizing phenomena, by distortions, omissions, and deception in general. The audience is expected to accept half-truths and sweeping generalizations, and forget inconvenient information.³⁶

In the textual analysis, I will be looking for intertextuality and assumptions. The former refers to a text’s dependence on other texts, and is often employed to accentuate difference. The latter

reduces the difference by assuming common ground.³⁷ In particular, value assumptions will be of interest, as they point to what is good or desirable. At the same time, phenomena viewed as bad and undesirable will appear indirectly.³⁸ Identifying modality and statements with obligatory modalities will be important. Modality refers to probabilities and obligations with reference to what is

“THERE ARE NO EXACT NUMBERS OF EITHER THE PRE-WAR POPULATION OR THE TOTAL NUMBER OF VICTIMS, AND THERE IS BASICALLY NO WAY OF RECONSTRUCTING THEIR NUMBERS.”

being said. It signals “factuality, degrees of certainty or doubt, vagueness, possibility, necessity, and even permission and obligation.” Statements containing obligational modalities are linked to evaluations of varying intensity, and suggest steps and action to be taken, while also pointing to the desirable outcome.³⁹ In the analysis, action-oriented statements will identify potential answers to “the Gypsy question”.

Although it is possible to pin down the design of the anti-Roma propaganda and its chronology with reference to anti-Roma measures in the GG, one issue remains out of reach of the researcher. It is impossible to determine whether, and to what extent, the propaganda made an actual impact on the readership. Anna Czocher has found that autobiographers looking back at their wartime lives describe the press as the easiest available source of information. They claim that most people were able to read between the lines, and follow the military developments, to read the official ordinances and various advertisements without being affected. Still, it turns out there were times when propaganda affected the readers’ perception of the world.⁴⁰ After his convincing 330-page study of propaganda in the GG, Lars Jockheck finds that “empirical data is lacking for satisfactory answers” as to the actual impact of the propaganda. In general, it succeeded much better among the Germans working in the GG, at worst contributing to their radicalization and to brutalization of policies towards the non-German population. As to the Poles, the polarity between brutal Nazi policy on the one hand, and the claims in the newspapers on the other, made popular acceptance of the propaganda improbable. Still, one of the outlets of the Polish resistance movement likened the Nazi press propaganda to poison. Although not instantly harmful if taken daily in minuscule doses, it would eventually degrade and influence recipient’s mind, it was argued. While being cautious not to make sweeping claims, Jockheck points at pre-war anti-Semitism and anti-Communism as factors that made the task of Nazi propagandists easier when matters connected to Jews or the Soviet Union were on the agenda.⁴¹

The “Gypsy” in popular imagination and in newspapers

When describing the common denominator of the diverse historical forms of the collective imaginary of the “Gypsy”, Sevasti Trubeta identifies strangeness, as expressed by the “deviant” way of life and inability to conform socially, but also “diachronic stereotypes of primitivism, presenting Gypsies as ‘parasites’ and ‘noble savages’ and additionally as ‘born wanderers’”.⁴² Adam Bartosz identifies three main contemporary stereotypical representations of Roma in the Polish press in the 2000s – “demonic”, “criminal”, and “operetta”. The first refers to supposed supernatural powers of Roma. The second “views the Roma community as an organized unit of professional criminals”. The “operetta” Roma, in turn, are depicted as romantic wanderers living for music and the love of nature.⁴³ Thus, there have been

common and persistent features when it comes to the collective imagination on Roma. As a group and individuals they had been viewed as deviant, culturally distinct, and potentially dangerous.

Roma in the interwar press

If Bartosz’s down-to-earth typology of writings on Roma in newspapers is applied to the interwar press, the “criminal” and “operetta” themes turn out to have been dominant. In three politically diverse Lviv dailies such as *Dziennik Polski* (“The Polish Daily”) Polish newspaper close to the ruling circles), *Chwila* (“The Moment”, Zionist newspaper published in Polish), and the National-Democratic Ukrainian *Dilo* (“The Deed”, in Ukrainian), the criminal narrative predominates. Over the years, the average reader would get the impression that most Roma engaged in, or at least were in the physical proximity of, criminal activities. Roma were usually mentioned once a crime had been suspected or committed, and likely after a police intervention. Most often, the papers referred to local and regional developments. *Dilo* frequently focused on Roma who reportedly hassled Ukrainian farmers, either by stealing crops and poultry, or by extracting money from gullible land laborers.⁴⁴ As to the “operetta” theme, there was a multitude of notes advertising “fiery” Roma music on offer in the local restaurant and cinemas, along with information on radio shows playing such music in Poland and the neighboring countries. References to a “bohemian” way of life or “Bohemians” as persons with free and unconventional social habits (*cygański* and *cyganeria* respectively) were also common.⁴⁵ No information on Roma culture outside the criminal and operetta themes was available, but the readership learnt there were different groups of Roma, with varying degrees of friendship and animosity between them. Still, Roma were the only group whose nationality was mentioned explicitly.

Two of the texts on Roma go beyond the predictable accounts of Roma misconduct. In *Dziennik Polski*, the anonymous author of “Tribe of eternal nomads” characterizes Roma men as “particularly renowned for horse stealing and trade in stolen goods.” In turn, Roma women were known to be vagrants and beggars. The group was largely illiterate, superstitious, cowardly, and lacked morals, as “the definition of evil did not exist among Gypsies.” This let them carry out their criminal doings without scruples. Roma [likely Sinti, too, as the daily makes no difference between the groups] from former German lands incorporated into Poland after the First World War constituted the highest standing group among Roma in Poland, the author maintained. The second group were the Roma from the former Austrian part of Poland, who were mainly sedentary. The third

group encompassed Roma with Polish surnames and speaking Polish dialects, stemming from the former Russian part of Poland. One learns that there also were “Russo-Romanian” and Hungarian Roma in Poland.⁴⁶ After the short-lived Republic of Carpatho-Ukraine (part of Czechoslovakia prior to the German annexation in March 1939) was occupied by Hungarian

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troops in 1939, *Dilo* delivered a bitter account of the welcome arranged for the Hungarian Commissar by the local administration. Since Hungary lacked popular support for the annexation, “all Jews and Gypsies were put in front of the former residence of the Ukrainian government” and instructed to cheer for the Commissar. This was done until the throats of “the Jew-Gypsies” were hoarse, *Dilo* reported.⁴⁷ Generally, the tone on Roma matters was hardly one of approval in the Zionist *Chwila*. Still, the editors did not engage in outright contempt as in the two examples above. Instead, *Dziennik Polski* took the lead, when also characterizing Roma camping on Lviv’s outskirts as “a plague”, a term recurring during the war. This was directly after information on a spike in local numbers of cases of breaking and entering.⁴⁸ In *Dilo*, one finds a litany of grievances, but no outright verbal attacks. However, it offers the only joint reference to Jews and Roma as willing tools of the enemies of Ukrainians. The Hungarian administration would use those supposedly alien (disloyal) groups, as it allegedly lacked the popular support of the “real” population. The case also constitutes the only example of combining the two groups in one negative mass, as in the war-time propaganda outlets.

The samples from the interwar period in the section above suggest at least two stereotypic themes on Roma. The first one was the one of Roma as potential criminals, villains and thieves. The second one depicted Roma as happy-go-lucky libertine characters defined by music and exotic customs. The section below shows that the former theme occurs frequently in the war-time propaganda outlets.

Anti-Roma propaganda in the war-time press

The main narrative encountered in the propaganda is that of irredeemable Roma. It can be divided into two sub-themes. The first is that of Roma as “born wanderers” (to use Trubeta’s terminology) and aliens. The fact that Roma had been itinerant up to a point of time, and most still were, was the favorite field of propagandists. From nomadism and/or the inability to adapt to sedentary life, most troubles emanated: idleness, lack of morals, and transmitting diseases. The way lay open to linking all the members of the group to negative, stigmatizing symbols, and allowed for sweeping generalizations and demonization. The Roma way of life invited criminality, the second sub-theme in the propaganda. The romanticized notions of Roma continued to flourish. They were, however, dismissed sharply as the war approached its end.

Roma as “born wanderers, aliens, idlers, parasites, and vectors”

In longer accounts, vignettes about the Indian or simply alien origins of Roma were usual. The *Lemberger Zeitung* found that Slovakia first saw Roma 500 years ago.⁴⁹ In a later account in the same daily, one learns that Roma had come to the Balkans after being expelled from India in the mid-14th century.⁵⁰ *Lvivski Visti* presented Roma as part of the “pre-Aryan” population that has plagued the Balkans since the high Middle Ages.⁵¹ However, the

Indian thread still prevailed, as claims of both *Gazeta Lwowska* and *Ridna Zemlia* show. The former found that Roma had probably been low caste in India, and that they had “swarthy mulatto faces”, while the latter informed readers that they were “organically alien” to Europe.⁵² In other words, the articles stressed the exotic and foreign origins of Roma. As several of the examples below show, the accounts of grave maladjustments to the core society continued by listing supposed Roma deviance, unaccountability, and work-shyness, while illuminating the dangers of criminality and contagion to the “host” societies. Those accounts frequently identified nomadism as the main reason.

The first mention of Roma in the Nazi occupation press in Lviv aimed at showing the readership that Roma were put under firmer control than during the Soviet occupation. Among the news on local developments, one finds that Roma have “again appeared on the streets, market squares, and in tramways of Lviv”. Their “screams and clamor” filled the streets, as they “obtrusively clung to passers-by in order to tell them their fortune”. Still, Roma were far fewer than “during the Bolshevik times”, when “whole camps” of them lived on Lviv’s streets and squares.⁵³ Thus, the reader learns that Roma brought trouble while constituting an alien body of visitors, and being a nuisance to the town’s *permanent* inhabitants. Therefore, the reference to their supposedly lower numbers is supposed to bring about a sense of relief and improvement. The last-mentioned was one among many supposed improvements, be it the tidying up of the town (after the Nazi offensive) or barring Jews from public parks.

In May 1942, the readership learned there were 55,000 Roma in Hungary “who do not want to work, but roam from place to place”. The Hungarian government had decided to separate them from the rest of the population and put them in labor camps to prevent crime and the likelihood of Roma transmitting diseases.⁵⁴ The piece gives the reader no references as to the facts, but talks about the development as a natural outcome of what is generally known: that many itinerant Roma were criminals and potential carriers of diseases. Supposedly, they performed no labor whatsoever. Thus, putting them in labor camps might appear beneficial to society; the dangerous elements would be contained, while society could celebrate the prospect of the integration of a deviant group. From an article on Roma in Slovakia, one learns that Roma would not only learn to work, but also to read and write, in specially dedicated labor camps. Contained along with their families, Roma “would not ramble”.⁵⁵ The *Lemberger Zeitung* praised the Slovak government for succeeding “in solving the Gypsy problem” where the drastic old measures of the *ancien régime* (mutilation), the ambitious program of Habsburg empress Maria Theresa and her son emperor Joseph, and the soft and misguided measures of “the Czech-Jewish” state had failed – in making the Gypsies sedentary, and teaching them to work. The important factor, the author maintains, was that the Slovak government did not accept “the false democratic idea about the equality and brotherhood of all peoples,” as one could not equate “parasites” with “hardworking people”. In Slovakia, Roma were placed in the labor camps and required to work. Roma settlements would also be removed from the main

streets, in order not to upset picnickers and resort visitors. This was a campaign to raise “the social, hygienic and ethical level” of Roma and making them sedentary. Their formerly infection-ridden colonies were on the way out, the population being adapted to “work, order and cleanliness.” It was encouraging to see Roma in clean working uniforms in the spotless camps, the author concluded.⁵⁶ Here, one can follow a “classic” repertoire on Roma as unchangeable, incorrigible over time. Itinerant Roma are identified as parasites with low social, hygienic and ethical standards. Roma settlements are described as “colonies” infested by diseases, marking their foreign and unestablished character, and a potential danger of contamination for surrounding areas. Distinctions between itinerant and sedentary Roma are blurred; they do not matter. Contrasts are at play, when claims of “work, order and cleanliness” in the camps follow those of the need to elevate the (social, hygienic and ethical) level of Roma and making them sedentary. In the process, one would contain the drifters, and their infections, and keep the streets pleasant for everybody else. In September 1942, *Stanislavske Slovo* informs readers that “Yugoslavia begins a campaign of struggle against Gypsies-wanderers”, who are not only thieves, but also “carriers of infectious diseases, particularly typhoid fever”.⁵⁷ The name of (by the time) a defunct state shows that propagandists would not go into the technical niceties and realities of the Nazi occupation and the Ustaša regime, but rather mention a place that the readership could put on a map. Nazi propaganda programmatically accused Jews of spreading diseases, particularly typhoid fever.⁵⁸ However, it is unlikely that the readers knew what measures were being undertaken: mass murder of segments of the Roma population in the so-called Independent State of Croatia (*Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, the NDH).

The Balkans remained an important reference point. In *Livski Visti*, a short article entitled “The Balkan Nomads” (*Balkanski Nomady*) turns out to be a summary of a text in the Croatian weekly *Novyi Lad*. “The nomads” already constituted a problem in the 10th century in Byzantium once they had formed into a group of “various asocial types and the homeless”, and from the “pre-Aryan” population, consisting of “Mongols, Avars, Gypsies, of various racial and national roots”. The Ottoman Empire used them to hasten the fall of Serbia. Even today, one can most often see those “nomads” in Serbia, and in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The author, one Dr. Uzorinats, claims that “lack of land and lack of satisfaction with intense agriculture” made “the robber and antisocial elements – actually the most negative among the negative” join the Ottomans in their war effort against Central Europe. The former usually advanced before the main army, pillaging and robbing, turning the land into a desert. Although many among them later joined Croatian detachments, “others still remained perpetual robbers, who easily took to arms rather than to a plow”. Actually, the author maintained, “the same element” had prevailed in “the bands” of the former centuries, as in 1914, in former Yugoslavia, and in “the bands” [meaning partisans] of today. The problem thus turned from a historical into a contemporary one. Nowadays, decisive steps were being taken in Croatia “to clear the space of the Balkan nomads, who do not have anything

in common with the Croatian nation and have throughout the centuries merely proved to be a devastating factor”. The victory over the nomads would be made “easier and more likely”, the more peoples gathered themselves in the question of race, Uzorinats concluded.⁵⁹ This account went hand-in-hand with the view prevalent among race theoreticians in the NDH and the ruling Ustaša regime.⁶⁰ The Roma were depicted as alien and dangerous for at least a millennium. As both the Byzantine Empire and the medieval Serbian kingdom fell under Ottoman pressure, one may presume that “the nomads” even hastened the downfall of them both. If sedentary, the former “nomads” hardly proved to be good farmers, but regressed to violence. Before the indirect mention of the mass murder (“decisive steps”) carried out by the Ustaša regime, one finds another reference to the incorrigibility of “the bands”, as they were an alleged part of anti-Croatian and anti-Axis partisan movements. The latter statement also belittled the resistance made by the partisans to a mere expression of banditry by the supposed “nomads”.

The *Lemberger Zeitung* article “Die Zigeunerfrage im europäischen Südosten” (The Gypsy question in South-Eastern Europe) published in June 1943 drew parallels between “solving” the Jewish and “the Gypsy question”. The readers were informed that Roma had been undermining the societies “they have haunted”, and constituted “a plague”. It was not a coincidence, the author continues, that the peoples of the Balkans required a solution to “the Gypsy question” at the same time as the Jewish question was being solved on “the basis of race”. After all, Roma were “an equally important issue for a healthier population policy in South-Eastern Europe [as Jews]”. They once poured into Europe, and had “haunted” Germany, “seldom ready to work, but always inclined to earn a living by theft, robbery and deceit”. Only after the Nazi accession to power, the author finds, were convincing measures taken against them. Roma were declared an inferior race. Since they were idlers, they were expelled from the body of National-Socialist German people, “and officially treated accordingly”. Today, as the peoples of the South-Eastern Europe were striving towards the victory, it was an obligation, “to enforce the settlement and solution of the Gypsy problem with all means, just as with the Jewish question, so the creative European people would be liberated from those parasites”. According to the author, no further proof was needed that Roma were a “parasitic people” (*Schmarotzervolk*). Unlike Jews, Roma engaged in deceit and criminal activities only to scrape a living, and did not strive after prosperity and riches. However, they refused “any scheduled work”, unlike “the native cultural peoples”. By doing so while the peoples were working hard for the new order and the victory, Roma “as a race and as humans” put themselves outside “the European community”. No nation could allow itself the luxury of nurturing such subversive elements at the time when strengthened discipline was needed, the author summarized.⁶¹ Thus, one learns that Roma constituted a natural disaster of sorts and a contagion, as they “poured” into the continent, “haunting” its societies, constituting a “plague”, and being “parasites”. As they were rootless, one could not expect loyal and productive behavior from them, but

merely “theft, robbery and deceit”. In addition, Roma had deliberately put themselves outside the community of peoples in order to carry on with their life. While the Nazi Socialist measures against Roma in the Reich were positive steps, they did not suffice in the era of the life and death struggle against Bolshevism. With wording recalling medical science, the indirect suggestion is made that the infected part of the body be removed, and not merely by means of legal discrimination. “The national body” should be cleansed, given the decay Roma brought into the society. Recurring references to Jews make the necessary measures clear. Roma must disappear physically.

In *Ridna Zemlia* from summer 1944, one finds the most outspoken advocacy of solving the problems supposedly caused by Roma published in a non-German newspaper. The article echoed the tone of the *Lemberger Zeitung* from June 1943 in calling for solving “the Gypsy question” in the same way as “the Jewish question”. One learns that Roma “gushed into Europe” from Asia Minor. They were “organically alien”, and had not accustomed themselves to settled life. In the Reich, the problem has been solved by registration and control, while “Hungary has not been as lucky”. The number of Roma in Hungary was estimated at 280,000–300,000. Wherever Roma go, “they leave tuberculosis, typhoid fever and venereal diseases in the places of their recent stays”. They were also in conflict with local populations. “The New Europe” that was appearing on the ruins of “all that was antiquated, dangerous, and harmful to its peoples”, has set itself the task of solving “this problem of social-ethical order”, on which the welfare of European nations largely depended.⁶²

In the articles in the section above, one finds depictions of Roma as aliens, invaders, element of nature flooding the European civilization. Their alleged anti-social behavior depended largely on their being foreign and itinerant. There was a general assumption that all Roma were in fact nomads. If sedentary, they still made bad citizens, neighbors, workers and farmers. Being outside society (out of choice) made bandits and parasites out of Roma. They also transmitted infectious diseases when travelling. As the section below shows, all those factors made Roma criminal in the eyes of the propagandists.

Roma portrayed as criminals

The criminal narrative always overlapped with the plethora of Roma deficiencies sketched out in the previous section. The alleged criminality of Roma was rooted in their anti-social character that had defied progress over centuries.

While dismissing the validity of popular supernatural beliefs surrounding Roma over time, *Gazeta Lwowska* at the same time identified the group as “the tribe of thieves” repeatedly driven away from Lviv and its vicinities. The view of Roma cited above was behind the group’s historical “persecution”. The latter also depended on mystic beliefs, the supposed practice of child abduction, and many other misconceptions. The overall impression is that Roma had been rightly persecuted for being “dirty, dishonest,

crude”, features they, according to the author, have retained up to today. However, persecution due to “belief in Gypsy witchcraft and superstition, fear of strangers, has wrongly persisted among most of us”, one learns. As the piece referred to Roma history in Lviv since the 1480s, one gets the impression that Roma were also incorrigible over time.⁶³ While allegedly dismissing a number of stereotypes, the article amplified others and depicted them as defects constant over time. When presenting anti-Roma measures in Hungary, *Ridna Zemlia* wrote that separating Roma from the rest of the population and putting them in labor camps was “due to the high number of criminals among Gypsies”, among several other reasons.⁶⁴ In 1944, in a piece entitled “The biggest free-loaders”, *Ridna Zemlia* claimed that Hungarian statistics mirrored “the criminal behavior” of Roma, who also regularly came into conflict with the law.⁶⁵ In a similar way, *Stanislavske Slovo* claimed that putting Slovakian Roma in labor camps would prevent them from “deceiving people”.⁶⁶ From *Gazeta Lwowska*, one learns that while Tartar cries were heard in the locality in ancient times (a detachment of Tartars was defeated there in 1695), nowadays “howling and squalling of Gypsy youth which is numerous here, very numerous”, was heard. Somehow, the author maintains, Zniesienie has become “the permanent quarter of many Gypsy families”. Their adaptation to the local milieu “evokes scenes uncommon in the rest of the town”. The Roma women (“busy coquettish Gypsies”) did not walk quickly in pairs as in Lviv’s center. Instead, they constituted “a static if not characteristic feature” of the local scenery when standing in groups and talking. Roma wedding parties went on for three days, with an abundance of food and alcohol brought in by Roma women. The passers-by enjoyed the music streaming out of the windows. Turn away from the main Nowozniesieńska Street, the author instructed, and walk to Kardynał Trąba (Cardinal Trąba) Street. There, “impoverished and dirty” girls sit on the ground and play – “light-haired indigenous ones and black-haired Gypsies”; “they grow together, they play together, they know how to communicate with each other”. The author concludes that “righteous and brave” people, citizens of Lviv, inhabited Zniesienie with its orderly flower and vegetable gardens.⁶⁷ One reads that Roma are loud in a way similar to Tartars (the symbol of pillage and destruction in Polish historical imagination) in the past. What article does not explain is that Roma living on one of the streets described in the article were under suspicion of cattle theft, illegal slaughtering and breach of rules concerning the war-time economy, one of them actually serving a prison sentence at the very time the article was printed. There were several Roma living in Zniesienie.⁶⁸ In semi-urban settings such as Zniesienie,

those cases must have been a talking matter. Somehow, the news reached *Gazeta Lwowska*. One should also note the wording of the title that refers to the street bearing the name of a medieval cardinal, but uses adjective *kardynalne* (synonymous to “fundamental” or “serious”, as in “cardinal error”) rather than *kardynalskie* (referring to high Roman Catholic Church offi-

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cial). This equivoque was likely more than a proof of author's wit, and referred to the situation that had allegedly occurred in Zniesienie – a virtual Roma colony. The reference to wedding parties with plentiful food and drink going on for days were intended to upset readers who were likely to be worn out by malnutrition due to high food prices; general public health was declining.⁶⁹ It likely alluded to goods supposedly brought to the parties as obtained in illicit ways. The daily rather correctly described the ways the Roma women moved in the city center – in pairs, or in slightly bigger groups, as cases from the local courts from 1943 show.⁷⁰ The passage about the citizens of Lviv and orderly gardens of inhabitants of Zniesienie probably referred to the need to solve the mingling of peoples that could prove disastrous for the non-Roma population, in terms of mutually exclusive polarities of order (the non-Roma population) and disorder (Roma). The latter were bringing noise, dishonesty, and potential insecurity to the otherwise calm and orderly suburb.⁷¹ In “Particularities of old Lwów. The Gypsy Settlement”, the readers of *Gazeta Lwowska* found that Roma “make a living by chance, from the work of others, they steal and deceive out of principle and dilettantism”. They also regularly trick people when trading horses or simply steal them. Good blacksmiths as they were, Roma attempted to settle in the (then unpopulated) area on the outskirts of Lviv. Founding several smithies, they still engaged in stealing – “their natural trade” – with far greater enthusiasm. This endangered the security of other inhabitants. The suburb was unsafe; there also was a deep wheel-driven well – “the well of suicides” – where dead bodies were regularly found. It disappeared at approximately the same time as the smithy. Roma either assimilated into the population or wandered on “to continue their vagrant life”.⁷² Here, one again finds that Roma were incorrigible over time, and unable to adapt to the social mores of the majority population. Attempts at a settled and ordered life merely created an unsafe area, as the ways of Roma remained unchanged. The story about “the well of suicides” hinted that Roma engaged in darker matters than theft and deceit. While the articles in *Gazeta Lwowska* stand out as full of double meanings, and as somewhat more sophisticated when it comes to the message, the point was still that Roma could not be trusted. Under the neighborly façade, the criminal dwelled. By putting Roma in the local setting of Lviv and the vicinity, the articles in *Gazeta Lwowska* also brought “the Gypsy problem” into the direct environment of the readership, and provided it with a face, a location, and even an address.

A savage not noble: The limits of the “operetta” Roma

Somewhat surprisingly, anti-Roma propaganda in the press was paralleled by many references to the – real or imagined – aspects of Romani culture that had found their way into the musical canon. Throughout the period studied, one finds ads for concerts at cafés and restaurants attracting potential visitors with “Gypsy music” or “romances”.⁷³ *The Gypsy Baron*, an operetta by Johann Strauss the younger, was produced in 1941, just before

Carmen.⁷⁴ One finds sentimental flashbacks to past productions of *The Gypsy Baron* in Lviv in an article in *Gazeta Lwowska* that actually condemns Roma.⁷⁵ Mykhailo Tiahlyi has noted same phenomenon in the press of *Reichskommissariat* Ukraine. According to him, those musical pieces supported “romanticized popular cultural images” of Roma. They had at best a loose relationship to actual Roma culture(s). Tiahlyi believes that the idealized Roma image of popular culture obscured the real Roma in the collective imaginary of the population, thus excluding them from the public space, which in turn facilitated the mass killings.⁷⁶

A poster advertising *Gypsy Love* by Franz Lehár, an operetta staged at the Lviv Opera House, shows that the authorities did not see any contradictions between staging pieces inspired by Roma music and culture (though inaccurate), and intensifying persecution of Roma in the summer of 1942.⁷⁷ However, in 1943 a different image of the “operetta Gypsy” already began to appear. *Lvivski Visti* informed readers that the various “expressions” that ill-informed westerners have called “Balkan” or have counted as part of “Balkan romanticism”, have nothing in common with the population of South-Eastern Europe. Actually, it was claimed, these features constituted “roots of evil” that went back to the “nomads”.⁷⁸ *Ridna Zemlia* echoed these claims a year later, claiming that “if all Gypsy romanticism is put aside ..., the Gypsy problem reveals a picture of deep social degeneration”. The common view of Roma culture as containing romantic elements was in fact a result of “sentimental films and operettas”, and “a consequence of Jewish profiteering”. The result of this process was “glorification of the Gypsy ideal”.⁷⁹ In those two articles, one finds a departure from the dichotomy of Roma as a potential criminal and an alien on the one hand, and as a “noble savage”/“operetta Gypsy” (stereotypical but with positive elements) on the other. It turns out that predilection for even most selective and stereotyped parts of Roma culture was mistaken, as those were a smoke screen for social and moral deviance. In the latter article, one also learns that the pre-war popularity of Roma/Roma influenced music was due to Jewish interests in show business. Here, two negative narratives interact. The profiteering Jews employ the deviant and morally corrupt Roma culture in order to facilitate the decay of society and to make a profit. The “operetta Gypsy” was no more.

A Short Comparison:

Nowy Kurier Warszawski and Roma

Nowy Kurier Warszawski (The New Warsaw Courier, the NKW) featured several notes and shorter articles on Roma. In general, they followed those in the Lviv press in relation to time and themes. However, since the publication started in late 1939, an initial period when Roma matters were treated in a way similar to the interwar years can be observed. Short notices in 1940 and 1941 were comparatively positive in tone – when describing the arrival of Roma in Warsaw after the winter of

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1939–1940 as a recurring (but not unwelcome) phenomenon, and the group as productive, or questioning an account pointing at a Roma woman as a hypnotizer-thief.⁸⁰

The negative accounts and references in the NKW spiked in 1942, the year when the persecution of Roma started in the GG. Local developments and anti-Roma policies elsewhere were used interchangeably. As to the latter, one finds information about measures undertaken in Slovakia (“labor camps”, referring to same developments as *Lemberger Zeitung*), or in Bulgaria (a ban on Jews and Roma marrying “Aryans”).⁸¹ From a Romanian case, the readership learned that nomadic Roma had been sent east (the deportations of Roma to Transnistria). Roma constituted “an interesting ethnographic and social problem”, and had always been “unwanted guests” in the countries where they lived, as they refused “to adjust to the societal order”. They sabotaged Habsburg Emperor Joseph II’s well-meant attempt to make Roma become farmers. The author posed a rhetorical question concerning whether the Romanian attempt to make Roma sedentary and productive would succeed, the underlying expectation being that it would not.⁸²

As to local (Warsaw) developments, in the summer of 1942 the readership was informed that Roma were contained in the ghet to “along with the Jews”. The measure was described as necessary, as the author claimed that Roma women would often steal when telling fortunes, or simply swindle people into handing over “jewelry, clothes, [and] sometimes their whole savings.”⁸³ In a way similar to the press in the DG, one finds notices informing about cultural events containing supposedly Roma features, including a circus introducing Roma wrestlers in 1940, and a “Gypsy camp” (reportedly 15 persons), the latter in late 1943, after at least eighteen months of Roma persecution.⁸⁴ In general the NKW follows the same pattern as the DG press in relation to Roma, with radicalization occurring in 1942.

Concluding discussion

Designing the propaganda: “problems”, obligations, and measures

In the sections above, the reasons for Roma constituting a “problem” appear to be clear. However, with the notable exception of articles where Roma and Jews were mentioned simultaneously as alleged problems for society, the measures to be taken and obligations in this context appear less obvious. In the newspaper accounts, one finds numerous intertextual references. Developments in Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, Croatia, Slovakia, and the Reich are frequently mentioned. One also finds more unspecified entities such as “the Balkans” or “South-Eastern Europe”. It is likely those locations appeared in the texts to illustrate that Roma were dysfunctional, anti-social, and potentially dangerous everywhere one looked, and thus constituted a global problem calling for decisive measures. Those references could be important as indirectly explaining what was happening to Roma in the GG and the DG in 1942–1944 and why. At the same time, a community of European nations with shared problems and values was assumed, including the authors and the readers, that was supposedly plagued by Roma activities. A question

OPERNHAUS Beginn 19:15 Uhr		THEATER der SS- u. POLIZEI Beginn 19:15 Uhr	
Freitag 23. Mai 1942	Zigeunerliebe Operette von Franz Lehár	Donnerstag 11. Juni 1942	Violinkonzert! Waltraut Schoettler Am Flügel HERMANN BISCHLER
Sonntag 24. Mai 1942	Carmen Oper von Bizet		
Montag 25. Mai 1942	Zigeunerliebe	Freitag 20. Juni 1942	Veranstaltung Lieder- u. Arienabend Kommandant Marcell Wittrich Stimmen Rein
Mittwoch 30. Mai 1942	Zigeunerliebe		
Freitag 31. Mai 1942	Don Quichote Ballettoperette	12., 13., 14., 15. Juni 1942	Veranstaltung OPERNHAUS Das große Juni-Programm Lebendes Leben
Montag 1. Juni 1942	Carmen		
Mittwoch 6. Juni 1942	Don Quichote	Die am 21. 5. vorgesehenen	Violinkonzert VASA PRIHODA wegen wichtiger Erkrankung des Künstlers auf einen spä- teren Termin verlegt werden!
Freitag 7. Juni 1942	Zigeunerliebe		
Montag 8. Juni 1942	Don Quichote		

Operas featuring several “operetta Gypsy” themes on display at the Lemberg Opera House in May–June 1942, Biblioteka Narodowa DZS XIX A 6. At the same time, the persecution of Roma was accelerating.

underlying the complex of “problems” and “questions” was whether enough was being done locally, and whether so many measures were needed or planned elsewhere. This brings us to the matter of solutions – what should be done, and was the desirable outcome?

A number of evaluative statements with implicit and explicit obligational modalities appeared in the articles. “Screaming and clamor” mentioned by *Lvivski Visti* in December 1941 along with the supposed obtrusiveness of Roma, although hardly a threat, constituted a case of disorder calling for action. Even more so did the existence of work-shy, parasitic people who also were a potential health hazard. There was language inspired by medicine, with Roma infecting the “people’s body”. Logically, this “body” should be treated. Besides those factors, there were outright references to what form developments should take. “No nation” could nurture parasites; the peoples of the Balkans “required” a solution, it was “an obligation” to settle the problem “*using all means*” (my own italics), and the people “would be liberated” from parasites. The most outspoken texts also referred to Jews, clearly marking the course of events to come, as their treatment could have hardly escaped the readership. The measures as they crystalize in the texts from 1943 and 1944 are

genocidal, their objective being annihilation of Roma. Read the texts closely, and any other approach might appear as illogical, given the need to carry on with the war effort while also preserving stability.

The propaganda devices

The propaganda device that underlies all the anti-Roma articles is *card stacking*, meaning manipulation of information by blending facts and half-facts along with sweeping generalizations and unevicenced statements. The interwar press accounts on Roma were important in the process. The propagandists relied on the prevalence of negative attitudes towards Roma that could be amplified and gain new dynamics. The theme of criminal Roma, for instance, appeared in many pre-war notes and articles. However, those texts often referred to concrete events in space and time. The notes and articles contained the names of those involved, and recounted a real course of events. Roma were described as a group, *and* as individuals with their own needs, agendas, motifs and sympathies – even if in a stereotypical and overly negative way. Still, they were rarely depicted as a homogenous menacing mass. The war-time press referred to general and amorphous developments, often out of sight of the reader. This allowed for manipulation of information while using threads that had circulated in the public sphere during the pre-war period – such as supposed cannibalism or typhoid fever being spread by Roma.⁸⁵

Name calling was another important device used by the propagandists. Several negatively charged names were attributed to the whole group: aliens, idlers, criminals, and transmitters of diseases. The expectation was that the audience would embrace this terminology rather than look for evidence (that was anyway dissolved and lost in the first propaganda device discussed above). There was an expectation of communality when it came to anti-Roma sentiments. Large groups of people throughout occupied and Nazi-allied Europe were depicted as threatened, and as sharing anti-Roma attitudes – clearly an attempt to create insiders versus outsiders sentiments. This so-called *bandwagon* feature of propaganda, suggesting a majority subscribes to views proposed by the propagandist, was sometimes supported by another propaganda device – *glittering generalities*. Positively sounding but empty phrases and words such as “the European community”, “creative European people”, “the New Europe” or “victory”, aimed to make the audience embrace the ideas and measures presented in the texts without paying attention to the content or its implications.

Propaganda and genocide

The writings on Roma in 1941–1944 follow the path of radicalization of anti-Roma policies. While the first note on Roma in Lviv in *Lvivski Visti* in December 1941 is negative, but makes no references to anti-Roma measures, the tone definitely changes in 1942. In January, one learns about the treatment of Roma in Slovakia from *Lemberger Zeitung*. In February, *Gazeta Lwowska* opens its anti-Roma series that ran until November 1943. The radicalization begins at the same time as an ordinance with an anti-Roma

edge was published (January 1942) and entered into force (April 1942).⁸⁶ From the spring, a number of articles followed the above three, reaching a crescendo in *Ridna Zemlia* in June 1944 (Roma should be treated as Jews), just one month before Soviet troops entered Lviv. The persecution intensified; killings of Roma in the open in the GG in 1942–1943 accounted for 84 percent of all such executions carried out there in 1939–1945. The year 1942 also marks the beginning of groups of Roma being put into ghettos.⁸⁷ The anti-Roma propaganda and persecution paralleled *Operation Reinhardt*, aimed at annihilating the Jews of the GG. It was set in motion in March 1942, and preceded by years of propaganda. Its sheer scale and intensity have long overshadowed the mass murder of Roma in the GG.

Apart from proximity in time to anti-Roma regulations and persecution, the propaganda material on Roma is abundant with thematic similarities to the anti-Semitic propaganda in the GG. It will suffice to look at terms such as “parasites”, “plague” or the accusation of transmitting typhoid fever and other diseases. There are obvious parallels to the writing on the supposedly work-shy and parasitic Roma being put to work in labor camps, and Roma transmitting contagious diseases. Rather than orchestrating food crises and profiteering from them as Jews supposedly did, Roma were accused of not contributing to the war effort. When Jews were being mass-executed in ghettos or sent to concentration or death camps, they were frequently referred to as a “plague”, a term one finds in *Lemberger Zeitung* in relation to Roma. Accusations of spreading diseases was grave and linked Roma to Jews in the way that must have been obvious to the readership. Just like the anti-Semitic propaganda, the anti-Roma pieces analyzed above were abundant with information about Roma persecution elsewhere, outside the GG. Apart from the likely ambition to show that Roma constituted a general problem as mentioned above, another probable goal was to reassure the readership that the violent measures they were witnessing would not apply sequentially, and eventually also afflict the majority population. The findings of this study are likely to be repeated in future studies of anti-Roma propaganda in the GG, as distribution of (dis)information was centralized. ✖

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PHOTO: JĀNIS LIPKE MEMORIAL MUSEUM

JĀNIS LIPKE

A HERO OF LATVIAN HISTORY

by **Michela Romano**

When we open the great book of memory of the Holocaust in Latvia, the name of the dock worker Jānis (Žanis) Lipke and his legendary rescue act echo across celebrations, monuments and heroic national narratives.

This article will present the story of Jānis (Žanis) Lipke, a Latvian man living an ordinary life who became a national hero by saving fifty-five Jews from the brutality of the Nazi regime.

For a Latvian of the time, there is nothing remarkable in the way Jānis Lipke's life starts. He was born in the year 1900. His father, Janis, was an accountant, and later a rifleman, and his mother, Pulina, was a housewife in the Latvian region of Jelgava. Jānis Lipke joined the army, 19 years old, as an artilleryman in the Latgale division in 1919. Coming back to Riga in 1920, he met Johanna Novicka (1903–1990), the woman of his life: his wife, the mother of their three children and an invaluable support for his future activities, that now are legendary.

Between the World Wars, the period from 1920 to 1940, Lipke

worked at the Riga Docks. While there, he got closer to communist groups and leftist circles.

This period's end also marks the beginning of one of the darkest pages of Europe's history, and some of the bloody and tragic events that the European area was going through also happened in Latvia. The city of Riga witnessed the confinement of the city's three thousand Jews in the ghetto district *Maskavas Forštate* and their progressive elimination in forced-labor camps around the capital and the Rumbula Forest. In previous years, Lipke had distinguished himself by some illicit activities: hiding social democrats and communists, and dealing with certain smuggling activities, disclosing what one could call a strong character despite restrictions.¹

He also proved to be an adaptable and skillful character: he spoke Latvian, Russian and German, used to drive a small bus between the Jelgava area and Valmiera, and completed a course in air defense with the German Commandant's office in Riga. All these aspects and qualities turned out to be crucial for him,



Žanis Lipke Memorial museum was completed in 2012.



Žanis Lipke, left, and a stamp dedicated to him and Johanna Lipke.



The young Lipke family lived on Gospitalnaya Street 19 in Riga. The house has not survived, only photographs remain.

enabling him to make contacts among a large number of milieus and people. These contacts made it possible to create a network that managed to rescue fifty-five Jews from the Riga Ghetto.

The turning point in Jānis Lipke's life can be pinpointed when he started his job at the *Luftwaffe* warehouses, the so-called Red Warehouses by the Central Market in Riga. It was this position that enabled him to start the secret transfer of Jews from the warehouse to several hidden shelters in the city, avoiding surveillance partly thanks to his knowledge of the German language. His extremely risky operations were helped by some of the Lipke family's friends, who gave information about available means of transport and safe shelters in the city. Those rescue acts continued even when the situation became extremely dangerous, as the regime tightened its grip over the country even more. Janis Lipke still carried on his operations, not losing his courage and determination, as is emphasized in the narrative of this legacy.

A network of help

One of his most crucial acts was building up a network of helpers and shelters in the city. There were several hiding places all around the city which made it possible for him to carry on his activities; some were places where he used to work, like the warehouse in Vienība, while others became shelters partly thanks to his friends such as Barnets Rozenbergs who offered his workshop in Brīvības Street.² Invaluable help was also given by Vilis Bīnenfelds, the local municipality head who managed to find a shelter in Dobeles, and also supplied people with food.³ These were just some of the shelters found by Jānis Lipke and his friends in Riga. Still more people were involved in donating food

or giving essential information. As stated on the official website of the Lipke Memorial: "At a time when fear and the struggle for survival were the rule, twenty-five people were ready to put their own lives and those of their loved ones on the line to help people in grave peril without betraying anyone".⁴

However, when even the most hidden locations in the city were becoming dangerous, the project of a bunker under the woodshed of Lipke's house became reality.⁵

A crucial role in the rescue operations was played by Johanna Lipke, who took care of the people in the bunker, gave them food and tried to meet all their basic needs. After witnessing bloody episodes in the Riga ghetto, she decided it was im-

possible to do nothing, guided by a deep sense of humanity and responsibility.⁶

The narratives and stories about that time told by the rescued people depict Jānis Lipke, commonly known as "Jan", as a knight in shining armor, ready to do everything he could to help people in danger, guided solely by a simple and pure feeling of humanity and empathy. The first Jew to be rescued was a close friend of the family, Chaim Smolyanski; however, many of the people saved did not even know Jānis Lipke or his family. They were helped regardless of their social position or nationality. As Jānis Lipke did not like to speak about the details of his activities, even after numerous interrogations and attempts by Soviet troops to find some sort of reward in return for his help, what we have nowadays are the memories collected from the people he saved and the Lipke family.⁷ The first act of recollecting all the experiences was done after the war by a group of people united by the desire to research holocaust memories. Two activists of the

**"LIPKE WAS NOT
CHARGING FOR
HIS SERVICES; HE
HELPED THOSE HE
COULD."**

group, David Silberman and Harry Levi, started collecting stories from the people Lipke helped, later publishing the book *Like a Star in the Darkness*.⁸

Righteous Among the Nations

In 1966, Janis and Johanna Lipke were awarded the title of “Righteous Among the Nations” by Yad Vashem, Israel’s memorial to the victims of the Nazi regime and the World Holocaust Remembrance Center, whose main aim is to preserve the memory of the victims and those who fought against the Nazis. The same institute published some interviews witnessing to Jānis Lipke’s deeds, and information about how the rescue operations were conducted. For instance, in Izak Drizin’s testimony, we learn that Jānis Lipke did not expect to be paid for rescuing Jews. Drizin recounts how he asked Lipke for help in escaping the ghetto, although he had no money, and got the answer that he, Lipke, was not charging for his services; he helped those he could.⁹ Drizin further tells how hard this unselfishness was to grasp: “Why should he help us? He was not interested in money. He was not a communist. What was his motive? He risked his life and the lives of his dear one, for the sake of strangers. It was incomprehensible at that time.”¹⁰

The “hidden” museum

Today, Jānis Lipke is recognized as a hero of Latvian history and promoted as such. The museum dedicated to him is a key point in the Holocaust ‘memory map’ of Riga, together with the monument in Riga’s Great Coral Synagogue. The Jānis Lipke Memorial museum was completed in 2012 in the Lipke family’s courtyard on Kipsala Island, not far from the bunker where Jānis Lipke hid Jewish families. In this 3 m² small shelter, from eight to twelve people were always hiding during the dark years between 1942 and 1944.¹¹

This address, Mazais Balasta Dambis, is quite hidden, partly as it is off the city map and difficult to find. This is one of the reasons why it was suitable as a shelter for the rescued people.

When entering the museum, the visitors discover a wooden labyrinth illuminated only by some light coming from the floor. There are a few items recalling the conditions in which the Jews lived in this small space, and to further illustrate the atmosphere there are simulated sounds from the outside, reminding visitors of the danger of exposure.

In contrast, the rest of the Memorial Museum building has enormous windows. The building’s architect was Zaiga Gaile, who conceived the structure in such a way that it is possible to look down from the attic to see the bunker recreated in the basement.

Her objective was to give to the memorial a significative and innovative function: going beyond the attempt to let the visitors identify themselves with the victims and refugees of that time, she imagined it as a place transcending history, able to have an important influence nowadays too.¹²

The structure guides the visitor into a journey through time: it starts from the reconstructed bunker, that can be observed but not accessed, continues on the first floor that leads to a wooden structure with paper walls, called *Sukkah* in Hebrew, translated as a “temporary shelter”. The last stop is the attic, where there are pictures and documents of the Lipke family and the events of the epoch.

Visitors end their visit at the highest point of the building, giving them perspectives on the whole journey through the museum, as well as time and history, but also the possibility to look ahead into a future yet unknown. The visitors are thus guided through the memorial building from being an observer in the dark corridor on the first floor up to the luminous top floor, describing the experience of helpers and rescued, making feelings such as humanity, hope and courage come alive, existing beyond spatial and temporal barriers.

This museum is just one among the numerous places marking the Holocaust history of Riga. On the wave of remembrance of a great personality of historical and human relevance, the film *The Mover*, based on Lipke’s story, came out in 2018. The original title in Latvian is “*Tēvs Nakts*” [father night], directed by Davis Simanis and inspired by the Latvian novel *Puika ar suni. Stāsts par nosargātu noslēpumu* [Boy and his dog. Story of a secret untold], the story of how Janis Lipke’s son helped him in the rescue operations.¹³

By defining Jānis Lipke as a hero of his time in Latvia, Latvians are given a sense of being part of the resistance movement in Europe during the war, fighting against the Nazi regime and also opposing the Holocaust. On the other hand, portraying Jānis Lipke only as part of Latvian historical memory in connection with the remembrance of “someone who once did something good” risks overlooking the importance of the timeless contribution he and his fellows in all European countries stand for. His and his wife’s decision to brave any risk, to retain their humanity and act accordingly, is perhaps the most important message to share with future generations. ✕

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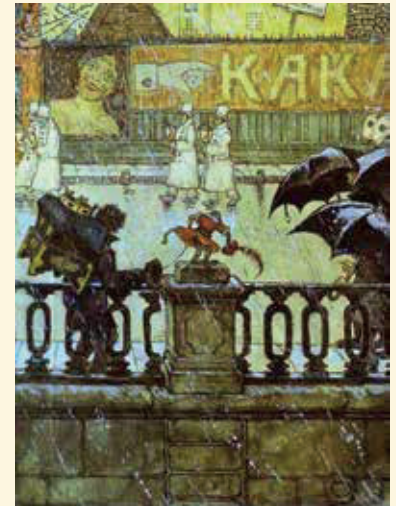
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Starye Gody was published 1907–1916.



Mir Iskusstva cover 1899 by Maria Yakunchikova.



City types (City grimaces) by Mstislav Dobuzhinsky, 1908.

LOSING THE PAST

by **Anna Kharkina**

SOCIAL MELANCHOLY AND MODERNIZING DISCOURSE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION

abstract

How can the loss of connection with history be experienced and expressed? The relationship with the past is difficult to capture and describe, although at some historic moments the emotional connection with the past becomes pivotal. This article introduces the debates on loss and cultivating the sense of losing the past in modernizing Russia in the late 19th – early 20th century. It contributes to the history of emotions, analyzing the discourse on the disappearance of Russian cultural history cultivated by intellectual and artistic circles around the journals *Mir Iskusstva*, *Starye Gody* and *Iskusstvo* in the late Russian Empire, and tracing distinct voices that problematized the relation to earlier times in Russia and promoted the preservation of Russian cultural and historical monuments. The article concludes that the discourse of losing the connection with Russia's own past played an important role in forming the discourse and practices of Russian heritage preservation.

KEYWORDS: Cultural heritage, the late Russian Empire, vandalism, monuments, melancholy.

Nowadays the cultural heritage preservation discourse is significantly institutionalized. There are multiple national and international organizations that work with the question of preservation on routine basis following well-developed legal foundations. However, in a historical perspective the institutionalization of the cultural heritage preservation discourse is a relatively new phenomenon. Just a hundred years ago, private initiatives played a more active role than government policies in the practice of cultural heritage preservation.

This article makes connection between cultural policies studies and the study of that historical epoch which developed a special taste for publicly expressed feelings such as boredom, gloom, yearning, and melancholy¹ as well as emotional engagement with the question of cultural heritage preservation. It claims that the discussions on the preservation of cultural heritage were fueled by social melancholy, a publicly expressed yearning in relation to the loss of Russian cultural tradition. It



Tsar Dadon Before the Shemakha Queen. Ivan Bilibin's illustration to *The Tale of the Golden Cockerel*, 1906.



Empress Elizaveta Petrovna in Tsarskoye Selo by Evgeny Lansere, 1905. The artwork was an illustration to a book about the empress by Alexandre Benois.

was not only pure scientific interest that inspired Russian cultural studies in the late Russian Empire, but also personal passion to save existing old cultural objects from disappearing.

It was the time when the sense of a premonition of a civil catastrophe was common. Pessimism had established itself as a cultural trend. The classic work on European melancholy was Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West* [*Der Untergang des Abendlandes*], the first volume of which was published in 1918. Europe was indeed going through a period of high turbulence with wars and revolutions, immense social changes and the destruction of old traditions, and *history* and *time* became special objects of modern sensibility.²

The aim of this article is to introduce the debates published in three pre-revolutionary journals that actively developed the theme of emotional connection with the past, and simultaneously promoted the ideas of cultural heritage preservation. This article describes those individuals' passion, which later influenced the establishment of 20th century cultural heritage preservation institutions in the Soviet Union and even internationally.

The analysis in this article uses the history of emotions as its research framework, and focuses on the concept of *social melancholy* developed by Mark Steinberg for the analysis of the cultural history of pre-revolutionary Russia.³ This article claims that during the time of the late Russian Empire, or speaking from the perspective of cultural history, the Silver Age,⁴ the Russian aesthetic and intellectual elite, united around the journals *Mir Iskusstva* [The Worlds of Art] (1898–1904), *Starye Gody* [Bygone Years] (1907–1916), and *Iskusstvo* [Art] (1905) and following international intellectual trends, addressed the task of the appropriation of Russian history⁵ and creatively modernized the relationship with the Russian past.⁶

The article is composed in three parts. Part one provides a theoretical background for the study of social melancholy – the sense of the loss of Russian cultural identity and the disappear-

ance of material culture. It points to the connection between social melancholy and the construction of Russian cultural history.

Parts two and three describe what was new in the Silver Age's attitude to the Russian tradition, namely the new rhetoric that emerged to express the relation to the past. Cultural preservation enthusiasts developed a deeply emotional way of talking about the disappearance of Russian traditions, introducing a new historical *sensibility* in relation to cultural heritage, which found its expression less in academic studies⁷ than in the artistic practices of writers, painters, poets, musicians, and cultural journalists. The second part describes this new rhetoric of the disappearing past, using the analysis of articles in the art journals *Mir Iskusstva*, *Starye Gody*, and the short-lived *Iskusstvo*. The third part looks closely at the Silver Age's rhetoric of heritage preservation and the use of the notion of *vandalism*. It seeks to reveal the connection of these ideas with the general European reaction to fast growing industrialism and outlines the ground for the emergence of ideas on cultural heritage preservation that were significantly developed later in the 20th century.

Three pre-revolutionary art journals

Mir Iskusstva (1898–1904) was initiated by the St. Petersburg group of art enthusiasts with the same name and was dedicated to developing the connection between Russian and international art. The driving force behind this journal was cultural entrepreneur Sergei Diaghilev (1872–1929) and artist and writer Alexandre Benois (1870–1960). *Starye Gody* (1907–1916) was also produced in St. Petersburg by publisher and editor Petr Veiner (1879–1931), one of the founders of the Museum of Old Petersburg (founded in 1907), a museum of local history and culture in St. Petersburg. The journal aimed at representing the history of Russian culture and supporting public interest in art and craft collecting. *Iskusstvo: Zhurnal Khudizhestvennyi i Khudozhestvenno-kriticheskii* [Art: The Journal of Art and Art Criticism]

was published in Moscow by Nikolai Tarovaty (1876–1906) in 1905, and was meant as a continuation of the work started by *Mir Iskusstva*. All three journals ceased to exist after the revolution 1917: *Mir Iskusstva* was closed already in 1904 as the editors' group felt that its mission was fulfilled, as well as due to difficulty with financing the publication; *Starye Gody* was closed due to the turbulence of the revolutionary period; and *Iskusstvo* was closed due to Tarovaty's early death.

All three journals analyzed in this article clearly express concern about the destruction of cultural monuments as an outcome of rapid industrialization in Russia in the late 19th – early 20th century. Modern industrial society at the turn of the century tried to exploit not only natural or human but also symbolic resources, including historical and cultural monuments, transforming them into “cultural heritage”⁸ – pointing out the value of historical artefacts for the national identity as well as the responsibility to preserve them for future generations.⁹ Thus, this article interprets the appropriation of cultural history in the context of the general trend of Fin-de-Siècle society, seeking inspiration, justification and a basis for modern society in old art, craft and architecture.

The study of the Silver Age, the period in Russian history with an intensive cultural life, coinciding with the last decade of the Russian Empire, has an established academic tradition. One general research field is the study of aesthetic development representing the work of multiple artistic and literary groups as well as artistic trends such as impressionism, symbolism, rayonism, futurism, cubism, etc. in the arts; and symbolism, acmeism, futurism, etc. in literature.¹⁰ Another well-developed research field is the analysis of Russian culture within the framework of the construction of the national idea.¹¹ Thus, the ways in which the Russian Empire modernized were often analyzed from the perspective of Russian singularity, its special historical destiny, rather than as part of general European history, although the comparative approach has also been introduced into the study of Russia.¹²

Despite being quite original, cultural development in the late Russian Empire followed European trends in many respects. The interest in cultural heritage was promoted by such civil societies as *Mir Iskusstva* and The Society for the Protection and Preservation of the Monuments of Art and Antiquity in Russia,¹³ the Arts and Crafts movement in Britain, and the *Bund für Heimatschutz* and *Vereinigte Werkstätten für Kunst im Handwerk* in Germany. Intellectual and artistic circles in both Russia and the rest of Europe criticized the positivistic enthusiasm for progress as well as the rapid industrial development that led to the destruction of historic monuments and traditional ways of living. Instead they drew attention to the past, praising the arts and crafts of bygone times. They searched for artistic value in history rather than in

the future, pointing out the dangers of the idea of rootless progress. Russian artistic and intellectual groups of the Silver Age, united by the idea of preserving Russian history, demonstrated openness to and knowledge of international culture. To become a part of the European art scene was one of the main goals of *Mir Iskusstva*'s members. Thus, their interest in the national cultural heritage was intertwined with the ideas of aesthetic cosmopolitanism,¹⁴ to use a contemporary concept – since the study of the national past was a popular European trend,¹⁵ originating in the Gothic revival in England as early as the late 1740s.

Social melancholy and Russian tradition

The influential article “Morning and Melancholy” by Sigmund Freud, written in 1917, the year the Russian Empire ended, introduced a new category that enabled the notion of *melancholy* to be considered for the analysis of the collective imagination. In this article Freud explained melancholy in comparison with the grief: both feelings related to the loss of the object, but in melancholy, as Freud claimed, the patient “cannot consciously perceive what it is he has lost. This, indeed, might be so even when the patient was aware of the loss giving rise to the melancholia, that is, when he knows whom he has lost but not *what* it is he has lost in them”¹⁶. Here Freud defines the narcissistic character of melancholy, its orientation on the self.

In social melancholy, the feeling of missing the past helps to recall what has gone and include it in constructing the “self” of a *modern person*, a suffering individual who experiences the groundlessness of existence in the modern world that destroys traditions and old ways of life, and talks about “loss, doubt, despair, and disenchantment”.¹⁷

Social melancholy plays an important role here – the fantasy

of the lost old world, which has the appeal of the *original*, forms the idea of old artefacts as valuable cultural and historic monuments, and transforms them into what nowadays is understood as the symbolic capital¹⁸ of a nation. Thus, exactly like personal melancholy, social melancholy can have a constructive aspect, filling in a void in a nation's collective identity.¹⁹

Russian philosopher Pyotr Chaadayev (1794–1856) in his

Philosophical Letters (1826–1831) described Russian tradition as present in its absence. His works played a significant role in forming Russian melancholic rhetoric on the lack of tradition.²⁰ He claimed that other European countries had paid attention to their history, while in Russia the habit of caring about its own past was nonexistent. This became an influential idea that formed Russian self-perception up to the revolution in 1917, a colossal social and political shift, which brought a new type of history writing.²¹ This absence of tradition was experienced as a

“RUSSIAN ARTISTIC AND INTELLECTUAL GROUPS OF THE SILVER AGE, UNITED BY THE IDEA OF PRESERVING RUSSIAN HISTORY, DEMONSTRATED OPENNESS TO AND KNOWLEDGE OF INTERNATIONAL CULTURE.”

painful loss of something that at the same time was considered as never having properly existed – the absence of the opportunity to be like other Europeans with their attention to their own history. The shared relation to this absence of tradition and the collective imagination of what had been lost was instrumental in constructing the collective identity in the late Russian Empire.

Steinberg sees the period between two revolutions 1905–1917 as an “unprecedented ‘epoch of moods’ (*epokha nastrienii*)”.²² He develops a link between the study of Russian modernity and the study of melancholy as a social feeling, and demonstrates that “Russian melancholy of the early twentieth century [...] was a mood understood to exist primarily in the public sphere”.²³ Together with Valeria Sobol in the introduction to *Interpreting Emotions in Russia and Eastern Europe*, Steinberg develops the idea that emotions are proved to be not just personal but a social phenomenon and can be culturally constructed.²⁴ For Sobol and Steinberg, social emotions both react to and shape experiences. They claim that an *emotional culture* exists, which is influenced by and has an influence on “norms, habits, values, moral codes, and discourses, especially about self and society”.²⁵ As a result, this social perspective on emotions brings historicity in sensibility. At the time of the late Russian Empire, as Steinberg notices, melancholy had its roots in “a disordered world” and was “intensely public and even popular”.²⁶

This public expression of emotions was not something specific to Russia but rather characteristic of general European self-perception at that time.²⁷ The ideas on the preservation of cultural history, material and immaterial, were obviously influenced by this general perception of the epoch, facing impending disaster. The common feeling, expressed in various publications, was the sense of failure to catch something that had just emerged from oblivion and was going back into the darkness of destruction, together with the disappearing world of old Europe and the Russian Empire.

Will it be missing forever?

The absence of something which did not even exist – a missing object – can cause even stronger emotions than real loss.²⁸ This section analyses the discourse on the sense of the missing connection with history during the late Russian Empire. The cultural epoch of the Silver Age in Russia brought together a variety of social actors around the theme of cultural heritage preservation: scholars such as Nikodim Kondakov (1844–1925) or Dmitry Aynalov (1862–1939), intellectuals, artists and writers such as the members of *Mir Iskusstva*, and connoisseurs, collectors and organizers of new cultural institutions, such as Princess Maria Tenisheva (1858–1928), founder of the Museum of Russian Antiquity in Smolensk. This cultural epoch united scholarship with media popularization and self-educated enthusiasm as well as self-funded curatorship and collectorship.

In the period of modernization, the loss of connections with the historical past and cultural tradition was experienced as a cultural and social catastrophe that many in intellectual circles felt obliged to try to prevent. The feeling of the melancholy of loss shaped the discourse on the preservation of cultural arte-



The Church of the Holy Spirit in the village of Flenovo, Smolensk region, commissioned by Maria Tenisheva, 1900–1905.



Nicholas Roerich with his sons while working in the Temple of the Holy Spirit on the Talashkino estate. Photography, 1910.

facts, leading to the establishment of institutions to preserve the cultural heritage – museums, private collections, journals, educational programs, and so on. This in its turn stimulated the discussion about the necessary cultural policy for heritage preservation.²⁹ The cultural discourse of appropriation of the past was developed in a style of very personal emotional attachment. Russia's own past, which was considered to have just been discovered as an object of study and admiration in the 19th century by scholars and Slavophile writers,³⁰ was immediately experienced by cultural actors of the Silver Age as being lost. The general sentiment was that without active engagement the disappearing past – Russian cultural history – would be gone forever.

The theme of the careless attitude towards Russian historical and cultural monuments was not invented during the Silver Age. As early as 1883, Russian art historian Alexandr Vasil'chikov (1832–1890), director of the Hermitage from 1879–1888, wrote:

New architects in the West, having renounced eclecticism and too slavish imitation of Vignola, began to seek inspiration in the monuments of folk antiquity. While in Russia, these monuments are destroyed with impunity or rebuilt in the most ignorant way, whereby the last traces of antiquity are erased, in the rest of Europe they know how to protect them.³¹

Nevertheless, this was still an expression of professional duty by the director of Russia's most significant museum and was addressed primarily to a professional audience. Archeologist and art historian Georgii Filimonov (1828–1898) expressed similar professional concern. In 1879 he underlined the absence of interest in the Russian cultural tradition even among representatives of the teaching staff at Moscow University:

The foremost figures of Western enlightenment in Russia, with its best representatives – professors of Moscow University who had just returned from abroad and brought the last word in art criticism from there – could not naturally look at Russian art except from the point of view of Western science, and the latter, as we know, did not know and did not want to know Russian art. Nor was it much more widely known to Russians who were engaged in art at that time, both theorists and scholars as well as practitioners and artists.³²

At the end of the 19th century, intellectual discussions on cultural heritage in Russia had become fueled by the intensified fear of the total loss of connection with the past. Russian art historian and journalist Nikolai Wrangel (1880–1915) wrote highly emotionally in 1910 about the disappearing culture of Russian manor houses (*usad'by*): “It seems a terrible and impossible nightmare,

that this reality, which is so close to us, no longer exists and has been carried away irrevocably.”³³ Just few years earlier, artist Ivan Bilibin (1876–1942) had written in *Mir Iskusstva*: “Only recently, as if it were America, we discovered an old artistic Rus', vandalized and mutilated, covered with dust and mold. But under the dust she was beautiful, so beautiful that the immediate impulse of those who opened it is fully understandable: restore it! Restore it!”³⁴ These were not professionals from established cultural institutions addressing a narrow professional circle, but independent writers for whom publishing was an enthusiastically active, free-time occupation – cultural heritage preservation was a passion for them. They appealed to a wide audience in their texts on the pages of popular journals that they established, edited and published themselves.

This feeling of loss of the past consequently replaced another *sententia* widespread in Russian intellectual circles – the statement of Russian cultural backwardness.³⁵ Highly authoritative Russian philologist, art historian and folklorist Fedor Buslaev (1818–1897) claimed that Russians themselves accepted the German and French disparagement of Russian cultural history as dark and lacking in cultural development. According to art historian Dmitrii Ainalov,³⁶ Buslaev evaluated foreign scholarship on Russia as often negative and not very informed about its own subject of study.³⁷ Buslaev saw an example of such an approach in the works of Karl Schnaase (1798–1875), a German art historian, author of *Geschichte der bildenden Künste* [History of the Fine Arts], where Russian culture was described as suffering from the lack of its own ideas, and as being significantly culturally defined by Mongols, whose influence contributed to the creation of a tasteless aesthetic mix.³⁸

In 1877 Eugene Viollet-le-Duc (1814–1879) published *L'art russe: ses origines, ses éléments constructifs, son apogée, son avenir* [Russian Art: Its Origins, Its Constitutive Elements, Its Apogee, Its Future], a book on Russian art that was also criticized by Buslaev. In his work, Viollet-le-Duc repeated the idea about the corruption of Russian architecture due to Asian influences. Buslaev in turn aimed at demonstrating the generic connection of Russian art to Bulgarian and Byzantine, not Asian art.³⁹

Buslaev launched yet another theme that became important for the Russian self-image: stimulating an *emotional* relation with the past by introducing the discussion on Russian religious creativity. He claimed that although it lacks the vivid colors and beautiful forms of Italian and French art as well as their naturalism, Russian art embodied other important values: strictness, the true religious character of painting, lost by the West.⁴⁰

The most influential journals warning of losing the past were *Mir Iskusstva*, and *Starye gody* in St. Petersburg and *Iskusstvo*, published by Nikolai Tarovaty in Moscow. The pivotal organization for the development of cultural heritage preservation ideas

“THE CULTURAL DISCOURSE OF APPROPRIATION OF THE PAST WAS DEVELOPED IN A STYLE OF VERY PERSONAL EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT.”

was *Obshchestvo zashchity i sokhraneniia v Rossii pamiatnikov iskusstva i stariny* [The society of the protection and preservation of the monuments of art and antiquity in Russia], established in St. Petersburg, and spread across Russia in more than 20 branches. Opposing themselves to the ignorance of the masses, these intellectual circles helped to construct the culturally cultivated sense of losing the past, as well as inspiring and propagating a strong emotional connection to Russian cultural history.

The journal *Starye Gody* was especially influential in nurturing the feeling of loss. It is symptomatic that the journal's popularity began with the Nikolai Wrangel's article "Zabytye mogily" ["Forgotten graves"] about graves at Lazarev cemetery at the Alexander Nevsky Lavra.⁴¹

The oblivion vis-à-vis cultural history stimulated strong feelings of sadness and powerlessness among contributors to *Starye Gody* as they tried to document disappearing treasures. They found the charm of old mansion houses especially attractive and travelled to document their passing. One example of the expression of highly emotional suffering at cultural loss is the description of a vanished mansion house in Lialichi:

To preserve what has survived, a significant budget will have to be spent only on the most necessary repairs of this palace construction... I'm not talking about restoring the palace's art, an idea that is so seductive and seems so possible, thanks to paintings and architecture that have miraculously survived. Meanwhile, it is absolutely necessary to save not only the palace, but the whole estate. After all, apart from Moscow estates, this is the only example of an estate in Russia where the general ensemble has survived, where you can feel the former breadth of artistic ideas and feel a sad pleasure from dying but still audible echoes of the past.⁴²

A contributor to *Starye Gody* constantly faced what he or she interpreted as the unfair treatment of the cultural heritage and experienced a strong feeling of anxiety from witnessing the disappearance of the past. In a report "Vsio to zhe" ["Still the same"] by E. M. Kuz'min, a passionate description is given of the scene of demolition of an old bell, "Sokol", from Saint Sophia Cathedral in Kiev. For those workers who demolished the bell, it was just "old, useless". Kuz'min hopelessly complained that the words of connoisseurs appreciating the objects of the past are not heard: "We write and write – and in the depths of our hearts a doubt scratches from time to time – why? If they want to destroy – they will destroy, if they want to damage – they will damage, and not out of hate, but not even knowing what they are doing."⁴³

Special attention in Russian cultural heritage preservation debates was given to the disappearance of the church's material heritage. Under Peter I, the patriarchy was abolished and was replaced by the Most Holy Governing Synod, which also became responsible for church property. Some members of the church demonstrated their interest in material culture, for example, members of church archaeological societies. Nevertheless, the



Princess Maria Tenisheva (1858–1928), founder of the Museum of Russian Antiquity in Smolensk. Painting by A.P. Sokolov, 1898.



The railway magnate and industrialist Savva Mamontov was one of the top patrons of Russian art and culture. In 1870, Mamontov bought the Abramtsevo estate, just north of Moscow, where he founded an artist colony. Portrait by Michail Vrubel, 1897.

level of attention to the religious cultural heritage among clergy was low. Bilibin wrote on this subject:

The state of ancient churches is most pitiable. Being in the hands of uncultured people, they are vandalized or destroyed by ‘repairs’ until no longer recognizable ... Sometimes, after a bishop has made a detour of a known territory, dozens of old churches are sentenced to destruction as unnecessary trash.⁴⁴

Even before the Revolution, some intellectuals discussed the idea of the musealization of valuable church objects in order to preserve them.

The discourse on the past in Russian intellectual and artistic circles therefore rotated around the theme of finding and preserving something which had already almost disappeared. The reaction to the objective changes brought by modernization and industrialization led to the development of an aesthetic sensibility towards disappearing history, and found its expression in the rhetoric of loss.

Cultural heritage preservation and vandalism

In the late Russian Empire the modernizing discourse on vandalism – the thoughtless destruction of the cultural and historical monuments – was accompanied and at the same time produced by the discourse on cultural heritage preservation and the revitalizing of old artistic traditions. The collective sense of missing historical treasures expressed in the shared feeling of melancholy, as mentioned in part one, was not just negative. It simultaneously nourished the idea of cultural heritage preservation, stimulated the formation of a Russian identity, and helped the Russian intelligentsia to follow the general European fashion on the medieval revival.

In Russian society – polarized between Westernizers and Slavophiles – the special character of the *Miriskussniki* art group’s ideas was their interest in promoting both the modernization of art and at the same time, the protection of historical monuments. The artist Mstislav Dobuzhinsky (1875–1957), a member of the *Mir Iskusstva* group, wrote in his memoirs in 1955:

In the broadest program of the “World of Art”, in addition to the propaganda of contemporary Western art, the connection with which our art world was so lacking, there was also propaganda and, it may be said, the rehabilitation of our own art of earlier years. Much has been forgotten: our wonderful 18th century was ignored; the beauty of St. Petersburg, glorified by Pushkin, was interpreted as an official, barracks style.⁴⁵

The general rhetoric of the circle of *Mir Iskusstva*, *Starye gody* and *Iskusstvo* was that being forgotten, the historical monuments would fail to withstand the destructive force of the appropriation of space by growing urbanization, and the appropriation of resources by rapidly developing industries.⁴⁶ Here the conflict of different types of modernization and appropriation became evident: cultural vs. economic, artistic vs. mass-produced.⁴⁷ An attempt was made to resolve this conflict, for example, by such cultural actors as Maria Tenisheva and Savva Mamontov (1841–1918) who established workshops with the aim of preserving and developing traditional Russian crafts in the Talashkino and Abramtsevo artistic colonies, respectively.⁴⁸ The task of artists and intellectuals involved in the Talashkino and Abramtsevo estate artistic groups was to balance these two types of appropriation – capturing the cultural heritage and supporting it – and to find solutions that would resist the homogenizing force of industrial capital.

Paradoxically, such defenders of folk culture as Tenisheva were dissatisfied with the quality of the handicrafts available in late 19th – early 20th century Russia.⁴⁹ These enthusiasts of traditional Russian craftsmanship felt that it was not enough just to save existing folk crafts in their condition at that time. They believed that craftsmen’s production should be improved by the study of older traditions, and that this tradition should be re-interpreted by artists such as those engaged in the workshops of Talashkino and Abramtsevo. Thus, the enthusiasts for preserving the past in reality re-invented the tradition that they wanted to save, to better suit their idea of what Russian craft was. The pure original tradition was nowhere to be found and

had to be purified by the efforts and investments of intellectual elite. As a result, the wealthy enthusiasts of the Russian craft revival manage to produce and popularize their own interpretation of Russian craftsmanship – what is known as *Russian modernism*.

This attention to the crafts was not specifically Russian but represented a general European trend. Following the ideas of

the Arts and Crafts movement, the members of the *Mir Iskusstva*, *Starye Gody* and *Iskusstvo* circle encouraged resistance to industrial mass-production and searched for examples of esteemed artistic manual work.⁵⁰ To achieve this, they needed to redefine the criteria of what was valuable in the tradition to include objects of simple peasant craft in the sphere of artistic interest. Thus, it was not the peasant or craftsman who was interested in saving the old tradition in the first instance, but an artist who saw its historical value and could adjust it to contemporary society and popularize it in the era of modernization. It was up to those intellectuals who mastered the art of emotionally charged cultural promotion to decide what was worthy of the status of national cultural treasure.

“THE CONCEPT OF ‘VANDALISM’ WAS OFTEN USED WITHIN INTELLECTUAL CIRCLES TO CRITICIZE THE GENERAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE PRESERVATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IN RUSSIA.”

The mixed rhetoric of modernization and preservation found its expression in *Miriskussniki's* attitude to St. Petersburg, which was considered at that time as a modern city without cultural heritage status. It was Benois who first introduced the theme of the disappearance of old St. Petersburg. Benois' article "Agoniia Peterburga" ("The agony of St. Petersburg"), published in 1899, articulated the protection of St. Petersburg. In another article, "Zhivopisnyi Peterburg" ("Picturesque St. Petersburg") from 1902, he wrote:

I would like artists to fall in love with St. Petersburg and to sanctify and promote its beauty, thereby saving it from perdition, stopping its barbaric destruction, and protecting its beauty from the encroachments of rude, ignorant people who treat it with such incredible disregard, most likely only because there is no protesting voice, no voice of protection, no voice of delight. St. Petersburg – the barracks, the offices – is therefore not worth mercy. We, on the contrary, will not tire of repeating that St. Petersburg is an amazing city; not many are of a similar beauty.⁵¹

The term *vandalism*,⁵² coined to describe the destruction of artworks following the French Revolution, was quickly adopted in cultural heritage preservation practice across Europe,⁵³ including the circles of authors published in *Mir Iskusstva*, *Starye Gody* and *Iskusstvo*. For example, Benois wrote about the demolition of old buildings in his article titled "Vandalism" in chronicles of *Mir Iskusstva* in 1904:

In some 40, 50 years, thanks to the general low standards, and to the system of art teaching, the architects, and even more so semi-architects – civil engineers – have lost all concept of what architecture is. The worst is that they are not limited to their own products, but they also spoil, break and destroy what little beauty we had, that was produced during the heyday of architecture in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁵⁴

Wrangel, who published extensively in *Starye Gody*, saw vandalism as a special characteristic of the Russian people: "With criminal negligence, with deliberate laziness and with zealous vandalism, several generations have brought to nothing all that their great-grandfathers created."⁵⁵ He diagnosed the reason why Russia had a special relation to its own history. According to him, a continuous culture had never existed in Russia. He saw Russian history as the history of endless cultural losses: what the Varangians created was destroyed by the Mongols; Peter the Great destroyed the culture that started to flourish under the first Romanovs; Russian manor house culture disappeared with the reforms under Alexander II.⁵⁶ For Wrangel, the history of Russian culture was a history of disappearance and discontinuity, with ever loosening connections to Russia's own past.

The concept of "vandalism" was often used within intellectual circles to criticize the general attitude towards the pres-

ervation of cultural heritage in Russia. *Starye Gody* published a series of articles titled "Materialy po istorii vandalizma v Rossii" ("Materials on the history of vandalism in Russia") by art historian Georgii Lukomskii (1884–1952)⁵⁷ describing vandalism not only in Moscow and St. Petersburg but also in provincial towns such as Riazan', Ekaterinoslav, Taganrog, Minsk, Smolensk, Voronezh, Kiev, and others.⁵⁸

The criticism directed towards modern urbanization was very vivid in *Mir Iskusstva*, *Starye Gody* and *Iskusstvo: Zhurnal khudozhestvennyi i khudozhestvenno kriticheskii*. The contributors to these journals passionately criticized urban industrial development that paid little respect to the cultural and historic monuments of the past:

With fantastic speed, here and there, huge houses are erected – the last word in hygiene, sanitation and all other techniques. Giving way to them at almost the same speed, the last witnesses of the "distant – close" disappear – the wonderful aristocrats' palaces, ruthlessly destroyed ... Of course, the pogrom cannot be stopped, but everyone has the right to demand that when destroying the beautiful old, the builder should then replace it with the equally beautiful new, if not more so ... Meanwhile, anyone with taste will be horrified, having seen all that has been built in Moscow in the last 10–15 years.⁵⁹

Iskusstvo closely followed discussions on cultural heritage preservation in Russian society in 1905, the year of its publication, reporting on important public debates and exhibitions. For example, Tarovaty expressed how Princess Maria Tenisheva's newly opened museum of Russian antiquity in Smolensk inspired him.⁶⁰ In his description of the museum, Tarovaty praised the works of old Russian crafts and criticized industrially produced goods in comparison with hand-made objects, following, like *Miriskussniki*, the ideas of the Arts and Crafts movement:

You look and do not believe that there was once a time when ordinary folk artists, simple and, in our opinion, uneducated, by some miracle created incomparable samples of art, penetrated by and reveling in beauty, and in the flight of unrestrained imagination gave their contemporaries such masterpieces from which our factory applied art is as far as from the earth to the sky.⁶¹

Tarovaty witnessed the rapid disappearance of that tacit knowledge inherent in the hand-made works of wood, metal, textile, leather, and stone, that also carried and epitomized local character and the national style.

Summarizing, we can say that the authors of these journals who focused on the preservation of the cultural heritage used the concept of "vandalism" to broadly describe the spirit of modernization. They criticized the destruction of old cultural and historic monuments, the oblivion or corruption of old tradition, and the absence of interest in the national past. "Vandal-

ism” was not a well-defined notion but rather a rhetorical figure, the watershed dividing those who felt involved in preservation practice and debate, and those who were outside it – those who had experienced that melancholy feeling of losing the past, and those who did not pay attention to the disappearance of the knowledge of cultural history and of material cultural artefacts.

Conclusion

The modernization of society, stimulated by industrialization and reflected in the modern style of the Silver Age, found its emotional expression in the sense of *social melancholy*. One aspect of this was the feeling of regret for inevitably disappearing traditional culture. Thus the discourse on cultural heritage preservation was introduced simultaneously with the rhetoric of losing the past. In their reaction to the mechanization of labor and rapid urbanization, accompanied by the destruction of historical monuments, the cultural actors around *Mir Iskusstva*, *Starye Gody* and *Iskusstvo* developed a new way of talking about cultural heritage preservation, proposing a new definition of what was to be valued as cultural heritage and worth preserving for future generations.

Steinberg and Sobol point out that every historical epoch has its own regime of emotions: “Existing emotional regimes – the repertoires of sentiment publicly available to individuals”,⁶² which an individual can choose from when sharing his or her feelings and thought publicly. In this article I described one of the nuances of the emotional palette that was available for a person interested in culture in the late Russian Empire. The article demonstrates that the ideas of cultural heritage preservation went hand in hand with the promotion of the feeling of loss of traditional culture and history. The rhetoric of this cultural loss, developed by cultural heritage preservation enthusiasts in the late Russian Empire, still inspires contemporary heritage preservation discourse,⁶³ and the socially shared melancholy about disappearing monuments of the past still functions as a driving force for national and international cultural policies and initiatives.

The feeling of the loss of the past is personal; otherwise it would not be such an effective stimulus to inspire people to invest their own time and financial resources in cultural heritage preservation work. This article points out the importance of the emotional aspect in the formation of the cultural heritage preservation discourse. Using the example of three journals that were pivotal in the development of the preservation discourse in the pre-revolutionary period, I demonstrated how the rhetoric of losing the past contributed to the development of a new approach to history, presupposing a more personal relationship with the cultural heritage. This assumes a more creative appropriation of the past – in art works, educational programs and materials, publications, exhibitions, public talks, art history and art criticism, curatorship, and so on. These activities helped establish the new habitus – the new type of living through old history, making cultural history closer, transforming, adjusting it to the needs of modern discourses and practices.

Nevertheless, as I demonstrate in part one, the object of melancholy is present in its absence. The object of study and

admiration – cultural artefacts – constantly need to be re-invented, revived, and re-constructed. Despite the enthusiasm of cultural heritage preservation expressed by the producers of the journals, this presence of the absence of the object of their admiration did not remain unnoticed by the participants of the preservation discourse. After all, Wrangel wrote in *Starye Gody* in 1910: “the whole ancient Rus’ beckons and attracts us only as a beautiful, whimsical, and mysterious fairy tale, which once we dreamed awake.”⁶⁴

Although an object of intangible dreams, cultural artefacts manifested themselves in tangible objects of value. Being the objects of nostalgia, the works of art and craft, history and culture, have been exploited in the 20th century as a resource for the creation of material values, which helped to establish the international network of cultural institutions of heritage preservation. ✕

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*All translations from Russian by the author.

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references

- 1 “Russians writing in the early twentieth century about the meaning of their times did not need convincing that emotions were embedded in social life. They were preoccupied with the ubiquitous evidence of feeling in public life and viewed these emotions as signs to be read in order to diagnose the state of their society, culture, and polity”. Mark D. Steinberg, “Melancholy and Modernity: Emotions and Social Life in Russia between the Revolutions”, *Journal of Social History*, vol. 41, no. 4 (Summer 2008), 816. On the linguistic analysis of the expression of feelings see also Vladimir Glebkin, *Kategorii russkoj kul'tury XVIII-XX vekov: skuka* [Categories of Russian culture of the 18th–19th centuries]. (Tsentr humanitarnykh initsiativ: Moscow & St. Petersburg, 2018).
- 2 Mark Steinberg writes on this “writers across the social, political, and philosophical spectrum seemed to agree that the prevailing emotionality of the age was pensive, anxious, disenchanted, tragic, debilitating, and uncertain... At the heart of this reading of the public mood – in part, of course, a reflection of their own moods – lies a perception of modern time as bringing more loss than gain, as moving into an uncertain future, if moving at all.” Mark D. Steinberg, “Melancholy and Modernity: Emotions and Social Life in Russia between the Revolutions”, in *Journal of Social History*, vol. 41, no. 4 (Summer, 2008), 819.

- 3 On social melancholy see Steinberg, “Melancholy and Modernity” (2008). Ilya Vinitsky also contributed to the discussion on social melancholy and wrote about Russian Sentimentalism: “Melancholy was conceived not as a purely psychological state, but rather as a cultural one, with its own branching system of interpretations, arguments, and myths, and numerous forms of expression...” See Ilya Vinitsky “‘The Queen of Lofty Thought’: The Cult of Melancholy in Russian Sentimentalism”. In Mark D. Steinberg and Valeria Sobol (ed.) *Interpreting Emotions in Russia and Eastern Europe*. DeKalb, (Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 2011), 19.
- 4 This epoch can also be defined as “Russian Modern”, the term widely used by Russian scholars; see for example, *Modern v Rossii. Nakanune peremen. Materialy XXIII Tsarskosel'skoi nauchnoi konferentsii* [Modernism in Russia. On the Eve of Changes. Materials of the XXIII Conference in Tsarskoe Selo], (St. Petersburg: Gosudarstvennyi musei-zapovednik, 2017). “Tsarskoe selo”.
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- 7 The condition for systematic and centralized research work on Russian cultural heritage started taking shape in the 1840–1860s. The Imperial Russian Archaeological Society was founded in 1846; the Imperial Archaeological Commission in 1859. Exhibitions of old artefacts were regularly organized, presenting icons among archaeological findings. The ground for the academic study of the Russian cultural heritage emerged in connection with Russian Byzantine studies. In the second part of the 19th–early 20th century this research field developed intensively and included the works of several generations of scholars, such as Fedor Buslaev (1818–1898), Georgii Filimonov (1828–1898), Nikodim Kondakov (1844–1925), and Dmitrii Ainalov (1862–1939). The important journal on the theme was *Drevnosti* [Antiquities] (1865–1916), and *Vestnik Obschestva drevnerusskogo iskusstva pri moskovskom publichnom musee* [Bulletin of the Society of Old Russian Art at the Moscow Public Museum] (1874–1876).
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- 9 I use the contemporary concept of “cultural heritage” to make a connection between the historical study of emotions with contemporary cultural policy studies. At the same time I am aware that this concept was not widely used at the epoch which I analyze. Instead the writers of that time would use the concept of “pamiatniki stariny”, “the monuments of old time”. Nevertheless, their discourse is located in the same area of what was further formed and institutionalized as cultural heritage studies and policies.
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- 12 E. J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire 1875–1914* (London: Abacus, 1994).
- 13 On the work of the Society for the Protection and Preservation of the Monuments of Art and Antiquity see Anna Kharkina “Cultural Enthusiasts, Civil Society and the Strategies of heritage-Making in the Late Russian Empire”, in *Transactions of the Association of European Schools of Planning*, vol. 3, no 2, (2019), 155–167.
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- 16 Sigmund Freud “Morning and Melancholy” in Jennifer Radden (ed.) *The Nature of Melancholy: from Aristotle to Kristeva* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 285.
- 17 Mark D. Steinberg “Melancholy and modernity: Emotions and Social Life in Russia Between the Revolutions”, *Journal of Social History*, vol. 41, no. 4 (Summer 2008), 826.
- 18 The concept of symbolic capital was developed by Pierre Bourdieu in his books *Distinction* and *Practical Reason: on the Theory of Action*. Cultural heritage artefacts are usually considered as objects with this symbolical value as the objects of common appreciation, social significance, and uniqueness.
- 19 On the positive effect of melancholy see Freud (293): “The ego may enjoy here the satisfaction of acknowledging itself as the better of the two, as superior to the object”.
- 20 His melancholic attitude to Russia's not belonging to the family of civilized countries is well expressed in his first letter. See the analysis of this letter, for example, in Gordon Cook “Čadaev's First Philosophical Letter Some of the Origins of Its Critique of Russian Culture” in *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, Neue Folge, Bd. 20, H. 2 (June 1972), 194–209.
- 21 See Arup Banerji, *Writing History in the Soviet Union: Making the Past Work* (Routledge: London and New York, 2008).
- 22 Steinberg, “Melancholy and modernity”, 813.
- 23 Ibid, 814.
- 24 Mark D. Steinberg and Valeria Sobol (ed.), *Interpreting Emotions in Russia and Eastern Europe* (DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 2011), 5.
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 - 32 Georgii D. Filimonov, “Samostoitel'nost' russkogo stilia s tochki zreniia sovremennoi kritiki na zapade” [“The Independence of the Russian style in terms of modern Criticism in the West”], *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, no. 8 (Moskva, 1879): 1–2.
 - 33 Nikolai N. Wrangel, “Pomeshchich'ia Rossiia” [“Landowners' Russia”], *Starye Gody*, (July–September 1910): 58.
 - 34 Ivan Ia. Bilibin, “Narodnoe tvorchestvo russkogo Severa” [“Folk Art of the Russian North”], *Mir Iskusstva*, no. 11 (1904): 317.
 - 35 The discourse on Russia's backwardness was introduced by Pyotr Chaadayev, see *Philosophical Works of Peter Chaadaev* (Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991).
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 - 38 *Ibid.*, 7–8.
 - 39 *Ibid.*, 10.
 - 40 *Ibid.*, 12.
 - 41 Feliks M. Lur'e, ed., *Mir iskusstva: khronologicheskie rospisi sodержaniia 1899–1904* [The World of Art: Chronological Description of Content 1899–1904] (Sankt-Peterburg: Izdatel'skii dom “Kolo”, 2012) 10.
 - 42 Alexandr A. Rostislavov “V Lialichakh” [“In Lialichi”], *Starye gody* (January 1914), 49.
 - 43 E. Kuz'min, “Vso to zhe” [“All the Same”], *Starye gody* (May–June 1910), 78.
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 - 63 See, for example, the motto of the civil movement *Arkhnadzor*, uniting a group of citizens who act with the aim to preserve historical monuments and landscapes in Moscow: “Happy is he/she who has the courage to defend what he/she loves” <http://www.archnadzor.ru/>, accessed 7 January 2020.
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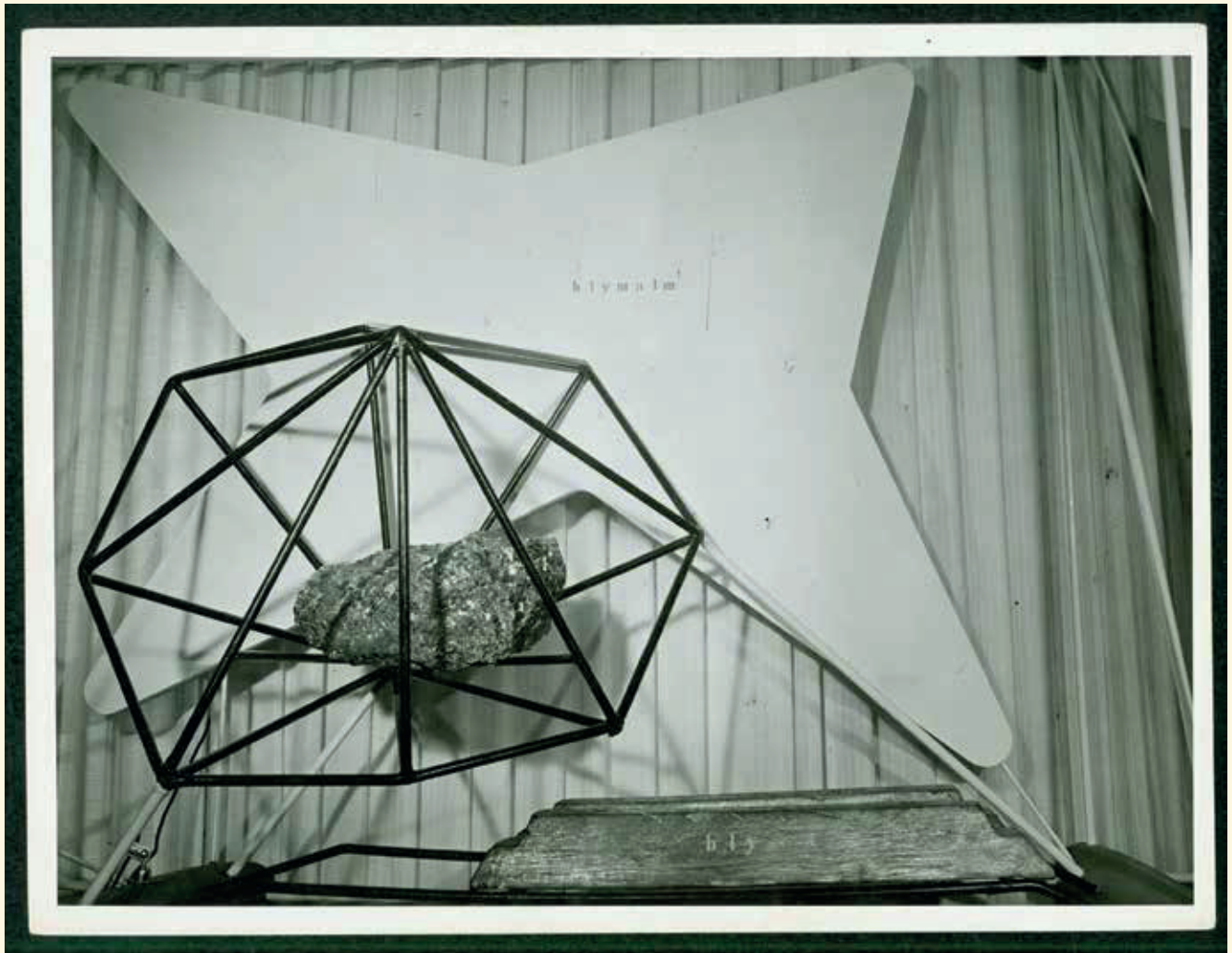


Fig. 1.

NEGOTIATING MODERNISM

**The Yugoslavian Pavilion
at the Stockholm Fair 1950**

by **Håkan Nilsson**

A close-up black-and-white photograph from the Stockholm Fair of 1950 shows a remarkable display. In the foreground is a stone, placed in an octagonal cage made of black metal rods. Thanks to a support system of similar white rods, the cages appears to be hovering in front of a background consisting of a pleated white curtain and a screen in the shape of an organic, four-pointed star. The whole arrangement is lit by direct light, throwing dramatic shadows of the cage onto the curtain. It says “blymalm” (lead ore) on the screen, and beneath the cage one finds what according to the inscription “bly” [lead], is a lead pig. (fig 1)

This arrangement was placed in a sequence of similar ones, showing other goods that Yugoslavia put on display at the Stockholm Fair (then called S:t Eriksmässan after the city’s patron saint Erik) in 1950. Considering that we are looking at a presentation of the young nation Yugoslavia, whose status in the new East-West divide appeared undecided to many, the interior design is surprisingly liberated from any nationalistic markers. At the same time, it is striking how visible the interior design itself is – to the point that it seems to be as important as what is exhibited. The display thus follows one modernist ideal:

that of retraction, of letting the exhibited items speak for themselves. But on the other hand, the display is not “retractive” at all; it almost becomes more the focus of attention than the lead ore and the lead pig.

In the following, I will discuss why this Yugoslavian pavilion, the result of a collaboration between architects Vjenceslav Richter (1917–2002) and Zvonimir Radić (1921–85) together with artists Ivan Picelj (1924–2011) and Alexandar Srnc (1924–2010), was shaped the way it was. I understand the various design decisions as more than just ways of displaying goods, i.e. I see them as statements of modernism and my analysis aims to reveal what messages were intended, how they were received in a Swedish context and, finally why this complexity has been lost in history writing.

MY ANALYSIS REVOLVES round a paradox. The Yugoslavian use of modernism could mean both a step towards the liberal capitalism of the West and, at the same time, a totally contradictory move, using modernism as the art of (self-managing) socialism.

This putative contradiction indicates that the meaning of “modernism” was not yet fixed, that it was negotiated. With this paper, I aim to re-open those negotiations, disclosing a more complex understanding of modernism. Obviously, this entails a discussion about the notion “modernism”, but it is crucial that

my argument stems from a visual analysis, based on the rich visual documentation from the Ivan Picelj archive, courtesy of the MSU museum in Zagreb.

These visual sources have allowed me to reconstruct the layout of the entire pavilion, which led me to think of it as a totality rather than discrete individual displays. To be able to discuss the reception I have also studied written sources from the time, such as the response the pavilion received in the Swedish press. By discussing the words used in these texts (such as “neutral”) and comparing this to how the pavilions from the Eastern bloc are described, I find evidence that the press usually takes into account that Yugoslavia had recently been expelled from the Eastern bloc. But it also becomes clear that the press described the Yugoslavian pavilion from a Swedish understanding of what modernism is.

To grasp why the Yugoslavian pavilion was understood the way it was in Sweden, and to understand why the “negotiated” modernism of the 1950s has been lost today, I use the notion “myth”. I take as my starting point here two slightly different understandings of structuralism. One stems from Claude Levi-

Strauss (1908–2009) who pointed out that “anomalies” in a binary structure are often understood as either holy or dangerous. In 1950, Yugoslavian modernism (as indeed Yugoslavia in its entirety) could be said to form such an anomaly between East and West: As could Sweden. Sweden had been neutral during the war, the dominating party was the Social Democratic Party with a reformistic agenda, and the relationships on the labor market were characterised since 1938 of the “Saltsjöbad spirit” that was the result from negotiations in Saltsjöbaden (a site outside Stockholm), described by historian Astrid Hedin as a “unique consensus-oriented

dialogue between employers and unions”.¹

Roland Barthes (1915–1980) is the other structuralist I base my study on. His discussion about how myths shape our world view and how in the long run, they sometimes blind us to what is before our eyes, is useful when it comes to understanding the reception in the 1950s as well as that of today. Thus, where Claude Levi-Strauss helps us to understand why Yugoslavia’s position as in between is relevant, Barthes is used to discuss the myths that shaped and shape our understanding of the world.

The collaboration between the artists

Through the years 1949–1950, the relatively young state of the Federal People’s Republic of Yugoslavia (proclaimed in 1945),

abstract

In 1949–1950, the Yugoslavian Chamber of Commerce commissioned architects Vjenceslav Richter (1917–2002) and Zvonimir Radić (1921–85) together with artists Ivan Picelj (1924–2011) and Alexandar Srnc (1924–2010) to shape several pavilions at various international trade fairs; in Stockholm twice. This text departs from a rich photographic documentation of the 1950 fair, discussing how and why Yugoslavia turned to modernism, why the artists shaped the pavilion the way they did, how it was received in Sweden. It also places the pavilion in a political context. As Yugoslavia was expelled from the Eastern Bloc in 1948, it had to find new alliances. The turn to modernism could be seen as a sign of this, but such reading also risks diminishing the role of modernism, leaving it as something that belongs to the liberal democracies in the West. The text argues against such narrow reading. It also discusses the role art history has played in forming a quite stereotype image of modernism and finally, it uses Roland Barthes “myth” as a way of looking at modernism from a multiple perspective.

KEYWORDS: Modernism, constructivism, international fair, art, architecture, interior design, Exat 51, Vjenceslav Richter Zvonimir Radić Ivan Picelj, Alexandar Srnc, Myth.

via the Yugoslav Chamber of Commerce, commissioned architects Vjenceslav Richter and Zvonimir Radić, and artists Ivan Picelj and Alexander Srnec (in various constellations) to create settings suitable for displaying both the country and its products. The object of this paper, the fair in Stockholm 1950, would be the last of their presentations.

Exactly why the pavilion of Stockholm Fair was to be the last the artists/architects worked on is rather unclear. In her dissertation on experimental artists' groups in Europe during the post-war era, Valerie Lynn Hillings explains it as the result of a "dispute with the federal Chamber of Trade".² She leaves no reference for this statement, but as she lists interviews with Ivan Picelj, an educated guess says that she got this from one of the artists. Ana Ofak offers a different explanation by pointing to world politics: with the beginning of the Korean war, things got more complicated between East and West and "Yugoslavia's waltz between the blocs" came to an end, where the country preserved "the grammar of a solo actor in international relations for now".³

LIKE MANY OTHER scholars, Hillings discusses the collaboration between the artists as a forerunner to their forming of the artist group Exat 51 the following year. Exat 51 was a group that strived for the synthesis of the arts and they would have great impact on art, architecture, and design in Yugoslavia and particularly Croatia. It is probable that the importance of Exat 51 has caused the artists' previous work on the pavilions to be left somewhat in the dark. It was Ana Ofak's recent publication *Agents of Abstraction* (2019) that gave full attention to the collaborative work between these artists. Ofak has done a tremendous work in mapping the group members contributions and the relations between the artists and to decouvert how the Exat 51 positioned their work in relation to official state politics. Starting with the domestic Book Train exhibition in 1948, Ofak shows how abstraction on the one hand faced cultural criticism for not fitting the socialist agenda, but that on the other hand, it simultaneously gained official support.⁴ She traces this support to the close association between modernism and the "newness" that became the agenda of the Yugoslavian Agitation and Propaganda (Agitprop) department. Thus, "abstraction introduced shocks in the visual experiences..." argues Ofak, that "indicated the force of modernization in Yugoslavia at that time."⁵

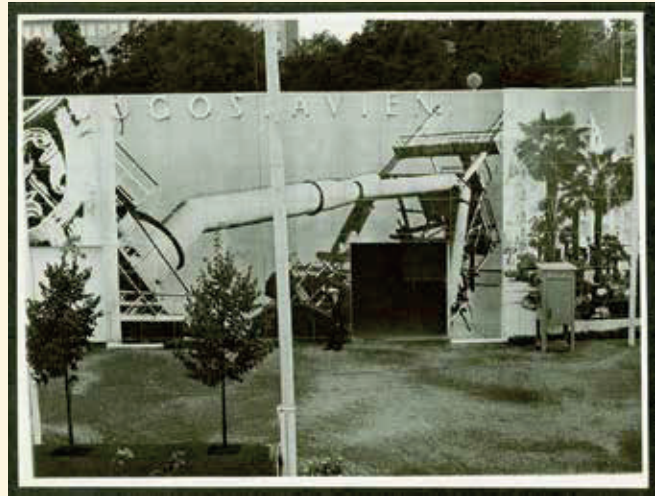


Fig. 2.



Fig. 3.



Fig. 4.



Fig. 5.



Fig. 6.



Fig. 7.

Ana Ofak's work has been most illuminating and helpful for this study, not least when it comes to archival work such as locating governmental documents. However, where Ofak relates the modernism of the artists/architects to state politics, I aim (as already mentioned) to reveal how "modernism" was under negotiation between many different stakeholders, which also means that the understanding of it changes in different contexts.

The Stockholm Fair

The Stockholm Fair 1950 ran from August 26 through to September 10 and mainly took place at Storängsbotten, a field close to the city center mostly known for its sport facilities, some of which were hired by the fair. According to a note in *Dagens Nyheter* (Swedish daily newspaper with liberal profile) it was to be 22% larger than the year before and covered 104,000 m²,⁶ which another text mentions to be 20% larger than the fair in Chicago the same year,⁷ where Yugoslavia also participated with a pavilion by Richter, Picelj and Radić.⁸ Among the participating countries in Stockholm we find Poland, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria from the Eastern Bloc, along with many countries from the West, including the US. Morocco, then still a French colony, was the only other non-European country. The USSR had intended to participate, but the space offered was deemed too small. In an interview published in *Arbetaren* [The Worker], (a newspaper with syndicalistic profile), Alexandrovitch Pawlow, the head of the Soviet pavilion at the fair in Leipzig, explained that as "the Soviet republics" only can be "presented as a whole", they needed more space than the Stockholm Fair could offer.⁹

The majority of the foreign countries found their exhibition space in the two principal exhibition halls. Yugoslavia was placed together with Italy and exhibitors from Sweden. It is hard to know if this separation from the other Eastern Bloc countries was deliberate, but it does suggest that to the fair management, Yugoslavia no longer belonged there. This understanding seems to have been generally accepted in Swedish press, albeit its status still was rather unclear. When a commentator in *Dagens Nyheter* mentions a series of countries that were to partake in the fair, s/he first places Yugoslavia among the other Eastern bloc countries, only to point in a parenthesis to its anomalous position: "if it [Yugoslavia] is to be counted as such".¹⁰

The entrance façade of the Yugoslavian pavilion was covered with photographic wallpaper consisting of three discrete images.¹¹ (fig 2) The image on the right-hand side of the façade shows palm trees, perhaps a part of an avenue, through which one can see the front of an old palace or church. This scenery is juxtaposed with an image of a large industrial plant, taken from an unorthodox frog perspective, making the steel construction lean inwards, where the great tower and its ladder is presented at an angle, inclining slightly over 45 degrees. This image is mounted so that the central entrance is placed in the center of the industrial plant, as if letting the audience enter through modernity. On the left-hand side of central image, one finds a third, smaller image placed above a second entrance. It seems to depict an enlargement of an architectonic element, perhaps an ornament from an older building.

THE THREE IMAGES convey an impression of a country with a long cultural history, and a benevolent climate; a country that also is a part of the developed, modern world. There are no visible signs connoting “socialism” or “working-class” here; this connection is only readable through association to the country, whose name in capital letters, in the Swedish spelling “Jugoslavien”, runs along the top of the façade through the motifs.

Inside, the exhibition space is wrapped in textile: white pleated curtains cover the walls and a cloth roof is hanging under the regular ceiling, softening the general lighting in the room. From the entrance one encounters a row of vitrines, placed diagonally behind each other so that all four of them are visible immediately when entering the pavilion (fig 3). To the left is an abstract, modernist sculptural object placed on a low plinth, together with a construction that carries a series of hats.¹² Connected to this runs a complex structure, made from white metal rods, carrying images of stunning natural scenes and of Yugoslavian people. The structure extends from the plinth to the left wall. This web-like system seems to cut off the corner to the entrance wall, where an information desk and a bat chair are situated. (fig 4)

The white metal rods serve as the basis for the entire grid-like display. In the basic structure the rods are joined horizontally and vertically by aerodynamic shaped oblongs, every second or third meter. This allows the rods and the oblongs to form squared dioramas, but without any actual walls, roofs, or floors. The items displayed are therefore attached to another set of rods, running diagonally through boxes. (fig 5) The oblongs are painted in different colors, maybe as a way of creating a difference between the sections.

It looks like the artists have matched the structure with the diverse content. When the grid carries fruits, smaller containers, built of the same kind of metal rods, are placed in the grid. When

the squares display sardines or other canned fish, the construction is more playful, allowing free-floating elliptical shapes to become the contours of fish, where the cans act as fisheyes. (fig 6) More traditional shelves are also inserted in the system and, as we saw in the introduction, the artists have worked with ingeniously formed cages for displaying minerals. (fig 1) At times the “grid” goes haywire, breaking away from being a neutral support system and focusing attention on itself. For instance, in a section that contains bottled goods, the grid that functions as a carrier for a shelf seemingly explodes into a complex system. (fig 8)

A section with bent metal rods inserts another kind of movement than the one that deploys in the play between diagonals and straight angles. A slight displacement between three or four bows provides the setting with a sense of a wind rushing in. It carries a plate of copper, akin to a scarf, caught by the wind, with the instructive text “koppär” (copper in Swedish) written on it. Like most of the texts in the exhibition, it is written in small letters, and with a typeface that recalls clichés. (fig 9)

Since there is no real roof in the dioramas, the lighting, consisting of classical desk work lamps, is also mounted on the grid.

The lamps either have plain, telescope or swing arms, leaving many possible angles for the light. This facilitates multiple lighting angles, used in some cases to cast complex and dramatic shadows on the wall, letting the grid and the products to be combined in one, flat shape. (fig 8)

Two sections of the grid-like rod system run along parallel walls on each side of the exhibitions room. A third, placed against a black background, seems to leave a space beneath it. It is likely that a wall covered with enlarged photographs with folkloristic motifs and traditional

textile products is on the far side. In front of it, centrally placed on the floor, one finds a square grid system that carries wooden planks and assorted goods from a builder’s merchant. (fig 3) (fig 10) This is juxtaposed with a structure carrying two logs, cut into thick planks, and then reassembled like logs. On the other side of the structure carrying wood products is yet another kind of diorama, probably displaying textile wares.

THE WALL LEFT of the entrance starts with a display of photographs of nature, followed by natural materials, metal, minerals etc. The right-hand wall consists of processed products, wine, tobacco, canned fish but also leather products like bags and portfolios. In the center is fresh fruit, and products of the forest, planks mostly, while the remaining dioramas show products for export. (fig 11) Some centrally placed items, such as the modern sculpture and the structure carrying hats, stand out for their non-functionalism. Some functional structures stand out because of their elaborateness, such as the squares where the support system take over the interest from the products. The same

“THE THREE IMAGES CONVEY AN IMPRESSION OF A COUNTRY WITH A LONG CULTURAL HISTORY, AND A BENEVOLENT CLIMATE; A COUNTRY THAT ALSO IS A PART OF THE DEVELOPED, MODERN WORLD.”

goes for the narrow and dramatic spotlights/desk top lighting.

How are we to understand the exhibition setting of the Yugoslavian pavilion? The very idea of letting the supporting structure create a totality with what is displayed could be located to many sources. For the Surrealist exhibition in 1932, Marcel Duchamp (1887–1968) used string that cut across the room and made it impossible to enter. Artist/architect Frederick Kiesler (1890–1965) used rods similar to the ones we find in the Yugoslavian pavilion to create exhibition support for the artworks in the room without building solid walls, notably in the “Abstract Gallery” in Peggy Guggenheim’s New York gallery *Art of this Century* in 1942. While it seems less likely that the Yugoslavian artists knew about Duchamp’s work, Ana Ofak suggests that Vjenceslav Richter came in contact with the works of Kiesler through his war time years as a refugee in Vienna, and points in particular to the concave panels that were also used in some of the vitrines in Stockholm.¹³ Other parts of the construction may also be derived from Kiesler.

Otherwise the structures suggest a strong affinity to the dynamics of constructivist compositions from the 1920s, such as Lyubov Popova’s (1889–1924) paintings showing spatial/architectonic compositions or El Lissitzky’s (1890–1941) *Prouns*. Also, the central photographic works on the façade speak the visual language of constructivism. Constructivism was part of Yugoslavian inter-war history, not least through the magazine *Zenith* which was produced 1921–1926. *Zenith* was primarily a literary magazine, but it also discussed art and architecture, and for instance had a cover with Vladimir Tatlin’s (1885–1953) tower for the third International. This “Russian Issue” (no 17/18 in 1922) was edited by Ilya Ehrenburg (1891–1967) and El Lissitzky jointly, and as Serbian art historian Jasmina Čubrilo notes, between “1923 to 1926 *Zenit* was devoted to the further promotion of abstract Constructivist and new (Zenitist) art...”¹⁴

MANY SOURCES POINT out the legacy of Bauhaus and Russian constructivism as important for the trio. Ana Ofak stresses the importance of, for instance, Alexandr Rodtjenko’s “Workers club”, his contribution to the Soviet Pavilion of the 1925 world fair *Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes*, as early as 1948 for the Book Train.¹⁵ Likewise, Croatian art historian Ljiliana Kolšenik writes that “it was exactly the ideology of Bauhaus that served as a key referential point of the neo-constructivist idiom appearing on the Croatian art scene at the beginning of 1950s (art group EXAT 51)...”¹⁶ According to one of the foremost experts on Exat 51, Ješa Dengeri, Richter already knew of El Lissitzky’s works and exhibition design before the war.¹⁷ The same author also underscores that this relationship was not a “distant and belated echo of ... European constructivism...” but a “part of the living and fervent attempts of the time in which Exat 51 worked.”¹⁸ That constructivism and the Bauhaus were important for the artists is underlined by the fact that when

working on the fair in Chicago (also in 1950), Vjenceslav Richter and Ivan Picelj took the opportunity to visit Laszlo Moholy-Nagy’s Institute of Design at the Illinois Institute of Technology, a successor to the ‘New Bauhaus’ that Moholy-Nagy had founded upon his arrival in the United States in 1937.¹⁹ Also, a little further down the road, Ivan Picelj would name one of his paintings to “Homage à El Lissitzky” (1952).

Imaging modernism

Before I discuss the use of modernism in the Yugoslavian pavilion and why the legacy of constructivism is of importance, it is useful to reflect briefly on the situation with the international fairs of the 1950s. Ana Ofak describes them as the “concept stores of the 1950s”.²⁰ Similar remarks about the Stockholm Fair can be found in the Swedish press at the time. The heading of an article in the Swedish morning newspaper (with conservative profile) *Svenska Dagbladet* in 1949 calls the Stockholm Fair “a business bridge across national borders”;²¹ the following year the local morning paper *Stockholmsstidningen* describes it as “the great market of the Nordic countries”²² and *Aftonbladet*, another newspaper with socialist democratic profile, calls it a “peace factor” when reporting on the inauguration.²³ However, occa-

sionally commentators also reflect how this meeting between states also meant a great venue for propaganda. In hindsight we know that the international fairs would develop along that line some years later, with the coming of the “total cold war”.²⁴ But even in 1950, it was of course already an issue.

To Yugoslavia, the fairs seems to have been, in the words of Jasna Galjer, “an ideal opportunity for (self)-promotion on an international level in the effort to get closer to the West”.²⁵ While this indeed seem to have been one of the reasons for Yugoslavia to take part in the fairs, I suggest that the use of modernism is more complex than a mere affiliation with the West. A move away from the East does not necessarily entail approaching the West. This kind of argument runs the risk of endorsing the stereotype that modernism was the harbinger of Western liberal democracy.

To get closer to this complexity, we need to further discuss why Yugoslavia opted for modernism, what image of the country they wanted to present. When Ana Ofak discusses the Yugoslavian pavilion at the Hanover Fair in 1950, she describes it as entailing being “less propaganda” and more “original design”.²⁶ Her recent research also reveals that the Yugoslavian state was concerned with the topic of modernism, and shows how it wanted to distance itself from blunt propaganda. A 1949 correspondence between the foreign minister Edvard Kardelj and the Yugoslavian ambassador in Paris, Marko Ristić, is revealing. The ambassador had written to the Chamber of Commerce about a fair (executed by other artists and architects) complaining that it was “provincial, Balkan-like and reactionary” and that it distributed speeches from Tito like brochures for toothpaste, a distribution he prohibited. Kardelj responded that Ristić had done the right

**“A MOVE AWAY FROM
THE EAST DOES NOT
NECESSARILY ENTAIL
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THE WEST.”**

thing, telling him not to “allow any cheap form of propaganda...”²⁷

These statements call for a discussion of how propaganda might *look*. As art historian Serge Guilbault has shown, in 1950s the “freedom” of the New York abstract expressionism was embraced by official politics as a “token inherent of the American system...” meaning that the art was interpreted to communicate political, propagandistic issues without actually depicting them.²⁸ If abstract expressionism could be used as a sign of “individuality” and “the American way of life” by the US, we must ask what official Yugoslavia thought that the “original design” of modernism communicated.

For example, modernism might just connote “modernity”; signaling Yugoslavia’s industrial development, rising after a devastating war that had destroyed most of the infrastructure and killed ten percent of the population. But modernism might also equal “modern”, i.e. contrary to the Balkans’ reputation as being left behind by the great nations of Europe, a reputation it was encumbered with. For instance, in *Stockholmstidningen*, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria are described as being “too agricultural to play with any Stakhanovite production figures...”, referring to the rich mining industries of (in this case) Poland. The “modern” of modernism could also point to an elevated position, reached through a long history of civilization. Architectural historian Vladimir Kulić identifies the need to place Yugoslavia among the old civilizations through the Pavilion of Yugoslavia at the EXPO 1958 in Brussels: “to counteract the stereotype of uncivilized backwaters, a long-standing complex inherited from the past.”

Thus, to Yugoslavia, modernism might mean much more than that striving to be closer to the West. It was rather a sign of independence that might also have reflected the difference between socialism in the Eastern bloc and in Yugoslavia. As Ljiljana Kolečnik has discussed, 1948–1952 meant improved contacts with the West for Yugoslavia, but also a re-evaluation of Marxism, a reading that led to a “theoretical framework of self-managing socialism, an authentic, modern political project implemented in 1952, which marked a real and irreversible detachment from the Eastern Bloc.”

Socialist modernism

If modernism in the Yugoslavian pavilion was used to mark a distance to and independence from the Eastern bloc, this kind of political

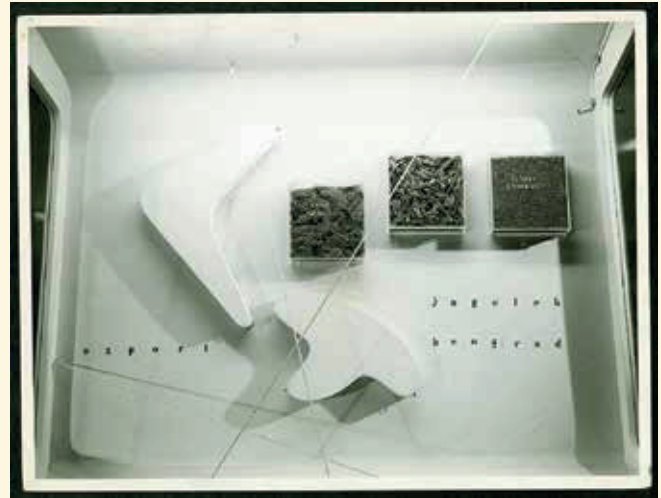


Fig. 8.

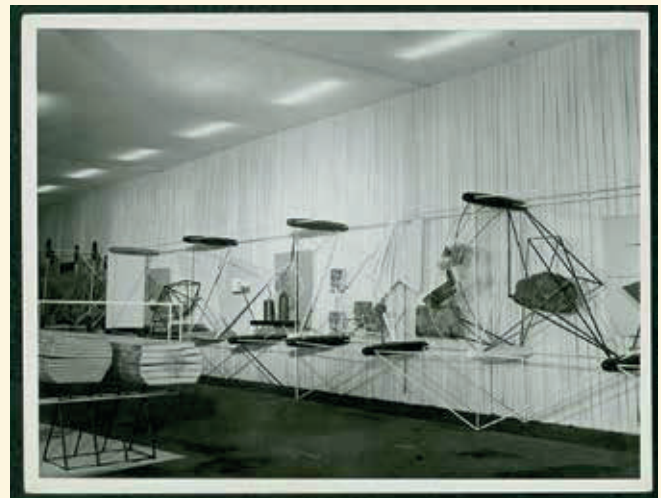


Fig. 9.



Fig. 10.

awareness brings us back to the question of propaganda, but now seen from the viewpoint of another kind of independence. Any kind of State-approved art casts a shadow of suspicion over the artists involved, as such liaisons can appear to contradict the ideal of artistic freedom. One finds evidence of such suspicion towards state-approved modernism in notions such as “socialist modernism” or “socialist aestheticism”. Both suggest a version of “socialist realism”, meaning an aesthetic dictated from above and thus a diluted version of “real” modernism.²⁹ In this way, “socialist modernism” also suggests, in the words of Vladimir Kulić, that “socialism was not a natural condition for developing modernism.”³⁰ In exchanging “socialist realism” for “socialist modernism” we end up with another stereotype of modernism, a dogmatic one, stuck in a Stalinist pattern.

Clearly, when the Yugoslavian Chamber of Commerce commissioned modernist pavilions from Richter, Radić, Picelj and Srnec, this was intended to work in favor of the Yugoslavian State. But does the fact that the State commissioned modernism necessarily compromise its artistic value and independence? And what claims does “self-managing socialism” bring, if the state in the long run was, to quote Maroje Mrduljas, “withering away”?³¹

THE FIRST WAY to approach such a question would be through the level of instructions from the commissioners. Here Ana Ofak’s research has been of great importance as she shows that for the first Stockholm pavilion, the Chamber of Commerce only “determined the materials to be used in the pavilion, leaving everything else to their [the artists] judgement.”³² She also describes how the primary concern of the Chamber of Commerce was to develop a “specific visual code that could accommodate commerce, culture, and industry within a socialist society...”³³ Thus, it seems evident that the artists had quite free hands to develop the pavilions to their own taste. However, several commentators suggest that a more conscious use of a “state modernism”, i.e. an official political tool, came into effect later, for example, when Richter won the competition for the Yugoslavian pavilion for the World Fair in Brussels in 1958.^{34 35}

The second way to address the question of the relationship between artistic independence and official politics would be to go to the artists themselves. While it is evident that Chamber of Commerce approved and perhaps even encouraged the use of abstraction and modernism, it is less likely that they understood the radical claims that followed with the constructivist tradition. I.e., the artists and the commissioner could have similar but also distinctly different ideas about what “modernism” in this case involved.

I thus propose that the constructivist approach of the artists and architects that influenced the layout of the Stockholm pavilion is more politically radical than being a mere sign of development and independence. It is an attempt to understand modernism as a means of socialism. Constructivism worked to obliterate the difference between art, design, and goods; something that indeed is legible from the images of the pavilion. This anti-hierarchical approach was also a central theme when Richter, Picelj, Srnec, Radić and a few other artists and architects formed

art group Exat 51 the year after the pavilion in Stockholm.³⁶ The second point in their manifesto states that the Exat 51 “sees no difference between so-called pure and so-called applied art”.³⁷

Constructivism and productivism

That Vjenceslav Richter, Zvonimir Radić, Ivan Picelj and Alexander Srnec consciously worked within the constructive tradition is therefore an important marker that renders the modernism of the pavilion more consciously political, as constructivism comes with a politically radical legacy. What claims can such an affiliation be said to make? Since her 1983 ground-breaking *Russian Constructivism*³⁸ Christina Lodder has researched constructivism, how it disseminated and came to “migrate” to the West. In her *El Lissitzky and the Export of Constructivism* (2003) she points to the hitherto unknown seminal role El Lissitzky played. The question of mediation concerns more than a crude account for who did what first: it also has political sides as it represents an instrumentalization (and thus de-politization) of the art form.

Thus, suggesting that El Lissitzky could be (re)placed among those who disseminated the radical Russian avant-garde could be understood as a very strong critique against the artist as a Prometheus who gave the fire to ignorant Westerners, who seemed to find nothing better to do with it than to light the candles in their bourgeois salons. However, when Lodder argues that during his Berlin years El Lissitzky ceased to be a real constructivist, her distinction between him and the Moscow constructivists, who were building the new society “in a direct, hands-on manner”, is not that blunt. Instead, Lodder discusses the role the *artwork* continued to play for El Lissitzky. To him, writes Lodder, “the essential task at hand was to use art as a symbolic, ideological vehicle with which to assist in the transformation of consciousness both in communist Russia and in the capitalist West...”³⁹ Thus, the step to productivism, i.e. to abandon the art object to work in “real life” (like the already mentioned Workers Club by Alexander Rodtjenoko) taken by many Russian constructivists, might not be the only yard stick for measuring radicalness. Art (as aesthetic objects), Lodder suggests, might prove to be a necessity, an “ideological vehicle”.

Developing her position on El Lissitzky’s role as a mediator of Russian constructivism, Lodder writes: “In this respect, he was enacting the Soviet regime’s current policy of cultivating sympathetic forces among Western intellectuals in order to create a phalanx of cultural fellow travelers who would ultimately support world revolution. [...] the kind of geometric abstraction that they chose for a time to label ‘constructivist’ served as an emphatically ideological instrument, geared toward fostering a revolutionary consciousness in the capitalist West.”⁴⁰

The very same might have been true for the politically motivated Vjenceslav Richter, Zvonimir Radić, Ivan Picelj and Alexander Srnec. The connection between constructivism and socialism formed a message for the radical forces in the West. It spoke of the radicalism of constructivism, forming an argument to Westerners about a different modernism where exhibition design exists on par with abstract sculptures, merchandise, natural sources, folkloristic craft, industrialization, and stunning

nature. None of this excludes the idea that the “modernism” of constructivism also carried a distancing from the Eastern bloc and an approach to the West.

Reception

What message did the Yugoslavian Pavilion communicate to its Swedish audience? Did the visitors recognize the choice of modernism and/or of constructivism? By looking at the reception in five Swedish national newspapers, as well as some more local ones, mostly the largest Stockholm-based morning paper *Stockholmstidningen*, I have tried to get an image of what was said in a broader context about the fairs. The newspapers selected are the at the time – and still – larger ones (before-mentioned *Dagens Nyheter*, *Svenska Dagbladet*, *Aftonbladet* as well as *Expressen*, with a liberal profile) and also the, at the time, daily newspaper (closed 1990) *Ny Dag*. Given the discussion of whether Yugoslavia was to be understood as a part of the Eastern Bloc, and the discussion how/if the fair was understood as part of a propaganda machinery, *Ny dag* offers another perspective on these ideas. *Ny Dag* was the morning paper of Swedish communist party Sveriges Kommunistiska Parti, which remained faithful to Moscow at that time.

The text material comprises mostly short, unsigned reflections, usually no longer than half a column or less. There are also elaborated ads, sometimes covering a whole page, explaining the content of a certain country’s pavilion, but these have been excluded from my analysis. Finally, there are also some longer, elaborated articles that often aim to cover the entire fair. Most texts do not remark either on the status of Yugoslavia as a member of the Eastern bloc or as represent of its propaganda, but some of them do. As we have already seen, there was an understanding that Yugoslavia was different from the other countries counted as part of the Eastern bloc. *Ny Dag*, in its turn, reports from the fair in three different issues, each article starting on the front page and dedicated to one of the three countries whose status as “Eastern Bloc” was beyond doubt: Poland, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria. The Yugoslavian pavilion is not mentioned by a word, but in a non-related article, published during the same time period, Tito is described as someone who has pretended to be a communist just to lure the Yugoslavian people, who allegedly felt strong kinship with the people of the USSR, to follow him.⁴¹

IN THE OTHER newspapers, the Bulgarian, Polish and Czechoslovakian pavilions are often described in the same manner as any other venue at the fair. However, there are also those that point out the unfree or propagandistic sides to them. When reporting from a press conference preceding the opening, *Dagens Nyheter* remarks that one cannot ask the “Czechs and Poles” “the sim-

plest question” since they always need clearance from above before answering.⁴² *Stockholmstidningen* devotes several pages to the fair on the opening day with many different articles. In one of the texts, the author comments that the “dictatorships” (without mentioning any specific country) use the pavilions for “propaganda, but softened and discrete” so that the “products can speak for themselves.”⁴³ The issue of propaganda returns discretely when an author writes that Poland claims to have “abolished unemployment forever”.⁴⁴ Under the subheading “Folkrepublikansk Propaganda” (Propaganda from the Peoples’ Republics) the author finds the propaganda from the countries of the Eastern bloc to be “gross” at times. Interestingly, the Yugoslavian pavilion is here reported to be “exemplary in its neutrality”, with the goods “tastefully inserted in a sort of cubistic grid system of rods along the walls.”⁴⁵ When reporting from “the Yugoslavian day” (invited guests only) *Svenska Dagbladet*, albeit in a short note, has only praise for the pavilion which is described as one of the “technically best exhibitions” at the fair, “where everything is allowed to speak for itself”.⁴⁶

This alleged “neutral” appearance of the Yugoslavian pavilion could be explained with its modernism since that was long understood as a part of the Swedish model and alas “neutral”.

“THIS ALLEGED ‘NEUTRAL’ APPEARANCE OF THE YUGOSLAVIAN PAVILION COULD BE EXPLAINED WITH ITS MODERNISM SINCE THAT WAS LONG UNDERSTOOD AS A PART OF THE SWEDISH MODEL.”

As early as in the 1937 World Fair in Paris, architect Sven Ivar Lind shaped Sweden’s pavilion in a way that connected international style with (social) democratic modernization.⁴⁷ Modernism had since connoted “democratic” in a Swedish context.⁴⁸ In a period of increasing trade exchange, the Swedish press took in Yugoslavia, dressed in a modernist outfit, as normal, as “one of us”.

This was not the case with Hanover Fair, where Richter, Picelj and Srnc had worked only months before. Instead, in the *Allgemeine*

Zeitung the pavilion is described as a “*Dekorationexplosion*” (explosion of decoration) and in one of the two illustrations the pavilion is described as a “*Schlachtfeld*” (battlefield). Unfortunately, the Picelj archive contains no images from the Hanover Fair, only some articles, the quoted one being one of them. None of the other articles describes or discusses the Yugoslavian pavilion. However, in the Vjenceslav Richter archive, there are images showing the proposals, reprinted in above mentioned Ana Ofak’s article “Expo Lab – Between Art and Industry in 1950” and her *Agents of Abstraction*. Together with the illustrations, we are faced with material that seem to have been similar to what was presented in Stockholm. As Ofak points out, the Yugoslavian pavilion is here described in stark contrast to the “rationality” that otherwise dominated the fair. “The German cliché of correctness was counterbalanced by the ‘intoxicating’ view of the Yugoslavian pavilion.”⁴⁹

Why did the German press spot the innovativeness of the Yugoslavian pavilion while the Swedish press did not? The Hanover

Fair was a relatively new venue, that in 1950 attracted exhibitors from ten other countries. Also Ofak concludes that Yugoslavia was the only socialist country, despite the fact, as she puts it, that they and Germany had just recently been “archenemies during WWII”.⁵⁰ There was thus no “Eastern bloc” propaganda to compare the Yugoslavian pavilion in Hanover with, allowing it to be more “other” than it was in Sweden. Also, strengthened relationships and the presumed “democratic” modernism permitted Swedish commentators to overlook the experimental, constructive design and instead focus on the “modern” totality which led a supposed neutrality: A position that would be “normal” from a Swedish perspective.

That the putative neutrality also was important for the Yugoslavian officials is suggested in two articles, also found in the Picelj archive, where Croatian newspaper *Borba* and Serbian *Politika* both refer to the reception in the Swedish press. M. Bratic in *Borba* concludes that the Swedish press recognizes the pavilion as “one of the most well-equipped and best decorated”.⁵¹ *Politika* is more detailed about the reception in the Swedish press and refers both to the fact that *Dagens Nyheter* wrote that the pavilion offers a “great overview” and that *Svenska Dagbladet* values how the products are “allowed to speak for themselves”.⁵²

And other modernist myths...

As this analysis of the Yugoslavian pavilion shows, limiting ourselves to identifying it as a part of “modernism” does not take us very far. There were (and still are) several parallel and sometimes conflicting interpretations of “modernism”: where it can exist, where it belongs ideologically, and what it signifies. Nor is a categorical distinction between the “East” and the “West” very helpful, not least since this tends to homogenize the idea of “modernism” in both blocs. On the one hand we are suffering from a historiography that has left the art of the Eastern bloc marginalized – or as Ljiljana Kolečnik puts it: “During the last 20 years, West European art history developed a particular type of contextual narrative on socialist culture operating on the *pars pro toto* principle and compressing the classes of analogous social, cultural and political phenomena into a single occurrence bestowed with meaning universal for the entire geopolitical space of former Eastern bloc.”⁵³ On the other hand, many (modernist) nuances also tends to get lost. Stephen C. Foster points to the problem with the contemporary interpretations of Western avant-garde that tends makes it apolitical: “Recent American scholarship has typically formalized the work of early twentieth-century European movements in ways that decontextualize the works and diminish access to their historical significance.”⁵⁴

Piotr Piotrowski points to the necessity of an art history that exposes “... repressive practices directed towards the margins,

peripheries both geographical and topographical...”⁵⁵ While I think that the analysis of the Yugoslavian pavilion strongly underlines this need, we also find conflicting understandings from margin to margin. If the Yugoslavian artists wanted to argue for a radical constructivist modernism with roots in Eastern Europe, the Swedish reception seem to have understood this claim from another vantage point, where modernism signalizes “neutral” and “democratic”. Thus, while art history needs to challenge established interpretations instead of forcing them upon the material, it also needs to let alternative understandings co-exist. This is why, in the final paragraphs, I will discuss the notion “myth”.

When American art professor Rosalind Krauss wrote of “modernist myths” in her highly influential essays from the late 1970s and early 1980s, she was discussing how abstract modernism comes with certain assumptions that we mistake for truths; for instance, that the grid would be a route to originality when in fact it can do nothing more than repeat itself. Or as Krauss formulates it “... this experience of originariness ... is itself false, a fiction.”⁵⁶ In the essay *Grids* she develops the notion “myth”, borrowing the concept from structuralist Claude Levi Strauss. Here, Krauss identifies how modernism becomes a story that represses, in this case how spiritualism becomes the unconsciousness of materialist modernism.⁵⁷ While I agree with Krauss that history writing of modernism is a story of repressions, the Yugoslavian pavilion calls for another kind of discussion concerning “myths” because it activates other “stories” than the ones identified in her writings. I therefore turn to another structuralist,

Roland Barthes, and his early essay *Myth today*.⁵⁸

Myth, writes Barthes, is a kind of speech, meaning anything that is being conveyed by a discourse. Thus, speech is not confined to language, but to representation. In the case of the Yugoslavian pavilion, this means that the objects shown, the way they are presented and the discussions they evoke all are part of mythmaking: Not because they are untrue, but because that is the way they make sense to us. The pavilion is under-

stood as “constructivist”, “modernist”, “chaotic” or “neutral” depending on which “myth” the interpreter subscribes to. This points to another important aspect: The Yugoslavian pavilion marks an intersection of *different* myths that, it seems, can sometimes co-exist and sometimes get into a clinch. The Swedish journalist who identified the settings as “rational” was probably uttering this from a position where “rational” also means “western” and perhaps also “democratic”; maybe even “Swedish” or “like-minded”. Myth has a double function, writes Barthes: “...it makes us understand something and it imposes it on us.”⁵⁹

MYTH NEUTRALIZES and it naturalizes. It makes us think that we understand what we are perceiving and that our perception is correct. It is indeed a speech in the Barthesian sense, the way we

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utter the world. In this way, it is feasible that agents from different political/ideological positions can agree that the Yugoslavian pavilion belongs to “modernism”, while at the same time having conflicting understandings of what this means. They are surrounded by different discourses where the sign modernism plays different roles. “Democratic western liberal democracy”, “useful expression of not-belonging to the Eastern Bloc” and “radical expression of an anti-hierarchic, socialist art form” are all “true” depending on how these statements exist in and confirm a certain myth.

As the Yugoslavian pavilion also makes clear, conflicting visions sometimes leads to a battle where opposing sides are trying to make the myth of the other visible as just exactly that, to “mystify the myth” as Barthes called it. In the liberal press, the Yugoslavian pavilion was used as a leverage to impose the image of “propaganda” on the pavilions of the Eastern Bloc, while at the same time they were, perhaps unconsciously, taking the ideal of liberal democracy for “neutral” and “true”. But communist newspaper *Ny Dag* ignored any such discussion and instead described these pavilions as neutral. Which brings me to my last point. Barthes writes: “...myth hides nothing: its function is to distort, not to make disappear.”⁶⁰ While the report in *Ny Dag* of course could be said to be a crystal clear example of “distorting” instead of making disappear, we also see that another, Western-biased and less conscious form of distortion surfaces when discussing the Yugoslavian pavilion. A myth that makes modernism as a radical statement quite impossible.

The myth is invisible for those who “speak” it. That is the power of it. The repressive practices Piotrowski calls attention to are probably not understood as such by those who practice them. In fact, they might be the (unwilling) result of a very reflective practice. When Krauss uncovered “unconscious” stories of modernism, she contributed to shaping a stereotype of the repressor, an image of abstract modernism where the individual artist reduces art to its (media) specific qualities and where painting becomes the jewel of the crown. While this “modernist myth” was important to “mystify”, it has little bearing on the collective, anti-hierarchic constructivism Vjenceslav Richter, Zvonimir Radić, Ivan Picelj and Alexandar Srnc deployed at the Yugoslavian pavilion. Thus, an “alter-globalist” art history cannot settle with “exposing repressive practices”. It must identify that all positions are temporal, myth-making constructions, lest it becomes repressive itself.

Conclusion

The Yugoslavian turn towards modernism from 1948 is often discussed as either a reaching out to the West and/or as a part of a “socialist modernism”, which creates the suspicion that it lacks the integrity of its Western counterparts. I have tried to argue that neither state socialism nor the Western liberal counterpart are fruitful concepts for understanding the collaborative work of architects Vjenceslav Richter and Zvonimir Radić, and artists Ivan Picelj and Alexandar Srnc. Their work in a constructivist tradition can equally be understood as an attempt to re-radicalize a modernist tradition whose legacy has little to do with

the liberal democracy it has been understood to signalize since the war. That art history has had such difficulties recognizing this, is paradoxically partly due to the many attacks on the idea of (liberal) modernism, which have contributed to cementing a stereotyped understanding of what late modernism is. By re-opening the negotiations, I hope to contribute to an un-doing of this stereotype. ✕

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- 9 “Sovjetunionen ser gärna ett ökat handelsutbyte med Sverige” [The Soviet Union looks forward to increased trade exchange with Sweden] *Arbetaren*, March 20, 1950: 5.
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special section

Introduction.

Religion in Ukraine: political and historical entanglements

Ukraine usually becomes the focus of the international media and lively scholarly interest when it undergoes some tremendous political and societal changes. Suffice to mention the year 2004 when the Orange revolution was on front pages all over the world, or 2013-2014 when mass protests – now known as the Euromaidan Revolution – followed by the Russian annexation of Crimea and the continuing war in Donbas came into the spotlight worldwide.¹ What happened in Ukraine in the years 2018 and 2019 drew considerably less attention both in international media and among scholars, although historically these years are no less remarkable than the years of mass unrests and regimes changes.

The year 2018 became a turning point not only in the church history of Ukraine but, more broadly, in the history of world Orthodoxy. In 2018 all official preparations were completed for the Orthodox Church of Ukraine to become an independent church in communion with all other Orthodox churches in the world. On January 5, 2019, the official document that grants the church's independence

– called *the Tomos* – was given by the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople to the newly established Orthodox Church of Ukraine. Thus, in 2019 the world witnessed the birth of one more Orthodox Church, a rare event in church history.

The whole discussion on religion in Ukraine, however, cannot be restricted

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simply to the questions of Orthodoxy. To grasp the scale of religious life of Ukraine we should broaden our perspective and look at the country from a bird's eye view. In this introduction I want not only to introduce each article that comprises this special section but also to describe the religious situation in Ukraine, to give readers a better grasp of the context which will

be tackled in the articles. On this note, I should add an important disclaimer: it is not spirituality and religious belief as such that are in the focus of this special section. The purpose of this discussion is to put the question of religion into the focus of the studies which approach different aspects of Ukrainian reality today and show how an analysis of an intricate interplay between religion, politics, and society can help us better understand this reality.

Religious affiliation in numbers

According to the sociological survey conducted in 2018, about 72% of respondents declared themselves as believers.² Compared with the number of believers in previous years, the overall number decreased somewhat from 76% in 2014, but religious leaders continue to enjoy the highest level of trust within Ukrainian society.³ Among believers, the most numerous are Orthodox Christians (67.3%); 9.4% of respondents declared that they belong to the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church; 2.2% said they are Protestants; and 0.8% attend the Roman Catholic Church; 0.4% belong to Judaism.⁴



The former president of Ukraine, Pyotr Poroshenko, and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople.

According to the Ukrainian census, 0.9% of the Ukrainian population follow Islam.⁵ Less than 1% said that they follow other religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism or Paganism. In the previously mentioned sociological survey a further 11.0% declared themselves non-religious or unaffiliated to any religion.

From the information above we can see how religious affiliation is distributed among the population. We see that three main religions – Christianity, Islam, and Judaism – which were present in the territory of the present-day Ukraine throughout the centuries are not distributed evenly. Despite the differences in numbers of believers, however, all these religions and the religious organizations that represent them play an important role in the societal life of the country, with their leaders commenting on all political changes and discussing the country's future perspective.

Religions in Ukraine from a historical perspective

Judaism appeared in the lands which are now Ukraine when Jewish traders trav-

eled to Greek colonies about 2,000 years ago.⁶ But it was in the 13th century that the Ashkenazi Jewish presence became significant here. Noteworthy is the fact that in the 18th century a new teaching of Judaism – Hasidism – originated in the Ukrainian lands. The significance of Ukraine as the place where Hasidism was established is difficult to overestimate, as hundreds of thousands of contemporary Hasidim come on pilgrimage to Ukraine to worship the memory of Rebbe Nachman, the founder of Breslov Hasidism, at his grave in Uman (a town in Central Ukraine). During the Second World War the Jewish population was exterminated in the Holocaust, leading to a total change of the cities' demographical outlook: Before the war, a third of the biggest cities' populations were of Jewish origin (15% of the population in the territory which is now Ukraine were of Jewish origin before the Second World War).⁷ Nowadays Jews comprise only 0.2% of the population of Ukraine (according to the census in 2001 or 0.4% according to the Razumkov survey in 2018). Although not numerous, the

Jewish community is well-organized and is especially active in memory politics in relation to the Second World War and the remembrance of the Holocaust victims. Two big organizations represent the Jewish community in Ukraine: the VAAD of Ukraine (Association of Jewish Civic Organizations and Communities) headed by the Soviet era dissident Josef Zissels, and the United Jewish Society of Ukraine headed by the oligarch Ihor Kolomoiskyi. The latter organization has an impressive cultural center in the city of Dnipro – *Menorah* – located in a huge building with a museum and the *Tkuma* research center which serves as a platform for academic conferences and as a publishing house for studies on Judaism in Ukraine.

LOOKING AT ISLAM, it was the Golden Horde (which at that time occupied a significant part of the territory of present Ukraine and adopted Islam as the state religion in 1313) and the Ottoman Empire (which conquered some of these territories in the 1470s) that brought Islam to these lands. Crimean Tatars accepted

Islam as the state religion of the Golden Horde (1313–1502), and later ruled as vassals of the Ottoman Empire (until the late 18th century). During the Second World War, in May 1944, the entire Crimean Tatar population in Crimea was deported by the Soviet authorities on charges of collaboration with the Nazi regime. Those who survived the hard conditions of the deportation resettled in Uzbekistan and other republics of the Soviet Union. Many of the deported Crimean Tatars returned to Crimea in the late 1980s and early 1990s.⁸ As mentioned above, only about 1% of population in Ukraine are Muslims. Most of them lived in Crimea where they comprised about 15% of the population.⁹ Many of them had to move from Crimea after the Russian annexation of the peninsula. They created their own centers in big cities and play an important role in the political and cultural life of the country.¹⁰ Nowadays, there are approximately 150 mosques in Ukraine. There is no single administrative center which represents all Muslims in the country; instead there are five different Muslim organizations with different political interests and agendas.

AS STATED ABOVE, Christianity is a majority religion in Ukraine. De facto, since the collapse of the Soviet Union up to 2018, there were four main Christian churches in Ukraine: 1) the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP) which remains dependent on the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC-MP), 2) the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Kyiv Patriarchate (UOC-KP) which was established in 1992 by the part of the clergy that diverged from the UOC-MP, 3) the Ukrainian Orthodox Autocephalous Church (UOAC) which originated in 1921 parallel to Ukrainian aspirations to build an independent state in 1917–1922, and 4) the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) which emerged as a result of the Union of Brest in 1596 between the Holy See and the Ruthenian Orthodox Church.¹¹ During the Soviet period, only the Russian Orthodox Church was tolerated by the state. In practice, the

UOAC and the UGCC were banned (the UOAC was permitted up to 1930 and the UGCC was forced to unite with the ROC in 1947; many priests of these churches were repressed or moved to the US or Canada where they were active in diaspora).¹² When the UOAC and UGCC were re-established in Ukraine in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the revival of these churches was closely connected to the national revival.¹³ The same can be said about the UOC-KP which appeared as consequence of the state's independence.

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It is between the Orthodox churches that the most tensions exist today. These tensions are often framed through historical narratives which are worth mentioning in more detail.¹⁴ Officially, the year 988 is marked as the year when the Christian religion came to Kyiv Rus', when Prince Volodymyr introduced Byzantine Christianity in these lands. The choice of religion was fateful because it placed the Kyiv Church under the authority of the Mother Church in Constantinople.¹⁵ When Kyiv lost its political power as a result of the Mongol invasion, the Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Rus', Maximus, moved to Vladimir in 1299. His successor, Metropolitan Peter, moved his see to Moscow in 1325. All the Metropolitans of Kyiv were established by the decision in Constantinople and they all held the title of the Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Rus' even if they had their sees in other cities. But in 1448 in Moscow, a Russian bishop, Jonas, was established as the Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Rus' without Constantinople's agreement. Not until more than a century later, in 1589, did the Church in Moscow gain autocephaly from the Ecumenical See.

That year, Metropolitan Job of Moscow became the first Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus' (hence, “Kyiv” disappeared from the title).

Parallel to these events, in 1458 in Kyiv (then the part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania) the Rus' Orthodox Church was established which was under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical See. In 1686 it was transferred to the jurisdiction of Moscow. In such a way, from 1686 up to the 20th century, Orthodox Christians in the lands which are now Ukraine belonged to the

Church under the jurisdiction of Moscow. When the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Bartholomew I of Constantinople, granted autocephaly to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU) in January 5, 2019, it was exactly the transfer of 1686 that was annulled.

Although the president of Ukraine, Petro Poroshenko, tried to present the church independence gained during his presidency as his own

victory, in reality, several factors came into play that finally resolved the fate of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine. These factors include the political will inside the country and the tensions in relations between Orthodox churches in the world that were caused by the Russian policy against Ukraine. The war in Donbas, the reluctance of the Moscow Patriarchate to condemn the war and to name Russia the aggressor in this conflict, and the decreasing support of the Moscow Patriarchate among the people of Ukraine, all put the position of Orthodoxy itself at risk.¹⁶ Compared to pre-2014 survey data, there was a dramatic decrease in numbers of people who stated that they belonged to the UOC-MP after Russian aggression against Ukraine since 2014.¹⁷ In yet another survey, people admitted that for them the UOC-MP was associated with the aggressive Russian policy against Ukraine.¹⁸ In the same survey, most of the believers named the UOC-KP as “the only Church of the Ukrainian people”.¹⁹ In these circumstances, the Ecumenical Patriarch realized that there was only one possible way to keep the millions of Orthodox people

in Ukraine in the embrace of the canonical Orthodox church: to recognize the church they formally chose as canonical. Formally, it is not the UOC-KP that gained independence, though. It was a newly established church that was granted *the Tomos*, but in practice it was the churches and parishes of the UOC-KP that formed the core of this new church.

The many aspects of religion in Ukraine today

In the following articles and interviews, more nuanced questions of religion are discussed. In his essay, Andriy Fert takes up the question of the public presentation of the church's independence in official discourses of political and ecclesiastical leaders. He argues that during the presidency of Petro Poroshenko (2014–2019), the church independence was presented as a triumph of historical justice after centuries of repression and persecution. Hence, debates on church history were positioned in a framework of decolonization and nationalization, which is in line with the politics of history conducted in Ukraine after the Euromaidan protests.²⁰ Tymofii Brik's study approaches a broadly debated question that was raised after the presidential election in Ukraine in 2019: Why then president Petro Poroshenko's campaign, with the emphasis on religion and Ukrainian Orthodox Church independence as supported by most Ukrainians, did not resonate with the voters, who elected

Volodymyr Zelensky with an overwhelming majority of 75%. Brik shows that *the Tomos* did play a role in Poroshenko's support but it was not enough for his victory. Alla Marchenko

also approaches the presidential election 2019 in her study. She noticed a paradoxical situation when international media writing on candidates took up the issue which was largely absent in the Ukrainian media – Volodymyr Zelensky's Jewish

affiliation. This suggests an interesting observation of imaginaries about Ukraine shared in foreign countries, which are largely shaped by historical narratives that put anti-Semitism at their core. Michal Wawrzonek's article sheds light on the social role of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. He argues that although the church is not big in terms of the number of believers and parishes and is limited to the western region of the country, it is a strong actor in the country's social life. Wawrzonek traces the church's involvement in the most decisive moments of history of the country in the 20th and 21st centuries and demonstrates that throughout history, this church had a powerful impact on social mobilization and resistance to authorities.

IN THE INTERVIEWS, two distinguished scholars of religion from Ukraine share their own ideas about the current religious situation in the country. Viktor Yelensky, a professor of religion who has published extensively on a vast range of religious issues, discusses the position of religions and different religious actors in the ongoing military conflict in Ukraine in a broader perspective of societal changes. He was the member of Ukrainian Parliament of the 8th convocation and a member of the Ukrainian delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

Sociologist Tetiana Kalenychenko, an expert in the field of religion and conflict resolution who works both at the University and in different NGOs, shares her experiences at different peace building projects and reflects on how religion can

be instrumentalized in conflict transformation.

All these articles and interviews show the importance of including religion in the studies of societies and look closer into complex entanglements that reveal

religious traces, sometimes in the most unexpected places. ✕

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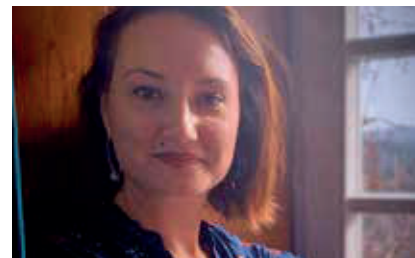
The image of Zelensky in media

“The Jewish background of Volodymyr Zelensky, the president of Ukraine, was specifically discussed in American and Israeli newspapers. **Page 100**




The narrative of the Tomos of autocephaly

“Recognition of the autocephaly of 'our church' from Moscow could not help but become a 'restoration of historical justice' in the eyes of so many. **Page 74**



The role of religion in peacebuilding

“In small communities, it is the religious actors who enjoy trust of the community and who have access to all the community's members. **Page 92**

A photograph capturing a significant religious event. In the foreground, Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople is seated, focused on signing a document. He has a long white beard and wears glasses, along with a black klobuk and ornate white vestments with gold embroidery and religious icons. Behind him, Epiphanius I of Ukraine stands, wearing a white klobuk and dark clerical robes. Other clergy members are visible in the background, some in black robes and others in more ornate vestments. The setting appears to be a grand, dimly lit church interior with chandeliers.

Patriarch Bartholomew signing the Tomos.
Epiphanius I of Ukraine (wearing a white klobuk)
stands behind him.

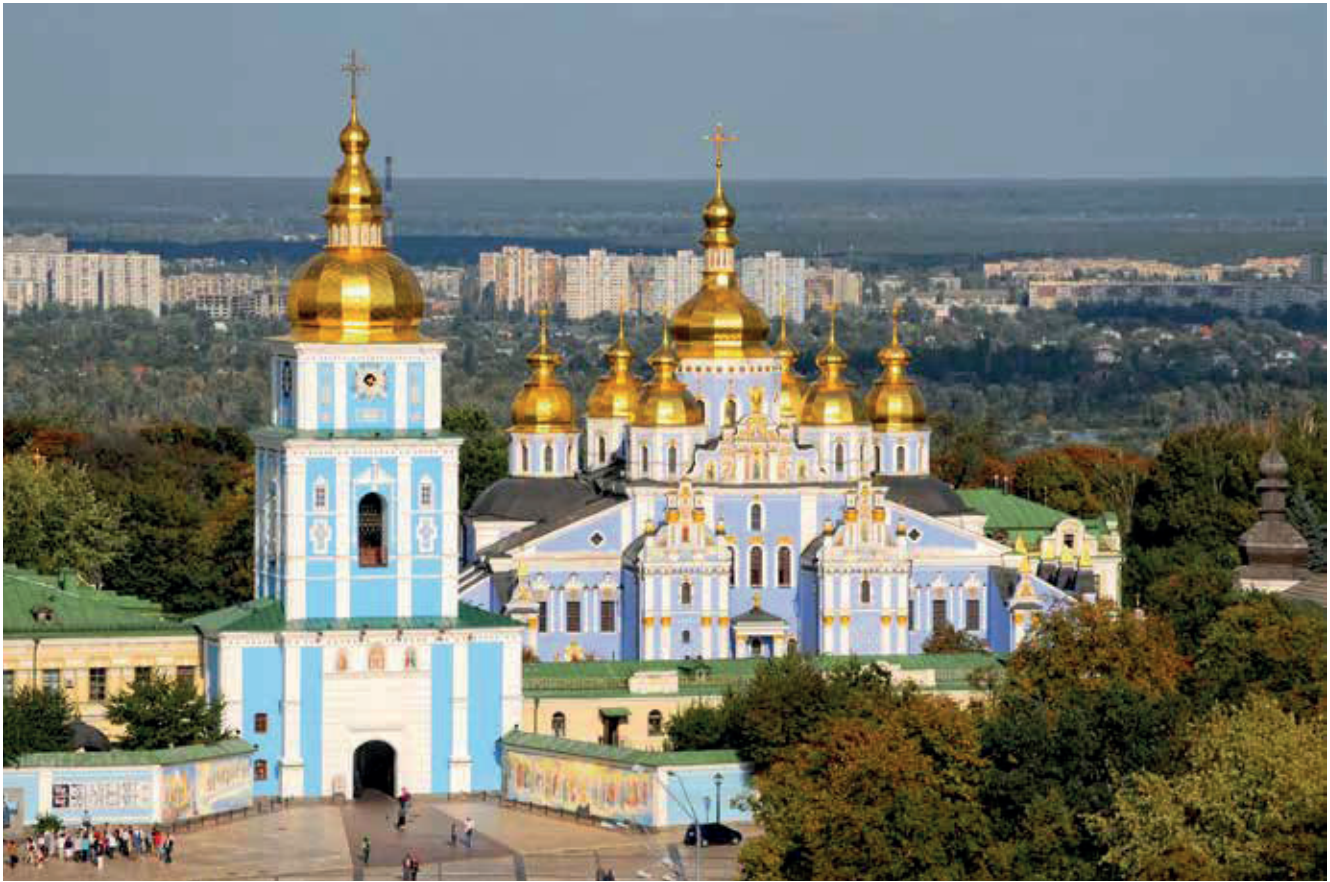
PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



CHURCH INDEPENDENCE AS HISTORICAL JUSTICE

Politics of history explaining the meaning of
the Tomos in Ukraine 2018–2019

by **Andriy Fert**



St. Michael's Golden-Domed Monastery in Kyiv.

PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

In 2014 Russia annexed the Ukrainian Crimea, and the war in the Donbas started. Russian propaganda emphasizing the common history of Ukrainians and Russians became a challenge to Ukrainian national security. In response, Ukraine officially employed a historical narrative describing Ukrainians as perpetual victims of and perpetual fighters against Russia, a people whose country was occupied first by the Russian Empire and then by the Soviet Union.¹

This narrative was claimed to be “genuine history”, which had been hidden until recently behind Russian and Soviet myths. Combating these myths became a trend in Ukrainian politics of history after 2014. One of the myths to be dismantled was that of the “common Orthodox Church” for Ukrainians and Russians. Back in the late 1980s, Ukraine had only one Orthodox church – the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC), but with the collapse of the Union, some of its bishops and communities attempted to gain independence from Moscow and create a “national church.” This resulted in the schism which shaped the religious landscape of Ukraine from the 1990s on. Three churches emerged from this schism: the UOC of the Moscow Patriarchate, the UOC of the Kyiv Patri-

archate and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church.² Of these, only the Moscow Patriarchate was recognized by other Orthodox churches of the world as “canonical” – that is, legitimate. If we consider that in Ukraine, as in other Eastern European countries, national and religious identities are intertwined, the subordination of the Ukrainian Church to Moscow in the conditions of a military conflict with Russia looks like a threat to national security and “historical injustice” for many Ukrainians who call themselves Orthodox. As a result, public demands for canonical recognition of the local independent churches grew stronger over the years after 2014.

In 2018/2019 President Petro Poroshenko did his best to take advantage of this. He urged that the Ukrainian church must be independent from Moscow and started the campaign to make it happen and so fulfil “300 years of Ukrainian aspirations” and “restore historical justice.” He turned to the Patriarch of Constantinople, asking him to grant the Tomos of autocephaly (independence) from Moscow, and actively supported the creation of the independent Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU) in every possible way throughout that year.

In this essay I’d like to discuss how the public use of history under Porosh-

abstract

This essay explores how the politics of history in the time of conflict between Russia and Ukraine empowered various actors of Ukrainian public life, from the president to religious leaders, to advocate for an independent Orthodox church as “long-awaited historical justice.” By deconstructing historical narratives employed in 2018–2019, it argues that church independence was placed within a broader context of decolonisation and overcoming the Soviet legacy.

KEYWORDS: Politics of history, Ukraine, orthodox church, Tomos

enko helped frame the pursuit of autocephaly as the restoration of historical justice. This is by no means a study about what actually happened in the 17th century when the Church metropolis of Kyiv became part of the Moscow Patriarchate, nor does it attempt to assess the historicity of historical facts pronounced by Poroshenko and other actors who propagated the same ideas. Again, it is not about what happened, but rather about how various institutions and talking heads in 2018/2019 described what had happened. So, this essay is about storytelling: how narrators build their story, what they include and what they exclude from it, the words they use, the parallels they draw.

TO THAT END, I analyze speeches, publications produced by several governmental institutions (president, parliament, Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, Ministry of Education), and news in the media, as well as materials prepared by various educational projects in the field of history. I also pay attention to what was said by pro-Tomos churches and religious scholars/historians involved in the process of advocating for the Tomos in the public space.

Stolen history

One of the central notions in Ukrainian politics of history after 2014 is that “our history” was stolen by Russia; once it was stolen, it was distorted in order to represent Ukraine as an inseparable part of Russia. The anti-Russian patriotic mobilization of 2014 gave birth to numerous state and civic initiatives, aimed at dismantling these distortions and “returning to the Ukrainian people its genuine historical memory.”

The most noticeable initiative in this regard was the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory (UINM) – a governmental institution under the executive branch. In 2014 it was mandated to cleanse Ukrainian history from Soviet myths, and since then the UINM team has promoted narratives about the heroic struggle of Ukrainians against Soviets and done its best to expose Russian myths about Ukrainian history.

Even though UINM dedicated its efforts mostly to “liberation movements” of the 20th century, they started a trend among the various actors involved in church issues of claiming that “for ages the Russian Empire, and then the USSR, have tried to ‘steal’ or ‘privatize’ (not only) the history of Ukraine as a whole,” but also “the history of the Ukrainian Church”, as Vitalii Klos from Kyiv theological seminary put it.³

“The ROC seeks to create a myth that the Metropolis of Kyiv is an invention of the late twentieth century, while that of Moscow has a thousand-year history,”⁴ argued, for instance, Taras Antoshevskyi, editor-in-chief of Religious Information Service of Ukraine.

The aim of this misrepresentation, according to another scholar, is quite simple – with the “Kyivan period of history” (between the 10th and 15th centuries) the Russian church looks older

and thus more authoritative in the eyes of believers.⁵

President Poroshenko, himself an active proponent of the “stolen history” narrative, addressed parliament in 2018, underscoring that “it was Ukrainians who first encountered ‘the light of the Christian faith, and only then did (they) share it with the Zalissia [*area beyond the forest, borderlands of Kyivav Rus – AF*], where the ancient princes of Kyiv had so recklessly founded Moscow’.”⁶ According to this logic, it is Ukraine that is older, not Russia, while the latter merely tries to appropriate Ukrainian history.

MOREOVER, as once again Taras Antoshevskyi pointed out, the Russian church itself unintentionally subscribed to this point of view, when “in 1948, it celebrated the 500th anniversary of the Moscow Metropolis.” So, as soon as Ukrainian church is recognized as independent, the theft of history will

become apparent to everyone and “the history of the Russian Church will begin not with Kyivan Rus’ in the late ninth century but in 1448, the point at which it split from the Kyiv Metropolis,” said Filaret, head of the Kyiv Patriarchate.⁷

Once that happened, the proponents of the “stolen history” narrative unanimously agree, Russian orthodoxy would become “500 years younger”,⁸ “Moscow’s most ancient conceptual claim to world hegemony” would fall apart,⁹ and so Russians would be forced to “think about what they could offer to the world, apart from what they stole from us.”¹⁰

“Annexation of Kyiv Metropolis”

The “theft” of church history was made possible thanks to the narrative in which the Kyiv Church Metropolis itself was stolen by the Russian church. The transition of the Metropolis from Constantinople to Moscow’s rule in 1686 was repeatedly referred to as “loss of independence”¹¹ or “annexation by Moscow” by various actors including the president and his advisers.¹²

As early as in 2016, the Ukrainian Parliament turned to Bartholomew, patriarch of Constantinople, with a request for autocephaly for the Ukrainian church. In their appeal, members of parliament, in particular, argued:

On July 26, 2008, on your visit to our country to mark the 1020th anniversary of the baptism of Kyivan Rus, you, Your Holiness, in your appeal to the Ukrainian nation [clearly outlined (AF)] your attitude toward the act of 1686, or as you put it, “annexation of [the Ukrainian Church] to the Russian state”.¹³

By placing the patriarch’s words in a radically new context in 2016, namely the annexation of Crimea and the ongoing war with Russia, Ukrainian legislators drew a clear parallel between events of the 17th century and the current state of affairs: Russia annexed the Ukrainian Crimea in 2014; Russia annexed the

**“ONE OF THE
CENTRAL NOTIONS IN
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Ukrainian church in 1686. These two historical injustices need to be corrected.

SUBSEQUENTLY, “annexation” took root in public discourse, so when in 2018 the Patriarch of Constantinople revoked the act of 1686 upon Ukrainian request, Ukrainian media by and large reported this news as “Constantinople called the annexation of the Ukrainian Church by Moscow illegal.” The same statement was repeated by church speakers¹⁴ and even by professional historians in their books.¹⁵

The president himself applied the term “annexation” in regard to church issues, for instance in his opening speech at the council to establish the new Orthodox Church of Ukraine – a crucial symbolic milestone on the way toward autocephaly – in December 2018:

The Ecumenical Patriarch finally declared as illegal Moscow’s annexation of the Kyiv Metropolis in the late 17th century. His Holiness has declared that the Russian Orthodox Church has no canonical rights regarding the Orthodox Church in Ukraine, and that our Orthodox Church should not be subject to the Russian Orthodox Church.¹⁶

Strong emphasis on the word “annexation” was usually accompanied by a list of Moscow’s violations of Kyiv’s rights. The first violation was that the Russian Church misinterpreted the 1686 act of transition. As Radio Liberty pointed out in “Constantinople-Kyiv-Moscow. Chronology of Church Relations”, the Ukraine project aimed at explaining church history in the light of the Tomos negotiations:

Patriarch Dionysius of Constantinople issued a letter transferring his right to ordain the Kyiv Metropolitan to the Patriarch of Moscow. The letter specified the conditions of such transfer [...] Moscow, however, interpreted this act as a complete transfer of the Kyiv Metropolis under its rule.¹⁷

These conditions required Moscow to preserve Kyiv’s privileges, to allow local clerics to elect the Metropolitan and to let them commemorate the Patriarch of Constantinople before Moscow during worship services. All of them – as the participants of the international roundtable assembled by the Ministry of Culture, the Orthodox Church of Ukraine and the National Academy of Sciences, put it in February 2019 – “have been violated by the Moscow Patriarchate.”¹⁸

In addition, the Moscow Patriarchate is represented as having acted illegally while seeking to place Kyiv under its power. For example, according to BBC Ukraine, Moscow ambassadors bribed the patriarch of Constantinople to make him sign the act of transition,¹⁹ and Moscow authorities appointed a new

metropolitan to Kyiv even before Constantinople gave them this right.²⁰ And so, “by intrigues and coercion the tsarist authorities incorporated the Kyiv Metropolis into the Moscow Patriarchate” – as authors from the Ministry of Education summed up in their materials about the Tomos for schools.²¹

APART FROM “gross violation of canons”²², the annexation narrative sometimes drew parallels between church-state cooperation in Russia now and then. As Olexandr Sagan, a well-known expert on religion in Ukraine, stressed on several occasions, one of the “organizers of annexation” in the 17th century, Patriarch Joachim of Moscow, was a *Reiter* (cavalry officer in the Russian army at the time) before taking his monastic vows, who used to say “I am ready to fulfill and obey any orders of authority”.²³ This portrayal of Joachim as a representative of the *siloviki* (military and security high-rankers in contemporary Russia), unquestionably loyal to the authorities in the 17th century, perfectly mirror the public image of the current Patriarch Kirill of Moscow as an FSB agent promoting

“THE FIRST VIOLATION WAS THAT THE RUSSIAN CHURCH MISINTERPRETED THE 1686 ACT OF TRANSITION.”

the Kremlin’s agenda in Ukraine.

In such a way, the annexation narrative underscores that the Ukrainian church was “illegally annexed” in the 17th century with help of bribes, its rights were violated in many regards, but none of the initiators of annexation “survived five years after that event. All of them were punished by God.”²⁴

Subjugation and Russification replace independence and national traditions

In historical narratives that frame the struggle for the Tomos, the “annexation” of 1686 turned the “natural” path of Ukrainian development into the “wrong” direction. The Ukrainian Church before 1686 is represented as independent and self-governed with its own unique traditions – one can easily observe this in numerous TV programs broadcast throughout the nation in 2018/2019.

The brief explanation of the history of Ukrainian Orthodoxy on the TV channel 24 argued: “Since its foundation in 988, the Kyiv Metropolis had been autonomous and had well-developed self-governance. (Its head) obtained extremely powerful rights and privileges, but traditionally he modestly called himself Metropolitan.”²⁵

In a similar vein, the TV channel Priamyi, in its program about church history, admits that even though “Greeks sent from Constantinople were in charge of Kyiv Metropolis during the reign of Volodymyr, the situation changed with the accession to power of Prince Yaroslav the Wise. In 1051, Rus received the first Metropolitan of local origin – Hilarion. Metropolitan Hilarion left behind an important philosophical piece, ‘Sermon on Law and Grace’, which asserted the independence of Kyivan Rus and the Rus’ Church.”²⁶

Before 1686, the independent Ukrainian Church maintained



An Eastern Orthodox icon depicting Equal-to-apostles Cyril and Methodius brothers as the Christian Saints.



The Tomos of autocephaly of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, signed by the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I on 5 January 2019.

“its own liturgy and its own traditions,” despite many difficulties, noted participants of the telethon “Unifying Council” on public broadcaster UA. Moscow itself broke away from this church in the mid-15th century.²⁷

Not only independence in self-government, but also what was called European orientation, was “natural” for the Ukrainian Church before 1686, according to this narrative. Over the whole period until 1686, Ukraine and its church are described as having been oriented toward Europe, just like modern Ukraine aspiring to the EU. President Poroshenko stated several times that “Prince Volodymyr’s decision to baptize Kyivan Rus (was) a genuine European choice”.²⁸ And since contemporary Russia opposes Europe, by breaking away from the Russian church Ukrainians will be able to return “the true meaning to the baptism of Volodymyr.”²⁹

THIS EUROPEAN CHOICE failed in 1686 when the Ukrainian Church was “annexed and occupied [...] Millions of believers were deceived, the church that had been a connecting bridge with the Christian world was defrauded. Those clerics who had resisted the occupation were persecuted mercilessly,” as stated by the participants of the aforementioned international round table.³⁰

Soon after that, following the proponents of this narrative, the Metropolitan of Kyiv lost his power over the Ukrainian dioceses;³¹ moreover, the Metropolis itself became just another “ordinary diocese” within the Moscow Patriarchate.³²

As result, for a very long time Ukraine turned into a “Russian political and ecclesiastical colony”,³³ which in its turn caused “the tragic processes of Russification and Ukrainian Orthodoxy’s loss of its uniqueness over the 18th and 19th centuries; any manifestations that did not conform to Russian church tradition were

prohibited”,³⁴ as the Ministry of Education outlined the situation in the materials about the Tomos for school teachers.

The emphasis on Russification is important to the narrative of “historical justice” which draws direct parallels between the past and the present. According to these logics, Russia had stolen history, and the church, and was now stealing the right of the local church to its own traditions and language. Perhaps, it is not a coincidence that, for example, the ICTV channel in its documentary “Tomos for Ukraine”, with the participation of the president, his adviser on church affairs Rostyslav Pavlenko, and the heads of the OCU, Epiphanius and Filaret, shows an excerpt from a history lesson devoted to Russification in the Kyiv theological seminary.³⁵

Similar emphasis on Russification was made by Father Vitalii Klos from Kyiv Seminary, who claimed that the empire:

took away all that was most valuable, authentic, original. And [the Empire (AF)] gave back, I would say, something “hollow”, distorted – some substitutes to distribute, to make sure everyone knew them. As a result, a holistic concept of Russian history emerged, certain traditions spread that we had never had in Ukraine, and instead our Ukrainian traditions were banned.³⁶

Both state officials and churchmen of different ranks appeared to share the view that long ago in the 17th century the Ukrainian church was forced to take the “wrong” path, which eventually lead to Russification and loss of independence in favor of Moscow, and this “historical injustice” was framed in present-day phrases from the vocabulary of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict.



The ruins of Korsun (Chersonesos) Crimea, a place where the East Slavic Christianity was born.

The Russian church created by the KGB vs the Ukrainian church born of national revolution

What would a story be without a villain who looks authoritative, but in fact is a fraud? The Russian church not only stole Ukrainian history; it also falsified its own history to conceal the unpleasant details about state help in recognition of its patriarchal status and cooperation with godless communists. Throughout the entire period of the Tomos campaign and the emergence of the new autocephalous church, various actors in Ukraine exposed these two unpleasant details to undermine Moscow's protests against Ukrainian autocephaly.

The story about how Moscow illegally split from Kyiv Metropolis in the 15th century and then, with help from the Grand Prince of Moscow, forced the patriarch of Constantinople to recognize its independence could not have been better designed to back up present-day Ukrainian state interference in the same business.

It is telling in this context that the report by 1+1 – one of the most influential Ukrainian TV broadcasters – came under the title “Bribes, intimidation and deceit: how historically “autocephaly” were granted to the Russian Church”, aired on January 6, 2019 – the day when OCU was granted autocephaly.³⁷

“Year 988 – Prince Volodymyr of Kyiv proclaims Orthodoxy the state religion of Kyivan Rus. In Moscow's location at the time – only swamps,” states the reporter. “For five hundred years Kyiv remains the center of Orthodoxy from the east to the north.” Then the reporter introduces the fact that in the 15th century, Moscow itself split off from the Kyiv Metropolis, and no one recognized its independence at the time. And only:

... at the end of the 16th century Boris Godunov lures Patriarch Jeremiah II from Constantinople, promising him protection against the Ottomans. For six months Godunov holds Jeremiah in captivity, seeking his permission to establish the Moscow patriarchy. Under pressure,

the patriarch agrees. In 1589, Moscow ambassadors give a bribe – countless [sorok sorokov – AF] fur coats and 200 gold coins for proclaiming the Moscow Patriarchate. However, the Russian Church do not receive the Tomos of autocephaly, only the letter proclaiming the Moscow Patriarchate.

On TV channel 24 there was also a program on the Tomos that rightly concluded, that “the Russian Church is the daughter of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, but for centu-

ries it has claimed to have supreme ecclesiastical authority over the Ukrainian Church.”³⁸

Another unpleasant page in Russian church history as discussed in the narratives on the Tomos directed at the Ukrainian public is that the Russian church was created by Stalin and remains the last relic of the Soviet Union. It is argued that this church collaborated with the Soviets in suppressing Ukrainian national identity and culture. The associative link between the Russian Orthodox Church and the USSR is difficult to overestimate. The decommunization politics conducted by the UINM in 2015-19 has entrenched the view of the Soviet past with exclusively negative characteristics of a “criminal totalitarian regime”, moreover, the “Soviet” in public discourse has more and more often become equated with the “Russian” – and, therefore, something negative.

AFTER THE SEVERE persecution of the church in the USSR in 1920-1930s, “Soviet leader Joseph Stalin dramatically changed his attitude to the church. He met with the remaining bishops and approved of their desire to elect a Patriarch... The restoration [of the Russian church took place] under the strict control of the Communist Party.”³⁹ The ROC is presented as a means of suppression of other churches in Ukraine. Thus, it is stated that the “Stalin-created church” was used by the Soviets to liquidate the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church after World War II, as well as to suppress the Ukrainian autocephalous movement – those few elements of the genuine “Ukrainian movement” in the USSR.

Similarly, Katerina Shchotkina, a well-known Ukrainian columnist covering church issues, reflected that “the ROC had been fully integrated into the USSR system. When the USSR collapsed, the ROC survived as did its structure.”⁴⁰ This structure has apparently lost its “spirituality [by creating] projects like Novorossiia, ‘Russian World’ and Orthodox fascism, [and also proposing] the “canonization” of Vladimir Putin,” – as the UINM put it.⁴¹ With Russia-backed separatists in the east of Ukraine using Orthodoxy as a part of their ideology alongside the Soviet narratives of the “Great Patriotic War” and “fraternal peoples” to undermine

Ukrainian independence, these arguments sounded pretty convincing.

So, while presenting the Tomos, President Poroshenko also emphasized the connection between the ROC and Stalin: “Let them demonstrate their (ROC) Tomos! Where’s their Tomos? Signed by Stalin? That’s how they started. This is the truth and they can’t hide it.”⁴²

FOLLOWING UP in his interview for “Focus” magazine, Poroshenko stated: “We hate the stereotype that we are part of the Soviet or Russian empire.”⁴³ The ROC as “the Soviet Church”, according to this approach, is something that still keeps Ukrainians in the Soviet-Russian empire, so it could not be considered part of the Ukrainian national past. Just as the historical narratives set by decommunization focused on resistance to Soviet power, the president also promoted the episodes of the church’s resistance to the Soviets. For example, he mentioned several times the episode of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church, which emerged thanks to the Ukrainian National Revolution of 1917-21 and was destroyed by the Bolsheviks.

The historical continuity of the newly established OCU with the church destroyed by the Bolsheviks was promoted by the president and the newly canonized Ukrainian church through symbolic gestures. On January 18, 2019, during his visit to Cherkasy, the President, together with the head of the OCU, Metropolitan Epiphaniy, unveiled a monument to the first head of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church – Metropolitan Vasyl Lypkivskiy (1864–1937). In his speech, he noted:

A Grand Design arose during the Ukrainian Revolution, when the government began the struggle for autocephaly of the Ukrainian church [...] Vasyl Lypkivskiy with his like-minded clerics convened the First All-Ukrainian Church Council in Saint Sophia on October 14, 1921, [and proclaimed (AF)] autocephaly... Vasyl Lypkivskiy was elected Metropolitan of Kyiv and all Ukraine, the first head of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. Moscow did not forgive Metropolitan Vasyl his efforts, his pro-state, pro-Ukrainian position, and his worship services in the Ukrainian language, and the 73-year-old bishop was shot on November 27, 1937 and buried in a nameless grave.⁴⁴

A slightly different pattern can be seen in the methodological materials of the UINM, prepared for schools in 2019. Dedicated to the centenary of the law “On the Higher Government of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church”, these materials paid as much attention as possible to the church activities of the Directory, the Ukrainian national government during the revolution.

But the student who was expected to read them could encounter the following passage: “In early February 1919, the Directory left Kyiv. The Bolsheviks, who were in confrontation with (Moscow) Patriarch Tikhon, at first supported the development of the national church in Ukraine. In this atmosphere, the First

All-Ukrainian Church Council took place in October 1921; it proclaimed the creation of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and elected Vasyl Lypkivskiy as its head.”⁴⁵

Mentioning Bolsheviks supporting the UAOC was rather an exception from general trend. In public Bolsheviks usually entered the scene merely as destroyers of the Ukrainian church,⁴⁶ never as its supporters.⁴⁷

Conclusion

When I told my friend that I was going to write an essay on how exactly the Tomos of autocephaly has become a “restoration of historical justice”, she nearly choked and asked warily, “Don’t tell me you doubt that the Tomos is a restoration of historical justice” Well, that is telling. The war with Russia turned the modern conflict back into the past, and therefore any conversation about the past becomes a conversation about the present.

Responding to the historical narratives of the Russian Orthodox Church and Russia about “fraternal peoples”, “the unity of the historical experience”, and “a common Orthodox culture”, Ukrainian actors created a narrative of resistance to the empire, and of opposition to “spiritual occupation.” In this narrative, Russia “stole” Ukrainian history and “annexed” the Ukrainian church. The strong parallels between modern warfare and the events of the distant past has made it possible to frame the Tomos as long-awaited historical justice, which restored everything to its rightful place.

THIS NARRATIVE has grown up from the politics of history that Ukraine consistently implemented since 2014, and all main points of this politics are easily traced in it: Russia as the main “Other”; the emphasis on resistance; not “common historical experience,” but occupation, etc.

Unlike the politics of history in general, in the case of the historical framing of the Tomos, the narrative was created by a huge number of different actors – from the president and the Ministry of Education to the media and religious scholars acting as talking heads. But surprisingly, it was very holistic and enjoyed equal support among the political elite and the expert community. With the Russian invasion in the background, when “being Orthodox is very or somewhat important to truly be a national in the country”, recognition of the autocephaly of “our church” from Moscow could not help but become a “restoration of historical justice” in the eyes of so many.

Answering my friend’s question, I would say that, in some way, the Tomos really brought a kind of historical justice to Ukraine. The struggle for recognition of the autocephaly and the enormous attention paid by so many people worldwide have shaped and promoted the narrative about the Ukrainian church fighting for its independence for centuries. This narrative – though with a lot of surprising oversimplifications – went far beyond the Ukrainian context, and finally challenged for the very first time the only authoritative source about the history of the Ukrainian Orthodoxy: the Moscow Patriarchate. ✖

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St Andrew's prophecy of Kyiv depicted in Radzivill Chronicle.

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

ELECTORAL EFFECTS OF THE TOMOS

by **Tymofii Brik**

Ukraine has been under the spotlight for last couple of years. The ongoing conflict with Russia, recent elections, and the US impeachment sparked interest in Ukraine among media and experts. A significant portion of this attention was received by the new Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky who won 73% votes in the second round of the election in April 21, 2019, defeating the incumbent candidate Petro Poroshenko. His surprising victory was as intriguing as Poroshenko's overwhelming defeat.¹ Usually, pundits explain Poroshenko's debacle with many variables including his failures to deliver some key policies and a misleading campaign.² This article is focused on the latter. His campaign was biased towards national identities and stressed the importance of the independent autocephalous Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU). The slogan "Army, Language, Faith" serves as an eloquent illustration of this point. Moreover, Poroshenko took a lot of credit for the success of the Tomos – the official document that grants canonical independence to the OCU. His emphasis on this issue during the campaign was even given the nickname "Tomos Tour".³ At the same time, the idea of the OCU became more popular among Ukrainians.⁴ Therefore, a question begs for an answer, as Jose Casanova puts it: "Why didn't Petro Poroshenko's direct – and

popular – effort in attaining the Tomos translate into electoral support?"⁵ However, this question is misleading as I will show, backed up with data. In fact, the Tomos did increase support for Poroshenko. However, the effect was small. The data at individual level (surveys) show that increased support for the OCU correlated with greater support for Poroshenko. Moreover, the data of transitions of parishes (from the Moscow Patriarchate to the OCU) also shows more support for Poroshenko at those precincts where a transition happened. Drawing on the literature

in political sociology and the micro-to-macro transition, I propose the hypothesis that competition between Orthodox jurisdictions was a necessary condition to ensure a link from the Tomos to electoral support for Poroshenko.

The role of religion in Ukrainian politics

Considering Poroshenko's campaign, researchers pointed out that it engaged with national narratives and identity politics featuring slogans of "Army, Faith, Language" and promoting the Tomos.⁶ The term identity politics is quite broad and is typically reserved by Western scholars and activists for political representation based on religion, race, or social background instead of party affiliation or ideological disputes. It is also used for disadvantaged or even threatened social groups in their struggle for

abstract

To what extent did Poroshenko's efforts in creating an independent and canonical Orthodox church translate into national electoral support? A survey conducted before the first round of elections and a dataset of parish transitions to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU) are employed to address this question. The data suggest that the Tomos did increase support for Poroshenko. However, this effect was small. Drawing on the literature in micro-to-macro transition, I propose the hypothesis that actual transitions of parishes at the level of precincts were a necessary condition to ensure a link from the general support for the Tomos to electoral support for Poroshenko.

KEYWORDS: Poroshenko, Tomos, Ukraine, Orthodox Church, electoral support



The former president of Ukraine, Pyotr Poroshenko, talks with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew.

PHOTO: PRESIDENT.GOV.UA

social equality or representation (e.g., people of color, LGBTQ, women). In Ukraine scholars use the term identity politics when they study national and local policies or public communication about state symbols, historical narratives, and national heroes. Language and religion are also a part of identity politics to the extent they are connected with state and national symbols.⁷ Poroshenko's efforts to exploit identity politics were a continuation of the long-established trope of appealing to national issues in Ukrainian political campaigns. Since early studies in the 1990s⁸ and 2000s,⁹ scholars have consistently registered that religion is deeply connected with Ukrainians' electoral preferences. As Yelensky¹⁰ pointed out, since the late 1990s followers of the UOC-MP were more likely to vote for anti-Western and pro-Russian parties such as the communists and the Progressive Socialists. Moreover, the church has become one of the most trusted institutions in the eyes of Ukrainians¹¹ with a growing influence on civil society in Ukraine,¹² while also being increasingly present in public speeches of Ukrainian politicians.¹³ Historically, this process of increasing influence in the secular and public domains was connected with the leading role of the church in the process of national-state building.¹⁴

ONE OF THE SIGNATURE features of Ukrainian religious life has been its pluralism.¹⁵ From the early 1990s till 2018, the Orthodox church in Ukraine co-existed with the Greek Catholic Church, the Roman Catholic Church, various Evangelical and Protestant churches, and smaller groups of Muslims and Jews. Moreover, the mainstream Orthodox church was split in three jurisdictions: the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP), the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC-KP), and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox

Church (UAOC). In different years and in different regions, this competition sometimes manifested in confrontations.¹⁶ This complex and plural configuration was institutionalized with the formation in 1996 of the All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations (ACCRO), which also played a very active role during the Euromaidan in 2014.¹⁷ Thus, religious pluralism has been tied with Ukrainian public and political spheres for a long time. It is worth mentioning that active competition between Orthodox jurisdictions contributed significantly to growing religious identities of Ukrainians.¹⁸

Therefore, Poroshenko's attempt to win voters' hearts with national and religious narratives was quite logical, given the whole history of religious revivals in Ukraine, the connection between religion and national state building, and previous electoral history. A careful investigation of his campaign by Denys Shestopalets¹⁹ showed that basic ideas in Poroshenko's public statements were previously expressed by former President Viktor Yushchenko and by the founder of the UOC-KP, Patriarch Filaret.²⁰ Interestingly, this research shows that Poroshenko's statements about the Orthodox church can be divided in two distinct periods: before and after April 2018. Initially, his rhetoric was calm and neutral; then he started framing autocephaly as not a religious but a political issue. He connected the political independence of Ukraine with the autocephalous status of the Orthodox church, while also arguing that autocephaly would be an important protection against Moscow's influence.

SINCE UKRAINIAN POLITICIANS do not have the authority to grant any Orthodox church its independence and autocephaly, it was Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople who signed the Tomos in 2019.²¹ The role of Poroshenko and his team

in this process was pivotal. They made a lot of diplomatic efforts to convince Bartholomew and Ukrainian political elites that the OCU had to be organized. Moreover, Poroshenko played a critical role in convincing Filaret (head of the Kyivan Patriarchate at the time) to step aside from a competition for the leadership of the OCU and to pass this appointment to Archbishop Epiphanes. Nevertheless, it was also a convenient historical moment shaped by the changing power dynamics within global orthodoxy, which pushed the Ecumenical Patriarch to reclaim his canonical primacy over the Metropolinate of Kyiv, against the competing claims of the Moscow Patriarchate. Moreover, after the Russian annexation of Crimea as well as Russian involvement in the conflict in Donbas, Ukrainian political elites and intellectuals were inclined to work towards the unification of Ukrainian orthodoxy in a new autocephalous Orthodox Church of Ukraine.

THE UKRAINIAN NATION reacted quite positively to the idea of a new independent Orthodox church. Polls showed that 43.9% of all Orthodox respondents supported the OCU. Another 15.2% claimed affiliation with the Moscow Patriarchate, and quite a large proportion, 38.4%, claimed to be “simply Orthodox”.²² At the same time, previous studies showed that ordinary non-MP Orthodox Ukrainians also displayed nationalistic preferences (in terms of language usage or voting for more pro-Ukrainian parties).²³ Therefore, it was natural to expect that such national support for the Tomos would have a significant effect on electoral support for Poroshenko. Yet, Petro Poroshenko lost significantly. Perhaps his defeat was the reason why researchers by default dismissed religion as an important variable in their studies. For instance, exit polls and representative surveys were mostly focused on such variables as region, age, gender, education, and ignored religion altogether. Thus, there was little study of the actual influence of religious preferences. Many published polling data or analyses by pundits and researchers entirely omitted the variable of religion. Yet, many have taken for granted that religion did not play any role in the elections. However, the simple fact that Poroshenko lost does not mean that religion did not play a role. I will briefly investigate and discuss this issue in this article. The empirical part of this article is focused on some descriptive statistics to navigate future discussions. More research could be done in future with possible additional control variables and inferential models.

Survey data evidence

From March 7th to March 17th, 2019 a polling agency, Vox Populi, conducted a relatively small national survey on behalf of the analytical think-tank Vox Ukraine. The fieldwork was supported by the International Renaissance Foundation as a part of the project “Ukrainians on the Political Compass”. The size of the sample is 1,200 with an error margin of no more than 3%. This survey is representative of the urban and rural population of Ukraine. Although the main focus of this survey was political ideology, it also included a question about religious affiliation. Despite the relatively small size of the sample, it was comparable with other larger polls regarding the electoral predictions (Table 1).

Table 1.

If the presidential elections were held next Sunday and the following candidates were presented, who would you vote for?

	Vox Populi, March 7-17, 2019, N=1,200	KIIS, March 20-26, 2019, N=1,600	Rating, March 22-27, 2019, N=3,000	Central Election Commission of Ukraine, Official results, March 31, 2019
Volodymyr Zelensky	21.3%	17.8%	20.6%	30.24%
Petro Poroshenko	13.2%	11.7%	12.9%	15.95%
Yulia Tymoshenko	11.6%	8.3%	13%	13.4%
Yurii Boiko	7.3%	7.1%	7.4%	11.67%
Anatolii Hrytsenko	6.5%	5.4%	7.4%	6.91%

Who supported the new Orthodox Church of Ukraine? In the Vox Populi data which we analyzed the distribution of religious groups was the following (Table 2). In the same vein to reviewed polls and research, most of our respondents belong to Orthodox church with no partitions (34 percent) and the Orthodox Church of Ukraine (22 percent).

Table 2.

Religious affiliation (n=1,200)

Religious group	Percentage
Orthodox with no partition	34%
Orthodox Church of Ukraine	22%
Moscow patriarchate	16%
Greek Catholics	10%
Atheists	10%
All other answers	8%

Looking at the regional distribution of OCU supporters, they were mostly concentrated in Center, Western, and Northern Ukraine. They had much smaller representation in the East and South when compared to all other religious groups. They were quite similar to all other religious groups in terms of basic demographics such as age and gender.; i.e. mean age of 47-48 with mostly women, 56%-58% respectively. In contrast, a group of Ukrainians atheists comprises a younger and mostly male population.

Table 3.

Socio-demographic profile by religious groups

Religious group	Orthodox Church of Ukraine (N=266)	All other religious groups (N=811)	Atheists (N=123)
Men	44%	42%	68%
Women	56%	58%	32%
Mean age	48	47	41
East	6%	14%	29%
South	11%	16%	20%
North	17%	12%	10%
Center	34%	25%	24%
Kyiv	4%	7%	12%
West	28%	26%	5%
Total	100%	100%	100%

How did they support political candidates? Table 4 shows the top 5 choices of respondents by religious affiliation. There is a clear tendency that Ukrainians who identified with the new Orthodox Church of Ukraine supported Poroshenko far more than any other group. They also showed less support for Zelensky. Notably, their support for Hrytsenko was quite small, even though he was a popular candidate in some Western Ukraine cities. Thus, one could argue that religion was a stronger predictor for swing voters between Poroshenko and Hrytsenko than region.

Table 4.

Top 5 candidates by religious groups

Religious group	Orthodox Church of Ukraine (N=266)	All other religious groups (N=811)	Atheists (N=123)	All (1200)
Petro Poroshenko	24%	11%	6%	13%
Volodymyr Zelensky	17%	22%	26%	21%
Yulia Tymoshenko	14%	12%	4%	12%
Hard to say, undecided	13%	15%	17%	15%
Anatolii Hrytsenko	7%	7%	2%	7%

The same variables presented above can be utilized in a simple logistic regression model for the simple purpose of testing the significance of their effects. More thorough investigation needs

to be done if one would like to model which variables can predict voting for Poroshenko. A better model should include more contextual variables and be more theoretically driven. Table 5 presents a series of simple models just to recapitulate the discussion about the socio-demographic profile and religiosity of respondents.

These models include the following variables: log of age; gender (man = 1, women = 0), language (Ukrainian = 1, all other languages = 0); region (combined "East and South", combined "North and Center", West, Kyiv); religion (the OCU, all other religious groups, atheists). The dependent variable is the probability of voting for Poroshenko if the elections were next Sunday.

In line with what was already discussed above, both "other religious groups" and atheists tend to show less support for Poroshenko than the supporters of the OCU (reference category). East/South regions (reference category) also tend to show less support for Poroshenko when compared to North/Center and Western regions. Men and Ukrainian speakers tend to have higher support for Poroshenko than women and people with other language preferences (including the mix of Russian and Ukrainian) respectively, whereas age does not play a significant role.

Table 5.

Probability of voting for Poroshenko and basic socio-demographic variables

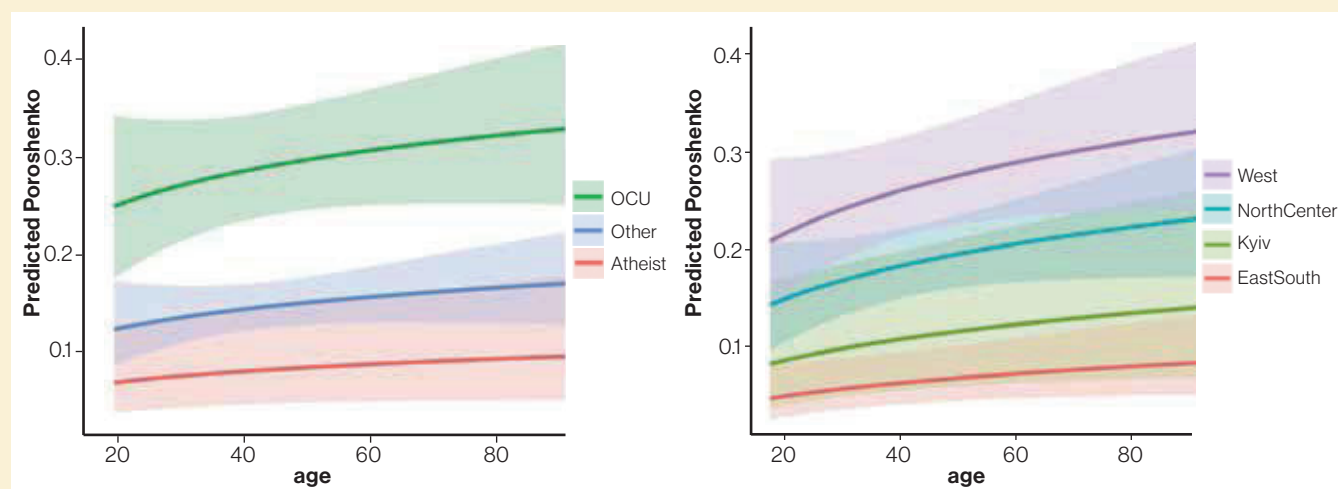
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Intercept	-1.83 (0.80)*	-3.96 (0.81)***	-3.82 (0.88)***
Religion (reference - OCU)			
Other religious groups	-0.89 (0.17) ***		-0.77 (0.17)***
Atheists	-1.60 (0.37) ***		-1.13 (0.39)**
Region (reference - East/South)			
Kyiv		0.56 (0.41)	0.42 (0.42)
North/Center		1.15 (0.24) ***	0.64 (0.25)*
West		1.60 (0.25) ***	0.94 (0.27)***
Male			0.36 (0.16)*
Ukrainian language			1.06 (0.25)***
Log of age	0.25 (0.20)	0.35 (0.21)	0.32 (0.21)
AIC	1,053	1,040	999

Signif. codes: 0 '****' 0.001 '***' 0.01 '**' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

For the sake of illustration, Figure 1 plots predicted probabilities for Model 1 and Model 2, respectively. These figures also plot confidence intervals for each estimate. In case of Model 2 (image to the right) one can see that confidence intervals of some regions overlap significantly, thus the role of regions in predicting the probability of Poroshenko's support is not so salient. The

Figure 1.

Predicted probabilities for voting for Poroshenko: Model 1 and Model 2.



difference between Western and Eastern/Southern regions is salient, while differences between other regions are not clear. In contrast, Model 1 shows quite a salient difference between the OCU supporters and everyone else. All in all, the role of religion seems to be more salient vis-a-vis the role of regions. However, more investigation is needed to include other variables as well.

Contextual data of religious transfers

Ukraine has witnessed a considerable amount of church competition between the Orthodox jurisdictions.²⁴ Comparative sociological literature on church competition makes a strong case that in a competitive environment, religious actors are more active, i.e. they adapt to the needs of their congregations. Consequently, people tend to be more loyal and active participants of religious communities.²⁵ Moreover, when church competition is present, religious organizations simply cater to more specific niches, which again maximizes the number of religious participants in a given territory.

IN THE UKRAINIAN CONTEXT, the Tomos cannot be separated from the process of church competition. At the national level, clergy, intellectual and political elites championed structural changes to the Orthodox church in Ukraine, arguing that all jurisdictions must join one single autocephalous church. This idea caused a series of protests and public debates, since not all religious and political groups agreed to the change.²⁶ To date, there is no research on the actual motivation of those parishes that changed their affiliation from the Moscow Patriarchate to the OUC. Their commitment to the Tomos may have had different reasons. The transition could have been promoted by local priests or by community members themselves. The support of local political activists could also have played some role. Regardless the motivation and key actors, in the end some communities were exposed to the process of religious transformation. Did this exposure have

any effect on electoral outcomes? This question can be analyzed with the data from the precincts.

For this exercise, I refer to the data on the transition of parishes from the Moscow Patriarchate to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine. A map of such transitions was published online and has been used by the research community.²⁷ These data should be treated carefully. They are based on media and sometimes self-made reports by the local activists. They may include both transitions and attempted transitions as well as ongoing transitions. Also, a few transitions were registered *after* the elections. Nevertheless, for the purpose of this article, I treat these data as a signal of church competition and exposure to religious change.

These data of religious transitions are merged with the data on electoral results for the second round of elections at the level of precincts. Overall, there are 510 cases of transition in the final dataset (Table 6). 510 is a relatively small number. In total, the dataset has 29,965 observations (excluding foreign electoral precincts).

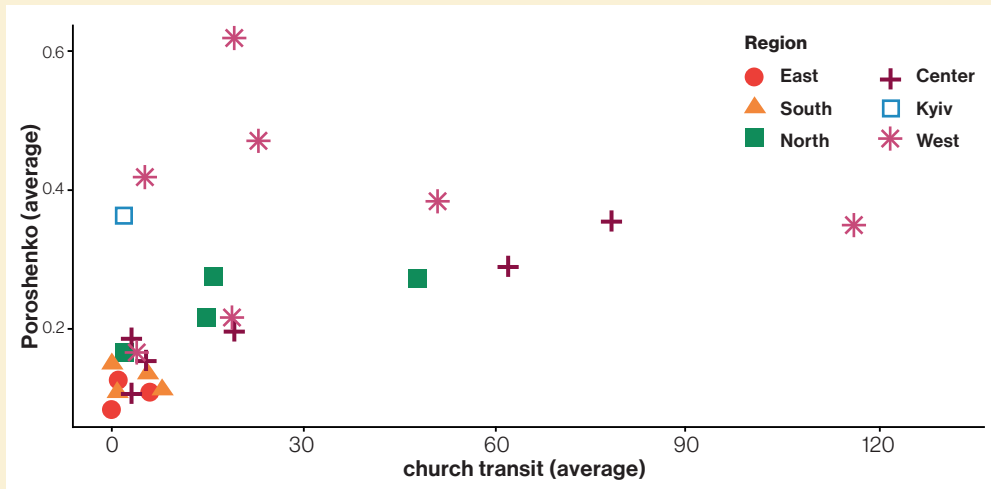
Table 6.

Transitions from the Moscow Patriarchate to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine

Region	City	Village/Small town
East	1	6
South	1	14
North	0	81
Center	1	167
West	0	237
Kyiv	2	–

Figure 2.

Number of transitions and support for Poroshenko



In terms of precincts, the dataset includes only 1.7% of such places where a church made a transition (in a village or in a city nearby the precinct). Yet, a closer look at these few cases can reveal something interesting. Figure 2 plots the total number of transitioned churches (x-axis) and the average vote for Poroshenko (y-axis) for each oblast. Oblasts are classified by regions and marked on a plot with colors and shapes.

FIGURE 2 SHOWS that the correlation at the level of oblasts is quite modest. The West and Kyiv gave Poroshenko a lot of votes regardless of the number of transitions. However, other regions

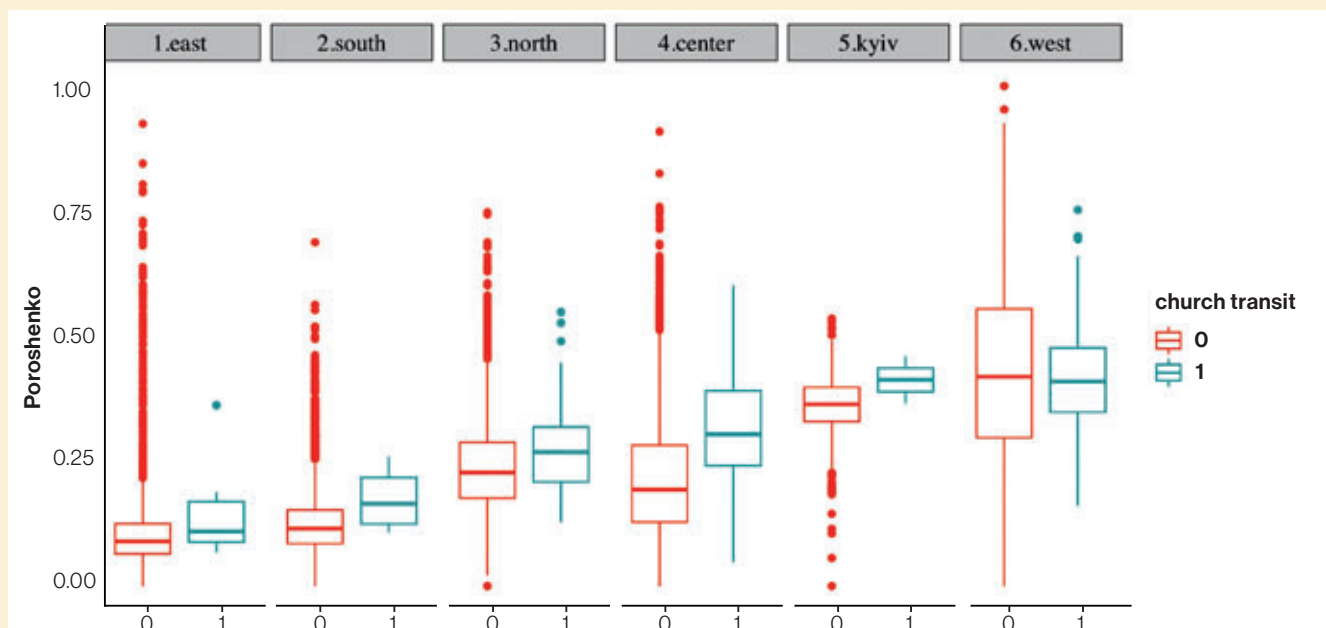
display an interesting pattern. Moving from East to South and then to North and Center, we see more support for Poroshenko in oblasts with more transitions.

This pattern is better seen at the level of precincts. Please note that in some regions, the number of transitions was very small (back to Table 6). Nevertheless, it is interesting to compare a few villages where the Tomos was taken seriously against other local territories (Figure 3).

Figure 3 shows the support for Poroshenko in each region in places where transition did not happen versus places where transition happened. In all regions except Western Ukraine, the pattern is the same – places with the effect of the Tomos displayed higher levels of support for Poroshenko. Western Ukraine gave a lot of voices to Poroshenko in all precincts, regardless of religious transition.

Figure 3.

Median support for Poroshenko at the level of precincts by church transitions (by regions).



small villages. This connection was seen in all regions, especially in the North and Center. Western Ukraine was the exception. Most likely the effect of the Tomos there was redundant since the local population already supported Poroshenko.

Summary and implications

After Poroshenko lost the 2019 elections, some experts argued that his emphasis on identity politics and the Tomos during the campaign was a mistake because this message did not resonate with Ukrainians. At the same time, researchers observed that the Ukrainian population largely supported the idea of the Tomos and the UOC. Moreover, extensive sociological scholarship has long argued that religion is a crucial component of the Ukrainian political process. Thus, a conundrum was posed: how come such popular efforts in attaining the Tomos did not translate into electoral support? The assumption that the Tomos did not pay off for Poroshenko seems to be based on a simple observation that he lost. However, this does not mean that there was no effect at all. Surprisingly, to date there was no systematic empirical effort to evaluate the effect of the Tomos on elections: was it absent altogether, was it restricted to some particular groups of people, or was it constrained by some structural conditions?

IN THIS ARTICLE I addressed this issue and employed two datasets: (1) a survey conducted before the first round of elections; (2) a merged dataset of church transitions (from the Moscow Patriarchate to the UOC) at the level of villages/cities with the electoral results at the level of precincts. The data show that the Tomos and the UOC did influence electoral preferences and electoral behavior. The survey dataset confirms that people who identified with the UCO also supported Poroshenko. Thus, religious preferences did play a role in shaping electoral attitudes. According to the second database, those places where churches changed their affiliation from the Moscow patriarchate to the UOC also showed higher support for Poroshenko (especially in central Ukraine).

The main implication of these findings is that the Tomos did play some role. It would be wrong to say that it did not. However, the effect was small and was limited to a small number of places where religious transition actually happened. Therefore, researchers could ask new empirical questions to explore the role of religion further: (1) Why did transitions happen in these particular places? Is there any omitted variable that can explain both religious transition and the support for Poroshenko in these villages/cities? (2) What was the mechanism that channeled people's religious preferences into electoral support for Poroshenko?

Possible answers to this question can be derived from the literature in political sociology and social movements as well as the broader theoretical literature on micro-to-macro transitions. The first stream of the literature is occupied with the big question of how people are mobilized for collective action (such as voting). This literature is vast and points to the importance of social background, grievances, resources, media, political campaigns, and opportunities for mobilization. The takeaway point

here is that there could be a small group of people with stronger preferences for certain ideologies, religious worldviews, and political candidates. It is likely that this particular group of people found Poroshenko's campaign appealing. Therefore, the Tomos did translate into electoral support, but the size of the group was small and not enough to bring victory. Still, this is not the same as saying that there was no effect at all.

ANOTHER LINE OF LITERATURE is rather broad and points to the fact that both individual agency and social structures must be considered. Although this framework is popularized in sociology under the label of analytical sociology,²⁸ it is also quite common in social movement studies.²⁹ According to this theory, a change at the macro level (e.g. a link from the Tomos to Poroshenko's electoral success) requires specific opportunities and incentives for people to behave in a certain way, and that their behavior should be mediated by structural and institutional conditions. In simple words, in some cases support for the Tomos did boost support for Poroshenko, and in some places it did not. To give an example, perhaps there were not enough structural opportunities for people who supported the Tomos also to vote for Poroshenko. For example, imagine a scenario where for some reason Poroshenko did not campaign strongly in a region inhabited by pro-Tomos Ukrainians while campaigning in those places where people did not care much about the Tomos. Such a mismatch clearly constrains incentives of potential supporters to actually vote for Poroshenko while not offering any strong incentive to his opponents. Another example could be if local priests decided to oppose the Tomos. In this scenario, the local population that supported Poroshenko did not feel that their religious preferences were catered for, which discouraged them from voting for their candidate.

In all these scenarios, personal preferences that are manifested in surveys are clearly not enough to produce electoral support. These preferences should be channeled at the level of precincts with favorable incentives. Therefore, religious preferences for the UOC should interact with electoral preferences and also meet actual change at the structural level (church transition). My data analysis is indicative that when people have already strong electoral support for Poroshenko, then the additional effect of religion is not significant (i.e. Western Ukraine on Figure 3). However, when people live in other regions with lower support for Poroshenko and their personal preferences match with structural changes, then their preferences are more likely to be transformed in electoral support.

Caveats and prospects for further research

My analysis, of course, is limited to simple descriptive exercises. Moreover, my final propositions are drawn on the literature and my interpretation of the descriptive statistics. Such analysis is at risk of omitting confounding effects. For example, one could argue that the observed patterns could be partially explained by social capital and peer pressure, i.e. people in smaller villages

coordinate better in deciding on local agendas, including which church to support or whom to vote for. More robust hypothesis testing is necessary to advance this research agenda. ✖

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“The role of religion in peacebuilding is undervalued”

Tetiana Kalenychenko, an expert in religion and conflict resolution, in conversation with Yuliya Yurchuk on how religion can be an instrument in conflict transformation.

by **Yuliya Yurchuk**

Y

ou are both a researcher and an expert working with conflict resolution projects. You directly apply your academic knowledge to solving practical issues. Can you tell us more about your own position as a scholar and as an engaged citizen? Can we say that you are both an activist and a researcher?

“First of all, I wouldn’t say that I am a hundred-percent academic because now I am more engaged in projects outside academia than in work at the University. My work for NGOs occupies much more of my time than my work in academia. On the other hand, I cannot say that I am an activist. I think that I am very privileged to be able to combine academic work with projects outside academia. My knowledge as a researcher enriches the practice. I implement some theoretical ideas in practice and see how they work in the projects. The work with NGOs, on the other hand, gives food for reflection in my research. Coming back to the question whether I can call myself an activist: During the period before I became fully immersed in academia, before defending my PhD-dissertation, I would say that I was an activist. It was especially obvious during the Maidan protests. During the protests on Maidan I was a volunteer. Later in 2014-2015 during the conflict in Donbas I also volunteered and worked together with chaplains on the front line. I also helped families who suffered because of the conflict. I was very active in all the volunteer work. During that period, I would definitely call myself an activist.

“But in 2015 I started to work professionally in the civil society sphere. That was the point when I stopped being an activist. At least I cannot call my professional activities a part of civic activism. In my opinion, activists work for their idea voluntarily; they are not paid for their work. For me, this work became my profession. I studied conflict resolution and conflict transformation and now I am dealing with these issues professionally. I am not a volunteer anymore so I cannot say I am an activist.”

Do you see some tensions between your work as an expert in different projects and a lecturer at the University?

“I teach only part-time, mainly students who take distance-learning courses. I can be flexible with my time and devote most of my energy to different projects in NGOs. At Ukrainian universities, there is almost no time for research; almost all research activities are unpaid. In contrast to this, my analytical skills are needed and valued in the projects I work with. For instance, I am currently working with the US Institute of Peace within the Dialogue in Action project. They needed me precisely because of my dissertation topic (the role of religion in conflict transformation). I am happy that my research was needed, and people are interested in its further development. Within



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the project we cooperate with different ministries and other state institutions where I can see that the results of my research are applicable in practice. That is why the combination of academia and NGO seems perfect for me now. It is both interesting for me and needed by society.

“Because I am a professional working in the NGO I have access to people and information which would never be available otherwise. I am not a sociologist or an anthropologist who would come from outside, take an interview and leave. I am always in this environment that also is my research interest. Moreover, I am a part of it. I would never get this knowledge without direct experience. All my knowledge from academia can be applied here.

“The specificity of my work depends on the projects. I work as a trainer and dialogue facilitator. In these roles, my main task is to build up communication processes between different groups. Often these are different religious groups because I mainly work with religious actors. I learn a lot in the process of my work. I see that religion has great potential in conflict resolution because it can provide a platform, a safe space, for all parties involved in the conflicts, because all religions are ideally neutral and directed to the good of all members of the community.”

Can you tell more about these projects that your work depends on?

“A project I am involved in is linked to the Peaceful Change initiative. It is an international group of experts in conflict transformation who are working in Syria, Libya, Caucasus, Balkans and Ukraine. In Ukraine, I collected information about all the projects on peacebuilding: Who are the mediators and facilitators working in the country, what work is being done, which trends are visible in this work, which factors of escalation and de-escalation of the armed conflict can we distinguish. Together with Tatiana Kyselova and Dialogue and Mediation Research Centre we have even developed a special instrument for the evaluation of dialogue initiatives by different parties in the conflict. In Armenia, I worked with young people and developed a methodology for training future community facilitators and mentors. Now the people whom I taught are giving workshops to their own students.

I also work for the NGO *Institute of Peace and Common Ground*, developing methodological materials and conduct training courses for civil activists. We are working with the Ministry of Education of Ukraine on the project ‘Peaceful School’ which is focused on communication in schools based not on punishment but on dialogue and communication. We work with children, teachers, and parents.”

What role does religion play in those peacebuilding processes?

“Religion is included in all these projects as one of the factors. But there are specific NGOs where religion plays a central role. These are the Dialogue in Action project, based on ‘Spirit and Letter’ and the Center of St. Clement at Kyiv Mohyla Academy. In these projects, religion is regarded as the main component in peacebuilding. We started our work on the projects there in 2016. It is interesting that different foundations find us by themselves and are willing to finance our activities. Here, religious actors are important players in all roles. We identified that in small communities, it is the religious actors who enjoy trust of the community and who have access to all the community’s members. We noticed that if we invite religious actors to our work with the community, then the work process changes. It becomes much easier to work. Moreover, we can see a transformation in group dynamics when we include religious actors in the peace transformation projects. We can clearly see that religious actors often do the same things that the NGOs do, so we simply bring them together. In these projects, we worked with Christians, Muslims, Jews, even neo-pagan groups, but most often with Christians of different confessions. We let them meet and find solutions for the better life of the community together. We also put a lot of energy into publishing. Recently we

published a translation of a text by a Mennonite, who is one of the important theoreticians on peacebuilding and conflict resolution – John Paul Lederach, and another book of our friend from Balkans – Goran Bozicevic. We are trying to create a literature basis that enriches practice with theory.”

What is specific about Ukraine and what does Ukraine have in common with other countries in conflict situations?

“First, I should emphasize that the conflict in Ukraine is not a religious conflict. The particularity of Ukrainian situation, though, is that religion here is closely entwined with social and political life. This raises new questions about the potential of religions and religious leaders to influence peacebuilding and conflict transformation. Because religion is closely linked to other spheres of life, there are close connections between religious actors and political actors, communities, and business structures. Moreover, there is already an established image of religion. Such a deep penetration of religion in different spheres of life presents both risks and opportunities. Religious actors have contacts with practically everyone in society, which is why they can reach many people and present a platform for building a constructive dialogue. On the other hand, in order to present such a platform and a safe

“I see that religion has great potential in conflict resolution because it can provide a platform, a safe space, for all parties involved in the conflicts.”

space, religious actors have to stay neutral. This latter part – staying neutral – is practically absent now. This is the problem that interests me most in my research right now. There is the concept of ‘insider mediators’ in conflict transformation research. These are the people who are peacebuilders in the very essence of their societal roles. They are the people to whom others come to solve their problems and conflicts. Very often these people are priests because people generally trust them. In Ukraine, though, the situation is too complicated. We have not only several religions or several confessions, we have several churches in one confession, which creates many communities within one community. This deepens the lines between narratives about the conflict and about the identities of parties involved. The churches often deepen the identity crisis that many Ukrainians feel after Maidan. This is fruitful ground for perpetuation of the conflict. In a way, people want to find some support, but they see that even the church is split and unable to give them this support. On the other hand, there are some attempts to develop a united approach to conflict transformation among churches in the Council of Religions of Ukraine, but these attempts are individual cases, rather than a concrete united initiative. These projects come from para-religious organizations, which are secular organizations with close links to religious actors (Eleos Ukraine as of Orthodox Church of Ukraine, or Caritas in the both Greek-Catholic and Roman-Catholic Churches, ADRA for Adventists etc). These are secular initiatives created by religious organizations. The people involved in these projects may be secular but the funding and organizational support comes from religious institutions too.


“If we compare the conflict situation in Ukraine with other conflicts, we can say we have a quite specific case. For instance, in the Balkan conflict, religion was an important element of identity, and religious organizations had concrete standpoints about the conflict. In Ukraine, the identities of the conflicting parties are blurred; the religious component is not strong. We deal mainly with the same religion, whereby the churches do not always express a united standpoint.

“The hybrid nature of the conflict in Donbas makes everything more complicated because this hybridity blurs the lines and definitions of the conflict. I personally know people who work in the church and try to serve the spiritual needs of their parishes, but the external circumstances influence the church even if we think about spirituality. If we think about the changes which the societies on the two sides of the conflict underwent during these five years, we can see that the gap between the people is growing. The economic, political and social conditions differ too much. Religion could create the platform for negotiations and dialogue, especially at grassroots level. It should be stressed that it is not only states that have to establish this dialogue. The dialogue should be built up from below. Let’s imagine that by some miracle the conflict is settled, the territories are back under the Ukrainian government’s control. How will life continue if the bonds between the people were cut? A lot of work will be needed to rebuild these bonds. Religion could help then. The fact is, though, that religious groups are split. The churches are split. So, this opportunity is mainly missed. The conflict revealed all the missed opportunities since Ukraine became independent. Suffice to say that we started speaking about Muslims only when it became trendy after the annexation of Crimea. Moreover, the Muslim community itself, which is not that numerous, is also split.”

Can you tell us how well the question of religion in conflict resolution is developed in the theoretical literature?

“The component of religion in conflict resolution is a rather new research field. Religion is often considered as an important element in the Islamic context but as my dissertation shows, there are different contexts where other religions are important factors in conflict situations. In Ukraine, we have a so-called ‘arbitrary’ religious conflict. That means that there is no conflict about religion as such, but there is a conflict about resources that involves religious actors. Here I mainly refer to the conflicts between different Orthodox churches and between different Muslim organizations in Ukraine.”

What do you think Ukrainian experts in conflict transformation can teach the world in regard to their own professional experiences?

“We have been developing our methodology and analytical frameworks for years and now we can see that the material we have is much more advanced than all the tools we had from the beginning of the conflict which were mainly ‘imported’. Ukraine is like a laboratory now. We can observe what can possibly happen in society when hybrid war becomes a reality, when post-truth and fake news set the daily agenda. I feel that we are in an experimental field and if we cope with the problems, we will set examples for others. We will be experts in survival strategies, so to speak. Our success will be a good sign for other societies.” 

“The conflict in Ukraine is not a religious conflict. The particularity of Ukrainian situation, though, is that religion here is closely entwined with social and political life.”



Viktor Yelensky, Professor of Studies of Religions, Dragomanov National Pedagogical University, Kyiv. He is a member of the Ukrainian Parliament of the 8th convocation and a member of the Ukrainian delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

“The war has become a serious challenge for religious actors in Ukraine”

Viktor Yelensky, professor of religion, in a conversation with Yuliya Yurchuk on the position of religions in Ukraine, and different religious actors in the ongoing military conflict in a broader perspective.

by **Yuliya Yurchuk**

W

hen we read about religion in post-Soviet countries after 1991, it is often the narrative about the religious revival which prevails. Suddenly, societies where religion was banned got permission to go to church, goes the narrative. At the same time, not many people practice religious rituals or observe rules or even go to church. Some scholars even speak about belonging without believing.

To what extent can we speak about a religious revival in Ukraine after the collapse of the Soviet Union? Was there a break with Soviet atheism or are there some continuities of Soviet legacies which can be seen even today? If so, what are these legacies?

“The religious revival in Ukraine began about a decade and a half before the collapse of the Soviet Union. This revival revealed itself in a manifestation of popular religiosity, a growing interest in religion on the part of the intelligentsia, appeal to the religion of young people, mass listening to Western radio broadcasting, increasing numbers of adult baptisms and frank mockery of state-sponsored atheism. The most numerous Ukrainian religious underground in the whole Europe (Greek Catholics, Evangelicals, Jehovah Witnesses) was consolidated and signaled their willingness to leave the catacombs. Religion received more and more social encouragement, religious practices intensified, and religious attributes (icons, body crosses, church candles) were actively spread. I analyzed the reasons for this phenomenon in my chapter ‘The Revival before the Revival: Popular and Institutionalized Religion in Ukraine on the Eve of the Collapse of Communism’.¹

“What happened after the fall of Communism was the powerful entry of religion into the public sphere, the mass opening of early closed religious buildings and the renewal of religious communities, the reestablishment of church structures, theological education, missionary activities, social work, and the revitalization of religious culture de-

formed in Soviet era. Churches began to play their own, often important role in a public and political life. Religion has also emerged as an important factor in political, cultural and ethnic mobilization, as well as in the legitimization of such crucial popular movements as the Orange Revolution 2004 and the Revolution of Dignity 2013-2014. Does all this mean that Ukrainians became religious and strive for the sacred en masse? It is difficult to say, but anyway, Ukrainians demonstrate what can be called 'average European behavior' with regard to religion. It should be mentioned that in the west of the country, religiosity is higher and religious behavior is more consistent. The survey conducted by the Razumkov Center in October 2019 showed that 20% of the respondents said that they had attended a religious service in the previous week."

To what extent can we speak about the secularization of Ukrainian society?

"Religion in Ukraine will probably not leave the public space and will not limit itself solely to the 'space of individual human souls'. Religious institutions expressed their political positions in practically all electoral campaigns. They also take open and clear positions in regard to the plans of Euro-Atlantic integration and Russian aggression. Most Ukrainian presidents and top politicians use religious rhetoric. No public figure in the sphere of politics, culture or art openly positions themselves as atheist. By the way, it is dramatically different to the position held by Ukrainian state and nation-builders in the early 20th century who had *Kobzar*, a book of poetry by Taras Shevchenko, and *Das Kapital* by Karl Marx in their pockets, to put it metaphorically."

The Orthodox Church of Ukraine finally got the Tomos in 2019. However, it did not result in the unification of Orthodox churches; instead, it led to even further fragmentation. How do you assess the present situation of the Orthodox churches in Ukraine and the possible development of the situation in the future?

"Granting the Tomos to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine is a truly historical event. Millions of Ukrainians who were called 'graceless schismatics' because they belonged to the church that did not have canonical status were returned to the embrace of the canonical church. The obstacle to church independence was not only the Russian Orthodox Church but also the whole arsenal of the Russian state. The struggle is not over yet but it seems that Russia lost this battle. I think that the development of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine is dynamic. This year about 540 communities from Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate transferred to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine. This church has strong support from Ukrainian intellectual elites. The attempted coup organized by Filaret (Patriarch of Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Kyiv Patriarchate) and actively supported by pro-Russian groups failed. Russia tried to cause a split in Orthodoxy, but no Orthodox church has severed links with Constantinople so far. Russia also tried to organize the isolation of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine but these efforts failed. Now the Orthodox Church of Ukraine has many hopes for the future and is concentrating on the quality of religious life, the development of theological education, and missionary activities."

Considering the fact that each main Church in Ukraine relates to Kyivan tradition as their origin, do you see any possibility for the churches to find mutual understanding about this past? Will these interpretations always differ or is there a chance for reconciliation? What is needed for such reconciliation?

"There were several initiatives in Ukraine dealing with the shared past of the Christianization of Kyiv Rus' (often referred to as 'Volodymyr's Christianization', 'Dnieper font', 'Kyiv tradition', etc.). What is interesting, is that it was most often the initiative of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. There is still little cooperation between churches in the questions about their past. Despite misunderstandings about the past, there are instances of fruitful cooperation for the common future. The intensity of the conflict between the churches is not so great that we need to speak about reconciliation. Even in their 'hottest' stages, these conflicts in contemporary Ukraine have never reached the level of the Protestant-Catholic conflict in Northern Ireland."

In Ukraine, as in many post-Soviet countries, religion and politics are very close. As a result, the religious sphere is very politicized. Is there any chance for religion to become less influenced by politics? What is needed to achieve a separation of political and religious spheres, in your opinion?

"Religion is inseparable from politics, especially when it comes to large human communities. The leadership of the church which unites thousands or even millions of people cannot stand aside and express no position about life outside the Church. The Churches are dealing with people who are born, live and die under certain conditions and the Church cannot ignore these conditions. Church leadership also ought to propose to its believers a way they

"Religion became an important factor in political, cultural and ethnic mobilization and the legitimization of post-Soviet popular movements."

should live in 'this world' which would align with their religious belief. Believers in Ukraine often faced severe challenges which were thrown at them by this world, such as wars, revolutions, turbulent social changes, but the religious leaders did not always give them adequate guidelines. I personally think that religion is always about politics. Even the questions of individual salvation are about the ways one lives here and now, how one should interact with others, whether one can and should participate in certain events or not."

What is the role of religious actors at times of war and military conflict in Ukraine? Religion can both split and unite communities: Which role does it play in Ukraine? Is there potential for religion to act for peace building?

"The war has become a serious challenge for religious actors in Ukraine. Most of them condemned the aggression and called for believers to protect the country. They provided unconditional support for the Ukrainian army, volunteers, and forcibly displaced persons. The only exception is the leadership of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate. This church became one of the organized actors who justified aggression against Ukraine and an ardent critic of Ukrainian Euro-Atlantic foreign politics. Moreover, the leaders of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate used democratic institutions as tools for undermining democracy and democratic values in Ukraine. The peacebuilding potential of this church, which is one of the favorite topics of Kremlin propaganda, is non-existent since its leadership accuses not the aggressor but Ukraine in the war in Donbas. This position is openly pro-Russian. In general, all these demands for peace directed only to the Ukrainian side are unfair and unjust: It is not the Ukrainian state that initiated the war and it is not Ukraine which furthers it. Other churches in Ukraine were very active in peace-building initiatives in 2014-2015. For instance, Ukrainian Baptists and Pentecostals met with their Russian co-believers in third countries. Now Ukrainian churches are focusing on easing the fates of their co-believers in the occupied territories and in the annexed Crimea where religious freedoms are severely suppressed."

"All these demands for peace directed only to the Ukrainian side are unfair and unjust: It is not the Ukrainian state that initiated the war and it is not Ukraine which furthers it."

Since the annexation of Crimea, more attention is being paid to Islam in Ukrainian public space. With Crimean Tatars who moved to inland Ukraine from the occupied peninsula, Islam became more visible, not only in Crimea. What is the future for Islam in Ukraine? Does the new government demonstrate an interest in supporting Muslim communities?

"Islam in Ukraine is as multifaceted as are the groups which belong to Islam. Historically those groups come from different ethnic communities, different cultures and have their own histories. From the very beginning of the war in Donbas, Ukrainian authorities supported Muslims, their rights and freedoms, including supporting those communities who are in Crimea. Thanks to Ukraine's efforts, resolutions were passed in the UN, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation (OSCE), condemning the suppression of religious freedoms in annexed Crimea. As a member of the Ukrainian delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, I personally raised this question with Dunja Mijatović, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, during my visit there in April 2019.

"If we talk about the future of Islam in Ukraine, then I think that it will be developed in the conditions of competition between ethnic modifications of Islam, where Islam is an identity marker, and global modification, whose link to ethnic identity is not so strong. The latter form of Islam is getting more and more popular among Muslim youth in Europe." ❌

Note: This text is based on an interview conducted in October 2019.

reference

- 1 Viktor Yelensky, "The Revival before the Revival: Popular and Institutionalized Religion in Ukraine on the Eve of the Collapse of Communism" In, Catherine Wanner, ed., *State Secularism and Lived Religion in Soviet Russia and Ukraine*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 302-330.

The personal is political: Volodymyr Zelensky in the spotlight of the international mainstream media

by **Alla Marchenko**

abstract

In this article, I focus on the mainstream media coverage of the background of Volodymyr Zelensky, candidate for the position of President of Ukraine and, subsequently, the sixth President of Ukraine. The elections provoked a splash of international interest in Ukraine because of the unexpected candidate, a comedy actor with no prior political experience. This research shows that not only the professional, but also the ethnic background of Volodymyr Zelensky became an important topic in the international media during the presidential campaign and the elections of the President of Ukraine in 2019. Mentions of Zelensky's Jewish background were supported by references to certain stereotypical views about the history of Ukraine, and his elections were covered as an unexpected breakthrough – either from the Soviet or from the anti-Semitic past.

KEYWORDS: Volodymyr Zelensky, international mainstream media, media and elections, media image of Ukraine, personal background of a politician.

How is it possible to accept information about the world and about society as information about reality when one knows how it is produced?

Introduction

Global societal change become particularly visible in political transformations. Ukrainian society can be regarded as a model for understanding what “liquid modernity”,² in the sense of unpredictability and rapid changes, looks like in the political field. Until spring 2019, an observer of Ukrainian political life could count five presidents, two mass uprisings (known as the Orange Revolution of 2004 and Euromaidan from 2013 to 2014), as well as a long period of resistance to Russian hybrid aggression since 2014.³ The sixth President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky, was elected by 73.22% of the voters on April 21, 2019 – after being known as a public actor in the genre of comedy. The phenomenon of Zelensky's campaign was built on the image of his hero in a TV

President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky speaks to the media after he voted at the polling station during the parliamentary election on July 21, 2019.

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK



show called “Servant of the People”, an ex-teacher of the History of Ukraine, Vasyl’ Holoborod’ko, who was elected President of Ukraine. Due to the show’s format, which involves guessing the real names of politicians played by actors, and where the names of organizations and political events are explicitly given, it became “life-imitating art”.⁴ His electoral campaign (called the Ze-campaign, where *Ze* referred to the two first letters of his surname) and the rapid victory of an unexpected candidate with no prior political experience provoked a new splash of international interest in Ukraine. Some Ukrainian public intellectuals, for example, Oksana Zabuzhko, expressed their concerns internationally about Zelensky being a product of imitation and new media technologies rather than being a proper politician with a real agenda.⁵ However, it is difficult to call this phenomenon unique if you take into account that the three “Cs” that stand for *consumerism*, *celebrity* and *cynicism* have become a distinctive feature of contemporary politics, downplaying the traditional forms of associating politics with ideology.⁶ Examples of the most resonant outcomes of such politics are Donald Trump becoming the US’ president and the Brexit campaign for the exit of UK from the EU.

The rapid growth of Volodymyr Zelensky’s rating in 2019 could be explained by the dissatisfaction among Ukrainian citizens about the politics of his predecessor, Petro Poroshenko, fueled by the different campaign strategies of two candidates – a traditional strategy by Poroshenko and a “mediatized” strategy by Zelensky, who used social media and emotional appeals to the need for a total system change.⁷ The announcement about his participation in the presidential elections was made by Zelensky himself a few minutes before midnight on New Year’s Eve 2019 on the “1+1” TV channel, during the time for traditional presidential speeches on Ukrainian TV.⁸

THE COMPLEX POLITICAL SITUATION in Ukraine before the presidential elections in 2019 cannot, however, be fully understood without its religious element. The latter has undergone major shifts in the most prominent religious denomination called the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate)⁹ and significant losses in the minority communities, namely, the Crimean Tatars and the Jews, due to the annexation of Crimea and the military activities in Donbas.¹⁰ It was Poroshenko’s idea to finally separate the Ukrainian Orthodox Church from the Russian Orthodox Church in the “story of the Tomos” and receive the autocephaly of the Ukrainian Church under the protectorate of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in 2018.¹¹ Religious tensions have also divided the Ukrainian Orthodox Church under Moscow Patriarchate among those who stood for and against the idea of Ukrainian ecclesiastical independence.¹²

Petro Poroshenko based his presidential campaign in Ukraine

on three identity markers: “Army, Language, Faith”, stressing the army’s role in the fight with Russia and directing sentiments in line with ethnic identity. Euromaidan is suggested in a study in 2018 to be the turning point from ethnic to civic nationalism¹³ wherein “civic identity is gaining ground at the expense of ethno-nationalist identity”.¹⁴ However, this re-orientation of the societal understanding of the nation is not reflected in the politics of history. The list of publications of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance from 2018 to 2019 shows that most of the published material deals with Communist repression and Russian military aggression, with a few publications on Holodomor (the famine of 1932–1933) and Babyn Yar as the main Holocaust symbols in Ukraine.¹⁵ However, this re-orientation was not acknowledged by Poroshenko, who chose to base his electoral campaign on exclusivist ethno-nationalist identity markers. It is suggested here that those limitations and his narrow focus on “Army, Language, Faith” did not give him more than minor support and led to him losing the election.

In this article, I refer to questions of collective memory rather than history, defining collective memory as references and dis-

courses about events, processes and people associated with the historical past, strongly influenced by the present-day narratives.¹⁶ By default, collective memory in the mass media is restricted, as any topics associated with collective memory illustrate the news of the present.¹⁷ Some scholars even speak of the construction of a “reversed memory” in the mass media, meaning a narrative that commemorates past events by

referring to present-day events.¹⁸ At the same time, it is difficult not to notice a visible trend of mediatization of the memory “as the principal shaper of 21st century remembering through the medial gathering and splintering of individual, social, and cultural imaginaries”.¹⁹ Mediatization has become a tool for reconsidering the role and influence of media in contemporary society²⁰ and media are one of the most powerful shapers of memory. Astrid Erll emphasizes that the role of the mass media in triggering collective remembrance is particularly effective when combined with narratives and images.²¹ Overall, Zelensky’s electoral campaign was based on messages in various social media – Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, which turned out to be effective in challenging the markers of identity offered by Poroshenko as being not too important in a country that requires radical change.²²

THERE IS A TENDENCY to shape collective memory using the most influential mass media that represent the stereotypes of Western culture, and neglect local nuances – this may be called the “cannibalization of memory”.²³ This trend may also be approached from a different perspective by tracing the aspects of history

“THE COMPLEX POLITICAL SITUATION IN UKRAINE BEFORE THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN 2019 CANNOT BE FULLY UNDERSTOOD WITHOUT ITS RELIGIOUS ELEMENT.”

that are repeatedly mentioned from a certain perspective and what they say about the international media image of Ukraine. To this extent, my focus on the international media coverage of Zelensky and references to the history of Ukraine in connection with him will shed light on how the international media shapes their readers' image of Ukraine.

2019 was not the first time that Ukraine came to the attention of the international media. Earlier global themes concerned the war in Donbas (2014–2015) and the implementation of reforms after Euromaidan (2015–2016).²⁴ Both topics gradually disappeared from the mass media news, due to their enduring nature. In this text, I analyze the ways in which the international mass media construct an image of Ukraine, connecting the elections of a new president to the collective memory of Ukraine. Interestingly, some questions that were central for the international media – Zelensky's Jewish origins and discussions about Ukraine's past – were not evident in the Ukrainian media during Zelensky's presidential campaign, as the latter was based not so much on his agenda, but on criticism of Poroshenko's politics.²⁵

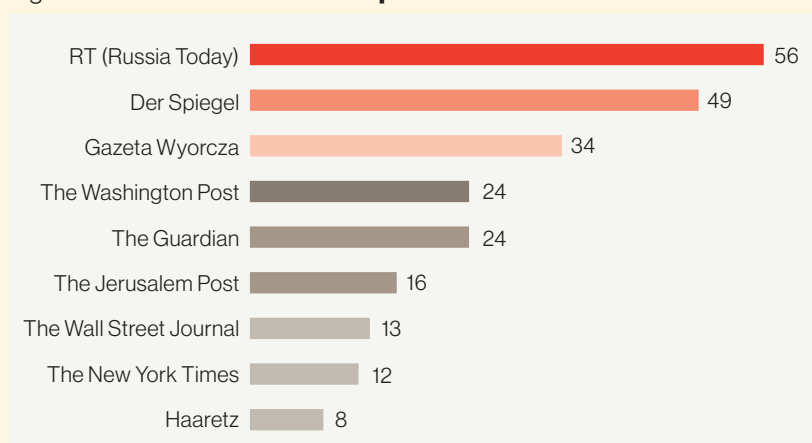
My main research question touches upon the formation of discourse on Volodymyr Zelensky in the influential international media during and after his presidential campaign. I am particularly interested in his background coverage by the media, and the way in which it is intertwined with the topics associated with the collective memory of Ukraine in mass media messages.

Methodology

The idea beyond selecting the newspapers was to take the media giants that shape the international context of events,²⁶ as well as the powerful media voices of the countries neighboring Ukraine. Thus, I have selected media messages from the following sources: *The New York Times* (US), *The Wall Street Journal* (US), *The Washington Post* (US), *The Guardian* (Great Britain), *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Poland), *RT*, former *Russia Today* (Russian Federation), *Haaretz* (Israel), *The Jerusalem Post* (Israel), *Der Spiegel* (Germany). They are selected for the reasons of popularity and symbolic power of these sources in their countries and abroad. However, I need to emphasize that The sources are not representative of all mass media on the topic. This research is rather an attempt to analyze a general framework of discussions about Volodymyr Zelensky from an international perspective.

SOME OF THESE MEDIA were produced in foreign countries directly involved in the current conflict in Ukraine or in the countries that have tensions with Ukrainian memory politics. By the former I mean media generated by Russia and its participation in a hybrid war using information as one of its significant weapons.²⁷ By the latter I mean the media in Poland, in which memory politics diverges dramatically from the official Ukrainian memory

Figure 1. **Distribution of articles per media**



politics of World War II²⁸ in relation to the Polish-Ukrainian conflict in Volhynia, Western Ukraine.²⁹ Germany and Israel also have a special position in framing their international memory debates in connection with the history of World War II. Moreover, both countries have a different relationship vis-à-vis the Eastern European nations. Israel's collective memory envisages Eastern Europe as the main site of the Holocaust with a complex relationship to the local population that could have collaborated with the Nazis,³⁰ while for Germany, Eastern Europe was an occupied territory and the Eastern European nations were consequently victims of the Nazi regime during World War II.³¹

I USED THE ONLINE RT (the most powerful international media voice of Russian mainstream politics in English), *Gazeta Wyborcza* (the most popular newspaper in Poland, also representing a critical view of Polish contemporary politics, including the politics of memory), *Der Spiegel* (as the most popular weekly magazine containing political news in Germany), *Haaretz* and *The Jerusalem Post* as two important newspapers in Israel representing more liberal (*Haaretz*)³² and less liberal views (*The Jerusalem Post*)³³. Most sources in the analysis are in English. The Polish newspaper and the German newspaper are published in Polish and German, respectively, and I analyzed their original texts using my own translation in this article.

I analyzed all articles that mentioned Volodymyr Zelensky from March to May, 2019. This was the period of the active presidential campaign in Ukraine, which included two rounds of presidential elections (March 31 and April 21, 2019) and the inauguration of Volodymyr Zelensky as President of Ukraine (May 20, 2019), provoking reflections in the mainstream media. This period could be characterized as a turning point in terms of rhetoric about a new and unexpected candidate, subsequently – the President of Ukraine – in the international media. Articles were selected according to the keyword “Zelensky”.³⁴ Number of articles in the analysis: 236 (their distribution per media can be seen in Figure 1).

In my analysis I have included opinion articles together with news articles, because they add to the image of Ukraine among its readers, and there were not enough of them to form a separate group (less than five). I concede that the authorship of many texts in the American and European media belonged to special correspondents in the region: namely, Georgi Kantchev in *The Wall Street Journal*, Anton Troianowski in *The Washington Post*, Andrew Roth and Shaun Walker in *The Guardian*, Andrew Higgins in *The New York Times*, Piotr Andrusieczko in *Gazeta Wyborcza* and Christian Esch and Christina Hebel in *Der Spiegel*. Articles in *The Jerusalem Post*, *Haaretz* and *RT* had numerous authors, including news agencies.

I conducted a qualitative content analysis using MaxQDA software. This method allowed me to count the frequencies of certain words and phrases in their context and thereby make conclusions about the establishment of rhetoric on Volodymyr Zelensky as a “dark horse” – an unexpected and unknown player – in the national politics of Ukraine.

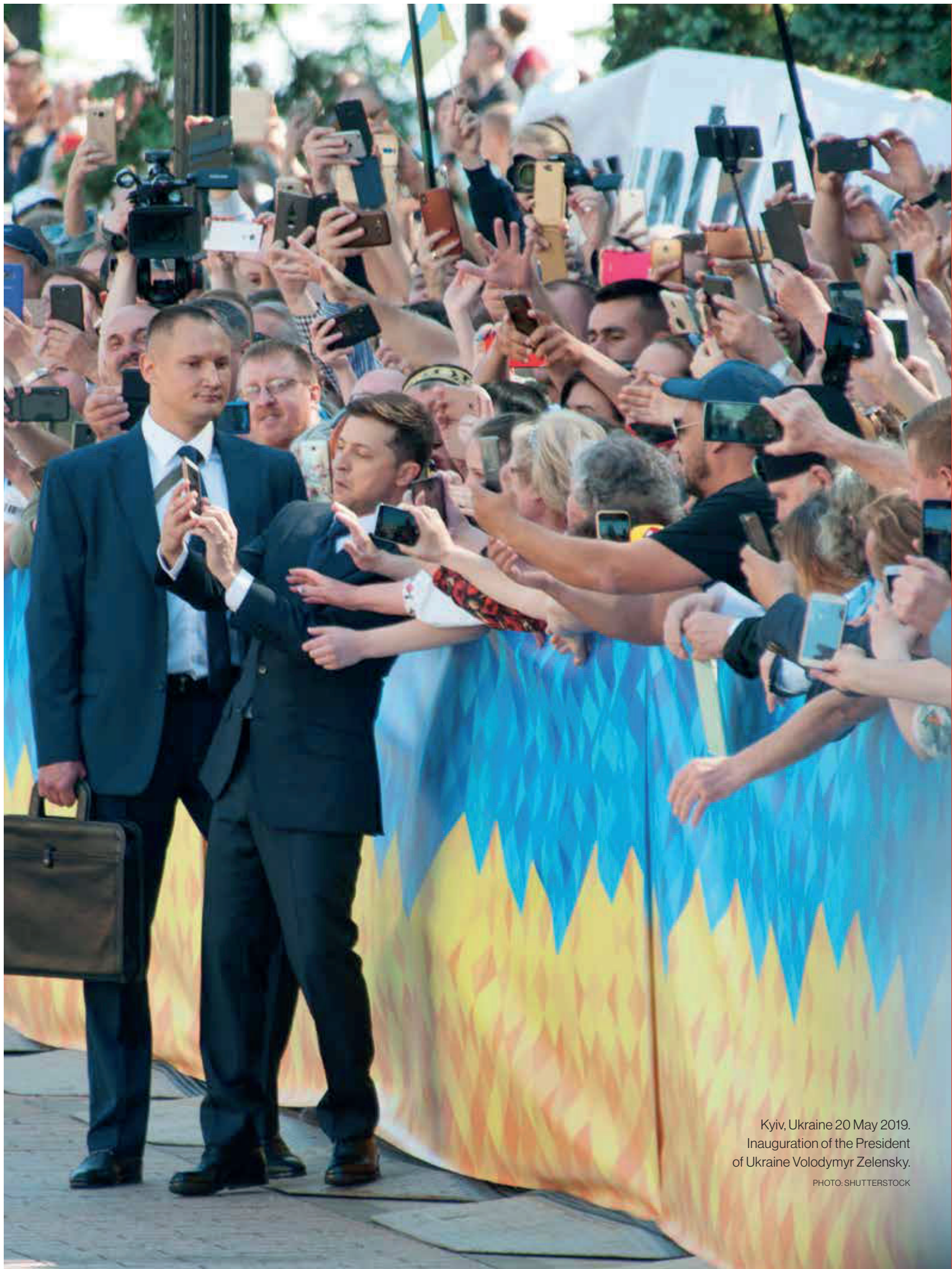
The limitations of this research are in the selection of source material. As previously mentioned, my goal was to define general popular trends associated with the representation of Zelensky at the very beginning of his political career and the connotations of such representation to the existing image of Ukraine – not to analyze specific details and representations of each country’s media profile.

Primary characteristics of Volodymyr Zelensky

A short official biography of Volodymyr Zelensky provides limited information on his place of birth, citizenship, marital status and education, and slightly more information about his career as an actor.³⁵ It should be noted that the international media attributes Zelensky’s acting career in comedy as being his main characteristic: comedian or comic actor, or actor and comedian (Figure 2). The second most frequent characteristic is from the same area – popularity (as a result of his celebrity status). However, the third most frequent characteristic refers to his being Jewish – and this dimension shows the biggest difference in the number of articles and references (181 references in 28 articles). In other words, the average number of mentions of “Jewish” is 6.46 in 28 articles, meaning that such a dimension (ethnic origin) is used in a different way from other dimensions – not just random usage, but an important focus that I will analyze later.

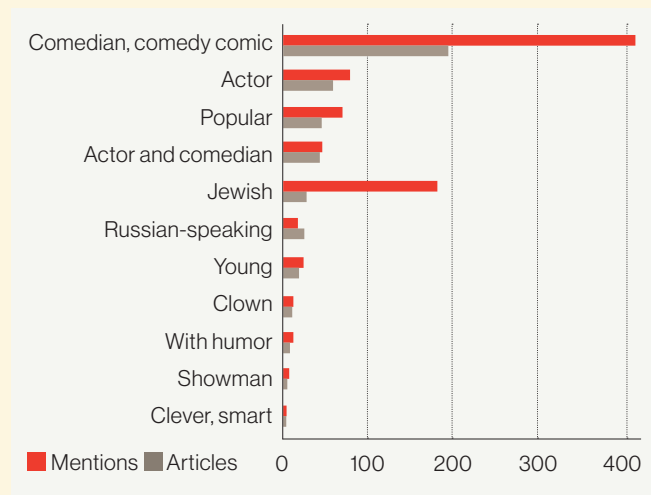
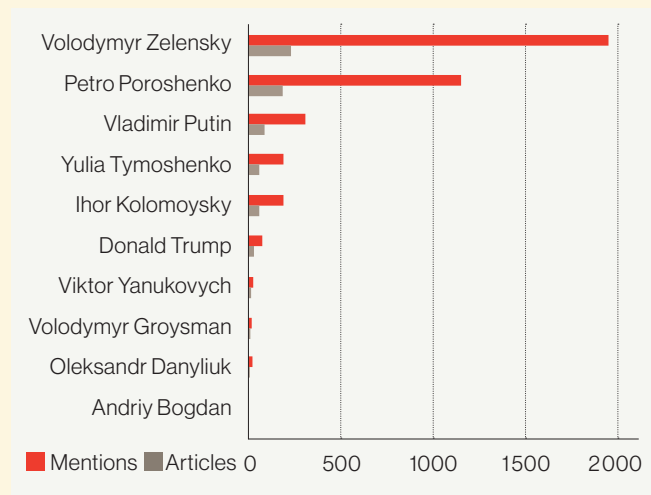
IN THE MEANTIME, I would like to stress that other characteristics used for Zelensky by the mainstream media refer to his language (“Russian-speaking”) and age (“young”). Additional characteristics such as “clever” or “smart” were found only four times, meaning they were probably not so interesting and “sensational” for an “unexpected” presidential candidate. While discussing an unexpected candidate, it is obvious that a newspaper focuses on the characteristics that make him/her different from the social expectations of the more “expected” candidate (in this case – “Ukrainian-speaking” and “experienced” – both of which used to describe Petro Poroshenko).





Kyiv, Ukraine 20 May 2019.
Inauguration of the President
of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky.

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK

Figure 2. **Characteristics of Zelensky in the analyzed sources, N (number of articles) = 236.**Figure 3. **Frequency of references, by name, N = 236.**

In light of the abovementioned, it is surprising that there were only two vague references to Zelensky with Ronald Reagan and eight references to Barack Obama who, to some degree, was also an unexpected candidate, or rather, an unexpected winner. At the same time, a lot more analogies (16) were made to Donald Trump becoming a national leader of the USA in 2016. Such analogies could be found in the newspapers of every country in the analysis. Moreover, two Israeli newspapers used the word combination “Ukrainian Donald Trump”, emphasizing that this is a popular comparison in Ukraine.³⁶

In general, the main personality of media interest relating to Ukraine in this period is Zelensky himself (1,947 mentions), followed by Petro Poroshenko (1,155 references) and Vladimir Putin (318 references). The fourth place regarding mainstream media interest belongs to Yuliya Tymoshenko (192 references), another likely candidate for the President of Ukraine in the first round, and to Ihor Kolomoisky (191 references), an oligarch who had business interests with Zelensky. Kolomoisky was mentioned only once in the Israeli mainstream media, which is rather surprising given the fact that he is an Israeli citizen and lived in Israel at the time because of the conflict with Petro Poroshenko.³⁷ Such a distribution of interest in personalities raises an important consideration: while Petro Poroshenko was the expected “other” in most articles about Zelensky, the interest in Ihor Kolomoisky is not that straightforward. In Ukraine, Kolomoisky’s personality was in focus because of his support for Zelensky’s candidacy and the alleged dependency of Zelensky on Kolomoisky (channel “1+1”, controlled by Kolomoisky, hosted the show with Zelensky

as the main character. This boosted his ratings, as previously mentioned). However, on the international stage, such attention to Kolomoisky’s personality could be provoked by the vacuum

of opinions and the absence of an official team for Zelensky at the time of the elections (the names Oleksandr Danyliuk and Andriy Bogdan, who belonged to his team at the time of the elections, can be noted in the lower part of Figure 3 – with just a few references, not visible against the background of other “big” names).³⁸ Thus, the media were filling the vacuum with some already known personalities who could attract the readers’ interest. The oligarch who

was in a conflict with another oligarch and President Poroshenko could easily play the role of attractor.

Frequent references to Vladimir Putin are expected and can be explained by the focus of the international media on the military conflict and violations of Ukraine’s borders since 2014. Moreover, Putin was mentioned in discussions on the potential opportunities of a new Ukrainian president to improve the critical situation in Ukraine.

The Jewish background of Volodymyr Zelensky

As previously mentioned, 12% of all articles mentioning Zelensky in spring 2019 were associated with his Jewish background (see Table 1).

The Jewish background of Zelensky was specifically discussed in American and Israeli newspapers, it was occasionally mentioned in Polish and German sources and it was totally ignored in RT. I would say that such a trend could be explained by multiple

**“THE JEWISH
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FROM A SECULAR
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WITH NO VISIBLE LINK
TO JUDAISM.”**

Table 1. **Distribution of articles in the mainstream media mentioning Volodymyr Zelensky's Jewish origins**

The Jerusalem Post	Haaretz	The Washington Post	The Wall Street Journal	The New York Times	The Guardian	Der Spiegel	Gazeta Wyborcza	RT	Total
10	6	4	3	2	1	1	1	0	28


Articles in *The Jerusalem Post* and *The Washington Post*, mentioning Volodymyr Zelensky's Jewish origins in the headline.

factors, including a general understanding of human rights connected with the absence of discrimination on the basis of origin. 40 years ago, Jonathan Sarna stated: “In America, even a Jew can be president. That, at least, has been the claim for two long centuries. It hasn’t yet happened, nor does anyone look for it to happen in 1980. Still, the myth of the Jewish president remains pervasive”.³⁹ Taking into account the specificity of the question of ethnicity in the USA, it is not surprising that the American media paid attention to what can be interpreted as a universal sign of political freedom. The absence of interest in RT could be explained by the popular trope about “Ukrainian fascists” used by the Russian media in the information war against Ukraine. This trope is considered especially powerful⁴⁰ due to the importance of the historical memory of victory against fascism in the post-Soviet space, particularly in Russia. An emphasis on Zelensky’s Jewish origins would look absurd as the allegedly “fascist” country could not have a Jewish candidate in the highest state position. However, I need to emphasize that the trope of Ukraine as a “fascist country” was not found in the analyzed set of articles in RT. However, it was widely used in other sources (even in the headlines⁴¹). At the same time, RT had published material about Kolomoisky as a Jewish oligarch standing behind Zelensky, which does not corroborate this explanation⁴² and which reflects to a larger degree the attitudes about Kolomoisky in Ukraine, as discussed above.

It is important to note that the Jewish background of Zelensky was primarily presented from a secular ethnic perspective with no visible link to Judaism. It was not raised in his interviews or political agenda, and this was stressed in the media: “Religion for me is the most intimate question,” he said in a December interview. “I am not ready to share it with anyone”.⁴³ In general, such a position contrasts the religious appeal of Poroshenko and his campaign connected to the idea of the Tomos mentioned at the beginning.

A distinctive trait of the Israeli press only was to use the word “Jewish” widely: “a Jewish comedian”, “a Jewish President”, while *Der Spiegel* mentions the “Jewish roots” of Zelensky.⁴⁴ “Jewish origin”⁴⁵ or “Jewish background”⁴⁶ can be found in the American media, or “Jewish heritage” in a British newspaper,⁴⁷ or in some Israeli articles that already used the one-word characteristic, “Jewish”.⁴⁸ It should be noted that the Israeli press (particularly *Haaretz*) was a source of citations in other mainstream media resources. In my opinion, all of the mentioned formulations signify both the complicated fate of being a descendant of a family of secular Jews in the Post-Soviet realm and the inability to find a proper word while defining the ethnic and religious background of the sixth President of Ukraine.

Part of the international media introduced a motif of Ukraine as the only country in the world, except Israel, in which the President and the Prime Minister are Jewish. This motif was found in most Israeli and American sources. Taking into account that there was a reference in *The Washington Post* to *Haaretz*⁴⁹ we can assume that this idea was appropriated from Israel (the first mention of the motif in the dataset is from the *Haaretz* article, dated April 21, 2019⁵⁰). At the same time, an important finding of this research is that a reference to the Jewish background of Zelensky was not used without a contextual explanation of its importance, and this contextual importance was illustrated by references to certain often stereotypical views about the history of Ukraine.

A historical breakthrough in Ukraine?

During the analysis, I noticed media emphasis on Zelensky’s elections as a “historical shift” or a turning point in history (see Table 2). It is worth noting that the trope of “historical shift” is indeed popular in all media descriptions of Zelensky becoming president (except for RT). This shift was particularly contrasted with the Soviet past and with the Russian authoritarian regime

Table 2. Distribution of articles referring to topics in the mainstream media

	Jerusalem Post	Haaretz	The Washington Post	NYT	The Guardian	Der Spiegel	WSJ	RT	Gazeta Wyborcza	Total
Historical shift	1	1	4	2	2	5	1		2	18
WWII	1	1	1	2		1			1	7
The Holocaust		1	2	1		1			1	6
Euromaidan					1	1	1	2		5
Anti-Semitism	2					1			1	4
Bandera	1	1	1							3
WWI				2					1	3
1917				2					1	3
Holodomor			1			1				2

of today. Thus, the Polish *Gazeta Wyborcza* wrote of the “historical choice of Ukraine” (two references) in the context of further distancing from Moscow: “The country made a historical choice: to break its ties with Russia and arrive in the European harbor, developing cooperation with NATO. The fact that Ukraine’s authorities have changed democratically is the best confirmation of this”⁵¹. It is also typical of the German *Der Spiegel* to define the elections as taking Ukraine out of the Soviet past. Such phrases as “from the historical tank”⁵² or “historical electoral victory”⁵³ are used in four articles. The same stance can be traced in the British *The Guardian*, which reads: “When you read the headlines about Ukraine, think about history”, in which the author meant “civilizational rupture” with the legacy of the Soviet Union⁵⁴. What was also emphasized in almost all the media was that the elections in Ukraine took a democratic path with an implicit comparison with elections in Russia or many other post-Soviet countries.

Another article in *The Guardian* describes this “historical shift” as an unusual presidential campaign due to Zelensky’s professional background: “It is Ukraine’s most unorthodox presidential campaign in history”⁵⁵. In general, references to “historical shift” in the articles cited (eight articles) were divided into those that did not coincide with the references to the Jewish origin of Zelensky and those that were strongly linked with the discussions about this origin and Ukraine as an historically anti-Semitic country (for example, there were typical expressions such as “scarred history”⁵⁶, “history of anti-Semitism”⁵⁷, “bad pages of history”⁵⁸).

The history of Ukraine through the lens of the mainstream media

I should emphasize that the references to World War II were often given with mentions of the Holocaust (see Table 2). Moreover, the term “World War II” was often used as a substitute for “Holocaust”, meaning a time marker of war atrocities towards the Jews. A typical example of these mentions (see Table 2) is the

collaboration with the Nazis, in which the collaborators were in the “Ukrainian nationalist movement”⁵⁹, while some of them were called heroes in the recent memory politics of Ukraine⁶⁰.

The topics of Euromaidan and Holodomor could be interpreted as those that introduced Ukraine to a curious reader⁶¹, while several references to World War I and 1917 put Ukraine into the general context of turning points in the history of the 20th century.

At the same time, references to World War II and the Holocaust were used in connection with the Jewish background of Zelensky, and this usage was linked to the articulated hopes for the shift of the politics of memory in Ukraine. The one (and only) article in *Der Spiegel*⁶² cites *Haaretz* and is focused on anti-Semitism in Ukraine, politics of memory that ignore the participation of local collaborators in the Holocaust, and that Zelensky could provide some hope.⁶³ This shows the existence of the “reversed memory” trend mentioned in the beginning, when interpretations of the present relate to the instrumentalization of the past.

Ukrainian nationalism in focus

As the reader can note from Table 2, the mainstream media also used the concepts “anti-Semitism” and “Bandera” when discussing the Ukrainian elections. “Bandera” is a trope that represents a stereotypical personification of the collective image of Ukrainian ultra-nationalism, usually with various negative connotations.⁶⁴ I must mention that the idea of “Ukrainian ultra-nationalism” is widely used in Russian information warfare and that the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology has included this dimension in the index of Russian propaganda surveys about Ukraine.⁶⁵ For instance, there were four similar examples in *RT* of the phrases “extreme nationalists”⁶⁶, “staunch nationalist”⁶⁷ and “fervent nationalist propaganda”⁶⁸ about the years following the Euromaidan events in Ukraine. The idea behind the usage of ideologically loaded terms is similar to that of the term “fascist” discussed above.⁶⁹

There were also other attempts to portray Ukraine’s present through references to its past (a total of eight articles). For

example, an opinion article by Ziemowit Szczerek⁷⁰ in *Gazeta Wyborcza* stated: “It is not enough that he is a Jew, which is often a reason to mock him, he is a Russian-speaking Jew”.⁷¹ In this example, the Jewish heritage of Zelensky is linked to the Russian language, thereby creating a combination that would probably be disliked by certain Ukrainian nationalists, according to the author. Generally, such discussions did not move to a more nuanced analysis of the situation in the country,⁷² illustrating the “cannibalization of memory” as an ideological instrument used by the mainstream media. It is important to remember that both the Ukrainian and the Russian language continued to function in the sphere of communication in Ukraine after Euromaidan.⁷³

A contrasting example about current nationalism in Ukraine can be found in *The New York Times*: “A few far-right nationalists have tried, in vain, to make an issue of the fact that Mr. Zelensky is Jewish. But the near total silence on his Jewish background has demolished a favorite trope of Russian propaganda – that Ukraine is awash with neo-Nazis intent on creating a Slavic version of the Third Reich”⁷⁴.

In the articles that question the continuity of the trope of “Ukraine’s anti-Semitic past” until the present day, it is typical to rely on the results of surveys, most often surveys by the Pew Research Center.⁷⁵ Such references often lead to conclusions: “Despite a difficult history, today Ukraine may be one of the least anti-Semitic countries in Central or Eastern Europe”.⁷⁶ It means that despite a dominating mainstream media vision of Ukraine as a nationalist and anti-Semitic contemporary state, some international journalists critically approach stereotypes or at least provide alternative data.

Conclusion

The research has shown an interesting twist in mainstream media writing about the unexpected politician: while trying to explain “unusual” and “unconventional” facts about him, the authors of the narratives referred to the negative characteristics of the Ukrainian past. The alleged anti-Semitism and nationalism served as a contrast that highlighted the new candidate, Volodymyr Zelensky. As a result, among many other dimensions to his background (education, profession, age, language, etc.), it was his Jewish origins that led to particularly complex discussions.

Many of these discussions involved disputes about the legacy of World War II and the Holocaust. It is important to note that topics such as Euromaidan, Holodomor or World War I were mostly used to provide some context for the international reader.

MATERIALS THAT DO NOT discuss the Jewish background of Zelensky contain information about the democratic elections in Ukraine as a sign of distancing itself from the authoritarian legacy. There are also articles that try to differentiate between the

past and the present, and a trope about the only country in the world, except Israel, with two Jewish leaders was introduced to reinforce this differentiation. Such results help explain the characteristics of the international image of Zelensky as the newly elected sixth Ukrainian president. The result also shows the need for professional research articles in the international mainstream media, which would question, investigate or corroborate

the stereotypical views of Ukraine that were mentioned. References to history in connection with the coverage of Zelensky’s Jewish background emphasized the contrast between expectations and reality, between Ukraine’s past and present.

Surprisingly, the professional background of the sixth President of Ukraine did not become a point of debate; it was used in the headlines as clickbait instead. The situation may look totally different after one year of

Zelensky’s presidency, taking into account many factors that demanded diplomatic skills from him and his team in both domestic and international arenas. Regarding the latter, the most infamous scandal was the result of Zelensky’s indirect involvement in the process of the impeachment of Donald Trump, after revealing that the US President had tried to influence Zelensky in order to neutralize his own political rival, Joe Biden.⁷⁷ In Ukraine, a great deal of tension between Zelensky’s team and his opponents has been connected with his ambiguous political actions towards such sensitive themes in Ukraine as the war in Donbas, status of the occupied territories, land market opening, etc.⁷⁸ However, the dynamics of Zelensky’s media coverage about his position as the President of Ukraine is worthy of separate research. ✖

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 - 77 Alan Cullison, Rebecca Ballhaus and Dustin Volz. Trump Repeatedly Pressed Ukraine President to Investigate Biden's Son. *The Wall Street Journal*. September 21, 2019. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/trump-defends-conversation-with-ukraine-leader-11568993176>; Helen Chernikoff, "Ukraine's Jewish President Is At The Center Of Trump's Impeachment Inquiry". *Forward*. September 25, 2019. <https://forward.com/news/432098/ukraines-jewish-president-is-at-the-center-of-trumps-impeachment-inquiry/>
 - 78 One of the most popular concepts connected with the first year of Zelensky's presidency in Ukraine is "red lines", or the lists of demands initiated by various groups: public intellectuals, politicians, representatives of civic society, etc. The lists may be interpreted as a reaction to the general ambiguity and lack of transparency in Zelensky's political strategy after winning the elections. For example, reference could be made to the statement initiated by the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Group about the "red lines" Zelensky cannot cross in the discussions of the Trilateral Contact Group in Minsk connected to Ukraine's territorial integrity: Pavlichenko, Oleksandr and Ievhen Zakharov. "Issues and red lines for the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky". Ukrainian Helsinki Human rights Union. October 4, 2019. <https://helsinki.org.ua/en/appeals/issues-and-red-lines-for-the-president-of-ukraine-volodymyr-zelensky/>.



The former Head of UGCC makes a statement to the press during Euromaidan.

PHOTO: A PROJECT BY STUDENTS OF THE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AT THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY (UCU) LVIV

Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church as an agent of the social life in Ukraine

by **Michał Wawrzonek**

abstract

Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church (UGCC) is only one of several Eastern-Christian communities which actively take part in the Ukrainian social life. Moreover, statistical data and results of the social surveys show that the members of UGCC are not numerous and that structures of this church are strongly geographically limited. However, during the events related to the Euromaidan, it turned out that UGCC was able to make an important influence on the social developments referred to as the all-Ukrainian social level. This was possible due to the relevant social and symbolic capital which UGCC has on its disposal. This article aims to characterize the elements of the social and symbolic capital that enabled UGCC to become such important agent in the contemporary social transformations in Ukraine.

KEY WORDS: The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church; social capital; patronalistic society; religion and politics in Ukraine

Social life: between state-power and political community

In the case of this paper, the term “social life” refers to the conceptualization of society as an “interpersonal space”.¹ This is a space shaped by “the relations interrelating members of collectivities – groups, communities, organizations (at present as well as in the past and in their aspirations for the future).² Some of these relations might be considered to be “positive”. In particular it concerns “moral relations” like “trust, loyalty, reciprocity, solidarity, respect and justice”.³ On the basis of these relations, social capital is created. Social capital determines “efficiency of individuals and collectivities” and a level of “satisfaction from the social life”.⁴ Therefore, it has a pivotal impact on the quality of social life.

The above-mentioned “positive relations” may be expressed in two different layouts: in “horizontal networks of exchange



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The Cathedral of Saint George in Lviv was the mother church of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church until 2011...

relations”⁵ or in “particularistic and vertical exchange relations”⁶ based on clientelism. Each of these layouts affects social customs referring to the given “positive relation”. Therefore, real meaning of such notions like “trust”, “reciprocity” or “justice” may differ depending on the layout in which they are referred to. Thus, two kinds of social capital might be distinguished: communitarian and non-communitarian.⁷

As a result of the post-Soviet social transformation, the “interpersonal space” (social customs) in Ukraine is shaped by the patterns of a patronalistic society. According to Henry Hale its main features are “strong personal friendships and family ties, weak rule of law, pervasive corruption, low social capital, extensive patron-client relationships, widespread nepotism, and what sociologists would recognize as “patrimonial” or “neopatrimonial” forms of domination”.⁸

IN PARTICULAR, this kind of domination highlights the relations between society (political community) and the political elites (agents controlling the state power structures). A basic purpose of such domination (governing in the post-Soviet mode) is “rent extraction”. It is “the major goal and substantive purpose of governing the state at all levels of authority”.⁹ This authority has to handle the issue of its legitimization. This is quite complicated problem because the process of the creation of the power structures as well as the patterns of recruiting their staff are not transparent. Implementation of the electoral procedures have not supplied a credible means of legal legitimization of the state’s power. Thus, the other patterns for gaining credibility are strongly needed. The ability to generate “growth and development” might be one of them.¹⁰ Obviously, if the representatives of the state power were willing to produce growth and development, or at least to give the impression of generating it, it would

facilitate their legitimization on the internal and international stage. However, looking back on the period after the collapse of the Soviet Union, it is quite evident that economic efficiency of the post-Soviet ruling groups is very limited and quite problematic. Therefore, such post-Soviet neopatrimonial regimes like the Ukrainian one seems to be strongly attached to the quasi-charismatic model of domination. Its patterns may fill a gap stemming from the lack or inefficiency of the other more “rational” (communitarian) ways of legitimization, such as “growth and development”. They seem to be useful especially when ruling elites are not able or are not interested in coping with the economic problems which affect people outside of this elite.

It seems that such quasi-charismatic and neopatrimonial model of domination is appropriate to the layout based on “particularistic and vertical exchange relations”. Therefore, it generates and exploits mostly a non-communitarian type of the social capital. One of its sources is symbolic violence based on the relevant symbolic capital. This enables the suppression of social frustration and the protection of access to rent extraction. However, post-Soviet, neopatrimonial elites suffer a lack of this symbolic capital. One of its potential sources are churches, especially Eastern-Christian communities. First of all, it concerns the Orthodox churches in Ukraine, although this article will be focused on a very interesting case of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church.

Specific features of secularization on the post-Soviet space

The position of the religious communities in Ukrainian social life has been determined by the features and consequences of the secularization process in the post-Soviet period. Soviet communism became a kind of political religion and did not sever



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... when the Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ in Kyiv was inaugurated.

itself from the eschatological patterns of legitimizing the “new” social order.¹¹ Thus, the Leninist version of Marxism perpetuated demand for the eschatological justification of social reality – or rather the presence of eschatological phraseology in the manner of describing and the method of justifying this reality. This was a favorable precondition for the future involvement of religion in political issues after the collapse of the USSR and the “Leninist extinction”.

It can be assumed that this demand, after several years of intense Marxist-Leninist indoctrination, was inherited by the post-Soviet mentality. In this context, it is worth noting together with Larisa Andreieva that dechristianization, which was the communists’ objective, does not have to be identical with secularization.¹² Abandoning Christianity (or any other religion) does not necessarily have to mean the end of eschatology as such. The need for it is inscribed in the human subconscious. Marxism responded to this need and created a new religion which “deified man.”¹³ Bolshevism created the new order (or rather tried to create its beginnings) with its own religion. It was “the official denomination” of the Soviet state,¹⁴ which spread its “gospel” in a particularly ruthless manner.

Therefore, if we want to use the term “secularization” in relation to Ukraine and generally to the post-Soviet area, we ought to apply its specific meaning. It is slightly different from the one which is commonly considered to be relevant to West

European societies. In this respect, Nonka Bogomilova’s view seems extremely inspiring. According to her, secularization has two consequences: “the erosion of the image of God as an absolute, as a transcendent reality” and “the inclusion of religious faith and experience in the complex social texture of needs, passions, community identities pertaining to particular empires, states, nations, ethnic groups, civilizations, classes”.¹⁵ As a result of this process, religion does not disappear, and it does not become excluded from the public space. On the contrary – it merges into it. The scholar illustratively states that as a result

of this process, God was “divided” and became “a collaborator and participant in various human enterprises, strivings, yearnings”.¹⁶ Secularization occurs when great religious systems lose their universal qualities by the fact that particular religious communities become entangled in the local, social and cultural circumstances. As a consequence, the real message of religion is determined not only by some general, universal principles or truths but also by a particular way of understanding them, which

results from local circumstances.¹⁷ Under such circumstances, these messages and symbols may be applied in the current political processes as very useful symbolic capital.

The UGCC – paths to the present

In order to better understand the sources and character of the social and symbolic capital of the UGCC, a brief summary of

“THE POSITION OF THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN UKRAINIAN SOCIAL LIFE HAS BEEN DETERMINED BY THE FEATURES AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE SECULARIZATION PROCESS IN THE POST-SOVIET PERIOD.”

origin and history of this church is necessary. The archeparchy in Kyiv was erected after baptism in the Eastern rite in 988. The new church community was canonically subordinate to the patriarchate in Constantinople. Its territory included lands which afterwards were incorporated to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 15th and 16th centuries. Nowadays, this is the general area of contemporary Belarus and Ukraine. In practice, the Kyiv archeparchy acquired broad autonomy, although its hierarchs still recognized the superiority of the patriarch in Constantinople. However, at the end of 16th century majority of them decided to break their canonical ties with Constantinople and placed themselves under the authority of the pope in Rome. Finally, it happened after signing the Act of the Union in Brest in 1596.¹⁸ In that way, the Uniate Church emerged. Its clergy and believers belonged to the Catholic Church, but they preserved an organizational autonomy and the Eastern rite. The union from 1596 met serious internal opposition. Some part of the clergy and believers had rejected the act of joining the Catholic Church and started the struggle for the legal restitution of the Orthodox Church in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Frank Sysyn pointed out that in the first fifty years, the Uniate Church was more successful in Belarus than in Ukraine. Especially the Khmelnytskyi Uprising “placed the very existence of the Uniate Church in doubt”.¹⁹ The Uniate Church secured its position in the second half of the 17th century. According to F. Sysyn “the retention of all Belorussia, Galicia and Right-Bank Ukraine by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth after 1667 ensured the victory of the Union in these lands by the early eighteenth century”.²⁰

Although the argument between adherents and opponents of the Brest Union was very ardent and sometimes violent, it resulted in the revitalization of the ties between the Eastern Christianity in the Ukrainian lands and the All-European cultural and civilizational processes.²¹ After the final partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1795, the structures of the Uniate Church started to function in two states: the Russian Empire and the Habsburg Empire.

The majority of the Uniate Church’s structures in the Romanov dynasty were liquidated in 1839. Its clergy and faithful were forced to “come back” to the Orthodox Church.²² The last Uniate eparchy in the Russian state lasted till 1875 (eparchy of Chełm). Finally, it was formally converted to Orthodoxy under pressure from state authorities.²³

The Uniate Church survived in the Habsburg monarchy in Galicia. It was renamed to the Greek-Catholic Church, and it gained a new separate, organizational framework based on the archeparchy of Halych that was formally restored in 1807. With time, the UGCC became a pivotal institution of Ukrainian national life in Galicia. Official political representation of the Galician Ukrainians was first acknowledged during the period of the Revolutions of 1848. It was headed by the UGCC bishop of Peremyshl

Hryhoriy Yakymovych. A huge part of the Greek-catholic clergy remained influenced by the idea of the cultural and national unity of all the Eastern Slavic peoples under the aegis of the Russian tsar.²⁴ The so-called Moskalophiles were quite strong in the second half of the 19th century. However, starting in the 1980s, a new, competing, national Ukrainian orientation emerged among the Greek-catholic clergy. As John-Paul Himka pointed out, “from the very end of the nineteenth century onward, the division over political orientation in the clergy was largely generational, with older priests being Russophile and younger ones being national populist”.²⁵

THE FORMATION OF the new elites of the UGCC was strongly affected by the reform of the Order of Saint Basil the Great which started in 1882.²⁶ It was the only Greek-Catholic monastic community at that time. The reformed Basilian order was “the most far-reaching response to the national movement from a Christian perspective”.²⁷ J.-P. Himka asserted, that the Basilian monks “borrowed and improved upon the methods of the national movement in order to initiate a religious revival among the spiritually endangered Ruthenian peasantry”.²⁸ However, it was quite a difficult challenge. The UGCC’s position in Ukrainian social life in Galicia was questioned at that time by an increasing wave of anti-clericalism among the lay representatives of the Ukrainian elites.²⁹ This Church restored at least part of its social leadership under the Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky. He actively supported Ukrainian ambitions in political, economic and cultural spheres, including the issue of state-building in Eastern Galicia at the end of the World War I.

During the interwar period, Ukrainian national life in Galicia was strongly influenced by the underground nationalist movement. Some of the Greek-Catholic clergy sympathized with the

nationalists and supported their activities. One of the leaders of the Organization of the Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), Andriy Melnyk, had very close relations with A. Sheptytsky.³⁰ On the other hand, Sheptytsky outrightly rejected and condemned some key parts of the nationalist’s ideology and the acts of political terror launched by the OUN.³¹ He tried to mobilize the UGCC to fight the nationalist movement “for the souls” of the Ukrainian youth. Although ties between the Greek-catholic clergy and the Ukrainian nationalist movement were numer-

“AFTER FORMER EASTERN GALICIA HAD BEEN INCORPORATED INTO THE SOVIET UNION, THE UGCC BECAME ONE OF THE MAIN OBSTACLES TO THE PROCESS OF SOVIETIZATION.”

ous and sometimes very close, the UGCC was able to preserve its autonomy in Ukrainian national life during the entire interwar period, as well as facing the dramatic wartime challenges after 1939.³²

After former Eastern Galicia had been incorporated into the Soviet Union, the UGCC became one of the main obstacles to the process of Sovietization. Therefore, the Soviet authorities decided to smooth it out and they held a so called “council” in

1946. Its participants were strictly supervised by the NKVD. This gathering “decided” on liquidation of the UGCC and declared a “reunion” with the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC)³³. As a result, the UGCC was formally eliminated. The Russian Orthodox Church not only discussed (as it finally seemed) the consequences of the events in 1596, but also “consumed” the ecclesial structure and infrastructure, which it would never be able to rebuild after the period of Bolshevik repression and would not be in a position to compete with. It was no accident that during the entire Soviet period, the densest network of the ROC’s parishes existed in the L’viv, Stanislaviv (Ivano-Frankivs’k) and Ternopil’ oblasts, meaning in the former “Uniates” areas.³⁴

In subsequent years, the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and its consequences has become – especially from the perspective of the Moscow Patriarchate, a constitutive element of an official Soviet order. However, the UGCC survived on the underground. The “catacomb church” was supported by the UGCC structures in exile (in Western Europe, North and South America).³⁵

The “catacomb church” consisted of two wings. The first one might be described as a radical. It was based on “a few Ukrainian Greek Catholic priests together with a small number of believers”³⁶ who chose “exclusion from socialist society and suffering persecution for ‘anti-Soviet activity’”.³⁷ However, Natalia Shlikhta asserts, “that the vast majority of Ukrainian Greek Catholics opted for another solution”.³⁸ They formally joined the officially ROC, although, in fact, they created an informal “church within the church”, a “crypto-uniate community”.³⁹ Therefore, a new kind of “lived identity” emerged among those “formally converted”. It allowed adherents “to preserve their religious and national distinctiveness”⁴⁰. There was some friction between representatives of these two wings of the “catacomb church”. “Involuntary converts” suffered “the accusations of ‘apostasy’ and ‘corruption’ from the Catholics and many catacomb priests”.⁴¹

AS NATALIA SHLIKHTA pointed out, the path they chose, “on the one hand, offered them a less threatened existence and some possibility for the legal exercise of their faith. On the other hand (as did the clandestine activities of the ‘catacomb’ church, albeit in a quite different way), it also contributed to ensuring conditions for the revival of the UGCC after the collapse of the Soviet Union”.⁴² For example, at the end of February and beginning of March of 1989, a solemn mass took place in Lviv in connection with the 175th anniversary of Taras Shevchenko’s birth. Between 25.000 and 30.000 followers gathered, and the mass was concelebrated by two clergymen: ROC member Fr. Mykhailo Nyskohuz and Mykhailo Voloshyn from the still-underground Greek Catholic Church. At the end of the mass, both priests gave each other a sign of Christ’s peace and declared that both churches “always strived for coexistence in peace and mutual respect,” which, as they said, met with counteractions from the state authorities. In the view of both clergymen, it was the outer-Orthodox factors that were responsible for the ongoing divisions.⁴³ Two months later, Fr Mykhailo Nyskohuz and his “crypto-uniate community” in village Stara Sil

officially joined the UGCC. Representatives of the local party nomenklatura “accompanied by no fewer than eighteen Russian Orthodox priests” took the measures in order to counter the revival of the Greek-catholic parish. They tried “to confiscate the church keys and expel Fr Nyskohuz, but about 1,500 people formed a phalanx to keep out the intruders. The next day, May 14th, perhaps the biggest congregation ever seen assembled to participate in the liturgy, which Fr Nyskohuz celebrated”.⁴⁴

On September 17, 1989, on the streets of Lviv, a demonstration took place which, according to various estimates, consisted of 250.000 to 300.000 people. The participants of the march demanded religious freedom for Greek Catholics.⁴⁵ It seems that local Soviet authorities were not able to carry out an independent, coordinated and far-reaching policy towards the UGCC. Practically until the last moment, they were mentally unable to cope with the problem of normalizing the position of the Greek Catholic Church.⁴⁶ The UGCC was one of few elements of Soviet social life that was independent from the operative nomenklatura system.

Finally, the UGCC was legalized in December, 1989. This event not only called into question further activities of the Russian Orthodox Church in the territory of former Galicia. The catacomb Uniate Church became a symbol of the fight for freedom and was one of the few elements of Ukrainian identity which were not Sovietized.

Allegedly, “the voluntary return” of the Greek Catholic Church to the bosom of the Orthodox Church, which was to take place as a result of the so called “council” in Lviv 1946, was one of the fundamental, foundation myths, which was used to legitimize Soviet power in the territory of the former Galicia. Therefore, permission to legalize the UGCC again called into question the legal validity of the communist party’s monopoly, not only in the ideological sphere, but also in terms of existing power structures and public life.

Although legalization of UGCC resulted from Gorbachev’s policy of “new thinking” (Perestroika), this issue extended beyond the limits of the freedom that the majority of the executors of the reforms from nomenklatura structures might have imagined. Yosyp Terelya – one of the best-known Greek Catholic dissidents – claimed that the decision to legalize the Greek Catholic Church was made in 1988 in practice. By his account, and also based on information leaks that reached the West, it became clear that in return, representatives of the legalized Greek Catholic structures were expected to break off their relations with the Vatican and the formal leader, Metropolitan Myroslav Lubachivskyi – who at that time was in exile.⁴⁷ From the viewpoint of the Catholic Church, such plans were obviously meaningless, and it has never happened. However, looking from the perspective of the then party-state structures, they were in a way understandable. It may be supposed that based on their original assumptions, the Soviet authorities were willing to permit the liberalization of social life, although the entire process was to be strictly controlled. Meanwhile, the Greek Catholic Church was too independent and might pose a threat in that its representatives would be “disloyal,” that is, they would be unwilling to limit their activities to

clearly marked boundaries. The sources of this independence were rightly detected in the links between the Greek Catholic Church and outside elements: the Vatican and the Ukrainian Diaspora. As long as the structures of this community reached outside – beyond the Soviet system of relations between the authorities and society and between the State and the Church – it was impossible to control. That is why it had to be perceived as a potential threat to the planned, “controlled liberalization.”

When the era of the Ukrainian independence had begun, the UGCC was of few well institutionalized structures of the social life with non-Sovietized and non-Russified identity. The underground clergy had to appreciate the significance of close ties to the faithful, leading to the development of a sense of community. The UGCC was able to survive this difficult period due to such virtues as the ability to self-organise, responsibility, and willingness to cooperate and sacrifice for the common good. It seems that due to the heritage of the “period of catacombs”, the clergy of the UGCC accustomed quite well the behaviors appropriate to “the horizontal networks of exchange relations”.

UGCC – quantitative and geographical limitations

In light of available statistical data, UGCC, in comparison with other Eastern-Christian denominations, does not seem to be a relatively large religious community. According to the social surveys published in 2000, “Eight per cent of the population of Ukraine said they supported the UGCC. This is 3,800,000 people: considerably fewer than the UGCC officially claims”.⁴⁸ Similar results were seen in social surveys systematically conducted by Ukrainian Center for Economic and Political Studies (UCEPS). According a study by this group in 2000, a total of 7.6% respondents in the whole Ukraine identified themselves with UGCC. In 2013, this number decreased to 5.7% but subsequently increased to 9.5% in 2018. For comparison, during the same period, the percentage of respondents declared as “Orthodox” fluctuated between 66.6% (2000), 70.6 (2013) and 67.3% (2018).⁴⁹

Moreover, territory where UGCC has strong and real structures and where the majority of Greek-Catholics live seems to be strongly geographically limited to the boundaries of the former Galicia, i.e. to the space, which before 1918, had belonged to the Habsburg Empire, and during the interwar period was part of Poland. In compliance with the contemporary administrative division of lands, the former Galicia covers L’viv and Ivano-Frankivs’k oblast, and partially in Ternopil’ oblast. These three regions are commonly considered as a UGCC heartland, fully dominated by the Greek Catholics. However, this conviction does not reflect reality. Few years ago, Andrii Yurash examined

this oversimplification. In his reasonable estimation, no more than 45–50 percent of the population of Galicia were active members of the UGCC (although as many as 60 percent may claim formal allegiance). Yurash underlined that his estimations related to the proportion of people who identify as Greek-Catholic or Orthodox should be verified by deeper research at the lower-level administrative units.⁵⁰

It seems that these estimations may also be scrutinized with another type of data. It is worth using official reports on the

number of temples belonging to the Greek Catholic communities in the above-mentioned regions, either on their own or as property transferred to them without ownership rights. Such an approach provides better opportunity to evaluate the real level of institutionalization of UGCC. Thus, it should be easier to assess the presence of this church in current everyday social life in Ukraine.

According to available data from 2015, Greek-Catholic communities in Ivano-Frankivs’k oblast held 657 of the 1249 religious buildings.

In L’viv and Ternopil oblast, they respectively held 1497 of 2177 buildings and 698 of 1535 buildings. In other words, they occupied an average of 55% of religious buildings in these three regions (52% in Ivano-frankivsk oblast, 68% in L’viv oblast and 45% in Ternopil oblast)⁵¹. These statistics show that UGCC has a slightly more believers than Yurash originally estimated. However, at the same time, it is obvious that domination of UGCC in the religious sphere in former Galicia is not as evident as in the case of the Roman Catholic Church in Poland, for example.

UGCC as an agent of the social life in Ukraine – three case studies

In order to better understand features of the UGCC’s agency in Ukrainian social life three case studies will be examined. The first one relates to the visit of Pope John Paul II in Ukraine in 2001. This case illustrates the value of the ties between the UGCC and the external world (out of the domestic neopatrimonial order). The second case refers to the approach of the UGCC leadership to the issue of fundraising during the construction of the Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ in Kyiv. This is an example of how the UGCC (at least, its leaders) handle the patrimonialistic rules of social life in Ukraine. The third case sheds a little bit of light on the participation of the UGCC in the events related to the Euromaidan. This is an opportunity to look at the UGCC as an important actor in the political and social processes at the All-Ukrainian level.

John Paul II in Ukraine

Significance of the structural connection between UGCC and the Vatican was very apparent during visit of Pope John Paul II

“WHEN THE ERA OF THE UKRAINIAN INDEPENDENCE HAD BEGUN, THE UGCC WAS OF FEW WELL INSTITUTIONALIZED STRUCTURES OF THE SOCIAL LIFE WITH NON-SOVIETIZED AND NON-RUSSIFIED IDENTITY.”

to Ukraine in 2001. A lot of important events happened then. Of course, key events included the public religious services celebrated in Kyiv and Lviv. There were two services in each town – one in the Latin rite and the second in the Byzantine rite. In this second case, UGCC appeared in the role of a host. In Kyiv, 70.000 people attended a holy mass.⁵² It was the largest mass event in the Ukrainian capital, apart from previous events related to the Orange Revolution and Dignity Revolution. Religious service in the Eastern rite in Lviv attracted around 1.2 million people.⁵³

The visit of John Paul II, assisted by the UGCC, was an event that occurred on a national scale. For the first time in a long time, the people did not take part in it as passive spectators, or as participants in a previously planned scenario. Pope John Paul II did not come to meet President Kuchma or to visit one of the Churches or its hierarchs but approached the Ukrainian people directly. The authorities could only assist in this meeting.⁵⁴ Moreover, John Paul II came to Ukraine at a very specific moment. A huge political and social action “Ukraine without Kuchma” had started few months before. The struggle of the Ukrainian social and political community to gain agency in its relationships with the state power authorities underwent a new dynamic. The Pope’s visit to Ukraine likely helped the UGCC become an influential participant in this process.

It seems that in the social consciousness of Ukrainian people a pope is permanently associated as a symbolic capital, which potentially might be useful for different activities in the public sphere. Such a conclusion stems from the results of social surveys related to public trust of the “leaders of global churches”. In 2018 in Ukraine, 42% of respondents trusted Pope Francis. He quite noticeably exceeded the level of trust of leaders of the Orthodox hierarchy. Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew might count on the trust of 31% respondents. Only 16% of participants in the survey declared their trust in Moscow Patriarch Kirill⁵⁵. Such a ranking of public trust in the papal leadership is likely to be favorable to UGCC and its social mission, since this community acts as the main native connector between Ukraine (Ukrainians) and Vatican.

Dealing with the domestic neo-patrimonial order

It seems that the autonomy of the UGCC from the neopatrimonial rules stems not only from the strong ties with the “external” agent like the pope or diaspora. It is also based on the symbolic and social capital that the UGCC has at its disposal. The leaders of the UGCC learned how to protect it from devaluation. The statement by the former superior of UGCC, Liubomyr Huzar, from 2002 proved it quite well. On the eve of the parliamentary elections in 2002 he declared, “In a fever of the electoral campaign more and more often we witness different actions of candidates who attempt to make impression among the voters that they have some extraordinary blessing or support from UGCC. This phenomenon is visible mostly on the printed materials, photos, promotional gadgets or it even comes up in propositions to make donations to the Church, sometimes even very valuable donations.”⁵⁶ Cardinal Huzar referred to the attempts to abuse



Sviatoslav Shevchuk has been the Patriarch of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) since 2011.

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the UGCC’s authority or some elements of its public image for particular political goals i.e. for the purposes of the neopatrimonial order. It might happen directly by exploiting the symbols related to the UGCC during the parliamentary election campaign. At the same time, there are more sophisticated ways of exploiting the symbolic and social capital of the UGCC. For example, some opportunities for gaining support from the UGCC might occur (mainly material and financial). Apparently, they would seem very attractive. However, if such support was accepted, the “beneficiary” would enter into a patron-client dependency. It seems that the UGCC’s leadership has been aware of this threat. For example, it was quite evident in the case of the construction of the Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ in Kyiv. It was one of the most important investments by the UGCC after 1991. At same time, it became an enormous challenge for this community from the financial point of view.

CONSTRUCTION OF THIS large sacral building by UGCC started in 2002.⁵⁷ It might be considered as an element in the strategy of getting out beyond the limits of the borders of the former Galicia. Implementation of this investment would prove the ability of UGCC to become a real All-Ukrainian agent of social life. Thus, it is worth turning our attention to one very characteristic element of the fundraising strategy launched by the coordinators of the construction of the Greek-catholic cathedral in Kyiv. Cardinal Huzar summarized it briefly as: “Our point is that we do not want to accept any donations from the official organs. Because it is always intertwined with some kind, I would say, “gratitude”. We want to be a free Church and we do not want that donations we accepted would put us off telling truth when it will be necessary”.⁵⁸

Such projects provide an opportunity for various agents in

the political system through their formal and informal structures to provide financial “support”. Actually, it is nothing but a reciprocal transaction: money in exchange for symbolic capital which stems from a public affirmation of the generosity of the backer made by the endowed community. In other words, under the Ukrainian conditions, acceptance of such kind of support means de facto joining a neopatrimonial network of relationships based on a patron-client pattern. Apparently, at least the UGCC leadership recognizes the challenges which an actor struggling for its agency in a patronalist order has to face. The strategy applied to the task of fundraising for the construction of the cathedral in Kyiv seems to confirm this hypothesis. Huzar’s successor, Metropolitan Shevchuk, stated during the electoral campaign in 2012 that, “Our church has always been active in social developments. However, we never tell anyone to vote for anyone, and we do not allow our clergy to participate in the election campaign.”⁵⁹ A few weeks later, on August 20, 2012, the superior of the UGCC emphasized during his sermon in Kolomyia that, “once the Church interferes in politics, it always loses. Because any political party which attempts to bestow favor from the Church won’t let it be free”.⁶⁰ However, despite the Metropolitan Shevchuk’s claims, some representatives of the lower Greek-Catholic clergy were openly involved in electoral agitation in favor of some candidates. As a rule, these candidates were presented as “backers” and “benefactors” of the local church communities⁶¹. Thus, it would be very interesting to examine how efficiently the UGCC was able to protect its autonomy against clientelist layouts at the local level.

UGCC and the Euromaidan

A lot of different religious communities were involved in Euromaidan. Some of them participated in these turbulent events quite actively. This extremely interesting phenomenon attracted the attention of numerous researchers of Ukrainian society⁶². During the events related to Euromaidan “churches acted like civic organizations. They had similar strategic goals and were in search of leadership. /.../ For church authorities Maidan became a way to increase their presence in public space”.⁶³ This article is focused only on the activity of the UGCC. Therefore, it is not a comprehensive analysis of the interrelations between all Ukrainian religious communities and the protestors and main agents of the Euromaidan.⁶⁴

At the beginning of this publication, the most important events related to the involvement of religious institutions in the emerging political crisis in Ukraine were juxtaposed. This review starts with the public statement of the Ukrainian Catholic University, which is closely connected with UGCC. Their statement referred to the collapse of the Ukrainian eurointegration process by the government from November 22, 2013.⁶⁵ It proves that from the very beginning, the Greek-Catholic community was well prepared to react to the changing social and political situation.

It is also worth to turning our attention to the genesis of the

notion of a “Revolution of Dignity”, as the protests came to be referred to. “At first, in the context of ‘Theology of Maidan’, an Orthodox theologian Cyril Hovorun mentioned dignity as “embedded by God into human nature”.⁶⁶ However, it was one of the most prominent representatives of the UGCC, bishop Borys Gudziak, who directly linked this expression to the events on Maidan. Then the notion of “Revolution of Dignity” became a “slogan”, which “helped to explain and legitimize the mass protests, to articulate their purpose”.⁶⁷

Undoubtedly, the most important and dramatic events during Euromaidan, such as student demonstrations, clashes with police forces, consultations and negotiations, and shooting the protestors took place at Independence Square and the surrounding area, (which gave a name to the protests as “maidan”, meaning a square). However, it is worth recalling another episode that is directly linked with UGCC, and which became an additional catalyst

for the confrontation between a large part of Ukrainian society and the government of President Viktor Yanukovich. On January 3, 2014, the Ukrainian Ministry of Culture submitted the superior of UGCC Metropolitan Sviatoslav Shevchuk with an official statement that included the threat of “the termination of the respective religious organizations.”⁶⁸ The reason for such a reaction of the government was religious activity, which was allegedly being conducted by “the representatives of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, in particular, at Independence Square in Kyiv during December of last year and in the new year – 2014”, violated “the law of Ukraine regarding freedom of conscience and religious organization.”⁶⁹ On January 13, 2014, Metropolitan Shevchuk made the contents of this statement public. This triggered public outcry and an additional wave of criticism of the government.⁷⁰ The Committee on Culture and Spirituality of the Ukrainian Supreme Council examined the activities of the Ministry of Culture. It turned out that the statement originated with the Security Service of Ukraine.⁷¹ The entire event mobilized new groups to resist the state-power that was associated with President Yanukovich. Olena Panych wisely pointed out that “the authority of UGCC in Ukrainian society and the support of international community were so high, that any attempts of governmental persecution were doomed to failure.”⁷² It is worth recalling that priests from different religious communities were also present at the Independence Square. However, the government considered activity by representatives of UGCC especially dangerous.

IN ORDER TO BETTER understand the role played by UGCC in Ukrainian social life, it is worth referencing to the available knowledge of the participants in the mass protests in Kyiv. Research conducted by Olga Onuch and Gwendolyn Sasse collected a lot of very interesting material related to this issue. One of its pivotal research questions was, “Who was the Maidan”.⁷³ Onuch and Sasse aimed at answering that question with data collected from “the *EuroMaidan Protest Participant Survey*, brief, on-site

**“THE GOVERNMENT
CONSIDERED ACTIVITY
BY REPRESENTATIVES
OF UGCC ESPECIALLY
DANGEROUS.”**



The interior of Greek Catholic Church in Spas, Ukraine.

PHOTO: KLARQA

interviews with protesters, interviews with politicians, activists and journalists, and focus groups with ordinary citizens and activists⁷⁴. It turned out that the majority of protestors hailed from Kyiv or the Kyiv region. (57%). At the same time, according to the research results from Onuch and Sasse, around 25% of the active participants in protests on Independence Square declared that they belong to UGCC. The Razumkov Center has conducted systematic research on religiosity and interrelations between the religious sphere and social sphere in Ukraine since 2000. Unfortunately, Kyiv oblast is counted together with other central oblasts of Ukraine – Vinnytsa, Zhytomyr, Kirovohrad, Poltava, Sumy, Khmelnytskyi and Chernihiv. In 2013, only 1.2% of respondents from central Ukraine that is defined in that way declared themselves as Greek-Catholics.⁷⁵ According to the official data UGCC had only 8 of 681 religious buildings in the Kyiv region.⁷⁶

Thus, a very interesting question arises: how to explain such big percentage of the Greek-Catholic believers among the participants of the Euromaidan? Partially this stemmed from the fact that a huge group of them came from the “Galician” region of Ukraine. Referring to the survey results from Onuch and Sasse, residents from Western Ukraine, mostly from Lviv and Ternopil oblasts, accounted for about 14% of protestors on Independence Square. However, in light of the previous conclusions related to the religious situation in the territory of the former Galicia, it would be hard to expect that everyone who came to Kyiv from this region to join the protests was Greek-Catholic. Thus, the data collected on the identity of participants in the protests on Independence Square likely indicate that associating with UGCC strongly influences social and political behaviors. In this case, it was intertwined with motivation for active participation in the actions of civil disobedience within the framework of Euromaidan.

Soon after overthrowing of President Yanukovich, leaders of the Ukrainian religious communities gathered on February 25, 2014 for a special meeting with Oleksandr Turchynov, who took

over as provisional head of state. He thanked them that “at a difficult time they stayed with the people and supported them.”⁷⁷

A spokesman for the Ukrainian parliament, Oleksandr Turchynov, became an acting president after the overthrow of Yanukovich. His acknowledgment addressed all churches and religious organizations in Ukraine. He did not favor any of them. However, it soon turned out that a new political configuration took shape after the Revolution of Dignity, in which the UGCC obtained a specific privileged position, at least for a while. This was demonstrated by an initiative to launch a state level celebration of 150th anniversary of the birth of Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky.⁷⁸

SHEPTYTSKY WAS A superior of UGCC between 1901–1944. He is object of a special worship among the Greek-Catholics. A process of his beatification started in 1960s. However, the significance and legacy of Sheptytsky goes far beyond the purely religious or ecclesiastical sphere. He was one of the most influential personalities in Ukrainian social and political life in Galicia and in inter-war Poland. Addressing social issues became a very important part of his pastoral activity.⁷⁹ Among other things, Sheptytsky tried to formulate in his writings a vision of the future independent Ukrainian state.⁸⁰

This issue was exploited soon after the Euromaidan as a reason for developing an image of Sheptytsky as one of the “state builders” (*derzhavotvorets*) of a contemporary independent Ukraine. On the June 17, 2014, the Ukrainian Supreme Court passed a resolution honoring the 150th anniversary of Sheptytsky’s birth at the official state level in 2015.⁸¹ Authors of the draft of the bill argued that such a resolution “will enable Ukraine to celebrate at the state level” the anniversary “of person who became a bridge between Western and Eastern churches, who supported restoration of the Ukrainian state and who fostered the development of the Ukrainian culture and spirituality”.⁸²

The initiative to involve state institutions in the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the birth of Sheptytsky might be interpreted as an attempt to legitimize the post-Maidan elite who took control of the state. Its representatives tried to use the symbolic capital related to UGCC to achieve their own purposes. The UGCC took this chance. As a result of this kind of exchange transaction, rather non-communitarian social capital was generated. The question whether such a result aligned with the previous aims of the UGCC leaders is of secondary importance. What is really interesting is the fact that, although the UGCC accepted the exchange with the neopatrimonial agents, it did not adopt a typical client's position.

UGCC during the Dignity Revolution proved that it had relevant institutional and human resources, as well as the social and symbolic capital to secure a position as an important agent in Ukrainian social life. Moreover, the UGCC was able to go beyond its own geographical limitations and become a specific, soft-power actor to influence the political system at the All-Ukrainian level.

Conclusion

As a rule, the majority of the agents in social life in Ukraine – media, political parties, NGOs and religious communities, are at risk of being subordinated to and dependent on the patronalistic rules. If agents reject them, they are at risk of being marginalized. The UGCC very significantly differentiates from the other Eastern Christian religious communities in Ukraine. This church as an institution in Ukrainian social life has maintained relatively broad autonomy from these patronalistic rules.

Moreover, the UGCC, as an agent in Ukrainian social and political life, is able to handle one more characteristic feature of the neopatrimonial order: the conditionality of the autonomy of “domestic political and economic actors vis-à-vis the political center”. As Gelman pointed out, this autonomy can be reduced and/or abolished at any given moment.⁸³ It seems that for the time being this rule has not yet applied to the UGCC.

Some important elements of the UGCC's structure are active outside of Ukraine, in North and the South America, and in Western and Central Europe. Moreover, from the point of view of symbolic capital, it is extraordinarily important that UGCC is a part of the Catholic Church and has strong organizational and spiritual ties with the Vatican. It seems that these are the pivotal factors which determine the above-mentioned autonomy.

In addition, the UGCC inherited from the Roman Catholic Church the requirement to shape basic doctrinal principles, rules, and theses into both abstract and formal definitions. Thus, the general *Catechism of the Catholic Church* provides a great deal of guidance on how to handle modern social developments. In 2011, the UGCC formulated its own catechism. This document contains a brief and relatively clear definition of a civil society that accommodates Christian ethics: “Church is a life-giving environment for sanctifying human nature and for personal development. In Church, a human can also develop himself in his social dimension /.../. A desire for sanctity itself opens Christians to serve their fellow man and society. For that reason, Christians

are creative participants in civil society”.⁸⁴ The authors of the catechism further wrote, “Civil society is marked by the proclivity of its members towards internal self-organization, openness, and autonomous activity for the common good. The Church in its social dimension is a pattern of civil society as long as it raises Christian citizens who are able to be sympathetic to the needs of their fellow man and react to them”.⁸⁵

These statements provide a good background for the participation by and development of the “horizontal networks of exchange relations”. It is worth noting that they stemmed not only from abstract theological reflection, but they were also based on practical experience. The sophisticated phrases of the catechism are also based on broad experience acquired during the church's underground “catacomb” period, for example, through the UGCC's involvement in the development of civil society in Ukraine during the Orange Revolution and Revolution of Dignity.

The UGCC, more than the other Eastern-Christian communities, builds its social position mostly on the basis of its relations with people and not with the structures of the state-power. The unconditional autonomy of the UGCC towards these structures was inherited from the Soviet “catacomb” period. It also stems from sensitivity of the church hierarchy to the different kinds of threats which might undermine this autonomy.

The process of shaping a new identity of the political community in Ukraine gained new dynamics due to the events of Euromaidan and to its consequences (the overthrow of President Yanukovich, hybrid warfare with Russia, intensification of the tension between neopatrimonial and civil models of social life, decommunization of the public sphere). The UGCC has some important assets which allow this church to go actively engage with these processes. First of all, it is one of the best, institutionalized, non-governmental agents in current Ukrainian social life. Secondly, this community acquired a habit of protecting and maintaining essential independence towards formal and informal structures of neopatrimonial power. This is a crucial challenge for all agents who attempt to influence social life in contemporary Ukraine.

Ukrainian social life is shaped by two networks of relations of exchange: vertical and horizontal. They cross each other. The first one still dominates everyday life in Ukraine. Horizontal relations, in turn, are to some extent unspoken, and they have been put in motion as a byproduct of the clashes between the main agents of the neopatrimonial order. These clashes resulted directly or indirectly in such events as the proclamation of the state independence, the visit of the John Paul II, the Orange and Dignity Revolutions. The UGCC was an active participant in these events. It seems that the UGCC has at its disposal the symbolic capital which may be profitably exchanged both via the vertical relations with the state power and neopatrimonial structures and via the horizontal relations with the agents of the growing civil society. ✕

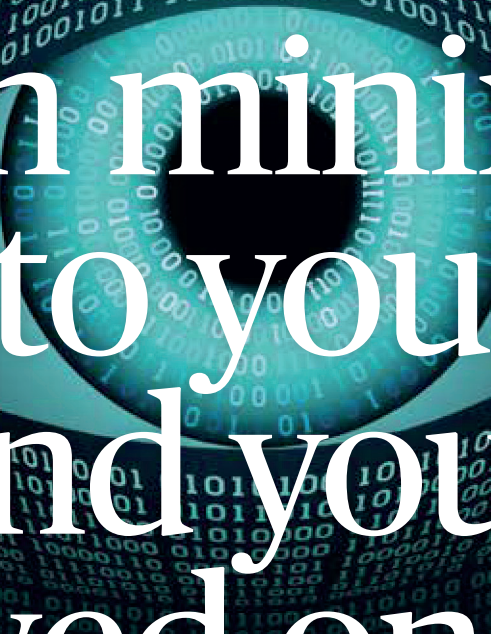
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**SELF-CENSORSHIP AMONG POLITICAL
BLOGGERS IN BELARUS AND RUSSIA:**



To make
yourself heard,
with minimal
risk to yourself
and your
loved ones,
that is the
challenge

by **Alesia Rudnik**



abstract

Awareness of potential political sanctions can stop social media users from expressing critical and open political views for the sake of personal security. This essay focuses on political bloggers in Belarus and Russia as political opinion leaders who have become more frequent targets of these regimes in recent years. The essay presents the results of a survey on perception and practices of self-censorship conducted among 61 well-known political bloggers in Russia and Belarus and discusses them in relation to the theory of the spiral of silence.

KEYWORDS: Bloggers, spiral of silence, censorship, autocratic regimes.

Belarus and Russia are electoral autocracies that have been governed by the non-democratic leaders, Lukashenka and Putin, respectively, for more than 20 years. Both regimes practice election fraud, human rights violations, limit freedom of expression and prevent political opponents from gaining popularity and influencing their political agendas.

Censorship of the printed media and propaganda distributed through official media channels allowed social media to gain particular significance during political and social protests in Russia from 2011 to 2012, 2019, and in Belarus in 2010, 2017 and 2020. During the protests, social media impacted the mobilization of people and also raised the awareness of political and civil rights violations, corruption and foreign policy. The growing popularity of political blogs rapidly led to the increased attention from the Belarusian and Russian authorities. Thus, surveillance tactics and Internet controls such as filtering, blocking of websites and crackdowns on independent media and individual political bloggers have been increasingly present in Belarus and Russia in recent years.

To illustrate this, 875 court cases related to social media publications, comments and reposts were recorded in Russia by the Black Screen Report in the period 2014–2019.¹ In turn, the Belarusian Ministry of Information blocked more than 500 informational sources over a period of three years.

Openly criticizing authorities causes certain individuals to escape from a country, as in the case of Russian political blogger, Thumso Abdurakhmanov, or Belarusian social media celebrity, Stsiapan Sviatlou, known as NEXTA. Other individuals face administrative or criminal persecution, such as the Russian, Yegor Zhukov,² or the Belarusian, Siarhei Tsikh-anouski, who, being a famous political vlogger, expressed an interest in running for president in May 2020.

On the one hand, political bloggers in an autocracy enjoy more freedom than oppositional or independent journalists as they do not fall directly under the jurisdiction of media legislation. On the other hand, autocracies continuously develop their repressive tactics and succeed in pre-

venting certain political publishers on social media from continuing to blog. Awareness of a regime's control is rising with an increasing number of reported cases of political bloggers being threatened or detained. It would be interesting to establish whether political bloggers a) are aware of the potential threats related to their activism; b) practice self-censorship in order to avoid political sanctions; c) continue blogging without practicing self-censorship, although they are aware of the political pressure and the consequences they might face.

Political bloggers: who are they?

Political bloggers combine the roles of individual social media users, political activists and journalists. They make publishing decisions themselves and often work individually without editorial revisions. They also have significantly more subscribers and viewers compared to ordinary social media users. They operate online, interacting with their audience, and are not necessarily aiming to achieve political goals.

Political bloggers have been described as citizen journalists, new journalists, online intellectuals,³ microcelebrity activists.⁴ They rely on an audience that is more politically engaged than the readers of traditional media⁵ and are willing to take on the following functions: information providers, watchdogs of conventional media, political advocacy, charity promotion.⁶ In autocracies, political blogs serve as an alternative source of information since trust in state-controlled media is low.

The audience of political bloggers in Belarus and Russia is mainly reached via Facebook, Twitter, Telegram and YouTube, although Vkontakte is the most popular social media network in both countries. Telegram gained particular popularity after it refused to provide the Russian secret services with its users' encrypted data. In the report "Media in Belarus 2020" (*"Медыа в Беларусі 2020"*), Telegram was described as "Platform of the Year".⁷

The political bloggers in my study⁸ are referred to as "individuals or groups of individuals who facilitate online political discussion by a) informing their audience, sharing political opinions and/or b) serving as watchdogs of the ruling elites and pro-governmental media, and/or c) advocating political issues and/or d) political charity promotion".⁹

A textual analysis of 99 posts in Telegram and Facebook over a period of two weeks demonstrated that political bloggers provided readers with either first-hand information, personal opinion on political issues, or encouraged readers to engage in charitable or political issues. Also, political bloggers made critical observations about presidents Lukashenka and Putin, human rights violations, lack of justice, and the repression of dissidents. At the same time, topics such as the environment, church and gender were less covered.

**"IN AUTOCRACIES,
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TABLE 1. **LEGISLATIVE REGULATIONS CONCERNING ONLINE MEDIA IN BELARUS AND RUSSIA**

	Belarus	Russia
Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law on Media ("means of mass information") • Counter-extremism law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Law "On Information, Informational Technologies and Protection of Information", • Criminal Code, Art. 282.1, 282.2
Concepts	"network editions", "producing and distributing extremism materials", "extremist organization"	"network edition", "content related to extremism, or calls for unsanctioned public actions or rallies"
What the amendment includes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • media license, restricted access without it • authorization of commentators • network editions can be blocked online • to register a media, the owner must be either an entity or citizen of Belarus who has worked in the media field for at least five years. • closing organizations that are assessed as extremist • restriction on receiving foreign funds for media emerged after 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • authorization of commentators • blocking content online by several federal bodies • blocking webpages upon warning • network operators must block access to the website following a request from the federal body
Bodies responsible for online media control	Ministry of Information, Customs, internal affair bodies, Prosecutor General, public administration body responsible for mass media	Roskomnadzor, Rospotrebnadzor, Federal Drug Control, Prosecutor General, FSB

What regulates the blogosphere?

For autocracies, legal prosecution is an effective method of hard censorship.¹⁰ In countries such as Belarus and Russia, political dissidents are often charged with actions that are not related to their activism but are instead triggered by it. For example, Ivan Golunov (charged with drug possession based on false evidence), Stsiapan Sviatlou (defamation of the president), Siarhei Piatruhin (abusing police officers). Political bloggers and independent journalists, however, have more often been prosecuted under media laws, laws on counter-extremism, as well as criminal codes.

Since an amendment to the Belarusian media law in 2018, Belarusian "network editions" can register as media channels.¹¹ On the one hand, registration as a media channel guarantees a media license and an easier accreditation procedure for attending press conferences or official meetings. On the other hand, online media, including blogs, risk having their working rights violated or being charged with illegal media content production.¹²

According to the SOVA center, 96% of prosecutions under article 282 of the Russian Criminal Code are related to individual or group publishers rather than the media.¹³ An amendment to the Law on Information, Information Technology and Protection of Information requires "communication platforms" to share data on identified readers with the Federal Security Service.¹⁴ Further, the law (art. 15.3) allows state bodies to require immediate blocking of websites if they contain information on drugs, suicides, extremism and calls to unsanctioned manifestations.¹⁵

The formulation of laws in Belarus is generally vague, allowing responsible bodies to make a broader interpretation. Even though the laws describe the obligations of those who publish in "network editions," they barely specify the rights and free-

doms guaranteed by such laws. Moreover, political bloggers are often treated as media channels that face the same obligations, even though the laws do not place bloggers in the category of media channels. Several human rights initiatives have strongly criticized these laws as being restrictive and impacting freedom of speech. Media laws in Belarus and Russia place bloggers under the potential risk of either being subjected to administrative charges for producing content as unregistered media, or being prosecuted under the extremism articles of the Criminal Code.

Self-censorship as an individual decision

Noelle-Neumann suggested that individuals tend to assess the social environment and decide on whether they are ready to express their opinions.¹⁶ They weigh this against the fear of being socially isolated if they express unpopular views and risk being stigmatized as radical if they dare to speak out. This results in a spiral of silence that unfolds when more and more individuals stay quiet because of their fear of social isolation. Although the author didn't discuss the notion of self-censorship, it became one of the first theories to introduce the process of self-censorship from a societal perspective.

Chen followed Noelle-Neumann and utilized a spiral of silence theory to examine self-censorship trends in social media during the election in Hong Kong.¹⁷ The author defined self-censorship as "decreasing and limiting expressive behaviors" and demonstrating "withdrawal behaviors (deleting, editing, untagging)." Chen concluded that when social media users discuss politics, they tend to practice one of the forms of self-cen-

TABLE 2. **DEMOGRAPHIC PORTRAIT OF THE SAMPLET**

Gender		Age					Country	
Male	Female	<50	41–50	31–40	26–30	20–25	Belarus	Russia
75.4%	24.6%	34.4%	27.9%	24.6%	6.6%	6.6%	57.4%	42.6%
Number of followers								
From 1000 to 5000	From 5000 to 10 000	From 10 000 to 50 000	From 50 000 to 100 000		From 100 000 to 500 000		From 500 000 to 1 000 000	
39.3%	31.1%	16.4%	4.9%		6.6%		1.6%	
Social media with majority of subscriptions (multiple choice was available)								
Facebook	Vkontakte	YouTube	Odnoklassniki	Live Journal	Instagram	Twitter	Own website	Telegram
85.2%	8.2%	21.3%	8.2%	14.6%	13.1%	11.5%	4.9%	21.3%
Country of residence								
Belarus	Russia	UK	US	EU country		Georgia	Anonymous	
47.5%	32.8%	1.6%	3.3%	9.8%		1.6%	3.2%	

sorship, taking into account the publicness of their opinions.¹⁸

In autocracies, self-censorship is not only caused by fear of social isolation but also by a political regime. Schimpfoss and Yablokov conducted a study among Russian journalists and highlighted that they are aware of potential sanctions for expressing critical opinions and often practice self-censorship, for example, by avoiding to mention specific topics or events.¹⁹

When studying self-censorship, it is vital to distinguish it from censorship as the latter refers to decisions made by publishers, editors or statutory regulations, while the former is motivated by an individual choice to resist expressing an opinion. This choice can be made based on the cultural or political environment and the fear of social isolation. Parks and Mukhrjee make another essential observation claiming that self-censorship is often an unconscious act.²⁰

Thus, self-censorship is a complicated phenomenon, both challenging to operationalize and challenging to measure. In the survey presented in this essay, the respondents were asked several questions related to expressive behaviors (such as whether they avoided particular topics or names when writing a social media post, or whether they used less critical language), as well as withdrawal behaviors (such as whether they edit political content by deleting, untagging, etc.).

“IN AUTOCRACIES, SELF-CENSORSHIP IS NOT ONLY CAUSED BY FEAR OF SOCIAL ISOLATION BUT ALSO BY A POLITICAL REGIME.”

Self-censorship and political bloggers: survey results

The web survey was directed at political bloggers in Belarus and Russia with more than 1000 subscribers who published political content on their personal pages/blogs/channels in social media. The questionnaire was conducted from March to May 2020. 61 political bloggers from Belarus and Russia responded to the survey (47.6% response rate).

Many bloggers described their self-censorship as being the result of the political situation in their country. Some bloggers stated that political correctness and unspoken rules or social media culture often increased their motivation to self-censor.

I am quite a calm and gentle person, Thus, my posts usually have a calm and sustained tone with no extremist and foul language. At the same time, I clearly understand that I will never write anything about Ramzan

Kadyrov, for example <...>. Also, it would be pointless if I fought with him for the sake of a few words. This of course relates to the political situation in the country.

Awareness of sanctions following political posts in social media is relatively

high. Thus, 44.3% of bloggers are certain that their social media activities could lead to increased attention from the secret services, while 42.6% associate the publishing of political content with potential sentences.

When asked whether they had any experience of being sanctioned because of their political content in social media, the bloggers in Belarus and Russia described such punishments as criminal charges, administrative charges, online threats, attention from the secret services, as well as the forceful blocking of publications (see Figure 1). Also, according to the survey, the experience of being sanctioned even with criminal charges had a weak association with the desire to self-censor.

Different forms of self-censorship were addressed and analyzed by the respondents. For example, only 13.1% reported that they toned down their language and avoided naming events and people. Only one respondent out of 61 indicated an unwillingness to criticize a president, while other respondents were ready to discuss Putin and Lukashenka relatively openly. However, when analyzing political blogs, I noted that bloggers tended to replace the names of presidents with synonyms or nicknames, such as “tsar” or “them up there”. This could be regarded as another form of self-censorship.

Post-publishing self-censorship did not often occur among respondents with regard to editing publications because of safety concerns. The analysis showed there was no particular association between the number of followers and self-censorship practices.

44% of the respondents were not certain whether their political posts on social media might attract the attention of the secret services. In the case of Russia, legislation explicitly specifies the role of the Federal Security Service (FSB) in managing political content online. At the same time, the formal absence of the KGB from Belarusian law complicates the application of the law as the secret services act as invisible agents but actively contribute to exposing, communicating with and threatening political dissidents.

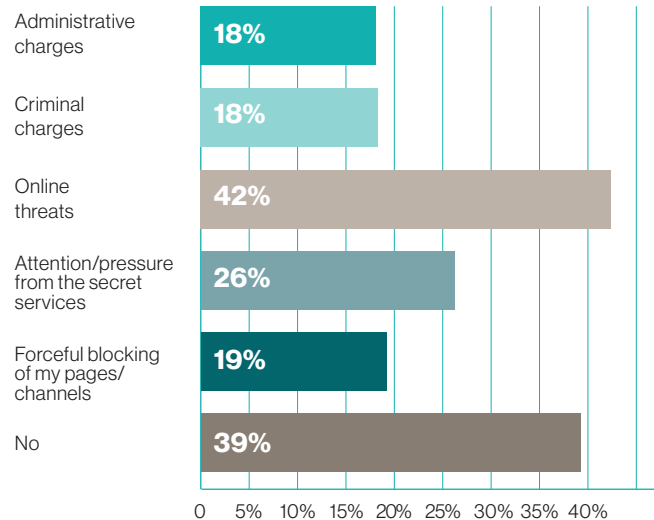
Three stages of self-censorship

Based on the study results, three main factors influenced the motivation to self-censor – legislation and its application, community ethics/social media culture/fear of social isolation, as well as fear of political sanctions. At the same time, self-censorship can be caused by other factors that are better addressed through interviews with political bloggers and are highly recommended for future research.

Based on the survey of political bloggers in Belarus and Russia and the definition of self-censorship proposed by Chen, I suggest a three-stage model of self-censorship. The first stage involves an assessment of whether it is safe to discuss specific topics or people. Secondly, language is selected and the level of criticism is determined. In the last stage, post-publication, the content producer edits the publication by rereading, toning down the language, deleting names, or replacing them with synonyms.

The highest degree of self-censorship was demonstrated at the pre-publishing stage when political bloggers assessed whether it was safe to discuss specific people or topics. According to the survey, fewer incentives to self-censor emerged during the

FIGURE 1. HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY PROBLEMS DUE TO YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PUBLICATIONS? (N=61)



post-publishing stage, as concerns about personal safety barely influenced decisions to adjust political content on social media.

As previously mentioned, it was noteworthy that experience of political sanctions had no association with a willingness to self-censor, either regarding expressive behaviors or withdrawal behaviors.

Can bloggers crack down on the spiral of silence?

The spiral of silence described by Noelle-Neumann can be adapted in order to explain self-censorship in autocratic regimes, as suggested in the model below (see Figure 3). An autocratic political system leads to the emergence of prohibited topics that many bloggers will be too afraid to cover. As a result, increasingly fewer individuals express their genuine opinions because of the fear of political sanctions. The more that people face political pressure from a regime for critically speaking out, the more the spiral of silence unfolds, affecting more groups of society.

Political bloggers in autocracies stand out as those who aim to crack down on the spiral of silence. Due to the factors mentioned above, thus far, they enjoy relative freedom of expression online. Despite attempts by regimes to minimize the influence of political bloggers by imprisoning some of them or blocking their content, the number of bloggers is rising, as well as the number of political topics that regimes tolerate. The more that political bloggers emerge, the greater the opportunities to eliminate the spiral of silence because of a) the limited control resources of modern autocracies; b) the impracticality of arresting every dissident. The mobilization potential of political bloggers has been regarded as relatively low due to

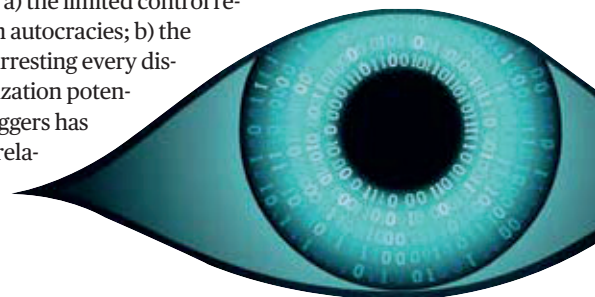
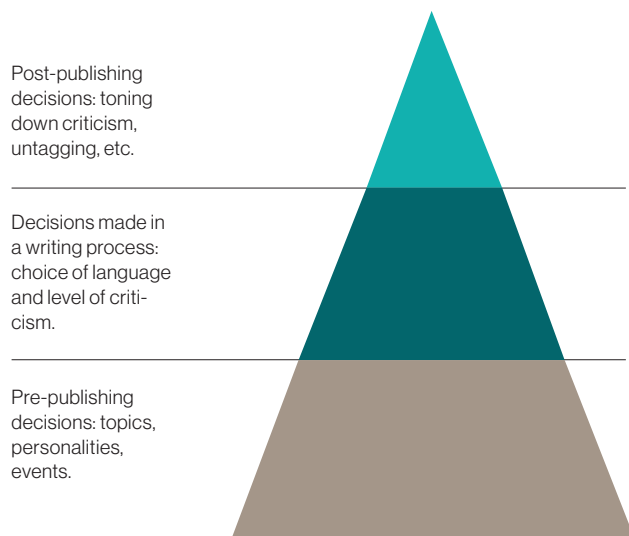


FIGURE 2. THREE STAGES OF SELF-CENSORSHIP



the weak culture of political protests in Belarus and Russia. Thus, autocracies may end up underestimating the effect of political blogs in offline protests. Demonstrations and rallies during summer 2020 in Belarus, coordinated through social media, including numerous political blogs, prove that political bloggers have the chance to use a window of opportunity to inform and educate society and broaden forms of political discussion in autocracies. ✕

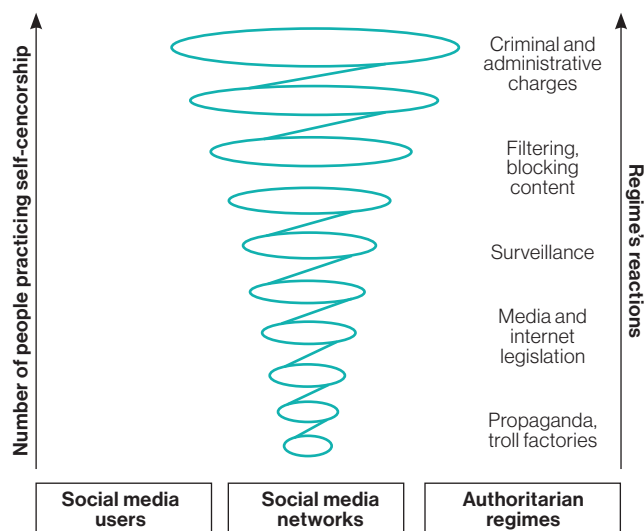
Alesia Rudnik, MA in Political Science and Journalism

Note: This article is based on findings from the study conducted for the thesis, "Why do bloggers keep silent? Self-censorship in social media: cases of Belarus and Russia" in 2020 at Södertörn University. The figures and tables are from the same source.

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FIGURE 3. SPIRAL OF SILENCE IN AUTOCRACIES



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Russian fashionistas and international politics

by Karin Winroth

The international image of a country has consequences for the expectations of what it can offer. A wonderful natural setting, culinary tradition, hard-minded politicians or extraordinary sporting achievements will leave an imprint in people's minds. It is a battle for status among nations in a similar way the Olympic Games are a battle among athletes (as well as nations). In the domain of fashion, countries known worldwide for their stylish design have long traditions of handicraft, and a reputation for taste and extravagance. Cities such as Paris and Milan use their heritage to cultivate haute couture, giving France and Italy an aura of chic elegance. London contributes with a creative rebel attitude and New York with a relaxed sophistication, making the UK and the US representatives of an avantgarde and laid-back style. However, it is seldom that you talk or hear about fashion from Moscow. Miroslava Duma, who presents herself as a Russian digital entrepreneur and investor in international fashion, has described Russia during the communist era as a fashion-free zone. Dresses were supposed to be simple back then. Later, Russian women rather became identified by their big hair, leopard tights and showing off bling and brands. However, this image was to be changed.

The new Russian fashionistas

In the early 2010s the viral world of fashion and street-style photographers found their new darlings among some fashionable women with their origin in Moscow: a group called the "Russian



Miroslava (Mira) Duma
visiting a fashion show in
Paris in 2013.

PHOTO: VICTORIA ADAMSON/BLAUBAT-EDITION.COM

Fashion pack". These women were not only exciting because of their extraordinary style but their personal stories also fascinated and reflected a Russia in transformation. It was presented as a shift on the fashion throne when in 2012 the fashion site Style.com appointed a Russian fashion designer as number 1 in a list of this year's "Look of the Year". For a long time, French or American fashion designers and fashion magazine editors had topped the list, or sometimes a British actress. However, in 2012 the Russian fashion designer, Ulyana Sergeenko, was selected as the most inspiring fashionista. Her female designs and appearance made her a new kind of fashion icon. Close behind her on the prestigious Style.com list of trend-setting influencers were more Russian names: Elena Perminova and Miroslava Duma (or Mira Duma as she is called). That year the Russian fashionistas made a serious entry on the international fashion stage, viewed as inspirational in their various outfits. The street-style photographers loved them, and their images spread all over the viral world. Mira Duma comments on the street style success of Russian girls in *Fashion Inspo*:

"We were the 'new thing'. You know how fashion is - there's always going to be a new look, a new idea, a new story. For a moment, street-style blogs were the new thing; now they have to look for another new thing. So today it's the Russians."

The individual and playful styles made the Russian women an inspiration for what was considered chic and cool. Their extensive wardrobes and their creative ensembles made them social media celebrities. However, after a while, they realized that they were not only seen as role-models and inspirational for fashion: they were also regarded as ambassadors of a new Russia. Their popularity put Russia on the map as a country offering fashionable inspiration and they were encouraging creativity as well as entrepreneurship by having the coolest and most stylish people at fashion shows. Outside the spring/summer show of Valentino 2013, during the Paris Fashion Week, a photograph of six Russian women was taken and spread all over the world by street-style photographers, even further establishing the attraction of this new group of fashionistas. In the West, they were perceived and sometimes described as "exotic" and exciting for the fashion industry. In the East they rather demonstrated that Russian was a country that also stood out in the international fashion arena.

THE RUSSIAN MODEL and fashionista Elena Perminova has stated that it was never her intention to change anybody's view about Russian forms of expression, but that she realized that she was one of the women who was contributing to this. She adds:

"Russian style has changed a lot, and thank God. In the past it was so much about labels. Everyone wanted to show that they were rich. I never liked that."

Mira Duma – a success story

Among the Russian designers, models and editors, Mira Duma plays a special role. She started out as a stylist and fashion journalist in the Russian versions of magazines such as *Vogue*, *Tatler*, *Forbes Women* and *Glamour*. Mira Duma saw the future on the Internet, and in a digital magazine in which the readers

could easily be updated about the latest in fashion. However, she also wanted to include space for reports from the cultural arena and what was happening in the movies, theater and architecture. This gave birth to *Büro 24/7* in 2011, a digital lifestyle magazine Mira Duma started together with her childhood friend Fira Chilieva. The site was to become very popular and after a number of years it was one of the trendiest sites in Eastern Europe. In 2016 the magazine had 4.9 million visitors a month – in Russia alone. However, there

was also global interest in the site. Over the years, *Büro 24/7* has been published in 11 different versions and distributed over four continents. It was nothing less than a megahit.

DURING THE 2010s the Western fashion industry became more interested in establishing itself on the Russian market. Russian consumers were showing an interest in cultivating a personal image of wealth and status. Additionally, a group of Russians had become very wealthy during the age of Perestroika, making them the perfect market for luxury brands. In order to enter this market and reach these consumers, it was crucial for the Western fashion industry to have the right Russian mediators: and the Russian fashionistas seemed to be the perfect bridge to the Russian market. Mira Duma was seen as the most powerful person in the world of fashion in Russia. Consequently, she was hired as a model for prestigious brands such as Louis Vuitton and Oscar de la Renta and *Büro 24/7* became a popular site for advertising, including Hermès and Louis Vuitton among other Western brands. When *Büro 24/7* expanded its editions into more languages and geographical areas, brands such as Burberry, Chanel and Ralph Lauren sponsored the venture.

Fashionistas from all over the world showed an interest in Mira Duma's personal outfits and she became one of the street-style photographers' favorites. Her name, face and style became familiar to the international fashion elite, and her own Instagram account had over 1.6 million followers. But even so, Mira Duma did not view herself as the party princess and fashion celebrity as some described her. Rather, she believed that business was her most important contribution. In her view of the world, her 'squad' was not to be found among the cool social media celebrities or fashion influencers. Rather, she surrounds herself with CEOs from the updated fashion and tech firms and by the coolest of tech nerds. She takes an interest in the fashion industry as a business, something the future would show. Her network has gradually expanded and she is now regarded as one of the



At the Paris Fashion Show in 2013. From the left, Polina Kit-senko, owner of the hip fashion shop Podium in Moscow, Elena Perminova (model), Natalia Vodjanova (model and philanthropist), Ulyana Sergeenko (designer), Vika Gazinskaya (designer) and Mira Duma (digital entrepreneur in fashion).

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

most influential persons in the industry. *The Financial Times* described her as “the force of the fashion industry” and the fashion magazine *Vogue* stated that she was “the most connected digital entrepreneur in fashion”.

Sustainability and entrepreneurship

But Mira Duma had greater visions. When she was growing up in Siberia, she was well aware of the environmental damage caused by the oil industry. Realizing that fashion is also an industry with considerable environmental consequences, she wanted to contribute to a more sustainable business. Thus, she used her connections to create a network of digital entrepreneurs and corporations that experiment with creating material for a more environmentally-friendly fashion industry. Her eye for business and her heart for sustainability made her a popular keynote speaker in conferences all over the world.

After investing in a number of sustainable oriented firms, Mira Duma collaborated in the foundation of The Tot in 2016. The Tot is a platform that offers advice on health and sustainability for mothers, and also includes an online shop. In 2017 she took a further step by establishing Future Tech Lab (FTL), an investor taking an interest in developing new technologies and innovations focusing on sustainability. To develop the company, Mira Duma created a network of specialists and scientists with expertise in innovative materials, competence in biotechnology, wearable technology (such as material reacting to body temperature) and connected them with fashion designers. The network includes experts from universities such as Stanford, MIT,

Harvard and even researchers from the Russian space program, Roscosmos. The focus of FTL is to develop and use technological improvements in materials to create a more sustainable fashion industry and to launch these new materials and ideas to the future generation of fashion designers. For instance, there are initiatives to grow leather from stem cells, make diamonds out of solar energy and create a material similar to silk from orange peel. FTL is a new sort of establishment that supports the trend for a healthier planet and lifestyle. It has several offices in the United States, Europe, the Middle East and China. However, Mira Duma is also proud of her Russian roots. Thus, she wanted to support talent in the country to stay and expose their ideas to the world from there. The founders of WhatsApp and the face-swapping app MSQRD originate in countries of the former Soviet, Ukraine and Belarus. Both apps were bought by the media giant Facebook and WhatsApp and MSQRD now have their headquarters in Mountain View, California and in London. However, Mira Duma wanted to support the opportunity for the pioneers of innovations within Russia to stay in the country and receive the appreciation they deserved in their homeland, thereby not needing to move to Silicon Valley. By supporting start-ups, technical platforms and programmers in Russia, they could be given opportunities at home. One idea to encourage this was when she connected *Büro 24/7* with Skolkovo, a government-initiated platform to become the Russian equivalent of Silicon Valley. The aim is to support young tech and innovation specialists to ensure that investments and achievements from these digital initiatives stay and grow in Russia.



Panel with Martijn Hagman, Miroslava Duma and David Roberts moderated by Peder Michael Pruzan-Jorgensen. Photo from Copenhagen Fashion Summit on sustainability in fashion, organized by Global Fashion Agenda.

Büro 24/7 kept developing and in 2017 it acquired a majority stake in the fashion magazine *System*, a worldwide known publication based in Great Britain. The acquisition is presented as a win-win situation in which *System* would benefit from the tech-team of *Büro 24/7* which, in turn, would take advantage of the competence in story-telling and access to the fashion industry. The plans for making a worldwide lifestyle magazine meant that the head office of *Büro 24/7* would move to London.

Scandals and media storms

The Russian fashionistas are all integrated in well-established circles within their home country. Mira Duma's father was a senator and her husband Aleksey Mikheev is an entrepreneur who also holds a position at the Russian Ministry of Economy. Ulyana Sergeenko is married to Danil Khachaturov who, according to *Forbes magazine*, is one of the world's wealthiest men. Elena Perminova's partner Alexander Lebedev is a former KGB agent who made a fortune on the Russian Exchange during the 1990s (a time when the Exchange exploded in wealth). Among other assets, he has a 49% stake in the Russian newspaper *Novaya Gazeta*. In 2006 his career took an unexpected turn and he joined the Duma. Thus, the Russian fashionistas are all connected in an influential context. Their relationship to the power center in Moscow is, however, not without complications. Lebedev, for instance, has a strained relationship with the Kremlin due to publications in *Novaya Gazeta* and some of his political statements.²

As previously explained, even though Mira Duma and the other female fashionistas are seen as ambassadors for their

country, their extravagant lifestyle is not completely in line with President Putin's wishes. Putin has stated that the consumption of luxury products must be restricted, as resources are needed to further develop the country. He also has concerns about the nativity in the country and has emphasized that women need to raise children.³

I would argue that values regarding what is seen as politically correct in Western Europe have influenced the opinions and public comments made by these fashionable Russian women. They wanted to fit into an international setting and therefore also came to adopt some values that are represented in the West, something that Mira Duma has also reflected upon. Moving the head office of *Büro 24/7* to London would be in line with this Western orientation. However, adapting to Western culture and also representing Russia is a complex challenge. And one day, a cultural clash emerged. An Instagram post was unintentionally used in a way that some people found offensive.

THE CAREERS OF Mira Duma and Ulyana Sergeenko suffered a serious setback in January 2018. In a note sent from Sergeenko to Duma she referred to a rap text by Kanye West and Jay-Z stating 'To my n*ggas in Paris'. She sent the note together with a beautiful bouquet of champagne-colored roses. Duma found the greeting charming and posted a photo of the flowers and the note on Instagram. The post generated a storm on social media, accusing Duma and Sergeenko of being racists. The use of the pejorative term about Afro Americans was upsetting to many people and seen as outrageous. Both Duma and Sergeenko offered their apologies on social media.

Only six hours after the first drama on Instagram, a second alarming coincidence emerged on social media. A video from a press conference for *Büro 24/7* filmed in Russia in 2012 was posted on YouTube. In the video, Mira Duma was asked what she thought about the well-known blogger Bryanboy's style, and how she felt about the transgender model Andreja Pejic posing for swimwear. In the video Duma said something about how it could be hard for young boys to see "these kind of things" as it might give them "strange ideas". The six-year old video received considerable attention and Mira Duma was now also being accused of homophobia and being narrow-minded regarding transgender persons. Mira Duma was devastated and claimed that she couldn't understand her own previous statements, assuring everyone that she found them both upsetting and hurtful. Both those coincidences on social media had a number of consequences for the status of Mira Duma and the designer Ulyana Sergeenko. Their apologies received various kinds of reactions.

ON HER INSTAGRAM Mira Duma expressed her concern:

"As we all know, the world is evolving at an extraordinary pace and, as humans, we are also evolving. The person I was six years ago is not the person I am today."

She added, "I'd like to formally apologise to any individuals or communities that I have offended. If any positive change is to come from recent events, I sincerely hope that the public discussions surrounding me might shine a light on the broader need to stamp out discrimination from society once and for all," she continued. "It is true that I come from a culture in which words and attitudes may be different than the Western ideals that I, in fact, have come to understand and accept."

Mira Duma's work in opening Russia to European fashion brands and building an international digital media corporation seemed to be destroyed in a matter of days as a consequence of her rather careless comments, and whatever it was that made her express them in the way she did. Mira Duma soon resigned from her positions in *Büro 24/7* and *The Tot*. The only position she retained was in FTL, the firm she had founded on her own.

Conclusion

Russian fashionistas have contributed to an updated image of Russia as a country. They created an updated style of what Russian fashion could be with all the attention they received at fashion events, in international magazines and on social media. They have displayed a Russian view of style and shown the world that Russia is a country in which cool brands are created. They opened up the Russian market to Western fashion brands by being exciting intermediaries. Thus, they were an asset for Russian political power. However, in order to fit into the group of international fashion celebrities, Russian women also partially adopted Western norms and values. They needed to relate to the international discourse on sustainability and values concerning consumption, but they also needed to be non-traditional when it came to the role of women, and sensitive and open-minded when it came to race and gender issues. In their home country, the group of Russian international fashionistas were occasionally

criticized for being too influenced by Western values. It could be argued or discussed whether, in the eyes of Russian society, they actually changed and differed too much from the mainstream norms and culture for women in Russia.

It is hard to assess whether the turbulence on social media was initiated by unknown forces. Some people have speculated whether this drama was planted and fueled by certain actors, questioning who such actors could have been. Was it forces in the West who believed that this Mira Duma, a Russian entrepreneur and trendsetter was receiving too much attention? That her business and reputation should be restricted? Or were there Russian actors who believed that the "Russian fashion pack" had adapted too much to Western norms?

BEING A CELEBRITY on social media is a double-edged sword. Mira Duma's mistake in posting what she considered to be a charming greeting on Instagram had consequences she could not have foreseen. This illustrates the sensitivity of expressing yourself in a multicultural and political world. However, the posting of a film recorded in 2012 only hours after Duma's own mistake can hardly be seen as a coincidence.

Mira Duma was not visible on social media until late 2019, when she announced that she was recovering from a serious illness. She appeared at the World Economic Forum in January 2020, discussing sustainability in the fashion industry. ✕

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Note: The article introduces one of the cases that is further elaborated on in the book *Fashionabla varumärken och passionerade entreprenörer* (Fashionable brands and passionate entrepreneurs) (2020), Ekerlids Förlag.

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Henry Lansdell. AN ENGLISH MISSIONARY'S TALES OF SIBERIA IN THE LATE 19TH-CENTURY

by Annagreta Dyring

The priest checked his baggage. No one could be better prepared. He felt he knew what to expect; this wasn't the first time he was headed east. He calmly and methodically packed a bundle of letters of recommendation while giving a moment's thanks to the powerful society luminaries and church fathers who had written them. He then left for the harbor to make sure the bibles and sacred texts in various languages were ready to ship. Estimated to fill three railroad cars, it was no small cargo.

On April 13, 1879, everything was ready and Henry Lansdell departed a misty London. At last, he was on his way to Siberia. Once there, he would visit prisons, mines and hospitals and distribute sacred tracts, scriptures and testaments, thus spreading the Christian message to victims of misfortune.

So began his journey to an unknown country. Thanks to his traveler's powers of observation and diligent note taking, the expedition is documented in the two volumes of *Through Siberia* from 1882. It's available on the Internet in its entirety through Cambridge University Press. An abridged Swedish version entitled *Genom Sibirien* was published in the same year.

The West's interest in Siberia had grown during the 19th century, but there were few reports from there. While a great number of west European doctors and mineralogists were active there, not much was heard from them, and the entrepreneurs and merchants involved in mining and the fur trade were presumably too busy doing business to devote their time to publishing. The UK's politicians were keenly interested in East Asia, and sincerely

hoped to make themselves at home in this part of the world too.

They asked themselves what kind of people lived so far away on the endless tundra, where permafrost paralyzes the ground and the harsh climate punishes anyone who ventures outdoors. They painted themselves a portrait of a man created in the wilderness, poor in spirit and capable of every kind of cruelty, above whom a Czar ruled with total power over the people. Fanciful westerners who'd gotten close to Russia had written reports that reinforced this picture. It was uncertain whether they had ever reached Siberia at all.

Lansdell felt that one particular report stood out. It was by the American journalist George Kennan from an expedition to the northeastern corner of Siberia in 1865. The purpose of the journey had been to investigate the feasibility of running a telegraph line between Moscow and the US. What interested Lansdell was Kennan's attitude to the people he met. There were no denigrating descriptions, instead he described the people there with warmth and admiration. According to his own analysis, Kennan had been "smitten by love for the Russian people". His report *Tent Life in Siberia* was published in the US in 1870. (A Swedish translation, *Lägerlif i Sibirien*, was published in 1891).

A religious man, Lansdell had high hopes for the trip but was also aware of his limitations. He knew no Russian, but the scriptures he would distribute had been translated into several of the languages known to be spoken in the east, and he would have an interpreter with him. His goal was purely humanitarian; he would not be prospecting for minerals, creating maps or buying





Lansdell dressed in Samoyede costume.

Lansdell in Gilyak costume of salmon skin. The Gilyaks are a people of Outer Manchuria.

Gold-mine and washing-house at Kara, a penal institution in Siberia.

All images from *Through Siberia*, 1883. The drawings were made by Lansdell during his journey.

furs. His mission was to evangelize for Protestantism. He was also going to document his journey, and this would prove to be significant.

THE FACT THAT Lansdell was heading for Siberia did not create much of a stir. Travels of discovery and exploration were a phenomenon of the age. People set out with different objectives, and these might include thirst for scientific knowledge or being caught up in the politically popular quest for colonies. Or merely wanting to see the sights and head off for Jerusalem, Cairo or Rome in the company of like-minded people. By and by, newspapers began supporting travel reportage by intrepid trailblazers who set out for tracts unknown. In 1872, the Thomas Cook and Son travel agency arranged the first round-the-world tour. But back then, not everyone traveled with a wallet-full of money and a return ticket. A great many impoverished Europeans set out on the long journey to America. Nor was this Lansdell's first missionary expedition as he had previously visited the peoples on either side of the Gulf of Bothnia in an effort to convert them to Protestantism.

British explorers were in a fortunate position. As a rule, they enjoyed sound scientific backing from prestigious academic soci-

eties or they traveled on assignments from newspapers.

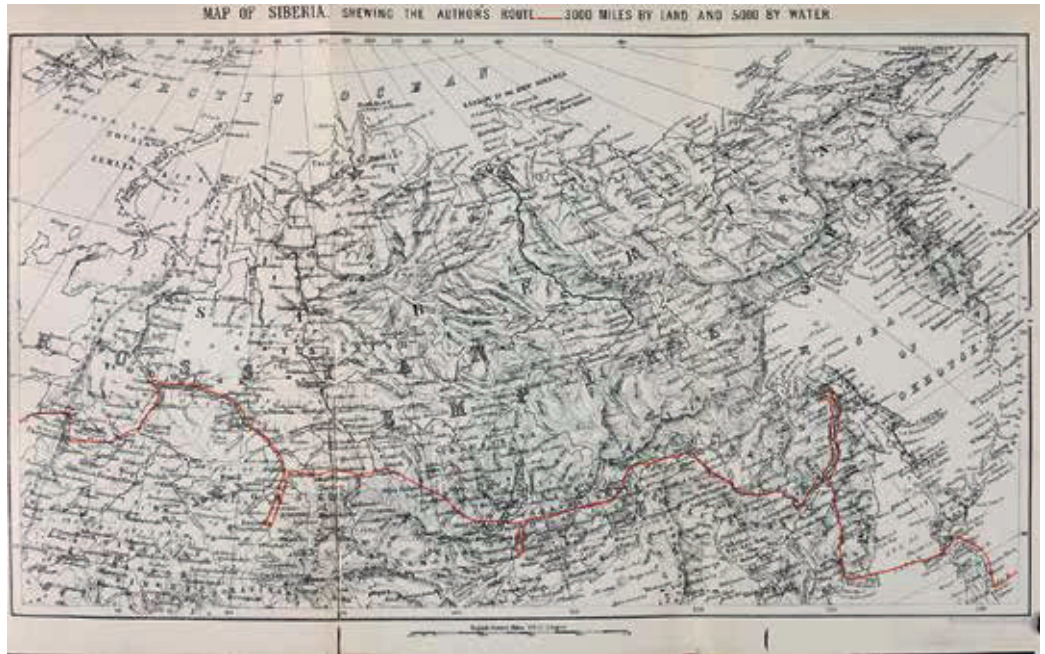
Henry Lansdell was firmly established with the religious powers that be. The Siberian mission itself originated with the Irish Church Missions, a somewhat independent body within the Anglican communion that usually kept itself busy trying to convert the Irish from Roman Catholicism. Lansdell also enjoyed support from the highest Anglican echelons, eminently dem-

onstrated by a hard-to-trump letter of recommendation from the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Armed to the teeth with letters and suitable means of payment, Lansdell boarded the train from St Petersburg on May 12, 1879. He was joined in Nizhny Novgorod by a pre-arranged interpreter. The railroad from Perm to Ekaterinburg was brand new, and Lansdell was amazed by the comfortable first-class seating. Little did he suspect the strenuous modes of travel he would

“THE RAILROAD FROM PERM TO EKATERINBURG WAS BRAND NEW, AND LANSDOLL WAS AMAZED BY THE COMFORTABLE FIRST-CLASS SEATING.”

later be forced to experience. When it was time to use the Siberian means of transport known as the tarantass, it proved to be a harrowing experience. This type of wagon - whose wheels were replaced by runners in the winter - was drawn by one or more horses. The coachman insisted that the design using longitudinal poles instead of springs minimized heeling and jolts. But traveling along the pot-holed roads of Siberia was an arduous physi-



cal ordeal for the priest from Great Britain. “May the reader be spared such a fate!” he exclaimed resignedly. “Just getting in behind the coachman is a science unto itself,” he continued. “Avoid trunks like the plague; their corners and edges will jab into your legs and back.” He learned to use flat overnight bags and soft bags as a base, then a mattress and finally a thin rug. Behind him he would place two or more down cushions to make things bearable. The reputation of the tarantass was also impugned elsewhere. When Jules Verne wrote *The Courier of the Tsar* (published 1876), he has his traveler burst out that the conveyance was hardly the pinnacle of the wainwright’s handicraft.

BUT LANSDELL DID NOT pass the Urals without visiting the famous mines where manganese, copper, malachite and above all iron were extracted. The proud mine officials emphasized how important the wealthy Demidoff family was for Russia’s mining industry. But Lansdell, who had seen plenty of iron deposits on his many travels, graciously declared that “the quality of Demidoff iron is only exceeded by what is mined in Dannemora”.

The next stop was the Tyumen, a city of growing importance with an ambitious school policy. Lansdell was received by the mayor, and he noted how simply the latter’s work room was furnished; it was similar to the Swedish counterparts he had seen as a missionary along the northern Gulf of Bothnia coast in 1876. “These bigwigs live more simply than their peers in England,” he thought, “without their being less happy for that”.

Tyumen proved to have a key role in terms of transportation. It was here authorities brought together hobos, rapists, murderers, robbers, counterfeiters and political prisoners for onward transport to various penal institutions to the east. Including women and children, the number of people transported in 1878 approached 20,000. Around one in six prisoners took along their

wives and children, who were allowed to find lodgings outside the penal institution. Every year, around 700 prisoners were said to have escaped during transportation to the east. When asked how this could be possible, the usual answer was: Putting a few rubles in the hand of a Cossack or minor official has a miraculous ability to render them blind in both eyes. It was also said that a reward of 3 rubles per shot escapee was paid upon handing over the body to the police. The transportation of prisoners to the east took various forms; many people were simply made to walk, the worst offenders in handcuffs or shackles. Political prisoners were the exception; they were handled individually and transported “at a furious pace” under supervision in various vehicles.

When Lansdell informed Russian officials that he intended to visit prisons and mines, he was told that Kara was the worst of all the penal institutions in Siberia. However, it turned out that none of the spokesmen had actually been to Kara. “The language of the hearsay witnesses is much keener than that of the eye-witnesses,” sighed Lansdell, as he prepared to pay Kara a visit. Once there, he found a large facility that seemed to be well-managed, noting that there were 793 murderers, 400

robbers, 38 arsonists, 22 rapists, 46 counterfeiters, 86 convicted of malpractice, 677 hobos and 73 convicted of political crimes. In all, 2,135 men and women. They received reduced sentences for good behavior. At the end of their sentences, prisoners could become colonists, i.e. settle somewhere in Siberia, till the soil and try to support themselves and maybe their family, a model common to the other prisons Lansdell visited, and which also provided a way to populate the uninhabited tracts.

Lansdell was well received in Kara and was given wild strawberries for dessert when he was invited to dinner by the “Colonel”. His residence, though simple, had a beautiful fenced yard with a couple of roe deer, “to amuse the children”. His hosts

“HE SEEMED DETERMINED TO POSSESS EVERY FACT ABOUT SIBERIA THAT COULD BE EXPRESSED IN NUMBERS.”



Tunguse girls in winter costume (far left).

Map of Siberia showing the author's route.

Oronchona is a hunting people dwelling in Siberia and in small numbers over the border in Manchuria.

Lansdell in Khokand armour with saddle cloth presented by the Emir of Bukhara.

All images from *Through Siberia*, 1883.

then offered him a visit to the prison hospital and orphanage, where he was impressed by the responsibility and thoughtfulness of the prison management. It was a large area that comprised several habitations. Major gold deposits had been found there, and Lansdell visited an open pit where the prisoners were tasked with excavating a given amount of soil from which to pan gold. Armed Cossacks stood guard. If prisoners were unable to fill their quotas of excavated soil each day, they could receive reduced rations or an extended prison term. If they helped a prisoner escape, they were flogged. No female prisoners could be seen at the mine.

OUR TRAVELER HAD developed a keen eye for detail. In fact, he was a bit of a fact nerd. He seems to have decided early on to complete a full overview of salient Siberian facts as a sideline to his Bible distribution. Thus he noticed numbers of inhabitants, distances, the height of mountains, the number of convicts per prison, the number of escapees, the number of imprisoned women and children, the weight of the inmates' food rations, the number of days per year inmates had to work and various pay levels in the prison environment, to name but a few of the facts and figures that would flow through his resumes. He seemed determined to possess every fact about Siberia that could be expressed in numbers. In other words, missionary work was not enough. He needed something else, something extra, to elevate his mission and demonstrate his capacity. In a moment of introspection he described himself as an amateur and said that the aim of his fact collecting was to help future, better schooled evangelists.

Lansdell was no do-little; he proceeded eastward across the vast landscape, come rain come shine. He distributed thousands of holy scriptures that were received with joy, and sometimes the recipients came back and asked for more and were prepared to pay for them. He noted down everything he saw, including trials and tribulations. Typhoid patients being cared for in a little hut; workless, listless prisoners, blatant anti-Semitism and the

dirty sub post offices. But he also noted the beauty he saw. Flowers, trees, species of birds – they all got their fair share in his notebooks.

There are signs of self irony in Lansdell's description of his own efforts. For example, he confesses that he tried his hand at meteorology but that his thermometers had broken and it all became a grandiose fiasco. At the same time, he duly noted that Siberia had 14 weather observatories where precipitation, temperature and windspeeds were measured three times a day as part of the Russian meteorological collaboration.

Usually he announced his visits by letter in advance, and as a rule he was received by the highest representatives of the facilities concerned. There were polite meetings where the inquisitive missionary was offered whatever the house was able to provide, while he also took the opportunity to record living standards, furnishings and lifestyles. He noted everything from unexpectedly simple dwellings to elegant residences, where everything was reminiscent of western upper class living. In one location, the great room in the house had a stylish staircase to the upper floor. The two pianos, romantic paintings on the walls and English furniture led him to think of English mansions.

LANSDELL WAS SUSPICIOUS of the West's colonial view of Russia and the Russians; for his part, he wanted to see and understand what he encountered. He was already well-travelled; he had visited Prussia, Belgium, Holland, Saxony, Bohemia, Austria, Romania, Bavaria and Switzerland – not forgetting Sweden and Finland – where he reconnoitered and evangelized, and now he condemned the West's reports from Siberia as "prejudiced and shoddy". He was most indignant when he returned home and read Dostoevsky's newly translated novel *The House of the Dead*, first published in 1861. Lansdell felt that Dostoevsky had taken the liberty to exaggerate the misery in the prisons, and he was also irritated by the way the Russian novelist had described "places that do not exist". For our English fact seeker, only documentary evidence would do.

So what kind of person was Henry Lansdell? What made him take on such a tough assignment? By all accounts, he was dedicated to his evangelical mission. He was hardly a Western know-it-all. Instead, he showed compassion for the poor souls he encountered in prisons, hospitals and mines, while on other occasions he allowed himself to smile at unexpected absurdities. He was not given to rolling his eyes when he saw how important bribes and contraband spirits were in the lives of prison inmates, but he noted how ethics adapted to prevailing circumstances seemed necessary in the midst of all the misery. While he saw what isolation and despair could do to people, he also noted human warmth in the midst of all their troubles. As his journey progressed, Lansdell felt ever more empathy with the “unfortunate”, as prisoners are called in the Russian vernacular.

In spite of everything, our priest was not only bent on evangelizing, he also wanted to understand the everyday living conditions in the regions he visited. He was particularly fascinated by the traditions of the different peoples and their cultural dress. His interest was so great he was constantly having himself photographed in everyday dress and traditional costumes, when he wasn’t admiring in detail the garments and adornments of the women. In Krasnoyarsk he was astounded by a “beautiful Amazon”. She was sitting astride a horse, had short hair and was wearing pants and high boots. He inquired a little into her status and discovered she was a local mother of three children. He often took the opportunity to buy various objects he found ethnologically interesting.

AFTER TRAVELING by steamboat along the Amur River for several days and having watched passengers play cards dementedly, he finally reached the port of Nikolayevsk. One evening in this colorful city, Lansdell ended up in a place where the locals would dance and amuse themselves. There was a lot to see there. He watched as men nonchalantly left one wall and moved across the floor to where the ladies were gathered, before summoning their desired dance partners with patronizing nods. Dancing was to the sound of violins, accordions and a xylophone as the ladies were swept around while the men stomped the floor hard. Then there was candy and social intercourse, interspersed with long pauses and a sparse form of talk known by the Russians as Siberian conversation.

One people that won Lansdell’s undisguised admiration was the Koryaks, who inhabited the Northeast and Kamchatka. They were reindeer herders renowned for their steadfast resistance to Russian authority. Lansdell noted that they were the “most denigrated” of all the Siberian tribes. When he visited them, he met a proud, hospitable people with great integrity. They were good fathers. He wrote that their regard for animals was akin to tenderness.

Finally, all that remained was the last leg to Vladivostok before he could begin his journey home via Japan, San Francisco, New York and Liverpool. It was soon September 1879, and Lansdell was busy stowing his collections and notebooks. At the same time, Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld and Captain Palander were in Yokohama harbor wondering how to strengthen the weakened hull

of the ship Vega. They were worn out after finally breaking free of the ice and completing the Northeast passage.

The press and publishers back home knew that Henry Lansdell could write; among other things he had started the *Clergyman’s Magazine* in 1875. The journals of returning long-distance travelers often contained sensational stuff, and this was meet and drink for the press and publishers. In some cases, the reports were also translated into several languages. Thus people were expecting a great deal from Lansdell’s travel journals. His publisher was Houghton Mifflin Company, an ambitious publishing house with its headquarters in Boston and overseas employees in London.

AFTER RETURNING HOME on November 25, 1879, Henry Lansdell wrote his report. Its title, short and sweet, was *Through Siberia*. It was in two volumes and immediately caused a stir. The publishers printed multiple editions and had an abridged version translated into German, Danish and Swedish.

Facts, prison life and folklore depictions were one thing, but what really caught the imagination of the British and American readers was Lansdell’s empathic defense of the character and culture of Russian people. It was this new Russian image that the newspapers wrote about. Not surprisingly, there were also discussions on whether Lansdell’s new image of the Russian truly held up. Had he really seen how the prisoners were treated? Had his judgment being clouded by the warm reception he received from prison wardens and guards? On the other hand, what did this missionary have to gain by painting an idealized picture of peoples far off in the middle of nowhere?

Overall, Lansdell felt that his journey to Siberia had been meaningful. He had succeeded in reaching ordinary people in Siberia with the Christian message, and his book had enjoyed widespread interest at home. So what happened next? Well of course, Henry Lansdell set out again, this time to East Asia. Not just once but twice, and his mission was the same as before. And in the middle of all this meticulously planned missionary work he still found time to marry. Her name was Mary, and following his death she took care of her husband’s ethnological collections from his long journeys in the East before finally donating them to the Canterbury Heritage Museum. Today, parts of the Lansdell Collection are displayed in its permanent exhibition, including an embroidered Tiara, brought home from a school in Kazakhstan. It was presented to Lansdell as a gift by the teacher who noted the delight he took in their beautiful embroideries. ✕

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literature

Lansdell, Henry. *Through Siberia*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 2 volumes. London, 1882. Available online: Cambridge University Press. ISBN 9781107281905. Swedish edition: *Genom Sibirien*. Albert Bonniers förlag, Stockholm 1882.

National history textbooks confront a radically changing history. The case of four post-Soviet states

When the Future Came. The Collapse of the USSR and the Emergence of National Memory in Post-Soviet History Textbooks.

Bennich-Björkman, Li and Kurbatov, Sergiy (eds.) (2019) Stuttgart: ibidem Verlag, 195 pages.

“How are national memories formed in relation to the collapse of the Soviet Union in these countries? What do these processes of memorialization point to in terms of historical determinism, room for agency, and relations within and among society, the public and the elites?” (p.11)

To answer these interesting questions the authors of the different chapters of the book, each dedicated to one country, and the book's editors, Li Bennich-Björkman and Sergiy Kurbatov in their introduction and concluding chapter, analyze history textbooks published between the early 1990s and 2012. The books come from four countries that gained independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union: Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova, and were published for secondary schools and universities. These four countries offer an excellent setting for a comparative study because they all share a common Soviet past, although with somewhat varying historical trajectories, Moldova and parts of Ukraine representing Soviet “latecomers”; they also offer quite a wide variation in their post-independence political and social developments. As the authors show, the university textbooks are – as could be expected – more varied and their interpretations more analytic than the textbooks used at secondary schools. Despite the fact that state public education agencies more or less formally authorize the school textbooks, giving a quasi-official status to the version of the modern history of their countries they present, they are not as uniform as one might perhaps expect.

THE STUDY FOCUSES, with good reason, on the school textbooks. Despite the fact that young people have today access to, and live under the influence of, a wide variety of competing historical narratives on offer most notably in the popular media, the school textbooks are without a doubt an important instrument in establishing, or at least in trying to establish, a collective national memory. One can argue that they present the official, or semi-official, version of the history of their states. With the exception of Moldova, where the change of the ruling political elites seems to have quite a direct impact on history writing, the authors have not systematically analyzed the changes in

historical interpretations during the twenty odd years because of the relatively small number of textbooks published in each country. In addition to the all-Russian books, the chapter on Russia compares the textbooks of three republics of the Russian Federation, Bashkortostan, Chechnya, and Tatarstan, as well as of two autonomous regions, Irkutskaya oblast and Rostovskaya oblast. The historical destinies of these three republics of the Russian Federation after the collapse of the Soviet Union as well as their present political situations differ quite radically, covering everything from the bloody civil war in Chechnya to the relatively peaceful transitions in Tatarstan and Bashkortostan. The analyses of these three republics give a picture quite different from that of the all-Russian textbook and those of the two Russian regions in emphasizing the ethnic and national aspirations and conflicts that are mostly downplayed in the all-Russian textbooks. This is evident even if for practical reasons the study analyzes only Russian language textbooks and not those published in the local languages of the Russian Federation republics.

ONE OF THE MAIN FINDINGS of the study is that in the history textbooks, the present and future form the past. The prevailing international and domestic situation as well as the aspirations of the ruling circles often influence the historical interpretations. What aspects of the present they cherish, and what kind of future they imagine or wish for, have a decisive impact on the interpretation of the past which, even if not outright biased or false, is quite selective. One of the main differences in these historical narratives is whether the countries present themselves as victims of Soviet and Russian colonialism, which is the case most notably in Ukraine as well as in Chechnya and Tatarstan, or as a part of the imperial past (Belarus). Moldova lies in between these colonial and imperial narratives of Soviet and Russian history. Perestroika is the period of recent history (1885–1991) that gets most attention in the books and the disaster of the Chernobyl nuclear power station is the most important single historical event, most notably and understandably in the history books of the two countries, Ukraine and Belarus, that suffered most from the disaster. In the Ukrainian narratives, Chernobyl takes the character of an ‘alarm clock’, awakening the Ukrainians from their passivity and revealing the dark side of the “old” Soviet Ukraine. Belarus textbooks also pay a lot of attention to it, but its meaning remains quite unclear. Gorbachev is the single person that gets most attention in the books. They present him as a rather ambivalent historical character who started something that he was too weak to control and unable to follow to the end.

AS THE AUTHORS of the chapter on Ukraine, Alla Marchenko, Yuliya Yurchuk and Andrey Kashin show, the Ukrainian historians’ task of narrating the modern history of their country is quite straightforward compared to the other three countries, because it fits so well into the old story of the emergence of an independent national state. In this narrative, the cultural liberalization of

Continued. National history textbooks confront a radically changing history



ILLUSTRATION: KATRIN STENMARK

perestroika, which came to Ukraine later than to Russia mainly due to the resistance of the local Ukrainian Communist leaders, and subsequent independence opened up the gates to a natural process of national awakening. It looks almost as if the nation had been sleeping all these years, only waiting for the prince's magic kiss to wake it up. In the Ukrainian textbooks, and in clear contrast to both Russia and Belarus, the people and popular national movements played an active role in the process of the state building. In all the other countries, with the possible exception of Tatarstan, if we are to believe these books, the people played hardly any role at all in their making. The struggle among the elites was decisive.

BELARUS OFFERS THE OTHER EXTREME in terms of historical interpretation in this context. In the Belarus textbooks, analyzed by Marharyta Fabrykant and Andrei Dudchik, the national movements – or other popular movements – played a minor role only at the beginning of the process of independence. "... the narrative of the nationalist movements is abruptly terminated with the end of the Soviet Union, so that it seems that it somehow ceased to exist once Belarus became independent." (p. 105).

Instead, the historians present Belarus as a natural continuation of the Soviet Union, as if Belarus succeeded in preserving everything worthy of the Soviet past. As the authors conclude, this is a rather peculiar "non-nationalist narrative of the way to national independence" (p. 104). The problem that the historians of this new state face, painting a picture of a state without a nation and with no radical changes after the collapse of the Sovi-

et Union, is to make sense why an independent Belorussian state was needed and came into being at all. According to this narrative, it was not the result of any active internal forces or demands for national independence but rather caused by external circumstances in Russia and the rest of the Soviet Union that were not under the control of the Belarusians.

Similar to Belarus, the Russian textbooks do not emphasize the role of any national or popular movements. As the authors of the chapter dedicated to the analyses of the Russian textbooks, Natalia Tregubova, Liliya Erushkina, Alexandr Gorylev and Alexey Rusakov, argue, in the Russian narrative the inherent tension between civil and ethnic identities becomes quite striking. In Soviet times, Russians came "to associate themselves and to be associated by others with the Soviet Union in general" (p. 55-56). The chapter reminds us, for instance, that there was no Russian Communist party, unlike the "national" communist parties in all the other Soviet Republics. The history of Russia, as a continuation of the Soviet Union, is the history of a multiethnic state that mostly ignores ethnic conflicts. This implies teaching primarily the history of the state or a territory, and not of ethnic groups or popular move-

ments. History is a game among political rivals and egoistic elites in which people are silent. Perestroika opened up a Pandora's box, causing what the authors call a domino effect: the fall of one piece inevitably causing the fall of the next pieces, almost without any conscious human intervention. Russia's relation to its Soviet past therefore remains quite ambivalent and its role among the previous Soviet states mostly reactive.

FINALLY, THE MOLDOVAN HISTORY textbooks, analyzed by Diana Bencheci and Valerii Mosneagu, mirror quite directly the changes in the ruling policy of the political elite in Chisinau, the Moldovan capital. This is a peculiarity of the Moldovan case, even though the conclusion is somewhat problematic since the authors do not systematically analyze the changes in the books published in different years in the other countries and regions. However, it is quite evident how, as the editors point out, Moldovan history textbooks reflect "the ongoing struggle between emphasizing Moldova as a Romanian territory, or underlining the Russian heritage, and pointing out a unique Moldovan identity." (p.153)

BY POINTING OUT both interesting similarities and differences in the historical narratives between the four countries as well as within the individual countries, the authors' purpose is not to evaluate the relative worth of their interpretations, nor to judge their truth. History writing is always selective in its emphasis, and even more so when presented in the rather straightforward and, understandably, somewhat simplified manner typical of school textbooks. This very feature makes textbooks an ideal object of study in trying to come to terms with the process of national memory building. Active memory building is obviously something that is in permanent demand, especially during periods of radical social ruptures when old narratives lose their relevance and are no longer convincing. At the same time that the study has many interesting and important results to offer it inspires several new questions, some of them mentioned by the editors. How is history taught in practice at the school and what role do the textbooks play? How much do they actually guide the individual teachers? How does the

process of authorizing the books function in the different countries? Do the official instances control more or less strictly, or even censor, the proposed book manuscripts? Or, are the common understandings of history identifiable in the books something that their authors more or less 'naturally' come to share? In Russia, for instance, teachers can choose freely from among a number of textbooks authorized by the local authorities. Therefore, the histories taught at the schools in the different republics and regions of the Federation can vary quite a lot and even contradict each other; this aspect obviously has both positive and negative sides. Finally, it would be very interesting to conduct a similar study in some other, or perhaps even all, post-Soviet Republics, from the Baltic Sea to the Caucasus and Central Asia – or even to include the independent states of the former Soviet bloc in Eastern Europe. Their newly constructed historical identities and narratives could help us better to come to terms with their self-understanding and even some of the reasons that cause international and domestic tensions in Europe and elsewhere.

IT IS A PITY that this study ends with the textbooks of 2012, for quite understandable practical reasons. The situation has, however, changed quite radically since then, with the war in Eastern Ukraine and the Russian occupation of the Crimea. The Russian state, at least, has become much more active and interventionist in its history policy, including the writing of textbooks. ❌

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Moving beyond and between nations. Transnational entanglements in the eastern part of Europe

Verflechtungen in Politik, Kultur und Wirtschaft im östlichen Europa. Transnationalität als Forschungsproblem.

Eds. Jörg Hackmann & Peter Oliver Loew, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2018, 211 pages.

The book consists of an introductory discussion on transnationality as a research perspective, especially within the field of history, followed by ten essays written by researchers from different academic disciplines. The editors Jörg Hackmann and Peter Oliver Loew state that the aim of the anthology is to discuss the usefulness of the concepts *entanglement* and *transnationality* in different disciplines from the vantage point of the eastern part of Europe (p. 17).

In terms of geographical concepts, those used in the anthology are primarily *östlichen Europa* (the eastern part of Europe) and *Ostmitteleuropa* (East Central Europe). In contrast, the concept Eastern Europe (*Osteuropa*) is hardly used at all in the different contributions. The editors consistently use *östlichen Europa*, and this concept also figures in the book's title.

However, the preference for these geographical concepts and their connection to the actual territory they connote is not really discussed by the editors. This is regrettable, since this is not only a matter of conceptual relevance, it also pertains very clearly to the notion of transnationality.

Apart from discussing the usability of the concepts of *entanglement* and *transnationality*, the book also aims at exploring the new questions that arise when historical disciplines come in contact with the approaches of other adjacent academic fields (p. 17). The interdisciplinary, or rather, according to the editors, transdisciplinary approach is a central theme in the anthology, and the expressed ambition is to initiate a "transdisciplinary debate" (p. 20). Actually, the background history of the anthology has a clear interdisciplinary and transnational aspect, since the initiative behind it emerged from both the *Deutschen Polen-Institut* and the *Johann Gottfried Herder-Forschungsrat*.

DESPITE THE ANTHOLOGY'S transdisciplinary ambition, historical contributions predominate. This is certainly noticeable in the editors' introduction, where the point of departure is the discussions on transnationality specifically within history, and in the choice of contributors, where both art historians and historians of religion are included. This is perhaps not surprising, since the notion of transnationality has had a considerable impact in recent

years, particularly on the discipline of history. However, given the book's ambition, greater academic variety would perhaps have been desirable. The editors themselves admit that unfortunately central disciplines like geography and ethnology lack representation. I would add that there is likewise unfortunately no contribution from gender studies. Contributions from these disciplines would undoubtedly have been both important and interesting.

MOVEMENTS, flows and interconnections of and between people, ideas and objects are at the very heart of the aforementioned concepts or perspectives, as is made clear in both the introduction and in the different essays. In that sense the editors point to some of the aspects that historian Isabel Hofmeyr put forward in a 2006 conversation piece in *The American Historical Review* where a number of prominent historians discussed transnational history. Hofmeyr described transnationality's core concern as "movements, flows, and circulation", not just as a theme but as something that defines the research project itself. The question of definition when it comes to transnationality and what exactly it entails seems to be both apparent and complicated, something that is also shown throughout the book. At the end of their introduction the editors, Hackmann and Loew, conclude that transnationality and entanglement are better understood as open research perspectives than narrowly defined theories (p. 17).

After the introduction, the anthology starts with a historiographical essay by Frank Hadler and Matthias Middell. They show how history-writing has changed from a focus on historical comparisons to instead embrace transnationality as a prominent research perspective, not least on matters concerning the history of East Central Europe. With solid empirical backing they show that East Central Europe between 1700 and 1900 was primarily characterized by entanglement. This conclusion must, they add, be put in the context of a globalizing Europe, where East Central Europe should not be seen as a region separated from the rest of the world; on the contrary, there has always been an exchange of culture and knowledge (p. 45).

Stefan Garsztecki's contribution deals with the development of transnationality concepts within political science, among them Europeanization. He ends his piece with a discussion of what possibilities transnational concepts could have for research on political institutions and processes in East Central Europe and Eastern Europe. Garsztecki suggests that future research should give attention to popular perceptions of transnational processes and how transnational realities are implemented, questions that have as yet received very little attention. Research on how concepts and imaginings move across different kinds of borders would certainly also be rewarding, he claims, not least on matters concerning women's rights and equality (p. 58-59).

In his contribution, Andreas Langenohl discusses transnationality in relation to both sociology and anthropology, juxtaposing these disciplines' similarities and differences. He espe-



ILLUSTRATION: MOA THELANDER

cially focusses on the methodological problems and challenges transnationality entails within these academic disciplines. Within sociology he points to current research on migration and diaspora, while concerning anthropology he discusses its focus on translocal rather than transnational processes. Langenohl ends his essay with an interdisciplinary discussion where the needs of social science are put in contrast with historical research on transnationality, pleading that sociology in particular needs to retain its focus on the nation (p. 76-77).

Piotr Kocyba's contribution concerns linguistics and its interest in language contact and intermingling processes, phenomena with evident ties to the concepts entanglement and transnationality. He shows how linguistics has developed since the 19th century and the, at times, fierce debate between proponents for diachronic and synchronic positions on the question of language origin and development. A central issue has been the so-called mixed languages, and whether new languages have emerged as combinations of previously existing languages. He especially points to East Central Europe and its plethora of language mixes as an exciting and rewarding field of research (p. 92-93). Interesting in terms of interdisciplinarity is Kocyba's finding that linguistic concepts are sometimes misinterpreted in historiographical debates on transnationality (p. 80). At the same time, he pleads for mutual consideration

between linguistic and historiographical discourses (p. 93).

LITERARY SCHOLAR Alfred Gall begins his essay by presenting his scholarly field's development into a transcultural discipline. But his essay is first and foremost a postcolonial study juxtaposing the works of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Adam Mickiewicz. Mickiewicz's work is read as a transnational and transcultural counter project to Hegel's marginalization of Slavic

cultures. Gall successfully combines descriptions of literary studies, theoretical aspects of transnationality and postcolonial perspectives with empirical findings from East Central Europe.

Transnationality has not been a major research concern within economics. The reason for this, Dagmara Jajeśniak-Quast maintains, is that this discipline mainly focusses on global issues. Within economic history, however, matters are entirely different. She exemplifies this very clearly and interestingly by a closer look at economic entanglements in the eastern part of Europe during the 20th century. With the help of the example of eggs from Poland, Jajeśniak-Quast shows that the standardization of Polish products was an integral part of European entanglements predating Poland's entry into the European Union. This is shown by highlighting international organizations and the establishment and implementation of regulated standards. Summing up, she points out the need for interdisciplinary initiatives in economic research on entanglements.

ART HISTORIAN Beata Hock cleverly combines transnationality and postcolonial perspectives with concrete examples from East Central Europe during the decades before WWI and the turbulent years between 1989 and 1991. Her essay is a compelling argument for transnational history-writing, emphasizing its potential to truly show East Central Europe as an integrated part of the world. Hock also points to the methodological advantages of a transnational approach for art history, for instance by the stressing the agency of boundary-crossing historical actors (p. 133).

Transnationality and entanglements within jurisprudence is the theme for Wojciech Dajczak's contribution, more specifically the history of civil law. In his rather empirical essay he ties concrete examples to a transnational perspective, showing what the latter means within his own discipline. Some of his examples

Continued. Moving beyond and between nations

deal with initiatives and attempts to standardize and harmonize European civil law, and the process of standardizing the Polish law of debt after the First World War when several legal traditions had to be synchronized. Dajczak highlights legal situations where national concerns have trumped transnational initiatives, but still points out that the perspectives provided by transnationality are very relevant for jurisprudence.

Riho Altnurme's essay is a reflection on transnationality within the study of religion, especially the history of Christianity in the Baltic lands. Religion is essentially a transnational phenomenon, but this does not mean that research has always been directed towards transnationality. In accordance with the other contributors, Altnurme stresses the possibilities for innovative research connected to the use of transnationality. History-writing on European Christianity in particular can benefit substantially, he claims, by the categories developed by researchers of colonialism and its missionary activities (p. 180). Concerning the religious history of the Baltic lands, Altnurme stresses the necessity of a transnational approach, but also the difficulties this entails for researchers since it requires skills in several small national languages (p. 180).

THE FINAL ESSAY written by Corine Defrance, Romain Faure and Thomas Strobel deals with transnational entanglements connected to school textbook revisions after 1945. They describe and discuss the writing of common school textbooks in history in France and Germany, on the one side, and Germany and Poland on the other. The essay provides interesting examples of concrete transnational processes by highlighting bilateral dialogues on school textbooks, their historical roots but also their actors and methods. Transnational phenomena and processes in an empirical sense here take center stage, not merely transnationality as a research perspective as such. Whether the two presented case studies constitute stepping stones towards a common European history textbook remains, according to the authors, to be seen (p. 202).

So, how well does the book live up to its aim of discussing the usefulness of the concepts entanglement and transnationality in different

disciplines from the vantage point of the eastern part of Europe? Like most anthologies it is somewhat uneven, most noticeable in the fact that the contributions are structured very differently. Some focus primarily on previous research within their respective disciplines in relation to the transnationality perspective, while other contributions are rather empirical case studies using transnationality as a tool of analysis. This is not necessarily a problem since the anthology brings together different academic disciplines and traditions. Perhaps more surprising is the fact that the connection to the eastern part of Europe, which the editors have declared to be such a central theme, is so unevenly adhered to. The contributions are positioned on a continuum where some of them have hardly any such connection, some refer to it in a closing paragraph, while yet others have fully integrated it in their analyses.

I WOULD ARGUE That the anthology works best in the essays combining a focus on the eastern part of Europe with reflections on transnationality and using concrete empirical findings. In the already mentioned 2006 conversation piece in *The American Historical Review* historian Sven Beckert pointed out that we need to move on from abstract discussions regarding distinctions and terminology and instead turn our attention to transnational empirical research. The essays that answer that call really contribute to the ongoing discussion on the uses of transnationality. And since the anthology gives voice to different academic disciplines, even if history predominates, the book constitutes an interdisciplinary meeting-place. In order to make full use of this interdisciplinarity, or transdisciplinarity, it would however have been valuable if the anthology had provided us with a closing reflection on what had actually been achieved. As it stands, the reader is somewhat left to her own devices, which is a bit unfortunate since the book provides us with many new ideas, both on transnationality and the eastern part of Europe but perhaps above all on the intersection between them. ✖

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literature

"AHR Conversation: On Transnational History", *The American Historical Review* 111 (2006): 1441–1464.

A Jewish family history. Living in two Baltic States

**Sista tåget
till Moskva:
Två väninnor,
två öden,
en judisk
familjehistoria
[The Last
Train to
Moscow:
Two
friends, two
destinies,
a Jewish
Family
History.]**

René Nyberg.
Trans. Geo
Stenius
Helsinki:
Förlaget, 2019.
Notes. Index.
Map. Table.
Photographs.
Hardbound.
264 pages.



Josef, Lena and Mascha, 1966.

René Nyberg, a veteran Finnish diplomat and former ambassador to Moscow and Berlin, with decades of experience in the Finnish foreign service, is also a trained historian. While Nyberg grew up in a bilingual Helsinki family and received a trilingual education at the German school in Helsinki, his semi-biographical *Sista tåget till Moskva* [Last Train to Moscow] only recently appeared in Swedish translation, after having appeared in a number of other translations from its original Finnish.

NYBERG'S BOOK is a tour de force of the modern history of the Russian empire's north-western borderlands, with a particular focus on the Jewish communities in Finland and Latvia, written in the form of a family biography. In the late 19th century, Nyberg's mother Feiga's Jewish family had moved from Orsha in Belorussia to the western parts of the Russian Empire – to Helsingfors (Helsinki) in the Grand Duchy, and Riga in the Governate of Livonia. By following the lives of his mother's and her cousin's families in these two cities, Nyberg produces a picture that is both personal and insightful, not only of his family, but even more so of the history of Jewish communities in two young Baltic states. Feiga, or Fanny, as she called herself, grew up in an orthodox Ashkenazi family. Her decision to marry a gentile Finn triggered violent reactions from her family, who forcibly abducted her and strongly pressured her to break the engagement. When she refused, she was entirely ostracized by her family. Her father read kaddish over her in the synagogue and arranged a *shiva* wake for his daughter, who was now regarded as dead. For the rest of her long life, all ties with the family were severed; a partial exception was her mother, who occasionally secretly visited her grandchildren. Until her expulsion from her family Fanny kept



Fanny, the author's Jewish mother.

close contact with their cousins in Riga, capital of independent Latvia from 1918. If the small Jewish community in Finland, unique among East European Jewry, survived World War II unscathed, the Jewish community of Riga was annihilated. The title of the book, *Sista tåget till Moskva* refers to Fanny's cousin Masha's escape, literally on the last train from Riga in June 1941 on the eve of the arrival of the German troops. Her entire family that remained behind was murdered. Only in the late 1950s were the two cousins able to re-establish contact, and only in 1971 able to leave the Soviet Union.

THE HISTORY OF THE NATIONAL AWAKENING, civil war, Finnish, Estonian, and Latvian independence out of the ruins of the Russian Empire and the delicate issue of how Finland and the Baltic republics reacted differently to Soviet pressure in 1939–40 are dealt with diplomatically and empathically. Nyberg guides the reader through the background of the Grand Duchy and the Baltic provinces with minute detail and insightful analysis as to why and how the Lutheran church – to which Nyberg belongs – developed into a national and nationalizing institution in Finland, whereas in Estonia and Livonia it largely remained a German-dominated institution, loyal to the aristocratic elites. No less nuanced is Nyberg's exposé about the small Jewish community in Finland, which in

Continued. A Jewish family history



Mascha Tukazier (front) with the author's mother, a cousin murdered in 1941 and an unknown gentleman.

PHOTO: RENÉ NYBERG

independent Finland slowly abandoned the predominant Yiddish in favor of linguistic assimilation into the Swedish language. In a clear, accessible prose Nyberg makes this relatively little-known history accessible to a general audience around the Baltic sea.

UNCHARACTERISTICALLY for a diplomat, Nyberg is outspoken and frank. Using a neologism used to describe a phenomenon among more recent immigrants to the Nordic states to characterize the actions of his grandfather and uncles, he refers to “an honor killing in 1930s Helsinki” (*Ett hedersmord i 1930-talets Helsingfors*). No less sensitive, Nyberg admits, is his tongue-in-cheek self-identification using a category of the 1935

Nuremberg Laws as the name of a chapter: “Mixed race of the first degree” (*Mischling ersten Grades, Blandras av första graden*), which, he noted, did not always go down well in the diplomatic community. “Once I made the mistake of using this definition too carelessly,” Nyberg notes. “In a meeting in Tel Aviv with the German ambassador ... I said that due to my history I have no Jewish cultural background and do not perceive myself as a Jew, but that I am a typical *Mischling ersten Grades*. The ambassador was shocked.” (p. 22) Nyberg sardonically concludes that “Germans of today lose their head if someone diverges from the safe and generally accepted path of political correctness. This correctness is part of today’s ethics in Germany. This pertains, in particular, to Jews and everything related to Jewry.” (p. 23)

NYBERG’S BOOK IS as much an academic work as it is a biography. The references give the impression of the book being a synthesis, with Timothy Snyder’s blockbuster *Bloodlands*, Yuri Slezkine’s *The Jewish Century*, and, in particular – and somewhat surprisingly – Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn’s partially problematic *Dvesti let vmeste* [Two hundred years together] the most frequently referenced literature. As a chaperone through a diverse literature in the Finnish, Swedish, Russian, German and English languages, Nyberg bridges languages and borders. Yet the book is not a synthesis, but to a significant degree a result of original research in multiple archives and languages. Unfortunately, these sources are not properly cited – at least in the Swedish edition – but mentioned in passing. The archives of the Jewish congregation in Helsinki, the archives of the Finnish Radio, the archives of the Finnish Foreign Ministry, the *Bundesarchiv*, the archives of the Senate of Berlin, legal records are but mentioned in passing; references to archives in Riga, Saint Petersburg and Moscow are lacking. This may be due to an editorial decision to market the book as popular history, therefore limiting the number of footnotes, but it nevertheless diminishes the value of what to a significant degree is original work. Another irritant is the inconsistency or references, provided sometimes in Latin transliteration, sometimes in Cyrillic, and then, not always correctly (alas “Ђорђа” p.254), and quotes in Russian are presented as Latvian (p. 141, p. 254, footnote 227). The quality of the Swedish translation is otherwise excellent. Popular history in the best sense of the word, this fascinating book deserves a wide readership. ✖

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Andrei Kozyrev's worldview on Russia. "Sooner or later the Russian people will rise again"

Andrei Kozyrev: The Firebird — A Memoir: The Elusive Fate of Russian Democracy with a foreword by Michael McFaul, former U.S. Ambassador to Moscow

Pittsburg:
University of
Pittsburg Press,
2019.
352 pages.

In his autobiographical book *The Firebird — A Memoir: The Elusive Fate of Russian Democracy*, Andrei Kozyrev, who was Foreign Minister of Russia 1991–96, gives a colorful and personal eyewitness account of the tumultuous years when the Soviet Union was irreversibly dissolved and succeeded by 15 independent and sovereign republics, first and foremost Russia, incomparably more influential, ambitious and powerful than any of the others.

Andrei Kozyrev belonged to President Yeltsin's innermost circle, a close and tight-knit forum of nine top Kremlin officials enjoying the confidence of and regular interaction with the President, who himself gave it the name "the President's Club". Kozyrev describes how the Club members had exceptionally intense and frequent access to the President. They "met each other in an informal atmosphere almost daily at dinner, occasionally at lunch, and in the early morning on the tennis court". A uniquely advantageous vantage point for chronicling the rivalries, the rumors, the intrigues and the perpetual battle for power at the top that Kozyrev observed and took an active part in.

Andrei Kozyrev's account mirrors the dramatic but — miraculously — peaceful transition from the moribund Soviet Union, led by the visionary but progressively ever more powerless Mikhail Gorbachev, to a new-born yet anarchic and chaotic Russia. Kozyrev was present during the August 1991 coup attempt against Gorbachev, when Soviet Armed Forces overwhelmed the urban scene of Moscow in their attempt to seize the emblematic Russian White House. This is when the charismatic, towering Yeltsin rose to the occasion, stepping on to a tank to address the crowd assembled all around, a watershed moment instantly eternalized in countless press photographs distributed around the world.

THIS COURAGEOUS and highly symbolic act represented Yeltsin's national political breakthrough and, metaphorically speaking, Yeltsin never stepped down from that tank, until he decided to abdicate from the Russian Presidency at the turn of the millennium. Kozyrev also participated in the truly epoch-making negotiations at Brezhnev's legendary former hunting lodge in Belavezha near Minsk, when the political leaders of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus



Russian former Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev.

PHOTO: APB SPEAKERS

agreed to dissolve, in other words, bury the Soviet Union.

For half a decade, Andrei Kozyrev worked in close proximity to President Yeltsin, both in the Kremlin and on official visits abroad. This definitely makes his autobiography a rare source of first-hand inside information about this unprecedented phase of contemporary history, jam-packed with developments of lasting impact.

After serving as Foreign Minister for five years, Andrei Kozyrev resigned and walked out of the Stalin-era Foreign Ministry skyscraper on Smolenskaya Ploshchad by the Moscow river in the center of the Russian capital, one of the so-called Seven Sisters, making an indistinguishable imprint on the Moscow skyline. Kozyrev then successfully ran for a seat in the Duma, the Russian Parliament, for the Northern naval port city of Murmansk. After serving one Duma term, Kozyrev retired from political life to pursue a career in private business after which he emigrated to the US, where he still lives, working as a Professor of International Studies at Stanford University.

MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, Andrei Kozyrev will be remembered for his unprecedented two-part plenary speech at the December 1992 Ministerial Summit of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) held in Stockholm in 1992. When Kozyrev took the floor, he shocked the assembled foreign ministers and their aides by "announcing serious changes to the foreign policy of the Russian Federation". Adding to the dramatic effect, Kozyrev went on to state: "The space of the former Soviet Union cannot be regarded as a zone of full application of CSCE

Continued. Andrei Kozyrev's worldview on Russia

norms. In essence, this is a post-imperial space, in which Russia has to defend its interests using all available means, including military and economic ones." The audience was dumbfounded. You could hear a pin drop. Yet, by informal agreement with the chair, Sweden's then Foreign Minister Margaretha af Ugglas, Kozyrev, against all protocol, was given the floor a second time when he explained that his first intervention had served to illustrate "the sort of changes that are typically demanded by the centrists in Russia. Of course this is just a pale simulacrum of the U-turn in strategy that the real opposition would make if it seized power. I wanted you to be aware of these demands." Kozyrev then went on to present to the bewildered, yet relieved, CSCE foreign minister collective "the actual policy of the Russian Federation as defined by our President."

ANDREI KOZYREV'S chronologically conceived memoir comprises 10 chapters, divided into three main sections entitled "Russia versus the Soviet Union, 1991", "Climbing a Steep Slope, 1992-1994" and "The Downward Slope, 1994-1996", reflecting the rapid rise and fall of Russian democracy. The book is capped by an epilogue called "Can Russian Democracy Rise Again?", in which Kozyrev concludes that "the failure of the reforms was not inevitable", but that: "Burdened with Soviet concepts and habits, Yeltsin, after an initial effort to enact profound change, in many ways retreated to the old habits of governing. His flaws were matched by the inability of the democrats to act without him; to overcome their personal rivalries... This was our major error, and the key reason why Russia's democracy failed. My reformist friends and I share responsibility for that failure."

Still, Kozyrev wants to end his analysis on a more positive note: "The Firebird of Russian democracy has arisen many times – in 1905, 1917, and 1991. Sooner or later the Russian people will rise again and reclaim the Russia they deserve."

Both as Foreign Minister and as a Duma deputy, Andrei Kozyrev consistently followed an ardent pro-Western policy line that earned him many vicious political opponents. The main message of Kozyrev's book is that Russia missed a historic opportunity when it discontinued its initial efforts of democratization and Western-

ization, sliding backwards into a Soviet-style social order.

Andrei Kozyrev makes good use of his inside information. Throughout, he is very discreet about Yeltsin's well-known alcoholism, but occasionally allows it to be reflected between the lines. Kozyrev starts out as a devoted Yeltsin fan, but gradually becomes progressively more alienated and critical. With Gorbachev, the evolution is the reverse: from merciless criticism to ever greater sympathy, even admiration for the politician who, by spearheading glasnost and perestroika, pioneered the reform effort necessary for the transition from the straitjacket of Soviet communism and planned economy to market conditions and political pluralism that was needed for social progress and economic well-being.

If this sounds very much like current mainstream political analysis, it is, in fact, true that the overarching lines of thought in Kozyrev's book are not prone to shock anyone familiar with this phase of contemporary Russian history. The added value of Kozyrev's particular take is his immediate first-hand experience and his profound personal commitment to and dedicated involvement in the political change that he is seeking for Russia. ✕

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BALTIC WORLDS is a scholarly journal published by the Centre for Baltic and East European Studies at Södertörn University, since 2008. It publishes articles in social sciences and humanities as well as environmental studies, practicing a double-blind peer-review process, by at

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Baltic Worlds is distributed to readers in 50 countries, and reaches readers from various disciplines, as well as outside academia. In order to present multi- and interdisciplinary ongoing research to a wider audience, *Baltic Worlds* also

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Baltic Worlds regularly publishes thematic sections with guest editors, enabling deeper explorations into specific fields and research questions. International scholarly collaborations are encouraged. *Baltic*

Worlds wishes to advance critical engagement in area studies and to apply novel theoretical and methodological approaches to this multifaceted field.

The journal's Scholarly Advisory Council consists of international scholars, representing different disciplines and with specific knowledge on the area.

*The Scholarly
Advisory Council*

COVID-19. RESPONSES AND CONSEQUENCES

Baltic Worlds' Online Covid-19 Coverage examines how politicians in different parts of the region are reacting to the crisis. Restrictions have been enacted to protect vulnerable groups from Covid-19, but the consequences and costs are hard to estimate, not only economically: we know that domestic violence has increased, and other side effects are also open to discussion. Are the measures to combat the pandemic also eroding democracy? People have fewer tools for making their voices heard, defending human rights, or simply crossing borders. Many countries have imposed wartime-style restrictions on their citizens. In some cases, the situation appears to have opened up for authoritarian or illiberal policies.

IN ALBANIA the government went to a complete lockdown for 3 months and managed to halt the spread of the disease. Gilda Hoxha reports that May 18, 2020 in Albania there were 946 confirmed cases, 715 recovered cases, and 31 deaths. On the other hand, she reports that "the Albanian state's ability to cover the socio-economical cost of this total isolation is non-existent" and that "the most vulnerable groups, the workers in the factories, mines, and in call centers continued their work every day and their working places/conditions are potentially high-risk sites for the spread of the virus; the same applies to overpopulated prisons and jails."

She also notes the negative effects of the lockdown on domestic violence and the problems with distant learning when only Tirana has access to Internet, and even there, it isn't stable. Further, she suggests that the restrictions on meeting and protesting in public spaces were used by the authorities as opportunities to take and go through with unpopular decisions,



Kyrgyzstan struggles to protect medics: Deputy Prime Minister Kubatbek Boronov.
PHOTO: GOVERNMENT WEBSITE

such as tearing down the National Theatre building. Albania's fragile democracy has surely not benefited from the closing down of society.

EDWARD LEMON and Oleg Antonov compare the differing responses to Covid-19 from the five Central Asian republics: Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. They pay particular attention to how the virus presents opportunities to strengthen authoritarian rule within the region: "For authoritarian regimes, the virus offers an opportunity to suppress dissent and strengthen authoritarian norms. While authoritarian states have recognised the spread of the virus in order to receive international humanitarian assistance, they have hidden the true number of infected and victims of the disease, as well as forbidding doctors to talk about the dangerous working conditions in hospitals, and imprisoning citizens for spreading false information."

The imprisoning of citizens is also a phenomenon noted in Azerbaijan by Leila Alieva. "Contrary to the considerations of safety recommendations of experts and NGO activists, the country's prisons never stopped being filled with the politically persecuted." She also reports on the lack of trust of citizens in the state institutions and how the control of the regime has

tightened during the pandemic. She writes: "The pandemic situation could have served as an excuse for solidarity and mobilization of the society vis-a-vis common threat. Instead it was used by the government to strengthen its power."

BELARUS IS a case of its own of course. Sofie Bedford reported in June on the lack of a strategy towards the pandemic: "As the citizens in this time of crisis have found they have to take responsibility for their own and others' wellbeing the social contract could potentially be considered broken, or at least breaking. Perhaps, she comments in June, this is in fact the reason why the Belarusian authorities have found themselves faced with a uniquely volatile situation as the general frustration over how they handled the Covid-19 situation is spilling over to the ongoing presidential election campaign."

SOFIE BEDFORD is also reporting from the election in Belarus on *Baltic Worlds'* online Election Coverage. As the situation in Belarus is very intense and unpredictable, *Baltic Worlds* invites scholars to keep contributing comments. ✕

Ninna Möerner

Read the full reports and more reports from other countries in the region at balticworlds.com.