



Mediating the Land, Landing the Media

Soviet Ukrainian Television and Popular Media Culture, 1957-1989

Bohdan Shumylovych

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to
obtaining the degree of Doctor of History and Civilization
of the European University Institute

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Department of History and Civilization

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Abstract

This thesis considers period between the late 1950s, when television was commenced in many places of UkrSSR, and late 1980s, when various groups used media in their strive to reform or dismantle the USSR. These 30 years of Soviet Ukrainian history envisaged massive social mobility in the country, inhabitants became more urbanised, educated, mobile, involved in many industries and occupations. There was a prize for this socialist modernisation: traditional village life was decaying, and urban dwellers often turned from the language of ancestors to Soviet transnational Russian language. Such situation in part influenced the feeling of resentment and the consolidation of national sentiments, which grew in the 1960s and 1970s, reaching its peak in the 1980s. Thesis shows that a prominent factor that helped to maintain national identity despite massive Russification was Soviet Ukrainian regional and republican media, mainly radio and television. But as a reaction to growing national sentiments, Soviets strived to normalise Ukrainian media in the late 1960s and early 1970s, at the same period when Kyiv attempted to create all-national broadcasting. While being immensely regulated in the late 1970s and early 1980s, Ukrainian media shaped specific media spectacle of folklorism, which was the outcome of Soviet policies and paradoxes. Soviet powers supported Ukrainian folk culture, but at the same time strove to shape urban and Russian speaking, universal Soviet people. As a result, Soviet Ukraine developed a performative mode of perceiving and practicing the nation; it shaped the identity of Ukrainian national television as a 'village television', which was often (especially in the 1980s) disapproved by young people. To attract young people to the national socialist media in the mid-1980s, especially after the launch of *perestroika*, Ukrainian powers needed to reform television and media in general and to transform it into a new public sphere. This change of Soviet media in the mid-1980s had unexpected outcomes, but what remained stable was the national audience, an imaginary media community of Ukrainian people, that was shaped during 1960s and 1970s.

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Introduction

Reporting on the Ukrainian election in April 2019, Adrian Karatnycky claimed that the new president “just won the first ever successful virtual campaign.”¹ This was because President Zelenskii “did no face-to-face campaigning, made no speeches, held no rallies, eschewed travel across the country, gave no press conferences, avoided in-depth interviews with independent journalists and, until the last day of campaigning, did not debate.”² Indeed, many observers specified that, among other factors, one particular media, such as television, formed this president. As a comedian, Zelenskii was omnipresent on popular TV networks, leading the most successful Ukrainian variety shows and starred as the president in the series *Servant of the People* [Sluha narodu]. In May 2019, historian Christine Evans explained the phenomenon of President Zelenskii with reference to Soviet game shows.³ She pointed out that Zelenskii became popular due to a particular television show, which developed during the late USSR. This was *KVN* [Club of the Merry and Resourceful], a television contest that was often associated with a young audience and Soviet cultural media innovation.

KVN was cancelled in 1972 due “to profit-seeking among the show’s producers and the anti-Semitism of the Central Television’s director at the time.”⁴ It returned to the air during perestroika in the late 1980s and still exists in the Russian Federation and post-Soviet Ukraine. The newly elected President Zelenskii started his career as a *KVN* comedian. However, what both Evans and Karatnycky missed is the institutional, organizational and aesthetic presence of Ukrainian television, which had developed as a strong state actor and cultural agent already in the mid-1960s and early 1970s. By the 1980s television in UkrSSR had shaped its own audience, which virtually united an imagined community of Ukrainians. Thus, President Zelenskii was elected not only due to his involvement in Soviet-type media entertainment, or due to virtual politics, which becomes a common feature worldwide. He was elected by his TV-audience whose origins can be traced to the late Soviet Ukraine.

To some degree, Benedict Anderson’s idea of an imagined national community was extended in the 20th century by widely available visual media. Media scholars argue that “broadcast television not only created the largest ‘imagined community’ the world has ever seen (the TV audience), but through its various textual forms and genres it functioned as a teacher of cultural citizenship over several decades.”⁵ Some fifty years before Zelenskii was

¹ Adrian Karatnycky, “Ukraine’s New President Just Won the First Ever Successful Virtual Campaign,” European edition of the American news organization Politico, <https://www.politico.eu>, April 24, 2019, <https://www.politico.eu/article/ukraine-new-president-volodymyr-zelensky-just-won-the-first-ever-successful-virtual-campaign/>.

² Karatnycky.

³ Christine Evans, “How Soviet Game Shows Explain the Popularity of Ukraine’s New President,” *Washington Post*, May 13, 2019, sec. Made by History Perspective, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2019/05/13/how-soviet-game-shows-explain-popularity-ukraines-new-president/>.

⁴ Evans.

⁵ John Fiske and John Hartley, *Reading Television* (Psychology Press, 2003), xvi.

successfully voted in Ukraine, Soviet experts envisaged this future, dominated by visual media. In 1969, reporting from the festival of amateur cinema held in the Ukrainian city Zhytomyr, the editor of the Soviet magazine *Television and Radio Broadcasting* [Televideniie I radioveshchaniie] declared:

In our opinion, the fascination with a camera is perhaps one of the most valuable, the most persistent and the most, if you can say so, promising qualities of modern human nature [...] It is unlikely that anyone will doubt that the colossal, unceasing army of people with movie cameras will eventually conquer history.⁶

The man with a camera, so vibrantly described by Soviet editors of the late 1960s, indeed conquered history, at least in post-Soviet Ukraine. Fascination with visuality remains with us, still being the most valued, persistent and promising quality of modern person, though recent history has been conquered not by those with film cameras but by those with phone cameras.

The massive visualization of culture, everyday life and the experience of history through media was characteristic of the late Soviet period. Stephen Hutchings acknowledges that Soviet culture gradually turned from literature as a main cultural form to television, which embraced and visualized literary texts.⁷ He called this practice of visual rendition of important verbal texts “reverse ekphrasis,” which in Soviet tradition was framed as ekranizatsiia [film adaptation] of literature.⁸ Moreover, as in the famous Soviet film by Dziga Vertov (*Man with a Movie Camera*, 1929) camera as the machinic apparatus of continuous visualization of reality (or a TV set) became a part of human boredom (and even a human body) in the 1970s and 1980s. Vertov believed that a film had to show reality and not fantasy. The Soviet critic Vladimir Sappak, writing about Soviet media linked television to the ideas of Vertov, praising television for its live and unscripted character.⁹ Television was considered to be both, a window to a real world (a clear image of the reality) and a magnifying glass (an instrument to examine something in detail).

In addition, Soviet television as a *visual machine* possessed the power to change time, and Soviet audience often travelled in time. It was a multitemporal or polychronic media which combined concepts originating from different historical areas (like new media and the folk song). For instance, folk media performances or historic television programmes created situations where people could experience their national past or connect to an otherwise inaccessible historical period. Like British visual landscape, which could “achieve the status of

⁶ “Govoriat Uchastniki Festivalia,” *Televidenie i Radioveshchanie*, no. 1 (1969): 43.

⁷ Stephen Hutchings, *Russian Literary Culture in the Camera Age: The Word as Image* (Routledge, 2004), 10.

⁸ Stephen C. Hutchings and Anat Vernitski, eds., *Russian and Soviet Film Adaptations of Literature, 1900-2001: Screening the Word*, BASEES/RoutledgeCurzon Series on Russian and East European Studies 18 (London ; New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005).

⁹ Christine Elaine Evans, “From Truth to Time: Soviet Central Television, 1957-1985” (PhD Thesis, Berkley (CA), University of California, Berkeley, 2010), 6; Vladimir Sappak, *Televideniye i My: Chetyre Besedy* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1968); Vladimir Sappak, “Televideniye, 1960: Iz Pervykh Nabliudeniye,” *Novyi Mir*, no. 10 (1960): 177–201.

national icon,” Soviet Ukrainian media pictured the nation.¹⁰ Thus, television could have two regimes of perception: “the socialist reality” of the audience and the “imagined reality” of television.¹¹ These realities created a hybrid time/spaces, where imaginary, local, national and non-national realities coexisted. This feature of television was also acknowledged by other authors, who claim that “television’s grounding in the contemporary is displaced by a polarized temporality of future/past.”¹²

Research objectives

This thesis is concerned with the role Soviet television played in shaping various identities. The British sociologist who specialises in media studies, Jean K. Chalaby, specified in 2005 that among various media “television was central to the modernist intent of engineering of national identity.”¹³ Similarly, the Australian professor of cultural studies, Graeme Turner, wrote in 2009 that: “For most of its history, in most places where it is available, television has been a national medium.”¹⁴ It is commonly agreed that television in the twentieth century played an important role in imagining nations worldwide. This was true in most places on the globe, but not in the USSR, where we can trace many national televisions instead of just one (Chapter 1). The Soviet Union created a hybrid mediascape, in which federal television in the Russian language was considered the national (“fatherland television”), even though various subordinate national republics created their own local, and at the same time national, television (“*Heimat* television”). Soviet Central Television aimed to engineer and promote the supranational identity of Soviet people, while local, regional and republican TV studios produced programming for various Soviet nations. In addition, the Soviet mediascape was partially exposed to western media broadcasting and, consequently, it was not only, as Graeme Turner claims, a national medium, but also supranational, transnational and highly hybridised medium.

This tripartite character of Soviet television (central-republican-regional) created specific media flow that highly influenced local identities. Raymond Williams’s “fact of flow”¹⁵ that describes the essence of television, is also highly applicable to the Soviet context since it

¹⁰ Stephen Daniels, *Fields of Vision: Landscape Imagery and National Identity in England and the United States*. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993), 5.

¹¹ Timothy Scott Barker, *Time and the Digital: Connecting Technology, Aesthetics, and a Process Philosophy of Time* (University Press of New England, 2012), 19.

¹² Hutchings, *Russian Literary Culture in the Camera Age*, 163.

¹³ Jean K. Chalaby, *Transnational Television Worldwide* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2005). Cited after: Andreas Fickers and Catherine Johnson, *Transnational Television History: A Comparative Approach* (Routledge, 2013), 1.

¹⁴ Graeme Turner, “Television and the Nation: Does This Matter Any More?,” in *Television Studies after TV: Understanding Television in the Post-Broadcast Era*, ed. Graeme Turner and Jinna Tay (New York: Routledge, 2009), 54. On the role of television in shaping post-Soviet Russian identity see: Stephen Hutchings and Vera Tolz, *Nation, Ethnicity and Race on Russian Television: Mediating Post-Soviet Difference*, 1st ed. (Routledge, 2015).

¹⁵ Raymond Williams, *Television: Technology and Cultural Form* (Routledge, 2004), 87. The concept of flow was also often misused since Williams himself did not have a consistent understanding of this media effect, see: Stuart Laing, “Raymond Williams and the Cultural Analysis of Television,” *Media, Culture & Society* 13, no. 2 (April 1, 1991): 167.

relates to human responses, memory, or the mood, which are part of everyday domestic life.¹⁶ Through “communicative entertainment” Soviet regional television was a principal mechanism by which local cultures could communicate with their “collective selves.”¹⁷ The importance of everyday experience (especially the television experience) was often connected to the news, which in the USSR served as a core axis around which artistic programming was organized. But these relations and mutual effects between local or peripheral individuals (and groups) and Soviet television are still understudied.

Interaction between popular music and television produced during late socialism a specific form of socialist popular media culture.¹⁸ The idea of popular media culture differs from that of popular culture in its media dimension, indicating that it is channelled to people and a lesser extent is produced by common people (like folk culture). However, I do not subscribe to the idea that this kind of culture is produced for passive consumers, merely in order to dominate and to mislead them by authorities. My thesis focuses on how new technologies, genres, and forms of popular media culture fostered in Soviet Ukraine in the 1960s-1980s new feelings of the nation. This study is concerned with the following general **research question**: How did visualization of popular music on socialist television in Soviet Ukraine predisposed regionalism and nationalism between the late 1950s and late 1980s?

To answer this question, thesis has developed several objectives. **First**, it focuses on the relations between Soviet Central Television, Ukrainian republican TV, and regional television, including different associate institutions and technologies that the USSR brought to its peripheries (Chapter 1 and 2). These institutions and technologies produced local media imagination as a social practice that helped to envisage the nation as well as supranational Soviet people. However, my work is not the history of Soviet regional or republican television, but rather the investigation of their role in shaping the modern/socialist national imagination. Thus, my **second** objective is to examine how visual media, such as television, co-opted with the field of music and what outcomes derived from this collaboration (Chapter 3, 5, 6). Both visual and music fields constructed meanings, promoted them, and resisted others. My particular focus is directed to the use of landscape and ethnic stereotypes in republican and regional televisual productions in this period. Since nationalism was banned ideology under Soviet socialism, my **third** research objective is concerned with the ideological relation between agents, networks, aesthetics and politics, and how Soviet popular media culture was politicized/bureaucratized and restricted at that time (Chapter 4, 7). Media experienced various Soviet regulatory practices within which power was omnipresent and in which consent or resistance was experienced.

¹⁶ Stuart Hall defined flow as something that is part of “flows” of everyday domestic life, see: David Morley, *Family Television: Cultural Power and Domestic Leisure* (Routledge, 2005), vii. See also: John Fiske, *Television Culture* (London: Methuen, 1987), 99–105; Hutchings, *Russian Literary Culture in the Camera Age*, 159–61.

¹⁷ Fiske and Hartley, *Reading Television*, xvi.

¹⁸ Meenakshi Gigi Durham and Douglas M. Kellner, eds., *Media and Cultural Studies: Keywords* (John Wiley & Sons, 2009), 29. In my work, I use terms such as state sponsored culture, popular culture, mass culture or popular media culture interchangeably.

I hypothesize that by visualizing popular music using Soviet ethnic clichés and national stereotypes (including national landscape and banalization)¹⁹ regional or republican television in Soviet Ukraine often created vivid imaginary, which used new technologies and various media genres to promote strong national sentiments. The particular role in shaping this socialist and at the same time national imagination played mediatized natural landscape, especially the Carpathian Mountains. Soviet Ukrainian television produced a clichéd form of nationalism that acted as an instrument of differentiation bent by Soviet powers, and which eventually played a role in the disintegration of the USSR in the late 1980s.

The following thesis employs the term *mediascape* as introduced by Arjun Appadurai in his seminal work on globalisation.²⁰ However, this term is regularly combined with the more traditional concept of landscape to emphasize the importance of environment, both real and imagined, for media and cultural representations.²¹ Appadurai believes that *migration* and *media* are crucial characteristics of modern life and that they have a profound influence over the work of *imagination*, a constitutive feature of modern subjectivity.²² For him, global processes of migration and communication enforce the deterritorialisation of identities in a world that is becoming culturally hybridised through the growth of diasporic public spheres and the global flow of people, images, finances, technologies, and ideologies.²³ Appadurai was among the first scholars to suggest that we think beyond the nation by imagining a (possible) form of sovereignty which replaces locality with trans-localities and by privileging culture in many global practices. In addition, he argued against a homogenised vision of transition from the pre-modern to modern state and acknowledged that modernity is unequally experienced on the global level. Hence, instead of treating differences between past and present as breaks, he introduced the concept of the *rupture* (or *disjuncture*) between capitals, ideas, technologies, ethnicities and imaginations, produced by migration and media.

In this research mediascape describes an evolving set of institutions, practices, technologies, ideologies, and actors in the USSR in the late 1950s to late 1980s. Together, they produced media content, symbols and narratives, distributed through cinemas, broadcasting stations, radios and televisions. The spaces formed by Soviet media were unique, combining the real and the virtual in a distinctive way. In the second half of twentieth

¹⁹ Ethnic stereotypes and images were involved in the circulation of cultural tastes, fashion, symbolic interchange of values between the periphery and the metropole producing appealing banal culture. Banalisation in (stylized between high and low) culture gives pleasure, insofar it offers meaning that is on the surface and does not need deep reading. Thus, banalization perfectly fits the nationalist agenda (as well as mythology), which looks for simplified and evoking emotional 'national' images. See more on banal nationalism: Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage Publications, 1995).

²⁰ Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis, Minn.: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

²¹ Denis E. Cosgrove, *Geography and Vision: Seeing, Imagining and Representing the World*, International Library of Human Geography, v. 12 (London: I.B. Tauris; Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

²² Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 3.

²³ He calls different global flows 'scapes' and differentiate ideoscape, technoscape, financescape, ethnoscape and mediascape, see: Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," *Theory, Culture and Society* 7, no. 2 (1990): 295–310.

century, regional, republican and USSR-wide [vsesoiuznyie] media had a profound influence over the modern Ukrainian imagination, and they shaped not only supra-national identities but also local subjectivities. Both Soviet and western media enforced the de-territorialisation of identities, but at the same time regional and republican media encouraged re-territorialisation.²⁴

Gerard Delanty, while discussing globalisation impacts over nations, stresses: “The dialectical deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation of national identities can be conceived not as an even, one-sided and universal process but as a phenomenon which unevenly affects different, interacting and competing cultural and political nationalist movements in different ways.”²⁵ Deteritorialisation caused by the Soviet media was the same as globalisation, the vanishing of space and also time. As a result of diminishing importance of space, it was a meeting of cultures, which could have a form of conflict, or merging of socialist cultures or the formation of a universal culture of Soviet people.²⁶ This means that the Soviet mediascape created a paradox, where local identities were universalised through socialist modernisation and at the same time were promised an imagined local homeland (similar to the German *Heimat*²⁷) as offered by regional television.

Many folk programmes on Soviet TV and radio combined past and present. Through this process media (and technology) functioned as fundamentally temporal and intervened in the processes by which people made meaning of the world.²⁸ Soviet Ukrainian television and its media-folklorism not only represented the culture of the past but also maintained the culture of the socialist present. Thus, Soviet Ukrainian television created specific *fairy-tale reality*²⁹ (see Chapter 3), in which the real and imagined, mythical and political coexisted and these features shaped its audience. This same audience elected a virtual “servant of the people” as its president in 2019. As Marshal McLuhan stated in the 1950s, the medium became the message, thus television turned into reality.³⁰

²⁴ Gerard Delanty, *Citizenship In A Global Age* (McGraw-Hill Education, 2000), 84.

²⁵ Delanty, 84.

²⁶ See similar arguments about globalisation, Delanty, 85.

²⁷ This German concept depicts, as Appadurai claims, “a human need for locality,” conveying a feeling of belonging, see: Friedrike Eigler and Jens Kugele, eds., *Heimat: At the Intersection of Memory and Space* (De Gruyter, 2012), 1. The idea of *Heimat* is often used to analyse national identity and also features in media studies, see: Jan Palmowski, “Building an East German Nation: The Construction of a Socialist Heimat, 1945-1961,” *Central European History* 37, no. 3 (2004): 365–99; Anastasia Kostetskaya, “East or West, Rodina Is Best: Shaping a Socialist ‘Heimat’ in German and Soviet Film of the Occupation Period,” *German Life and Letters* 69, no. 4 (2016): 519–36; Paul Vickers, “Moving Homes and Homelands on Television: (West) Germany’s Heimat and Poland’s Dom,” *Oxford German Studies* 47, no. 1 (January 2, 2018): 103–24.

²⁸ Barker, *Time and the Digital*, 27.

²⁹ The term “fairy-tale reality” (or “fairy-reality”) derives from media theory. Similar notion, which unites reality television and fairy-tales, was conceptualized by Jack Z. Bratich, who used the concept of “faireality tales.” I use “fairy-tale reality” instead of “feireality” because the former notion describes the magic and imaginary power of fictional television while the latter is connected to the specific genre of reality television. Since my thesis is not concerned with reality television, I propose the term fairy-tale reality to describe imaginary or fictional character of socialist television.

³⁰ Marshall McLuhan, “Myth and Mass Media,” *Daedalus* 88, no. 2 (1959): 340.

The problem of stagnation

The history of Soviet television starts before 1939, but it developed extensively in the late 1950s, after Stalin's death. It is consequently tempting to connect the socialist values and experimental aesthetics of Soviet television to Nikita Khrushchev's Thaw, and to end this period with the arrival of Leonid Brezhnev in 1964, which marked the turn from openness to oppression, finally leading to stagnation [zastoi]. Indeed, television did change after Sergei Lapin, a close ally of Brezhnev, was appointed a chairman of the State Committee for Television and Radiobroadcasting in 1970. However, as Christine Evans admits: "Musical sounds and performers included on Central Television's New Year's Eve concert programmes in the late 1970s would have been unimaginable on Soviet television in the early 1960s."³¹ To what extent then can we speak of the "stagnation" of Soviet television, which developed in the 1970s and became the source of information and visual imagination for the Soviet people? The periodization of this era typically employed by historians, and especially the turn from Thaw³² to stagnation³³, have little concordance with the history of Soviet television.

Even though the foundation of Soviet welfare we associate with Thaw, the extraordinary changes in material consumption for people who lived under the Soviet regime, arrived in the late 1960s and 1970s, the period is now known as high, late or mature socialism.³⁴ The important place in the Soviet consumerism of that time was reserved for popular music and television insofar as high socialism brought about not only greater comfort but also a Soviet popular media culture.³⁵ In this context, another recent work is worth mentioning, which is solely dedicated to Soviet clubs and popular entertainment in the USSR.³⁶ Gleb Tsipursky provides an examination of the Soviet effort to shape youth consumption and popular culture through emotions. This Cold War struggle to win the hearts

³¹ Evans, "From Truth to Time (2010)," 7.

³² Stephen V. Bittner, *The Many Lives of Khrushchev's Thaw: Experience and Memory in Moscow's Arbat* (Cornell University Press, 2008).

³³ Edwin Bacon and Mark Sandle, eds., *Brezhnev Reconsidered* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

³⁴ Recent scholarship often focuses on consumption during mature socialism, see: Neringa Klumbyte and Gulnaz Sharafutdinova, *Soviet Society in the Era of Late Socialism, 1964–1985* (Lexington Books, 2012); Paulina Bren and Mary Neuburger, eds., *Communism Unwrapped: Consumption in Cold War Eastern Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Cathleen M. Giustino, Catherine J. Plum, and Alexander Vari, eds., *Socialist Escapes: Breaking Away from Ideology and Everyday Routine in Eastern Europe, 1945-1989* (Berghahn Books, 2013); György Péteri, ed., *Imagining the West in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, Pitt Series in Russian and East European Studies (Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010); Anne E. Gorsuch and Diane P. Koenker, eds., *The Socialist Sixties: Crossing Borders in the Second World* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana Univ Pr, 2013), etc. These works exemplify how different life Soviet people were living in the late 1960s and 1970s from that of their parents in the 1930s. Soviet urban dwellers had also much more opportunities to consume not only material goods like cars or new dresses but also cultural products – from vinyl players and TV-sets to concerts and mass performances.

³⁵ From the 1930s on, Soviet officials had tried to control cultural media consumption but they had usually failed, see: Richard Stites, *Russian Popular Culture: Entertainment and Society since 1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Kristin Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time: How the Soviet Union Built the Media Empire That Lost the Cultural Cold War* (Cornell University Press, 2011).

³⁶ Gleb Tsipursky, *Socialist Fun: Youth, Consumption, and State-Sponsored Popular Culture in the Soviet Union, 1945-1970*, 1 edition (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2016).

and minds of people both at home and abroad finds resonance in this research, which is concerned with the feelings and worldviews shaped by Soviet and foreign media.

When it comes to Soviet Ukrainian history, the period between 1965 and 1970 is crucial. Many historians claim that this was a period of political stagnation in Soviet Ukraine, especially after officials started an anti-nationalist campaign in 1965, which intensified in 1972 after the first secretary Petro Shelest was deposed and there was a growing suppression of the dissidents and the clandestine press.³⁷ The KGB initiated a special operation called “blok” [obstruction], which aimed to eliminate those who opposed the Soviet system from cultural life, especially those who dared to publish their texts abroad.³⁸

Cultural life in Soviet Ukraine until the end of 1970s was regulated by three official figures (and their subordinated offices): the first secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party, Volodymyr Shcherbytskyi (1918-1990)³⁹, the Chairman of the Ukrainian KGB, Vitaly Fedorchuk (1918-2008),⁴⁰ and the secretary of ideology of the Ukrainian Communist Party, Valentyn Malanchuk (1928-1984).⁴¹ Fedorchuk developed an extensive network of KGB informers and infiltrated intelligentsia circles while Malanchuk employed widespread restrictions on Ukrainian cultural institutions. If any signs of “nationalist behaviour” were detected by agents among Ukrainian intellectuals, Fedorchuk would write an official request (alerting signal) to Shcherbytskyi, who would redirect it to Malanchuk, who had to “take care” and fix political-cultural issues.

The nationally-minded intelligentsia remember this period as *Malanchukivshchyna*: the epoch dominated by Malanchuk’s doctrinism.⁴² Since Malanchuk had strong support from the influential Politburo member Mikhail Suslov, cultural workers sensed that the campaign to quash nationalism in Soviet Ukraine was instigated from Moscow.⁴³ Yet, even though the pressure was high and intellectuals felt many restrictions in their work, they often maintained working or even good relations with party officials and KGB officers. The former Ukrainian

³⁷ Georgii Kasianov, *Nezgodni: Ukrainska Inteligentsia v Rusi Oporu 1960-80-h Rokiv* (Kyiv, Ukraine: Lybid, 1995).

³⁸ Oleh Bazhan, “Spetsoperatsia KDB URSR Blok: Rozrobka, Khid, Naslidky,” *Naukovi Zapysky NaUKMA. Istorychni Nauky*, no. 143 (2013): 30–36.

³⁹ Shcherbytskyi ruled Soviet Ukraine from May 1972, after dismissal of Petro Shelest, till the end of USSR, leaving the office in September 1989. He was acknowledged as one of the most important and influential communists in the USSR during the 1970s and the 1980s.

⁴⁰ Fedorchuk served as a chief KGB person in Soviet Ukraine between 1970 and 1982, being appointed in May 1982 as a main Soviet KGB official in Moscow, and later in the end of 1982 becoming the Minister of Interior Affairs of the Soviet Union (he served in the office until January 1986). For the successful elimination of the so-called Ukrainian nationalists and fight with illegal or anti-Soviet press in 1970s he received the highest Order of Lenin in 1977.

⁴¹ Malanchuk served in the office between October 1972 and April 1979, during the most active faze of anti-nationalist campaign in Soviet Ukraine.

⁴² Olexandr Yakubets, “V.Shcherbyts’kyi and Ideology: on the question of causes of ‘Malanchukivshchyna,’” *Ukrainskyi istorychnyi zhurnal (Ukrainian Academy of Science)*, no. 5 (2014): 116.

⁴³ Some Ukrainian historians accept that Malanchuk could act as a ‘political figure’ and even criticized Ukrainian party bosses since he felt support from the Central party Committee in Moscow, see: O. Bazhan, “‘Mene Nazyvaiut Suchasnym Kochubeyem...’ Notatky Na Poliakh Politychnoi Biografii V.lu. Malanchuka,” *Literaturna Ukraina [Literary Ukraine]*, December 2, 1993.

KGB colonel Nezdolia recalls that in the 1970s agents had to be familiar with cultural and artistic trends and often discussed art or music with their “colleagues,” namely cultural workers. Only amateurs, claims Nezdolia, could think that fifth department of the Soviet KGB (mainly concerned with intelligentsia) was about prosecution; it was primarily about “relations” with Soviet artists and aimed to conduct a protective, essentially ideological fight against foreign enemies.⁴⁴

If we consider the national and cultural oppression that took place in Soviet Ukraine in the mid-1960s to late 1970s, “zastoi” may operate as functional term. However, in the same period, Soviet Ukraine managed to create its own national television, which did not exist during the Thaw. As an institution and a brand, Ukrainian television was made possible by the complicated endeavour of uniting the programming of 15 regional studios and 26 media committees that had existed since the late 1950s. The consolidation of national programming in Ukraine was not due to the investment of substantial state resources, as was available to Soviet Central Television, but due to innovative thinking and the ability to mobilize the existing regional media infrastructure. Contrary to claims of stagnation, this was a major development for Soviet Ukrainian media in the 1970s.

By the late 1970s Soviet Ukrainian television had a stable audience. Some programmes aimed to maintain, and other aimed to create, an imagined community of Ukrainians. Thus, we encounter an obvious paradox: while the Soviet system was busy restricting national culture in the UkrSSR from the mid-1960s to late 1970s, national media were trying to promote or maintain national imaginations. The Soviet policy of fighting various nationalisms in the USSR did not contradict certain policies that helped to maintain nationalisms. If cultural stagnation was present at that time in UkrSSR, it was fragmented because Ukrainian television in the 1970s and 1980s was one of the sources for national imagination, consolidation and mobilization.

Soviet western peripheries

In this research I focus on the western peripheries of Soviet Ukraine, which were exposed to media broadcasting from neighbouring countries. Former Polish, Czechoslovakian, Romanian and Hungarian regions that were incorporated into the USSR during the Second World War and made legitimate in the late 1940s and 1950s went through the processes of Sovietisation and re-imagination.⁴⁵ In the USSR, these regions received new legal status and

⁴⁴ Alexandr Nezdolia, *Dve epokhi generala gosbezopasnosti* (Donetsk: Kashtan, 2006), 167.

⁴⁵ See some major works on Sovietisation of Western Ukraine: Svitlana Frunchak, “The Making of Soviet Chernivtsi: National ‘Reunification,’ World War II, and the Fate of Jewish Czernowitz in Postwar Ukraine” (PhD Thesis, Canada, University of Toronto, 2014); Tarik Cyril Amar, “The Making of Soviet Lviv, 1939-1963” (PhD Thesis, New York, Princeton University, 2006); William Jay Risch, *The Ukrainian West: Culture and the Fate of Empire in Soviet Lviv*, Harvard Historical Studies 173 (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2011); Sofia Dyak, “(Re)Imagined Cityscapes: Lviv and Wroclaw after 1944-45” (PhD Thesis, Warsaw, the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences, 2010); Tarik Cyril Amar, *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv: A Borderland City between Stalinists, Nazis, and Nationalists* (Cornell University Press, 2015); Christoph

became to be known as western Ukraine, part of Soviet west.⁴⁶ For the first time in its history, Ukraine received vast territories in the west, at the time mainly settled by ethnic Ukrainians and united under Kyiv's socialist government.

The political notion of western Ukraine appeared before Soviet rule was established in these territories. This title was actively used in November 1918, when Ukrainians in L'viv proclaimed the existence of the West Ukrainian Peoples Republic, which they hoped would succeed the Habsburg Empire. In the USSR this idea of western Ukraine persisted. Tarik Amar maintains that in Soviet terminology there were two names for the subjugated between 1939 and 1945 territories: western Ukraine and the western oblasts.⁴⁷ The western oblasts included not only former Galicia but also the oblasts of Zakarpattia, Chernivtsi, L'viv, Drohobych, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ternopil, Volyn, and Rivne.⁴⁸ Among the key Soviet officials who supervised the Ukrainisation and Sovietisation of former Galicia, Bukovina and Podkarpatska Rus, was Nikita Khrushchev, who had also participated in Soviet Ukrainian state building before the war.⁴⁹

In places with no Soviet history, authorities had an opportunity to implement an already developed set of Soviet innovations. The modern media, such as radio and cinema, gave the Soviets the opportunity to bridge their practices in these new places with those at the centre of socialist empire. The Soviet state invested in local media production and infrastructure, putting in place a Soviet television network and its attendant institutions, culture, producers, and consumers. Put differently, in these cities and regions becoming Soviet also coincided with the rise of media-culture.

Importantly, Soviet power was reestablished in these western peripheries in 1944-1945 but it was altered by the war. By 1945 the Soviet Union had exhausted its human capital and resources, however, it continued to expand by incorporating territories in the west and becoming increasingly internationally influential. Amir Weiner assures that Soviet powers tried to adjust the one-party state and its planned/command economy to new post-war realities.⁵⁰ What remained unchanged was the "socialist revolution," the lack of private property, the Soviet nationality policy and the desire to create Soviet citizens:

The ultimate goals of the Revolution, at least as stated repeatedly by Soviet leaders and ideologues, remained unchanged from the dawn of the Soviet era to its very end, that is, the

Mick, *Lemberg, Lwow, L'viv, 1914-1947: Violence and Ethnicity in a Contexted City* (Perdue University Press, 2016). I am indebted to Dr. Amar and Dr. Dyak for forwarding me their dissertations.

⁴⁶ Soviet west included also Baltic republics in the North (which are now treated as Northern Europe) and Western Belarus, see for instance the usage of Soviet West in: Roman Szporluk, "The Soviet West—or Far Eastern Europe?," *East European Politics & Societies* 5, no. 3 (1991): 466–482; William Risch, "A Soviet West: Nationhood, Regionalism, and Empire in the Annexed Western Borderlands," *Nationalities Papers* 43, no. 1 (January 2, 2015): 63–81.

⁴⁷ Amar, *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv*, 1.

⁴⁸ Amar, 13.

⁴⁹ Frunchak, "The Making of Soviet Chernivtsi," 120. See also: Yurii Shapoval, "M. S. Khrushchov. Naris Politychnoyi Diial'nosti," *Ukraiins'kyi Istorychnyi Zhurnal*, no. 1 (1989): 108, 110, 112.

⁵⁰ Amir Weiner, "Robust Revolution to Retiring Revolution: The Life Cycle of the Soviet Revolution, 1945–1968," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 86, no. 2 (April 2008): 225.

creation of a politically and socio-economically conflict-less polity and the moulding of a New Person who defines his or her identity solely through the Soviet collective.⁵¹

The war brought confusion to the Soviet project, but not the thorough rethinking of policies and key institutions introduced during high Stalinism in the 1930s.⁵² Soviet revolution after 1945 was no longer “robust” but rather “retiring”, and many innovations that were impossible in the 1930s became possible in 1950s. Moreover, incorporating eastern European countries into the socialist empire proved to be problematic: political events in Hungary, Poland or Czechoslovakia were hotly debated in the western peripheries of the USSR.⁵³ In the 1930s the USSR had been an almost closed country, at least with regards to information. By the 1950s, however, it was forced to adjust to not only widely accessible socialist radio and television broadcasting, but also the media influx from the capitalist west. In addition, soft measures, such as the increase in housing since the late 1950s and the introduction of “luxuries” like television, had political repercussions: people who had previously been exposed to collective entertainment now had a private cultural life, free from supervision.⁵⁴

The biggest and the most important town in the western Ukrainian region was and still is L’viv. The Bolsheviks imagined Soviet Ukrainian L’viv (which was recently the Polish city of Lwów), as “marginal and central, backward and crucial: a potential proving ground for their cutting-edge modernity.”⁵⁵ There was a similar Soviet perception of Bukovina’s main city Chernivtsi.⁵⁶ Such multi-ethnic former imperial cities like L’viv, Chernivtsi and Uzhhorod as well as the Carpathian region had to be reshaped through liberation by the Soviet army and by the means of socialist revolution. New regions not only had to change their social structure to become socialist, they also had to be reimagined.

The process of this socialist re-imagining required the constant linking of regional culture and national landscape. An important aspect of the new Soviet imagination surrounding the Ukrainian west was not only its cities but also the natural landscape. Even though Ukrainians from former imperial Russian provinces had attempted, prior to 1939, to imagine the Carpathian Mountains and their inhabitants as part of their imagined community, these territories and the local people were mainly unknown in the bigger Ukraine. After 1945

⁵¹ Weiner, 209.

⁵² Weiner claims that “*Soviet citizens rejected both terror and its victims*,” so discussion about the crimes of Stalinism was postponed to mid-1980s, see: Weiner, 210; 225.

⁵³ Conflicts in Hungary in 1956 or compromises in Poland (1956) or Czechoslovakia (1968) and Solidarity in Poland in 1980 had the power to change local socialist policies. So, for instance, west-Ukrainian peasants were aware (mainly by the means of television and radio) that in socialist Poland since 1956 collective farms were transformed and Ukrainian artists jealously looked at Polish artistic scene, which was released from censorship. See how Ukrainian officials reacted to Polish Solidarity in 1980: Zbigniew Wojnowski, “Staging Patriotism: Popular Responses to Solidarność in Soviet Ukraine, 1980–1981,” *Slavic Review* 71, no. 4 (2012): 824–48.

⁵⁴ Kristin Roth-Ey, “Finding a Home for Television in the USSR, 1950–1970,” *Slavic Review*, no. 66(2) (2007): 278–306.

⁵⁵ Amar, *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv*, 63.

⁵⁶ Frunchak, “The Making of Soviet Chernivtsi,” 154.

Soviet government had to incorporate newly acquired territories and peoples into national Ukrainian and at the same time Soviet imagination. Carpathian lands and the ethnic groups inhabiting them never belonged to the Russian imagination, thus these low and highlands were considered in Moscow or Kyiv as exotic and wild. The occidentalist and imperial imagination, coupled with Sovietization, promised to bring modernity to the region.

Soviet officials perceived the local people in western Ukraine as having been “poisoned” by capitalism. Only the socialist revolution had the power to reveal the good and “natural” culture of the people. Sovietization was the major reason why L’viv became not only Soviet but, for the first time in its history, a Ukrainian city.⁵⁷ In 1955 its population was 44percent ethnic Ukrainian. By 1959, it had grown to 60percent and in the late 1970s only a quarter of city’s inhabitants did not consider themselves as Ukrainians.⁵⁸ The important task was to forge the new socialist identity by linking hierarchically organised Soviet institutions or spaces with new cultural structures of local communities.⁵⁹ Changing class relations in western Ukraine had to create the new social basis for emerging socialist culture and this culture was seen in specific national and spatial terms. However, as Wojnowski argues, the situation in western Ukraine was not very different from other parts of the country, which similarly had Sovietness defined in geographical and ethnic terms.⁶⁰ In Soviet Ukraine, the strategies that defined local or national identities combined policies from Moscow, Kyiv, regional institutions, and finally the imagination of local citizens. Each had different levels of agency but they also had a different levels of access to media which, in turn, they each perceived differently.

The role of popular culture in the studies of nationalism

In the mid-1980s, the renowned Czech historian Miroslav Hroch proposed a model to help generalize the phases of national development in small nations.⁶¹ Hroch distinguished three fundamental phases, which are at times referred to as the A-B-C stages of nationalism: Phase A was described as the period of scholarly interest in folk and national culture, Phase B was a period of patriotic agitation to maintain this culture, and Phase C was a phase which corresponded to the rise of popular national movements.⁶² His model was widely used and

⁵⁷ Amar, *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv*, 13.

⁵⁸ Halyna Bodnar, *Shchodenne Zhyttia Ochyma Pereselentsiv Iz Sil (50–80-Ti Roky XX St.)* (Lviv: Ivan Franko University Press, 2010), 175. In 1931 Ukrainians constituted less than 16% of Lwow’s population, see: Halyna Bodnar, “Wojna w jednym losie,” *Krakowskie Pismo Kresowe* 9 (September 30, 2018): 91–111.

⁵⁹ For the construction of political identity through space see: Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, “Beyond ‘Culture’: Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference,” *Cultural Anthropology* 7, no. 1 (1992): 8; Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology* (Duke University press, 1997).

⁶⁰ Zbigniew Wojnowski, *The Near Abroad: Socialist Eastern Europe and Soviet Patriotism in Ukraine, 1956-1985*, 1 edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 14.

⁶¹ Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the Smaller European Nations* (Columbia University Press, 1985), 22–30. The periodization scheme was proposed by Hroch in the German version of his work much earlier, in 1968, but it became famous only in the mid-1980s. I am indebted to Dr. Pavel Kolář for clarification.

⁶² Oana Sînziana Păltineanu, “Miroslav Hroch’s Model of Small Nation-Formation and Begriffsgeschichte,” *Nationalities Papers* 38, no. 6 (November 1, 2010): 815.

scholars applied Hroch's taxonomy to other parts of the world.⁶³ He later admitted that *Social Preconditions* had a European focus and had been conceived as the first volume of a trilogy on nationalism, continued by his work in 1996 (*In the National Interest*) and in 2005 (*Das Europa der Nationen*).

Hroch's work on nationalism is important as it provides a common terminology for scholars interested in different subfields of nationalism studies.⁶⁴ Alexander Maxwell acknowledges that "Hroch's phases [...] usefully describe different types of nationalist activity, enabling scholars working in different subfields of nationalism studies to describe their interests to each other."⁶⁵ His model shows that culture is at the core of any national doctrine, though historians often only consider high culture, which they see as more important than popular culture. Writing on popular culture, John Storey declared that it was shaped as an outcome of Romanticism, nationalism and folklore studies. He maintained that:

In the late eighteenth, throughout the nineteenth, and into the early part of the twentieth century, different groups of intellectuals, working under the different banners of nationalism, Romanticism, folklore, and finally, folk song, "invented" the first concept of popular culture.⁶⁶

In some European countries these debates ultimately formed two definitions of popular culture: the first was popular culture as almost mythical, rural folk culture, and the second was popular culture as the corrupted mass culture of the new urban working class. In the nineteenth century there arose multiple debates about the character of culture: urban, folk, national or popular. But in any case, culture was seen as derived from the national "substance" and scholars argued, that the nation was a foundation, on which culture seemingly occurred. The nation was seen metaphorically as a "soil," which nourishes the roots and fruits of culture. Even now, as Mike Crang argues, scholars often tend to see a two-dimensional social world in which culture emerges from the nation:

Bounded and self-evident, a nationally rooted culture often is not imagined as the outcome of material and symbolic processes but instead as the cause of those practices – a hidden essence lying behind the surface of behaviour.⁶⁷

Since the nineteenth century another vision of culture has developed which stresses the importance of interaction and over the idea of a common national background. For instance, James Clifford declares:

If we rethink culture ... then the organic, naturalizing bias of the term culture – seen as a rooted body that grows, lives, dies. etc. – is questioned. Constructed and disputed

⁶³ Alexander Maxwell, "Twenty-Five Years of A-B-C: Miroslav Hroch's Impact on Nationalism Studies," *Nationalities Papers* 38, no. 6 (November 1, 2010): 773–74.

⁶⁴ Alexander Maxwell, "Typologies and Phases in Nationalism Studies: Hroch's A-B-C Schema as a Basis for Comparative Terminology," *Nationalities Papers* 38, no. 6 (November 1, 2010): 865.

⁶⁵ Maxwell, 875.

⁶⁶ John Storey, *Inventing Popular Culture: From Folklore to Globalization* (Berkeley: John Wiley & Sons, 2009), 1–2.

⁶⁷ Mike Crang, *Cultural Geography* (London: Routledge, 1998), 162.

historicités, sites of displacement, interference, and interaction, come more sharply into view.⁶⁸

The **visions/imaginings**, in which the nation plays a background for culture, have been rooted in the historiography of nationalism. For Ernest Gellner, national identity is constructed around high cultures, which are collected, surveyed, and codified by specific experts.⁶⁹ These cultures are aimed at bridging the gap between elite culture and the everyday culture of the people, often perceived as being wild, impulsive and unreflective. In such a model, nineteenth-century modernisation created a standardized and homogenous culture, which the elites designed for the masses. This imagined culture served as a specific bond with which identification would take place.⁷⁰ Consequently, culture is seen as a fixed entity and not as having a fluid nature to which, in reality, administrative bodies often need to adjust. Like an agent, who is supposed to “unpack” in any given society (similar to a computer program, which unpacks differently in various computer operative systems), national culture almost technically unpacks on the national/popular ground due to the apparatuses of dynamic modernity.⁷¹

In another well-known account from nationalism studies, new or invented cultural/national traditions aim to mask the fact that nations or nation-states have emerged only recently.⁷² Elite actors invented and introduced different cultural ceremonies and ordinary people passively absorbed their ideological messages. In such an understanding, the elites developed malevolent tactics to control the masses, and to bend them to their will. In the elite model of culture, there is no place for the vernacular and everyday culture, which is subordinated and ideologically manipulated by the “inventors of traditions”. However, not only the elites generated popular entertainment in the nineteenth century but also different actors, embedded in various social networks and connected to specific material culture.

Anthony Smith also rejected elites as a homogenous entity and sees them as representatives of different, often competing interests. These elites have different possibilities for the selection of symbols to represent an emerging nation. Thus, Smith affirmed that the selection of national symbols is a creative and shifting process.⁷³ Consequently, he does not take for granted that elite actors simply construct cultural hegemony, but that it must be fashioned to some extent and achieved in relation to the common sense that is already embedded in everyday culture. For Smith, culture is a “dynamic but not static phenomenon, containing both tradition, a set of values and everyday

⁶⁸ James Clifford, “Travelling Cultures,” in *Cultural Studies*, ed. L. Grossberg, C. Nelson, and P. Treichler (London: Routledge, 1992), 101.

⁶⁹ Ernst Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), 57.

⁷⁰ For Gellner nationalism is a purpose of modernity and a process of modernization, where such structures as education, communication and bureaucracy are driven by rational forces.

⁷¹ Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (Cambridge [Cambridgeshire]: Polity Press, 1984).

⁷² Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

⁷³ Anthony Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism* (London: Routledge, 1998), 155.

practice.”⁷⁴ Rather than being fixed, cultural traditions are continuously reinvented and associated with the current state of affairs. For instance, some traditions may become de-ritualized on a grand scale, but they always have the chance to be reactivated by the means of the media. However, Smith still praises hierarchical culture and acknowledges the key role played by intellectuals and arbiters of high culture in generating and analysing the concepts, myths, symbols, and ideology of nationalism.⁷⁵

This brief overview of nationalism studies shows that historians and their theories were bound by the big narratives of enlightenment. Theories of nationalism highlight the hierarchical and reified nature of culture, and even though the role of vernacular (mass, popular) cultures have been acknowledged, it is only minor in comparison. Therefore, it is important that strong historical parallels are not drawn from such conclusions, as an elite culture is simply one aspect of the production of national identities, which are shaped by commercial and popular cultures. In the early 2000s, Tim Edensor recognised that the idea of reified traditions and high culture as a major source of patriotism still dominate in studies of nationalism. However, both the elite’s role in making national culture and the drive by the state (the latter is often described as similar to a modern factory) to produce national rituals are very important, whereby national identity is not only located and experienced in prominent symbolic sites but is also domesticated.

The prevalence of references to popular music, films, television programmes, comics, tabloid newspapers, and sporting celebrities challenges the importance of high culture in shaping national identity.⁷⁶ National identity asserts Edensor: “Is enacted in homely settings as well as at ceremonial sites and memory-scapes; it is located in the familiar habits and embodies lifestyles that such practices bring about.”⁷⁷ Popular and media cultures are more immersive comparing to high culture: “There is still a greater degree of involvement which contrasts with the more distanced appreciation and assessment typical of an engagement with “higher” cultural forms.”⁷⁸ In today’s nation states, high culture has to be fostered and supported (for instance, the national opera in Ukraine would not survive without the state’s financial backing) because it lacks the same degree of engagement as popular and often commercially successful cultural forms.⁷⁹ Vernacular and mass cultures produce more easily fluid, common symbols that are more effective than “rigid emblems of reified culture,” for they can be interpreted and claimed by different groups in society.⁸⁰

⁷⁴ Smith, 187.

⁷⁵ Anthony Smith, *National Identity* (London: Penguin, 1991), 94.

⁷⁶ Few years ago, the only human who had more than 100 million followers of Facebook was a football star Ronaldo.

⁷⁷ Tim Edensor, *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2002), 186.

⁷⁸ Edensor, 187.

⁷⁹ In this context we may also consider Adorno’s criticism of popular culture, see: Robert W. Witkin, *Adorno on Popular Culture* (London; New York: Routledge, 2003).

⁸⁰ Edensor, *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life*, 189. See also recent study: Tim Nieguth, *Nationalism and Popular Culture* (Routledge, 2020).

When we direct our focus towards “non-historic people” (as claimed multiple observers) like Rusyns and Ukrainians in the nineteenth century, the situation becomes even more complicated.⁸¹ As a result of their subjugation to both the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires, Ukrainians struggled to produce a national elite culture, as individuals consumed Russian, Polish and Hungarian, cultures. The elites and bourgeoisie did not use the Ukrainian language, which became the dialect of the peasant class – the majority of whom were illiterate – and no attempts were made to develop or codify the language. Therefore, two sides – the intellectuals and the uneducated masses – had to be brought together in order to create new “imagined community,” and this imagination has advanced in the cities.⁸² It might seem that nationalism was impossible in such a context, given that Ukraine lacked such important elements as a national elites, modernization, the state, and mass vernacular press. Nevertheless, the Ukrainian nation was certainly imagined, and this imagination involved both popular and high culture, landscape and ethnography, urban, and rural culture. Above all, this imagination involved cultural hybridization.

Various attempts to create a Ukrainian nation-state after the collapses of European empires post-1918 had failed. The project developed by the Bolsheviks proved to be more effective and in the twentieth century Ukrainian statehood was realized in the UkrSSR, a socialist republic, which became a founding entity of the USSR. Recalling Hroch’s model of the development of nationalism, we see that it depicts the transition from the scholarly interest in folk and national culture (Phase A) to patriotic agitation to maintain this culture (Phase B). Phase C describes the rise of mass national movements, which could possible create nation-states. In Ukrainian history, Phase C was somewhat unusual since it corresponded with the creation of a state that was not a truly national.⁸³ The republic had all the necessary features of a state, except sovereignty, and could not fulfil national policies on its own. In such a state, national and folk cultures were promoted, but not to the same extent as in other modern cultures.⁸⁴ As David Brandenberger argues, already by the 1930s Soviet mass culture presented the Russian people as connected to progress, while other nationalities within the

⁸¹ See general discussion on the origin of Ukraine as political and national concept, Serhii Plokhy, “Ruthenia, Little Russia, Ukraine,” in *The Origins of the Slavic Nations: Premodern Identities in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), 299–354. On the discussion about Ukrainians as a ‘small nation’, see: Andreas Kappeler, “A” Small People” of Twenty-Five Million: The Ukrainians circa 1900,” *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 18, no. 1 (1993): 85–92; Andreas Kappeler, “Ein” Kleines Volk” von 25 Millionen: Die Ukrainer Um 1900,” in *Kleine Völker in Der Geschichte Osteuropas. Festschrift Für Günther Stökl Zum 75. Geburtstag*, ed. Manfred Alexander, Frank Kämpfer, and Andreas Kappeler, vol. 75 (Stuttgart, 1991), 33–42.

⁸² Snyder admits that “*the Achilles heel of peasant nations, and the weak point of ethnic politics, is the city,*” therefore leaders of these nations are ready to fight for cities, see: Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569-1999* (Yale University Press, 2003), 134.

⁸³ This argument is not aimed at some kind of phase’s theology, namely that in any situation such a phase should ultimately lead to the creation of a national state. Hroch argued that the nation could be reached even within imperial conditions, before the appearance of a state. I am thankful to Dr. Pavel Kolar for the clarification.

⁸⁴ Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939*, Wilder House Series in Politics, History, and Culture (Cornell University Press, 2001).

USSR represented traditionalism. Thus, Ukrainian culture was supported by the socialist state but often represented as a “frozen culture”:

[...] non-Russians were collectively cast as if frozen in time, forever clad in furs and exotic premodern textiles and surrounded with obsolete tools and field implements. Only Russian people culture stretched forward in time into the Soviet period.⁸⁵

This “frozen culture” is described in this research in terms of folklorism, an imitation of folk culture implemented by Soviet institutions and agents of culture. Since Stalinism, the national culture in Soviet Ukraine was trapped in an on-going cycle from Phase A to a Phase B, but could not reach Phase C, because the communist party-state replaced the nation-state. National movements in the USSR were thus successfully controlled and regulated, however, republican institutions still played an important role in national centralization and finally in national mobilization in the late 1980s. In spite of being “frozen”, national cultures in the USSR slowly enabled emancipation.

Media and the public sphere

In my research, I follow the idea that various media, and especially television and music, among other means, have the power to produce social imagination, create specific mediascape, which may be considered to be a public sphere on the crossroad of imagination, reality, politics and everyday life. Zygmunt Bauman indicated that the agora (public space), where private sphere (oikos) and state (ecclesia) meet, has already been mediatized.⁸⁶ Similarly, this, almost virtual, public space that appeared in the USSR in the 1960s-1980s combined imagination (for instance what is socialism, nation or the West), reality (social networks), politics (regulation and the politicization-bureaucratization of social structures) and everyday life (consumption and appropriation). Soviet culture, if it existed as multiple entity, was surely transformed by a media revolution in the mentioned period and television became the most important and emblematic medium of this transformation in the 1970s. It was for sure the place and space for implementing mass propaganda, political information, and education for masses, but besides this Soviet television was often lively, frequently unexpected, and changeable similar to any other form of popular culture.

Media reserve an important part in nationalism theories. Surely, many of the histories of nationalism emphasized the role of communication and popular culture. Widely quoted works (like that of Deutsch’s “Nationalism and Social Communication”⁸⁷) were essentially intellectual efforts to identify media factors that fostered the assimilation of various groups of people into a wider community.⁸⁸ Karl Deutsch combined in the definition of a nation some negative aspects such as “a common error about ancestry” or “a common dislike of the

⁸⁵ David Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism: Stalinist Mass Culture and the Formation of Modern Russian National Identity, 1931-1956* (Harvard University Press, 2002), 93.

⁸⁶ Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Polity Press, 2000), 39.

⁸⁷ Karl W. Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication* (Cambridge, MA: The M.I.T. Press, 1969).

⁸⁸ In television studies such approaches are often labelled as transnational history, see: Fickers and Johnson, *Transnational Television History*.

neighbours”⁸⁹ with media characteristics such as “complementary habits and facilities of communication”.⁹⁰ Benedict Anderson believed that a nation is a socially constructed community, imagined by the people who perceive themselves to be part of that group. Consequently, an imagined community is different from an actual community because it is not based on everyday face-to-face interaction between its members.⁹¹ For Anderson’s argument, the key factors for shaping imagined communities lay in media practices (mostly printed media), which had the capacity to spread the idea of the nation widely. For him, newspapers, magazines and other media do not merely display national spectacles, ritualized ceremonies or scientific explanations of national nature, but place the abstract things like “national interests” within everyday life. Anderson’s account is concerned with specific cultural practices that he believed to have shaped nations, namely literature and writing. Similar emphasis of the role of media can be found in the work of Arjun Appadurai, who further developed the idea of *imagined communities*, elaborated by Benedict Anderson.⁹²

Appadurai asserts, following Anderson, that the *social imagination* not only creates *imagined communities* but also *imagined worlds*.⁹³ He differentiates between (personal and collective) *imagination* and *fantasy*.⁹⁴ In his vision, imagination is a staging ground not only for escape but also for action, thus the consumption of popular culture and media does not result necessarily in passivity, but may evoke resistance, selectivity and agency.⁹⁵ This view contradicts the criticism of mass culture, which often comes from critical theory and post-Weberian sociology.⁹⁶ Appadurai claims that the social imagination has become part of the everyday life and practices of ordinary people, creating specific *mediascapes* or public spaces/spheres at the crossroads of imagination, reality, politics and everyday life.⁹⁷

The concept of the public in Soviet-type societies remains a much-discussed subject in recent historical studies. In Soviet everyday life, citizens had various points of contact with

⁸⁹ Gerard Delanty and Patrick O’Mahony, *Nationalism and Social Theory: Modernity and the Recalcitrance of the Nation* (SAGE Publications Ltd, 2002), 24.

⁹⁰ Sabina Mihelj, “Media and Nationalism,” in *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology* (American Cancer Society, 2007), 1–2.

⁹¹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, New York: Verso, 1991), 7–8.

⁹² Especially it is evident in the Appadurai’s concept of ‘mediascape’, which indicates the social imagination as a factor in construing reality.

⁹³ He calls this kind of imagination to be social, ‘*imagination as a social practice*,’ see: Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 31. It is also important to admit that Appadurai stresses that collective imagination often involves the fear and the action of ‘the other,’ thus ‘*one man’s imagined community is another man’s political prison*,’ which was the case with imagined Soviet people, see: Appadurai, “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy,” 6.

⁹⁴ While fantasy represents the Lenin’s concept of ‘opium for the masses’ or Marx’s ‘false consciousness’ implying passivity, imagination in Appadurai’s terms ultimately leads to *expression*, which may fuel action rather than preventing it.

⁹⁵ Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 7.

⁹⁶ See for example: Witkin, *Adorno on Popular Culture*.

⁹⁷ He admits that everyday subjectivities that are transformed through media and imagination usually connected to politics, but in a different way that before. In this context it is revealing to compare Adorno’s engagement with avant-garde and experimental music and his anti-mass culture theorising.

officials of one kind or another, so for them, public spaces appeared as communication spaces. Acts of communication in public spaces implied an entangled co-occurrence of formal and informal messages.⁹⁸ Similarly, Soviet television was often both the producer of official communication and worked as a trigger of the interhuman exchange of messages. Following other researchers,⁹⁹ this thesis considers Soviet television as a part of the public sphere, which had crucial influence over the minds of people in the 1970s and 1980s. As Evans admits: “The new political and ideological environment after 1968 contributed to a more expansive search for new ways of representing and unifying the Soviet public.”¹⁰⁰ Being an interactive media (by involving practices such as writing letters), television discussed important Soviet matters, like the values, forms of consumption, and identities of a “Soviet way of life.”¹⁰¹ Even though Soviet television during late socialism was far from being live and unscripted, it still offered various peoples living in the USSR a type of public sphere, where experiment, interaction, and innovation could be found.¹⁰²

If we follow Jürgen Habermas, the Soviet public space would appear to be entirely consumed by the state. Indeed, historians argue that: “Modern dictatorships attempted to unify the body politic, to abolish pluralism, and to create their own form of modernity – a modernity in which ambivalence was eradicated.”¹⁰³ In Soviet type societies¹⁰⁴ the public sphere and the state are said to merge (the major public space in the USSR was the Communist Party and its subordinate institutions), while in democracies, the public sphere is outside of the state and is seen as an organised “body of nongovernmental discursive opinion that can serve as a counterweight to the state.”¹⁰⁵ These opinions, according to Habermas, which do not belong to the state, are conveyed through media. But in USSR media were subordinated to party-state therefore there was no differentiation between the state and the public opinions, which could serve as a counterweight to the state.¹⁰⁶ In the Soviet Union, the regime attempted to turn the public sphere into a showroom of its achievements (like in other

⁹⁸ Monika Rùthers, “The Moscow Gorky Street in Late Stalinism: Space, History and Lebenswelten,” in *Late Stalinist Russia: Society Between Reconstruction and Reinvention*, ed. Juliane Fürst (Routledge, 2006), 248.

⁹⁹ Peter Dahlgren, *Television and the Public Sphere : Citizenship, Democracy and the Media* (London: SAGE Publications, 1995).

¹⁰⁰ Evans, “From Truth to Time (2010),” 181.

¹⁰¹ Evans, 182.

¹⁰² Evans, “From Truth to Time (2010).”

¹⁰³ Jan C. Behrends and Thomas Lindenberger, eds., *Underground Publishing and the Public Sphere: Transnational Perspectives* (Wien; Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2014), 6.

¹⁰⁴ Jan C. Behrends, Rolf Malte, and Gabor T. Rittersporn, “Open Spaces and Public Realm. Thoughts on the Public Sphere in Soviet-Type Systems,” in *Zwischen Partei–Staatlicher Selbstinszenierung Und Kirchlichen Gegenwelten: Sphären von Öffentlichkeit in Gesellschaften Sowjetischen Typs / Between the Great Show of the Party–State and Religious Counter–Cultures: Public Spheres in Soviet–Type Societies*, 1 edition (Frankfurt am Main; New York: Peter Lang AG, 2003), 423–52; Behrends and Lindenberger, *Underground Publishing and the Public Sphere*, 9–10.

¹⁰⁵ Nancy Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy,” *Social Text*, no. 25/26 (1990): 75.

¹⁰⁶ “Dissenting voices were forced underground and oppositional opinions could only be voiced amongst friends or in the anonymity provided by the masses on streets and in other public places,” see: Behrends and Lindenberger, *Underground Publishing and the Public Sphere*, 7.

dictatorships),¹⁰⁷ so the mass media were used to mobilize the public and promote the leaders of the party-state. This system created various underground worlds, which functioned as an unofficial “alternative public sphere,” that shaped “alternative public opinion” on reality.¹⁰⁸

The theory of the public sphere described by Habermas suggests that there was no democracy in the USSR.¹⁰⁹ This thesis demonstrates that even though the one-party state did not differentiate between the state and the Soviet people, in the late 1980s the Soviet media shaped the public sphere/space within and outside of state institutions. If we take the more nuanced model of Nancy Fraser,¹¹⁰ we could say that there was a *strong* public, which participated in party and parliamentary sovereignty, and a *weak* (which only formed opinions) public space in Soviet Ukraine. A strong public had the power to transform opinions into authoritative decisions, while a weak public (like a group of intellectuals)¹¹¹ mainly generated views but could not transform them into political choices.¹¹² Thus, Fraser’s arguments enable us to move away from a sharp separation between civil society and the state to considering these spheres as connected and often taking various hybrid forms.¹¹³

If we use Fraser’s model, the Ukrainian republican government functioned as “strong public space” since they had formal sovereignty and could turn a public opinion (for instance ideas and needs that were shaped within unions of writers) into legislation or formal regulation.¹¹⁴ Similarly, a “weak public space”, like intellectuals worrying about the loss of national language, put pressure on those who were involved in state apparatus through social movements. In the late USSR, weak and strong public spheres often merged, creating hybrid forms which produced events like the popular music festival *Chervona Ruta* (1989). The groups which supported such initiatives, usually had official and at the same time critical discourse, and this duality helped them to interpret their identities, interests or needs.¹¹⁵ Fraser’s model of the public sphere, which does not separate state agents and society voices, thus helps to explain the late Soviet system. This thesis shows that Soviet media involved the

¹⁰⁷ Simonetta Falasca-Zamponi, *Fascist Spectacle: The Aesthetics of Power in Mussolini’s Italy* (University of California Press, 1997).

¹⁰⁸ Anna Niedzwiedz, “Religious Symbols in Polish Underground Art and Poetry of the 1980s,” in *Underground Publishing and the Public Sphere: Transnational Perspectives*, ed. Jan C. Behrends and Thomas Lindenberger (Wien; Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2014), 189.

¹⁰⁹ Behrends and Lindenberger claim that “a liberal public sphere of the Habermasian type is indeed only one historical model” while “many others have existed and continue to exist in the modern age”, see: Behrends and Lindenberger, *Underground Publishing and the Public Sphere*, 16.

¹¹⁰ I am thankful to professor Alexandr Etkind for this reference.

¹¹¹ A ‘body of private persons assembled to form a public’, so mainly not the state officials but private persons. According to historians dissidents were part of this “weak public space” producing underground publishing, which was the nucleus of an alternative culture that evolved in Eastern Europe. Behrends and Lindenberger, *Underground Publishing and the Public Sphere*, 9.

¹¹² Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere,” 74–75.

¹¹³ Fraser, 75–76.

¹¹⁴ For instance, in October 1989 Verkhovna Rada (Ukrainian Soviet parliament) issued a law ‘*Pro movy v Ukrainiskii URSR*’ [On Languages in UkrSSR], which was a result of continuous presser from ‘weak public spaces (nationally minded intelligentsia) on ‘strong public space’ (communist party functionaries).

¹¹⁵ Craig J. Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (MIT Press, 1992), 123.

weak public space and it gives support to Alexei Yurchak's argument that binary oppositions do not explain Soviet history.¹¹⁶

In Soviet type societies the party-political sphere was, and often still is, extremely important, however political processes and actors alone cannot explain social changes that took place in such societies. To see the dynamics of state and public interactions and the constant progressions of redefining rules and boundaries of political legitimacy is of crucial importance.¹¹⁷ Late Soviet public sphere consisted not only of private, semi-private or autonomous spaces, where counter cultures were enacted, but also it embraced the "majority spaces," defined by Soviets as places and spheres of mass mobilization (Chapter 8). Any location where gatherings were allowed, including state-created public spaces, was part of Soviet public sphere. The same we can attribute to Soviet television since its representations consist not only of visuals but to a great extent of talk. As Dahlgren affirms: "This talk is public talk, usually taking place in a studio. It consists of people talking among themselves, but its 'communicative intentionality' is such that it is aimed at the television audience beyond the studio."¹¹⁸ And often these people beyond the studio replied to television programmers and editors with phone calls and letters, especially after 1986, since there was a potential of the audience to interpret or resist messages, and to construct its own meanings.

Television historiography relevant to this study

Already in the late 1960s the field of Soviet television attracted an attention of social scientists and historians in USSR. The first comprehensive analyses of television were made in the 1960s by the Soviet journalists and social scientists. Vladimir Sappak in his works acknowledged an educative as well as entertaining character of television,¹¹⁹ while Rudolf Boretskiy,¹²⁰ Alexandr Yurovskiy,¹²¹ or Enver Bagirov analyzed various TV genres.¹²² Such

¹¹⁶ Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton University Press, 2013), 4–8.

¹¹⁷ See editors' introduction in: Jan C. Behrends, Rolf Malte, and Gabor T. Rittersporn, eds., *Zwischen Partei–Staatlicher Selbstinszenierung Und Kirchlichen Gegenwelten: Sphären von Öffentlichkeit in Gesellschaften Sowjetischen Typs / Between the Great Show of the Party–State and Religious Counter–Cultures: Public Spheres in Soviet–Type Societies*, 1 edition (Frankfurt am Main; New York: Peter Lang AG, 2003).

¹¹⁸ Dahlgren, *Television and the Public Sphere*, 16.

¹¹⁹ Sappak, *Televideniye i My: Chetyre Besedy*; Vladimir Sappak, "Iskusstvo Kotoroie Rozhdaietsia," *Voprosy Literaturny*, 1962; Sappak, "Телевидение, 1960."

¹²⁰ Rudolf Boretskiy, *Informacionnyie Zhanry Televideniya* (Moscow, 1960); Alexandr Yurovskiy and Rudolf Boretskiy, *Osnovy Televizionnoi Zhurnalistiki* (Москва, 1966). He was a founder of the youth programming department on Moscow's Central TV, and later became an acknowledged professor of Moscow state university; he was among the first scholars who defended thesis in journalism in the USSR and worked abroad (in Poland).

¹²¹ Alexandr Yurovskiy, *Spetsifika Televideniya* (Moscow, 1960); Yurovskiy and Boretskiy, *Osnovy Televizionnoi Zhurnalistiki*; Alexandr Yurovskiy, *Televideniye - Poiski i Resheniya: Ocherki Istorii i Teorii Sovetskoy Televizionnoy Zhurnalistiki* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1975).

¹²² Enver Bagirov, *Televideniye Kak Sotsialnyi Institut Politicheskoi Struktury Obshchestva* (Moscow, 1975); Enver Bagirov, *Televideniye 1970h. Nekotoryie Tendentsii Razvitiya*, TV vchera, segodnia, zavtra, 3 (Moscow, 1973); *Televideniye. XX Vek. Politika. Iskusstvo. Moral.* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1968).

researchers often scrutinized the Soviet television as the part of the ideological apparatus of Communist party and openly stated that television was as a major power to indoctrinate party's ideology into general public.¹²³

Vsevolod Vilchek and Yuri Vorontsov, who published in 1977 a book under the title "Television and artistic culture," carried out the important work on Soviet television and its relation to culture.¹²⁴ These authors analyzed television in its relation to art and tried to differentiate the artistic qualities of this new medium, arguing (in opposition to many other authors) that television should be seen not only as a threat to high culture but also as a powerful instrument for transnational cultural development. In the late 1970s the USSR had centralized its television programming in order to achieve more homogenous program design and broadcasting, while regional or even national studios were already considered unnecessary, some had to be closed. Therefore, the authors' claims for transnational power of Soviet television were also directed against practices to homogenize Soviet broadcasting in Moscow, which often meant russification and centralization.¹²⁵

Soviet scholarships often employed the language of description and advise, and authors considered the aestheticization of TV-programming¹²⁶ or in rare cases dedicated specifically to the merge between television and popular music.¹²⁷ The current bibliography of popular television is often also a kind of positive criticism and to lesser extend historical research.¹²⁸ Even though there are plenty of works about Soviet popular television published in the USSR from the 1960s through the 1990s, they often lack a critical approach. For my study, I will consult both Soviet and western publications,¹²⁹ like Hellen Mickiewicz's, who

¹²³ Vilen Egorov, *Teoriya i Praktika Sovetskoho Televideniya* (Moscow: Vysshaya shkola, 1980); Vilen Egorov, *Televideniye i Zritel'* (Moscow: Mysl, 1977).

¹²⁴ Vsevolod Vilchek and Yuri Vorontsov, *Televideniye i Khudozhestvennaya Kultura* (Moscow: Znanie, 1977).

¹²⁵ I would like to recall again the Appadurai's affirmation about the locality's ambiguous relation to global flows, see: Arjun Appadurai, "The Production of Locality," in *Counterworks: Managing the Diversity of Knowledge*, ed. Richard Fardon (Routledge, 2003).

¹²⁶ H. Troitskaya, "Muzyka I Televideniye," in *Iskusstvo Goluboho Ekrana* (Moscow, 1968); Iurii Bogomolov and A. Vartanov, eds., "Modifikatsii Estradnoi Muzyki Na Televizionnom Ekrane," in *Televizionnaia Estrada*, by E. Averbakh (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1981), 218–32; E.B. Averbakh, ed., *Rozhdenie Zvukovoho Obraza: (Khudozhestvennyie Problemy Zvukozapisi v Ekrannykh Iskusstvakh i Na Radio)* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1985).

¹²⁷ A. Vartanov and Iu. Bogomolov, eds., *Televizionnaia Estrada* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1981).

¹²⁸ V.L. Tsvik, *Televizionnaya Zhurnalistika* (Moscow: Aspekt Press, 2004); Yasen Zasukrsiy, *Iskusheniye Svobodoy: Rossiyskaya Zhurnalistika: 1990-2007* (Moscow: Moscow State University Press, 2007); Georgiy Kuznetsov, *Tak Rabotayut Zhurnalisty TV* (Moscow, 2000); T.A. Kurysheva, *Muzykalnaya Zhurnalistika i Muzykalnaya Kritika* (Moscow, 2007); E.V. Sovetkina, *Estetika Muzykalnykh Videoklipov* (Moscow: Триада М., 2005).

¹²⁹ Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time (2011)*; Heather L. Gumbert, *Envisioning Socialism: Television and the Cold War in the German Democratic Republic*, Social History, Popular Culture, and Politics in Germany (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2014); Paulina Bren, *The Greengrocer and His TV: The Culture of Communism after the 1968 Prague Spring* (Ithaca, [N.Y.]: Cornell University Press, 2010); Peter Goddard, ed., *Popular Television in Authoritarian Europe* (Manchester University Press, 2013); Christine Evans, "Song of the Year and Soviet Mass Culture in the 1970s," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian & Eurasian History* 12, no. 3 (Summer 2011): 617–45.

produced an outstanding scholarship in the 1980s.¹³⁰ Her research was focused on politics and power relations in the field and based on the vast archival holdings and extensive literature that was published in the USSR in the Russian language.

There always was a strong preconception that the socialist media was boring, not interesting for researchers and often created “successful failures.”¹³¹ This prejudiced view of socialist television resulted in limited scholarship in the post-1960s socialist media. However, there were multiple similarities between the socialist and capitalist media at this time: TV set ownership statistics, concerns about the public service mission of media, issues of taste and the fear of American influences, entertainment programmes, and concerns over national culture.¹³² In recent years history of socialist television and media gradually become a part of general history of European media.

In 2012, Routledge published an important edited volume which focused on popular television in eastern Europe.¹³³ This collection of essays aimed to respond to the latest surge of interest in popular television. The volume examined the complex interactions between funding systems, regulatory policies, and the issues of globalisation, imperialism, popular culture, and cultural identity. In 2014, Marsha Siefert pointed out that the inclusion of formerly socialist countries into the history of European television began after the foundation of the EU Screen project (www.euscreen.eu) and its associated journal.¹³⁴ A particularly important part of the current research in this field is the focus on socialist light entertainment within television programming, which is partially the focus of this study.

Important recent research by Paulina Bren, Heather Gumbert, Kristin Roth-Ey and Christine Elaine Evans, argues that Soviet and socialist media were not just political and boring thus we have much to gain by looking at socialist societies through the lens of their mass media. Such works advance the general concern in recent Soviet historiography regarding how people experienced power and the relation between the private and public spheres under late socialism.

In the case of Czechoslovakia, Paulina Bren explored the period of “normalisation,” which started after the Soviet invasion in 1968.¹³⁵ Before the invasion, the reformers had made unanticipated liberalization of socialist television to advance political and social change.

¹³⁰ Ellen Mickiewicz, ed., *Changing Channels: Television and the Struggle for Power in Russia* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1989); Ellen Propper Mickiewicz, *Split Signals: Television and Politics in the Soviet Union, Communication and Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Ellen Mickiewicz, ed., *Media and the Russian Public* (New York: Praeger Publishers Inc, 1981); Ellen Mickiewicz, *Television, Power, and the Public in Russia* (Cambridge University Press, 2008).

¹³¹ Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time* (2011), 1.

¹³² Timothy Havens, Aniko Imre, and Katalin Lustyk, eds., *Popular Television in Eastern Europe During and Since Socialism*, Routledge Advances in Internationalizing Media Studies (Routledge, 2012), 21–23.

¹³³ Havens, Imre, and Lustyk, *Popular Television in Eastern Europe During and Since Socialism*.

¹³⁴ Marsha Siefert, “Popular Television in Eastern Europe During and Since Socialism,” *Historical Journal of Film, Radio & Television* 34, no. 1 (March 2014): 172. See also: Marsha Siefert, “Between Truth and Time: A History of Soviet Central Television,” *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 38, no. 1 (January 2, 2018): 216–19; Marsha Siefert, “Film and Television Genres of the Late Soviet Era,” *Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema* 11, no. 3 (September 2, 2017): 264–65.

¹³⁵ Bren, *The Greengrocer and His TV* (2010).

In its aftermath, party leaders employed media to achieve *normalisation*, often pitting television stars against political dissidents in televised spectacles. Bren shows how Vaclav Havel's "greengrocer" (an ordinary person) experienced normalisation after 1968 and the ways in which popular television serials framed this experience.¹³⁶ Consequently, Bren's research offers a new cultural history of communism from the Prague Spring to the Velvet Revolution that reveals how state-endorsed ideologies were played out on television, particularly through serial films.

In her account of socialist Germany, Heather Gumbert examines television and the power it exercised to define the citizens' view of socialism during the first decades of the German Democratic Republic.¹³⁷ She traces how television became a medium celebrated for its communicative and entertainment value and explores the difficulties state authorities had in defining and executing a clear vision of the society they hoped to establish. Gumbert explains how television helped to stabilise the GDR society in a way that ultimately worked against the utopian vision of the authorities. Both works focus on public/private or society/power relations through the lens of the socialist media. They consider television as a technology, an institution and a medium of social relations and cultural knowledge. In addition, they see television in the GDR and Czechoslovakia as means of political *stabilisation* or *normalisation*, which was necessary during late socialism. Socialist television presented a model of the kind of socialist realist art that appealed to authorities and audiences in a very effective manner and which had to react to inner social realities and to challenges imposed by transnational mediascapes.

In a similar fashion, Kristin Roth-Ey analysed Soviet television together with cinema and radio, which shaped, as she called it, the Soviet media empire.¹³⁸ Like her colleagues who study socialist media, Roth-Ey confirms that Soviet television was not only conservative and overtly educative but also a volatile socialist enterprise shaping a new Soviet media culture. In this culture, the centre of gravity shifted from the group experience of cinema house or lecture hall to the private settings of the living room in newly built socialist houses. This way a new type of cultural experience appeared, that was at once personal, and immediate, like the mass culture of capitalism. Roth-Ey affirms that even though Soviet officials considered television to be a culture for the masses (opposing capitalist model) it was constantly challenged by inner constraints and international mediascapes to the point that it failed to deliver a unique Soviet culture.

The enormous scale of cultural production had an inevitable impact on the state's ability to censor and to control it, thus giving media professionals greater flexibility. Mass television also undermined Soviet culture's traditional mobilising mission, thus in the long run media unpowered the mere idea of Sovietness. If Soviet culture was imagined as a common,

¹³⁶ Vaclav Havel described Czechoslovak popular media culture as a form of socialist propaganda in his essay, which title followed an official TV show, see: Vaclav Havel, "Zpívá Celá Rodina (The Whole Family Sings)," August 25, 1975, <https://archive.vaclavhavel-library.org/Archive/All?event=15330&lang=en>.

¹³⁷ Gumbert, *Envisioning Socialism*.

¹³⁸ Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time* (2011).

and therefore mobilized, endeavour to build socialism, television shaped passive viewers, who preferred not to participate but to watch a media spectacle.¹³⁹ The new way in which culture was consumed (privacy and immediacy) gave more agency and choices to ordinary people. In such a scenario, Soviet culture became increasingly less Soviet and Roth-Ey consequently argues that the very success of the Soviet state in promoting and distributing its own culture for the masses had a destructive impact on the idea of a common Soviet culture.¹⁴⁰

The most recent work on Soviet Central Television draws extensively on archival sources, interviews and television recordings, similarly concluding that Soviet popular media culture was far from dull and rigid.¹⁴¹ Most previous histories of Soviet media portray the 1970s as a period of stagnation with the gradual decline of the industry. Tracing the appearance of television game shows, Soviet news programmes, serial films, and variety shows, Evans demonstrates that most popular Soviet shows were imaginative, laying the groundwork for the post-Soviet media system. This work dedicated to Soviet Central Television in Moscow helped me to investigate the remote and peripheral television in Soviet Ukraine. The comparison of central and peripheral was especially fruitful since this research uncovered how the republican and regional media often followed, contested, copied or misunderstood programming policies and the aesthetics of Soviet Central television.

My thesis enriched its historic focus through the lenses of media genres, especially considering Soviet music television (musicals, television concerts, musical films, etc.).¹⁴² I do agree with Marsha Siefert that a genre, as an analytical construct, “provides shared ‘clusters of meanings and frameworks’ of understanding how film and television are produced and consumed.”¹⁴³ The socialist realist art had an envisaged ideal, developed in the 1930s, which was reshaped by new syntactic and semantic elements that evolved over the 1970s and the 1980s. Some chapters of this thesis often refer to Elena Prokhorova, who has dissected the Soviet media mythology and deciphered certain tropes or genres of Soviet television.¹⁴⁴ Her recent study on television in the 1970s shows that it was an institution that articulated cultural values via various genres.¹⁴⁵ According to her research, Soviet television developed a “parallel system of genres,” which celebrated conformist compromise but, at the same time, signalled ideological crises. The book outlines how television gradually emerged as the major form of Soviet popular culture in 1970s and 1980s. This deconstruction of the Soviet myth, as

¹³⁹ On media spectacle see: Douglas M. Kellner, *Media Spectacle* (New York: Routledge, 2003); Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle* (Black&Red, 1977).

¹⁴⁰ As a conclusion USSR lost the cultural Cold War, see the title: Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time* (2011).

¹⁴¹ Christine Elaine Evans, *Between Truth and Time: A History of Soviet Central Television* (Yale University Press, 2016).

¹⁴² On the importance of a genre in Soviet scholarship, see: Vladimir Propp, *Theory and History of Folklore*, ed. Anatoly Liberman (University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 39–47.

¹⁴³ Siefert, “Film and Television Genres of the Late Soviet Era.”

¹⁴⁴ Elena Prokhorova, “Fragmented Mythologies: Soviet TV Mini-Series of the 1970s” (PhD Thesis, University of Pittsburgh ETD, 2003).

¹⁴⁵ Alexander Prokhorov and Elena Prokhorova, *Film and Television Genres of the Late Soviet Era* (Bloomsbury Publishing USA, 2016).

articulated through the media, helps us to understand the persistence of this myth in the current collective memory.

The body of scholarship that exists in the various national languages of the former USSR goes beyond the scope of this introduction. However, it is important to note that these publications are often heavily descriptive or memoir based. This thesis is not completely dedicated to media studies (radio and television) nor it is the study of popular culture (popular music). Rather it merges the field of regional and republican television with that of state sponsored popular culture in UkrSSR, which together created the specific Soviet mediascape. It shows the formation of popular media culture at the crossroad between television, radio and popular music.

This thesis is organised thematically, and several chapters cover the same period. This framework is due to the different narratives and evolutions of the history of institutions (regional television), social practices (like music), and imagination (televisual and musical). However, there are several focuses that I have tried to convey through all chapters. First, is the phenomenon of the popular Ukrainian song *Chervona Ruta*, which was produced in the late 1960s by Volodymyr Ivasiuk and regional television. This song gave a title to a festival of popular music in 1989, which marked a cycle of 30 years of Soviet Ukrainian history. Second, I have discussed through all the chapters matters and issues of the mediatization of ethnic culture and folk stereotypes, which in UkrSSR often took a form of folklorism. Folk programming was a crucially important aspect of Soviet Ukrainian broadcasting both on regional and republican levels.

The first part of this study, which consists of four chapters, considers how certain aspects of media infrastructure developed in the western peripheries of the USSR, and what kind of media imagination regional television studios were able to produce in the late 1960s. The decisive point of regional imagination shaped the Carpathian Mountains and cities of the region, that had to be transformed under socialism. Regional landscape and local folk culture, placed in the context of Soviet national politics and exposed to the transnational mediascape, helped to produce new forms of popular media culture. The following two chapters are dedicated to the issues surrounding the politicization of popular media culture and show how national television was made through the process of media consolidation from 1965–1970.

The second part of the thesis is mainly dedicated to national television programming broadcasted from Kyiv. Two chapters discuss folklorism in the Soviet Ukrainian media, which aimed to shape an imagined folk community through media festivals. The final chapters focus on the politicization of popular media culture and audience research conducted by the state media committee in the 1980s. Special attention is paid to media reform during the political perestroika of the 1980s and the “festivalisation” of Soviet Ukrainian culture in the late 1980s, which helped to mobilize the national audience. Among various festivals that took place in UkrSSR in the 1980s special attention is paid to Chervona Ruta festival of popular songs (1989), which provoked new cultural and national imagination in late Soviet Ukraine.

Chapter 1: Making “Heimat” television, late 1950s – early 1970s

Introduction

Post-war L’viv was a dramatic theatre for the struggle between Soviet “liberators” and Ukrainian nationalists.¹⁴⁶ The fight for the souls of young people and local intellectuals escalated when the communist writer Yaroslav Halan (1902-1949) was murdered on 24 October 1949. Communists feared that the young generation of Ukrainians would join the nationalists even if they were born or raised under the socialist system.¹⁴⁷ They also were afraid that Ukrainian nationalists could spread their agenda further to the east of Ukraine. Thus, Halan’s murder, despite its unclear motives,¹⁴⁸ had dramatic consequences, instigating the repression of the local youth, students and intelligentsia. Nikita Khrushchev arrived in L’viv in 1949 to command an anti-nationalist operation and to relieve the city from the remaining hostility. In his letter to Stalin he claimed that it was not enough to kill bandits, they should be hanged so that local people can see the results of their disobedience.¹⁴⁹ He proposed using typical Soviet punitive methods – incarceration, deportation, judicial murder, and fast-track detention. Luckily, not all these methods were used.

In 1950, Soviet officials claimed that L’viv was still “a hiding place for ... nationalists.”¹⁵⁰ This was a tendency for the whole decade. In the late 1950s, numerous returnees from Stalinist camps, some of them prosecuted for nationalism, played important roles in the public sphere and Soviet institutions in L’viv. Many of them felt that it was unproductive to fight the strong enemy such as communists, but it was necessary for the Ukrainians to participate in the Soviet system to hold control over it in the future.¹⁵¹ By contrast, communist leaders endlessly demanded proof of local loyalty, often suspecting individuals of systematic deception.¹⁵² Communists had to make a compromise with locals, who were offered Soviet culture, though in a specific national form, in return for their political loyalty. Soviet leaders extended their immediate influence over locals through the media, such as cinematography, radio, print, and later television. Media institutions that developed in Western Ukraine in the late 1950s and early 1960s had an important task to fulfill: they conveyed to locals important

¹⁴⁶ Amar, *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv*, 169. Local counterinsurgency against Soviet rule was strong and party-state won its war by killing more than 150,000, deporting more than 200,000, and incarcerating nearly 110,000 locals, see: Amar, 17.

¹⁴⁷ At the same time those nationally minded Ukrainians who migrated to USA believed in 1953 that Soviet L’viv would not remain for a long time. Even though it was “covered by the Soviet swamp,” underneath develops new, Ukrainian city, enthusiastically stated former L’vivians, see: Mykola Shlemkevych, “Introduction,” in *Nash Lviv. Iuvileinyi zbirnyk, 1252-1952* (New York: Chervona Kalyna, 1953), 5.

¹⁴⁸ There is a suspicion that Halan was murdered with certain help from the Soviet side, however this was never proved and remains as speculation.

¹⁴⁹ Amar, *The Paradox of Ukrainian L’viv*, 245.

¹⁵⁰ Amar, 170.

¹⁵¹ Mykhailo Kosiv admits that Ukrainian partisans urged him to enter Soviet high university that Ukrainians had a voice there, see: Mykhailo Kosiv, Arrests in 1965 and national dissent, interview by Bohdan Shumylovych, Audio interview with transcript, April 2015, U-stories (Urban Media Archive), Center for Urban History of East-Central Europe (Lviv, Ukraine).

¹⁵² Amar, *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv*, 224.

messages of the new socialist regime and at the same time explained the compromise, namely that national Ukrainian culture would be supported for the exchange in loyalty to Kyiv and Moscow.

This chapter addresses some aspects of the Soviet media evolution in the west of the USSR and how it influenced local imagination. Soviet television was brought to the western peripheries of Ukraine in the late 1950s and early 1960s and developed due to the media competition of the Cold War.¹⁵³ The following sections are not dedicated to technological development but rather address the changes in media programming from the late 1950s–1960s. It shows how nationally minded persons found professional opportunities in newly established Soviet institutions of culture (for instance, television studios) and how cultural programming was organised around the news. In addition, it demonstrates that regional television actively participated in the Soviet “turn to entertainment” of the 1960s, trying to produce not mass culture but rather culture for the masses. Regional media in Soviet western Ukraine were captivated by the strong image of the Carpathian Mountain, and regional television and radio enthusiastically participated in shaping new media myths in the late 1960s.

We can understand the west Ukrainian landscape, visually dominated by the Carpathians, in terms of the German notion of *Heimat*. In its simplest sense, *Heimat* means home or homeland and indicates local efforts to appreciate the provincial culture and simultaneously to celebrate nationhood.¹⁵⁴ This concept is very close to the Russian or Ukrainian “*Otchizna*” [homeland], which is a derivative of the Slavic word “*Otec*” [father].¹⁵⁵ It is slightly different from “*Otechestvo*” [fatherland],¹⁵⁶ which means the country of one’s ancestors, but which carries emotional overtones implying that some people have a special feeling for the fatherland that combines love and a sense of duty, a certain (like Soviet)

¹⁵³ On cultural aspects of Cold War see: Anthony Shaw and Denise Youngblood, *Cinematic Cold War: The American and Soviet Struggle for Hearts and Minds* (University Press Kansas, 2010). Researchers often admit that Cold War re-established some Stalinist myths in Soviet mass culture, especially in spy films and other references to masculinity, see: Prokhorova, “Fragmented Mythologies,” 80–110; Isabelle de Keghel, “Seventeen Moments of Spring, a Soviet James Bond Series? Official Discourse, Folklore, and Cold War Culture in Late Socialism” 8, no. 25 (2018): 84. But at the same time Soviet détente (1969–1979) with the capitalist west promoted mass entertainment and westernization in USSR, see: Sergei Zhuk, “Hollywood’s Insidious Charms: The Impact of American Cinema and Television on the Soviet Union during the Cold War,” *Cold War History* 14, no. 4 (2014): 593–617. This thesis considers both aspects, mainly fragmentation of Soviet myth in late 1960s and Soviet entertainment.

¹⁵⁴ Celia Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* (University of California Press, 1990), 5.

¹⁵⁵ Consider the Polish word *Ojczyzna*, which refers to the idea of personal *Heimat* and political *Fatherland* at the same time. Ukrainians translate the famous Horace’s quote ‘*dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*’ as ‘*solodko i harno vmerty za otchyznu*’, which shows that the word *Otchyzna* (like Polish *Ojczyzna*) could have both personal and political meanings.

¹⁵⁶ *Otechestvo* as a notion was frequently used in the 19th century, see, for instance, Fedor Tiutchev’s famous quote “*And the smoke of the fatherland is sweet and pleasant for us.*” The German word *Vaterland* [fatherland] similarly to Russian *Otechestvo* means the land of ancestors (unlike *Heimat* as homeland) and it was widely used in Nazi propaganda, and then in the counter-propaganda of the allies. Therefore, the corresponding English word *fatherland* often receives negative connotations, and in neutral contexts many people prefer the word *homeland*.

patriotism.¹⁵⁷ Interestingly, the Soviet *korenizatsiia* of the 1920s worked with similar attitudes as German Heimat and aimed to make Soviet power seem “native” [rodnaia], “intimate” [blizkaia], “popular” [narodnaia], “comprehensible” [poniatnaia].¹⁵⁸ Jan Palmowski argues that the idea of regional homeland (Heimat) was widely used in the socialist GDR, even though the state asserted its political and economic control.¹⁵⁹ Similarly, the idea of locality, native land and its inhabitants was important part of public discourse, actively performed by the socialist state in western Ukraine.¹⁶⁰

In the Soviet west, connections with regional and local cultures flourished in the 1960s, expressed through folk music, amateur theatre, folklore groups, traditional arts enthusiasts and local festivals. Mediatized Carpathians became part of the UkrSSR’s public transcript about native people, liberation and the western Ukrainian homeland. The Soviet powers strived to link the local landscape and various references to home and the homeland with socialism, and to include the latter into the local culture and values. To paraphrase Tarik Amar’s argument, the intentional Soviet making of the local Heimat “had the unintended effect of shaping and solidifying a special and persistent western Ukrainian identity, which was distinct from the eastern, pre-1939 variant of Soviet Ukrainian identity.”¹⁶¹

1.1. Informal networks

The period between 1957 and 1961 marked an important turn in the development of Soviet media infrastructure, since many regional studios were constructed over the vast territory of the USSR. The decision to build a television centre and studio in L’viv was made in 1955 and on 26 July the city council of L’viv issued a document (rishennia #814) to construct it on lands in the hills above the historic city centre. The state power [Vykonkom Oblasnoii Rady Trudiashchych] issued its decision on 30 July 1955 [rishennia #742], claiming that television was needed in the city because the population was growing and people had cultural needs and “required” this new media.¹⁶² Near the old park called “High Castle”, officials reserved three hectares of land and ordered all the necessary documents to start construction

¹⁵⁷ I have often heard among Ukrainians a statement, that Russians have ‘otechestvo’ (a state) but do not have a home (heimat).

¹⁵⁸ Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, 12.

¹⁵⁹ Palmowski, “Building an East German Nation,” 368.

¹⁶⁰ On the turn to locality in the USSR see: Catriona Kelly, *Socialist Churches: Radical Secularization and the Preservation of the Past in Petrograd and Leningrad, 1918–1988*, 1 edition (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2016); Victoria Donovan, *Chronicles in Stone: Preservation, Patriotism, and Identity in Northwest Russia* (Ithaca New York: Northern Illinois University Press, 2019). Public or official discourse of socialist powers in the western part of Ukraine and reactions of locals can be compared to Scott’s public transcripts and hidden transcripts, however, I will not use this conceptual frame in this research, see: James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (London: Yale university press, 1990), 45–46.

¹⁶¹ Amar, *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv*, 14–16.

¹⁶² Vasyl Havrylyshyn, *Idu Do Vas* (Lviv: Spolom, 2016), 196.

works.¹⁶³ Funds arrived from the federal, republican and local budgets, including the savings of the city council.¹⁶⁴

Building a large television technical centre and studio was a challenge for the socialist economy and the process needed to mobilise both technical and political forces. Due to the shortage of workers, some ministries hired labourers of any kind. To construct the television studio and technical centre in Kyiv in 1952, officials had used numerous prisoners as additional free labour. In June 1952, the Minister of Internal Affairs Strokach informed the high officials at the Council of Ministers of the UkrSSR that he could not promise the on-site safety of more than 150 prisoners mixed with the hired workers.¹⁶⁵ He claimed that sometimes there were more than twenty artists visiting radio or television, who crossed the construction site and mixed with prisoners, which made it difficult to prevent the inmates from fleeing.¹⁶⁶

To jumpstart the construction work in L'viv Television in 1957, party officials reported that they planned to complete the major work in November, dedicating this important achievement to the 40th anniversary of the socialist revolution. As in many other instances of the Soviet statecraft, the socialist economy relied on the calendar cycles, and socialist holidays served as a justification for encouraging production. Thus, Soviet television appeared in the western region of the UkrSSR in 1957, commemorating forty years since the October Revolution. Local officials constantly sent letters to various Soviet ministries, regional communist units, committees and production plants from the late winter and spring of 1957 until the end of construction. In one letter, comrade Mykhailo Lazurenko, the secretary of L'viv Obkom, argued that his region urgently needed television and that the fulfilment of the plans would bring happiness not only to the Soviet workers of western Ukraine but also to the viewers from neighbouring Poland and Czechoslovakia.¹⁶⁷

In another letter, officials complained that western Ukraine belongs to the “zone of uncertain reception from Moscow” and regional broadcasting should be urgently introduced as it would increase Soviet media presence in the province.¹⁶⁸ Thus, communist officials used various possible ways to convince their colleagues from the centres (Kyiv and Moscow) to bring television to western Ukraine as quickly as possible. For many, television was a new and promising technology, which could help to promote socialist modernity, or even represent

¹⁶³ Havrylyshyn, 193.

¹⁶⁴ City council allocated in November of 1955 210 thousands of rubles from its over planned income.

¹⁶⁵ “Letters” (Council of Ministers of UkrSSR, 1952), Arkush 11-13, Fond 2, Opys 12, Sprava 1834, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

¹⁶⁶ “TsDAVO (1952), Fond 2, Opys 12, Sprava 1834,” Arkush 12.

¹⁶⁷ “Letters (Lazurenko)” (Lviv Obkom of Ukrainian Communist Party, General Sector, July 1957), Fond P-3, Opys 6, Sprava 111, DALO, The State Archive of Lviv Region. The Ukrainian communist official stated there were plenty of people (Ukrainians, Czechs and Poles) in the Soviet West that understood Ukrainian language and would listen to Soviet Ukrainian broadcasting.

¹⁶⁸ ‘Letter to Chervonenko S.V., the secretary of Central Committee of Ukrainian Communist Party’ (L'viv Obkom of Ukrainian Communist Party, General Sector, 1957), Arkush 151, Fond P-3, Opys 6, Sprava 111, DALO, The State Archive of L'viv Region.

the real achievements of socialism.¹⁶⁹ However, even if television was considered an important ideological and cultural institution, and officials invested great resources in it, they had only a vague understanding of its future role and influence.

Organisational and production confusion, common for Soviet socialism in the 1950s and 1960s, was evident both in infrastructural and managerial levels. Often television was seen as something exotic and closely connected to entertainment so, in some cases, workers and engineers took advantage of organisational chaos and established their own “home-made media networks” or “institutional” studios. Kristine Roth-Ey exposed the fact that in some Ukrainian regions, television could develop as an autonomous practice and was sometimes rather inadequately regulated by central powers.¹⁷⁰ Unable to receive broadcasts from Moscow or Kyiv, regional workers made their own media, which of course did not follow centralised instructions. In the late 1950s, these home-grown enthusiasts developed their own broadcasting equipment and even produced unauthorized media content, amateur radio and television. Christine Evans supports this statement, arguing that Central Television in Moscow before 1957 was far from a union-wide institution, not only administratively but also technically.¹⁷¹

Figure 1.1. Panoramic view of the former Castle Hill [Zamkova Hora] in L’viv.



In 1957, Soviet powers located the television studio on the hill, visible from many areas of the city. Since then, the TV antenna, together with the old church towers, dominate the city’s landscape. This antenna was the most visible sign of Soviet modernity in the old city of L’viv. L’viv Television changed the urban landscape not only physically, but also through its contribution to the local mediascape.

¹⁶⁹ On symbolic role of seeing socialism as work of art see: Michael David-Fox, *Showcasing the Great Experiment: Cultural Diplomacy and Western Visitors to the Soviet Union, 1921-1941* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 147; Amar, *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv*, 16.

¹⁷⁰ Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time* (2011), 185.

¹⁷¹ Evans, “From Truth to Time (2010),” 25.

Even though the L'viv Television studio was formally opened in autumn 1957, it was still not completed by April 1958.¹⁷² Nonetheless, its first broadcast was in December 1957. At 200 square meters, it was comparable to a big theatre and it could fit several choirs or hold a large stage performance meaning that from the late 1950s L'viv received not just a broadcasting institution but a new cultural institution. *Vechornytsi* [Evening Festivities] organised by L'viv Television in the 1960s normally gathered between 800-1000 folk artists in the studio.¹⁷³ Compared to other Ukrainian studios, it was the largest around. Thus, from 1957 the city of L'viv was not only imagined as a modern metropolis but was also turned into a socialist media-metropolis, punctuated with antennas, cables and communication devices. Television was appreciated as an emblem of modernity and, as Roth-Ey aptly noted, it provided "a fitting emblem of the socialist "good life" and proof of Soviet competitiveness on the Cold War's home front."¹⁷⁴

In the case of western Ukraine, television, both in terms of content and even its mere presence, aimed to show the progressive power of the Soviet Union over the "obscure" bourgeois past of the region. In October 1958, party functionaries had already asked local media professionals to make programming more effective and ideologically correct, mainly to show the great accomplishments of socialist transformations in the region.¹⁷⁵ In addition, the party recommended promoting ideological criticisms of capitalism and, more importantly, Ukrainian nationalism. This critical attitude was often considered as a "specialization" of L'viv's television studio. However, it turned out in the late 1960s that creative workers could hardly differentiate between the promotion of regional culture and nationalism (see Chapter 4.6.). Soviet powers treated locals and local imagination differently: regional communists could sense nationalism in cultural products (like films), which often were considered in Moscow as normal examples of Soviet culture.

Regional television in the USSR, including L'viv Television Studio, was designed by the editorials, formally following the typical organisation of Soviet Central Television. On 21 March 1958, several months after the first broadcast of L'viv Television, communist officials finally agreed the structure of the L'viv media committee and the programming desks of the studio: the L'viv Radio and Television Committee was directed by comrade Yur P.R. while Yakushchenko H. was made the head of L'viv Television (content production). Former theatre director Zuievskii V. received the position of chief director [holovnyi rezhyser] of the studio, Horokhovskii A. was appointed as the head of ideological programming, Kurhanskii I. as the head of the Editorial Office of Literature and Drama, and Kozik M. as head of the Editorial

¹⁷² "Protocols (construction works at the studio)" (Lviv Television and Radio Committee, April 23, 1958), Fond R-1357, Opys 1, Sprava 374, DALO, The State Archive of Lviv Region.

¹⁷³ Havrylyshyn, *Idu Do Vas*, 240.

¹⁷⁴ Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time* (2011), 178.

¹⁷⁵ *Narysy Istorii Lvivskoi Oblasnoi Partiinoi Organizatsii*, 3rd ed. (Lviv: Kameniar, 1980), 212.

Office for Young People.¹⁷⁶ All had either previous experience in media or regional cultural institutions, and had good political standing.

In general, the editorial offices [redaktsii] of literature, drama, music, and youth programmes constituted the so-called *artistic broadcasting* [khudozhnie movlennia] in Soviet television. This definition of artistic broadcasting was used in Lviv until the end of USSR and sport was not considered to be part of arts (literature, drama, music and youth programming). Even if these television departments were called artistic, it was difficult to attract good artists to work in television. In the late 1950s, both the salaries and prestige of television was far below that of the theatre or philharmonics. Therefore, television often attracted people who were either young and wanted to experiment with the new media or who could not find positions in other well-established cultural institutions. For instance, the director of early L'viv Television Heorhii Yakushchenko invited Olexandr Herynovych (1913-1997), who had recently (in 1955) returned to L'viv from the Stalinist camps and worked at the regional House of Folk Creativity [Budynok Narodnoii Tvorchosti].¹⁷⁷

Yakushchenko expected from Herynovych to create a team of professionals for television artistic programming and appointed him as the director and chief editor of the Music Programming Desk. At the office, Herynovych oversaw the positions of the chief editor (arrived to L'viv from the east comrade A. Porshnev) and his assistant (L'vivian of Polish descent Zbigniew Hrszanowski), assistants (musicians Roman Oleksiv and Anna Penigina), and editors (Oksana Palamarchuk, Myroslav Skochylias, and others).¹⁷⁸ The editors would prepare screenplays while the director, together with technical and administrative support, produced programmes. However, in reality these tasks and responsibilities were often mixed. In the 1960s and 1970s, this team of creative workers managed to bridge various forms and genres of art and produced genuinely innovative and highly popular television programmes.¹⁷⁹

Herynovych and Hrszanowski linked pre-Soviet Ukrainian and Polish cultural entertainment traditions, which had developed extensively in L'viv/Lwów during the interwar period, with Soviet policies and institutions.¹⁸⁰ Some creative workers at L'viv Television, like

¹⁷⁶ "Protocols (Committee structure)" (Lviv Television and Radio Committee, March 21, 1958), Fond R-1357, Opys 1, Sprava 374, DALO, The State Archive of Lviv Region; "Protocols (Lviv TV studio structure)" (Lviv Television and Radio Committee, July 18, 1958), Fond R-1357, Opys 1, Sprava 374, DALO, The State Archive of Lviv Region. As the focus of this study is entertainment musical programming I will not involve into work of other editorial offices hence mostly discussing Chernivtsi and L'viv Televisions' music or youth programming desks.

¹⁷⁷ He worked with Ukrainian cultural institutions during Nazi occupation of L'viv, was arrested in 1948 and imprisoned for anti-Soviet activities, released from camps in 1955.

¹⁷⁸ For the list of professionals, involved in artistic production of L'viv Television, see: Adriana Skoryk, "Kulturni Programy Lvivskoho Telebachennia: Istorychni Vytoky, Etapy Stanovlennia," in *Muzykoznavchi Studii*, vol. 18 (Lviv: Spolom, 2008), 34.

¹⁷⁹ Evans claims that early Soviet Television in general was a site of "*significant cultural play, experimentation and innovation*," see: Evans, "From Truth to Time (2010)," 4, 9, 26, 37.

¹⁸⁰ On pre-Soviet popular urban culture see: Jerzy Habela and Zofia Kurzowa, *Lwowskie Piosenki Uliczne, Kabaretowe i Okolicznościowe Do 1939 Roku* (Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne, 1989); Stanisław Machowski, *Bernardyński Mijam Plac* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1989).

Olexandr Herynovych, Borys Bobynskyi,¹⁸¹ and Oksana Palamarchuk,¹⁸² film and television programmes director Roman Oleksiv,¹⁸³ and even the first head of media committee Ivan Petriv,¹⁸⁴ had been associated to various degrees with pre-Soviet Ukrainian nationalism, thus demonstrating that individuals who did not necessarily adhere to the Soviet ideology could also find positions in television. It supports Amir Weiner's argument regarding the modified form of Soviet rule after 1945 that impacted on both the party-state and the socialist economy.¹⁸⁵ In this part of the USSR individuals who had been released from prisons and camps or were other former "enemies"¹⁸⁶ of the Soviet system could, by the late 1950s, find work in newly established and emerging institutions.

These repressed people frequently returned home after the introduction of the amnesty agreement in spring 1953.¹⁸⁷ It was partially the initiative of Lavrentii Beria, who had reported to the other party members that the brutal and violent policies of the Soviet regime in western Ukraine (and other western republics) was provoking negative consequences. On 16 May 1953, Beria prepared a special memorandum on the excesses of the repression in western Ukraine,¹⁸⁸ especially during the against the nationalist underground. On May 26, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union adopted a resolution on "The Question of the Western Oblasts of the Ukrainian SSR", however, Beria was shortly removed from power and debates about the "shortcomings" of Soviet violence in western Ukraine were silenced.¹⁸⁹ Nevertheless, after Beria's criticism, the Central Committee of Soviet Communist Party

¹⁸¹ Borys Bobyns'kyi (1929-1970) was a son of Galician writer and modernist Vasyl Bobyns'kyi (1898-1938), who was killed by Soviets in 1938. Borys was sent to GULAG for 'singing nationalist songs' in 1950 and released from camps in 1955. He found a place to work at L'viv Television, becoming an important bridge between pre-war Ukrainian culture and new Soviet culture, developed after Stalin's death. See: P.M. Dovhaliuk, "Bobyns'kyi Vasyl' Petrovych," in *Ukraiinska Literaturna Entsyklopedia*, ed. I.O. Dzeverin (Kyiv: Institut literatury im. T.H.Shevchenka/URE im. M.P. Bazhana, 1988), 199; Mykola Petrenko and Orest Senkiv's'kyi, *Viazenn z Hitaroiu: Spohady, Virshi, Pisni, Stsenarii Televystavy. Dolia Borysa Bobyns'koho, Telerezhysera i Poeta* (Liha-Pres, 2006).

¹⁸² She spent some years between 1940 and 1946 being sent with her mom to Kazakhstan for political reasons.

¹⁸³ He spent some years in Soviet camps before being employed by L'viv Television, see: Taras Brykailo, *Legends of Lviv Television*, interview by Yulia Maksymchuk, Oral interview with notes (unpublished, 2007), 2007, Lviv Television institutional archive; Taras Brykailo, *On film production at Lviv television*, interview by Bohdan Shumylovych, Recorded interview with notes, 2019, Center for Urban History of East-Central Europe (Lviv, Ukraine).

¹⁸⁴ Ivan Petriv had a brother, who was appointed by Soviets as local party representative and murdered by Ukrainian nationalists. After this murder he has left organization of young nationalists and joined Soviet authorities, soon becoming promising local young communist, see: Brykailo, *On film production at Lviv television* (2019).

¹⁸⁵ Weiner, "Robust Revolution to Retiring Revolution: The Life Cycle of the Soviet Revolution, 1945–1968," 222.

¹⁸⁶ There were plenty of imprisoned or deported by Soviets individuals in western Ukraine or the whole families that had no connections with underground nationalists or enemies of Soviet system, see: Michael Loader, "Beria and Khrushchev: The Power Struggle over Nationality Policy and the Case of Latvia," *Europe-Asia Studies* 68, no. 10 (November 25, 2016): 1761.

¹⁸⁷ Amnesty, which was announced on 28 March 1953, released from prisons 1,2 million of people, while almost half a million of criminal political procedurals were stopped.

¹⁸⁸ They were part of the Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, so called MGB URSR.

¹⁸⁹ F. F., "The Fall of Beria and the Nationalities Question in the U.S.S.R.," *The World Today* 9, no. 11 (1953): 481–97; Loader, "Beria and Khrushchev," 1788.

appointed the ethnic Ukrainian Oleksii Kyrychenko (1908-1975)¹⁹⁰ as the First Secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party.¹⁹¹ This story of Beria's "new course" on the national question in the USSR, is often debated not only in academic literature but also within popular discussions.¹⁹²

One important element derived from Beria's initiative was a growing criticism of the colonial practices of the Soviets: the treatment of locals as a "qualitatively lower sort of human existence" was condemned and even though "easterners" still occupied higher positions in managements and industry, locals were encouraged to take up these roles.¹⁹³ The new national course, introduced by Beria in 1953, was partially preserved in the policies of Nikita Khrushchev. In the late 1950s local cadres in formerly prosecuted western regions of UkrSSR were often promoted into administrative positions.¹⁹⁴ This policy was internally paradoxical, as was the whole Soviet policymaking in western Ukraine, as Khrushchev strove to combine "korenizatsiia"¹⁹⁵ and "sblizheniie,"¹⁹⁶ supporting locals and their national specificities while, at the same time, helping them to become universally Soviet.¹⁹⁷ It is important to mention that since Khrushchev relied heavily on Ukrainian communists and their support, he reinstated Ukrainians to the status of second most important among the Soviet

¹⁹⁰ He replaced in this position Leonid Melnikov (1906-1981), who even though was born in Ukraine, had Russian ethnicity, see: V.S. Lozytskyi, *Politbiuro TSK Kompartiii Ukrainy: Istoriia, Osoby, Stosunky. 1918-1991*. (Kyiv: Heneza, 2005), 94–95; Yurii Shapoval and Dmytro Tabachnyk, *O.I.Kyrychenko: Shtrykhy Do Politychnoho Portretu Pershoho Sekretaria TsK Kompartiyi Ukrayiny v 1953-1957 Rr.* (Kyiv: Institut istorii Ukrainy UAN, 1990).

¹⁹¹ "Biuro TsK KPU" (Central Committee, Ukrainian Communist Party, May 28, 1953), Arkush 29-30, Fond 1, Opys 6, Sprava 1880, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

¹⁹² See an article of known Ukrainian historian: Yurii Shapoval, "Ukraiintsi z radisnym krykom kynulys do mene...", *Den [Day]*, June 20, 2003, 105 edition, <https://day.kyiv.ua/uk/article/cuspilstvo/ukrayinci-z-radisnim-vigukom-kinulis-do-mene>. See data on repressions in western Ukraine, provided by Beria's research in 1953: Yurii Shapoval, *The Current State of Research on the Political Terror in Ukraine, 1920s-1950s* (2001), <http://www.artsrn.ualberta.ca/cius-sites/announce/media/Media%202001/2001-07-16.htm>

¹⁹³ Amar, *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv*, 17.

¹⁹⁴ Tõnu Tannberg, *Politika Moskvyy v Respublikakh Baltii v Poslevoennyye Gody, 1944–1956: Issledovaniya i Dokumenty* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2008), 175; Geoffrey Swain, *Khrushchev* (Macmillan International Higher Education, 2015), 84–89; Loader, "Beria and Khrushchev," 1788. During short period of time Ukrainian Communist Party became 'really Ukrainian', since representatives of this ethnic group comprised about 60% of the party.

¹⁹⁵ Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, 12. Bolsheviks believed that nationalism appeared when one nation was overtly praised in contrast to the other, thus to defeat nationalism one needed to make different cultures equal. By making korenizatsiia [indigenization] in 1920s Soviet officials did not mean to create nations anew, they assumed that these nations and national differences already existed, see also: Andy Nercessian, "A Look at the Emergence of the Concept of National Culture in Armenia: The Former Soviet Folk Ensemble," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 31, no. 1 (2000): 83.

¹⁹⁶ If some nations were more advanced than the others, to make them equal required active national development. All Soviet nations had to reach the state of developed national cultures to achieve the next historic progression of merging into a single Soviet nation, see: Robert J. Kaiser, *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR* (Princeton University Press, 2017), 106.

¹⁹⁷ Loader, "Beria and Khrushchev," 1788. During Khrushchev's rule Ukrainian language became optional in schools of Ukraine, therefore massive Russification was launched at the same time, when Ukrainian elites were promoted in the centre.

nations.¹⁹⁸ Ukrainian historian Yurii Shapoval recalls that the Ukrainian leader Kyrychenko considered himself second after Khrushchev in the USSR, especially when he had to replace the first secretary during his vacations in 1958 and 1959.¹⁹⁹

Thus, television arrived in the western peripheries of the USSR during an important period, when many returnees from Stalinist camps were searching for professional occupations. In addition, L'viv Television also established informal networks with Kyiv and Moscow. According to Taras Brykailo, personal relations and romantic liaisons played important roles in establishing effective working relations.²⁰⁰ Roman Oleksiv, the director of the first music films that were produced by L'viv Television, had apparently been involved in pre-Soviet nationalism, which cost him some years in Soviet camps.²⁰¹ According to colleagues, he was a womanizer and had an affair with Halyna Hreshylova, a married woman from the television editorial team accountable for film screening.²⁰² Hreshylova was subsequently fired from L'viv Television and finally found a position in Moscow as an editor for Soviet regional television.²⁰³ In spite of this, Oleksiv and Hreshylova remained close.

Hreshylova helped to enter Oleksiv's film *Zalytsialnyky* (1968) into the Third All-Union Festival of Television Films (Leningrad, 1969), where it received the first prize.²⁰⁴ She also helped to include Oleksiv's musicals, including *Sisia Rodysia* with the Baiko sisters, *Chervona Ruta* with Volodymyr Ivasiuk, and *Pisnia Bude Pomizh Nas* with Sofia Rotaru in the all-Union rotation on Central Television in Moscow. In 1982, when local officials refused to broadcast the musical *Vatra Klyche na Sviato* (featuring music ensemble *Vatra*) produced by L'viv Television, its director Myroslav Skochylias brought the film to Hreshylova.²⁰⁵ She ensured that it was broadcast on Central Television and after Moscow's broadcasting administrators normally avoided further criticizing of this musical film. Thus, formal and informal connections that were established between institutions in Moscow and L'viv in the mid-1960s continued into the early 1980s.

¹⁹⁸ Loader, 1788; C. H. Fairbanks Jr., "National Cadres as a Force in the Soviet System: The Evidence of Beria's Career, 1949–1953," in *Soviet Nationality Policy and Practices*, ed. J. R. Azrael (London: Praeger, 1978), 175.

¹⁹⁹ Yurii Shapoval, "Vozhd s kharakterom," *Den [Day]*, February 29, 2008, 39 edition, <https://day.kyiv.ua/ru/article/istoriya-i-ya/vozhd-s-harakterom>.

²⁰⁰ Brykailo, On film production at Lviv television (2019).

²⁰¹ Dmytro Pavlychko admits that Roman Oleksiv studied in Kyiv, at the I. K. Karpenko-Kary Institute of Theatrical Arts (now University of Theatre, Cinema and Television). In 1948 he was accused in nationalism together with another student of the same institute, later renowned Ukrainian film director, Volodymyr Denysenko. After Stalin's death and amnesty former students were released from camps and could return to film and television. See: Dmytro Pavlychko, "Odyn z Naiblyzhchkykh Moiikh Kyivskykh Druziv...," *Kino Teatr*, no. 1 (2015), http://www.ktm.ukma.edu.ua/show_content.php?id=1723. See the memoirs of Denysenko's sister: Halyna Denysenko, *Chuiesh Brate Mii* (Kyiv: Nash format, 2013).

²⁰² Brykailo, On film production at Lviv television (2019).

²⁰³ Brykailo claims that she had a love affair with a high official from this office, so when tensions at L'viv Television got too high this person helped her to find a job in Moscow, see: Brykailo.

²⁰⁴ Brykailo.

²⁰⁵ Liubov Kozak, Interview on history of Lviv TV., Oral interview with notes, April 2015, Urban Media Archive (Center for Urban History, Lviv, Ukraine).

Taras Brykailo, who introduced film production in L'viv during the late 1960s, admits that emotional and personal relations within local Soviet institutions were often crucial. He himself, as an official who was responsible for film production, often used personal networks to obtain necessary equipment or funds to sustain the studio. In order to start film production in the mid-1960s he needed to involve connections in the Soviet army²⁰⁶ or had to borrow used television equipment from Moscow. Brykailo recalls that Moscow Central Television had the possibility to purchase the newest media equipment, but normally TV officials had to find the way how to get rid of older technology. The socialist economy restrained media managers to claim recently purchased and normally working paraphernalia as being quickly “worn out equipment” [spisanoie]. To obtain the newest technology managers in Moscow found a special scheme and sometimes sent used equipment to periphery (like to L'viv Television) “for the further usage” [dlia posleduiushchei expluatatsii], as it was framed. Thus, central officials could pass on their old but still valuable technology to peripheral media-officials, who were otherwise unable to access such expensive paraphernalia.²⁰⁷

1.2. News and regional media content

The most promising and important programmes produced by the early L'viv Television centre were reportages that covered local events. These programmes were read from the screen by a narrator without any background visuals. In the late 1950s these *Tele-Chronicles* [Telekhronika] news or *Evening News* [Vechirni visti]²⁰⁸ “borrowed” the news from the radio or newspapers and presented them in shortened versions.²⁰⁹ Sometimes the camera would show curious or historic places in the city or region showing viewers the local highlights, but it was difficult to combine effectively both the narrative and visual planes because of technological confines. Texts were carefully reviewed and edited, and the TV reporter could not improvise or add their own comments. This style was partially changed after Khrushchev's speech at the 3rd Congress of Soviet writers (22 May 1959), where he endorsed a more improvisational and sincere way of public speaking for the Soviet media. Yet, even though Soviet television editors in Moscow and Leningrad demanded more honesty from the screen, it was still difficult to convince regional broadcasters.

In the early 1960s, the news program *Telekhronika* was broadcast by L'viv TV twice a week. The officials, however, wanted it to be aired every day.²¹⁰ Soviet Central Television was also looking for an appropriate news format that represented both all-union and local events. The Information Programming Desk came up with a new program, called *Estafeta Novostei*

²⁰⁶ Brykailo managed to receive film cameras and other expensive paraphernalia that were used by local military personnel.

²⁰⁷ Brykailo, On film production at Lviv television (2019); Brykailo, Legends of Lviv Television.

²⁰⁸ Because of these evening news editors had to move other programmes also to the late broadcasting, see: “DALO (1958), Fond R-1357, Opys 1, Sprava 374,” July 18, 1958.

²⁰⁹ The Soviet Central Television broadcast news under the title *Posledniie Novosti* [Latest News] and it had the same form of reading from the screen, see: Evans, “From Truth to Time (2010),” 79.

²¹⁰ “Protocol #6 (news)” (Lviv Television and Radio Committee, March 1960), Fond 1357, Opys 1, Sprava 441, DALO, The State Archive of Lviv Region.

[News Baton],²¹¹ that was first aired on the 3 December 1961 and, until the introduction of the program *Vremia* in the early 1970s, it was the most popular genre of Soviet television newscast. This program increased the prestige of Soviet information media and tied citizens to their TV sets, from which they learned about, among other things, the latest news on the Soviet cosmonauts.²¹²

In 1960, three years after its first broadcast, L'viv Television's three-month programming plan included six hours of television news, which constituted 5 minutes per day.²¹³ In the late 1960s, the news program received the new title of *Ekran Dnia* [Screen of the Day], following on from developments in the metropole where news programmes were changed to *Televizionnyie Novosti* [Television News] from *Pesledniie Novosti* [Last News]. Among officials dominated approach to television as mainly an information media. Therefore, the forming and most important programmes for central, republican or regional broadcasting were various forms of news, which had to be balanced with other socio-political or cultural programming. The new format arrived on 1 January 1968 when the first edition of the Soviet news program *Vremia* [Time] was broadcast to all regions and republics of the USSR. Soon it became the exemplar for communicating information in the Soviet style and, as Evans emphasizes, this television program started to challenge the main party's newspaper *Pravda* [Truth] as television editors began to receive information faster than newspaper editors.²¹⁴

In contrast to L'viv Television, other regional media (for instance Chernivtsi TV) had fewer technical and financial possibilities to broadcast news every day, therefore their editorials focused on the production of weekly news broadcasts (20 minute long reviews).²¹⁵ The television bulletin covered important events for communist development in the region (opening new enterprises, technological innovations, fulfilment of party tasks or challenges in international politics) and paid clear lip service to the communist agenda. Already in the early 1960s these programmes were mostly ideological and failed to attract new audiences. Not surprisingly, the decree "On the Future Development of Soviet Television", issued by the Communist Party on 29 January 1960, admitted that,

Programmes on socio-political issues occupy an insignificant place in the television, being often boring and maintained unconvincingly [...] there are extremely rare and usually unskilfully held television reports [...] In the televised speeches there is no intimate conversation, a casual dialogue [...] Outstanding masters of literature, theatre, cinema, music, are scarcely involved in the creation of programmes [...] in television, along with

²¹¹ The term comes from sport, originally it was Italian word "staffetta," widely used in USSR to define competition.

²¹² "Short history of Soviet TV," Internet museum of Soviet Television, www.tvmuseum.ru (blog), accessed May 15, 2016, http://www.tvmuseum.ru/catalog.asp?ob_no=4726&page=2.

²¹³ "Protocol #441" (Lviv Television and Radio Committee, 1960), Fond P-1357, Opys 1, Sprava 405, DALO, The State Archive of Lviv Region.

²¹⁴ Evans, "From Truth to Time (2010)," 2–3.

²¹⁵ "Protocols" (Chernivtsi Television and Radio Committee, January 25, 1966), Arkush 3, Fond P-2162, Opys 1, Sprava 761, DACHO, The State Archive of Chernivtsi Region.

enthusiasts of the enterprise there are still many unskilled workers, who often work in television because they failed in other areas of production.²¹⁶

Evidently, politics and analytical information had to be balanced out by culture and sport if viewers were to engage.²¹⁷ While television editorials were often accused of formalism and replicating established forms of programmes, they were persistently urged to find new methods that would fit local needs.

It appears that editors went through a creative transformation as they attempted to infuse their programming with ideology, art and local content. Television had to establish working relations with other cultural institutions, like theatres and philharmonics, which had performances by local groups or touring companies. Although theatrical performances and philharmonic concerts constituted an important part of regional broadcasting, the mediation of stage performances by television [teleteatr] remained a challenge. In addition to aesthetic and organizational matters, theatre managers feared that television would diminish their audience and shrink their income.²¹⁸

Indeed, already in the 1970s some theatres in the west of Ukraine asked for a 100 percent subsidy from the state because of the rapid development of television technology, which changed audience preferences.²¹⁹ Television editors often complained to the party that theatres and orchestras were not willing to cooperate, or if they did so, they provided much worse content than was expected. Officials consequently recommended that they produce their own TV-performances and concerts. This reflects the dubious role television had in its formative years, as Roth-Ey claims: "Television was in the paradoxical position of being celebrated and denigrated, pampered and ignored."²²⁰ This was also true for regional television in western Ukraine.

Officials and regional TV professionals in the 1960s worked hard to develop coherent and appropriate programming. Regional television editors received plans for theatre and music television programming from Kyiv and Moscow and were supposed to develop their own programmes. However, in practice they encountered many difficulties: screenplays would develop slowly and were submitted too late to make effective revisions, literary programmes would discuss abstract matters and not real life, musical programmes would last too long, and youth programming seemed to be made by chance [elementy vypadkovosti]

²¹⁶ "Nachalo 'kosmicheskoi ery,'" Internet museum of Soviet Television, www.tvmuseum.ru (blog), 2, accessed April 27, 2016, http://www.tvmuseum.ru/catalog.asp?ob_no=4623&page=2; *KPSS o Sredstvakh Massovoi Informatsii i Propagandy* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1987).

²¹⁷ On similar development in socialist Europe, see: Sabina Mihelj, "Television Entertainment in Socialist Eastern Europe: Between Cold War Politics and Global Developments" (Routledge, 2012).

²¹⁸ See highly debated conflict about the right to broadcast, between L'viv State Circus and L'viv State Television, "Dopovidna" (Lviv Obkom of Ukrainian Communist Party, General Sector, January 9, 1962), Fond P-3, Opys 8, Sprava 446, DALO, The State Archive of Lviv Region.

²¹⁹ "Discussing December Party Plemun" (The Communist Party of Chernivtsi Region (Organizational department), 1976), Found P-2329, Opys 01, Sprava 1318, DACHO, The State Archive of Chernivtsi Region.

²²⁰ Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time* (2011), 179.

and not through proper and coherent planning.²²¹ The situation improved only in the late 1960s coupled with organizational shifts in the centre of the Soviet Empire, when party functionaries decided to take full hold of television programming.

The goal of television scheduling, claimed officials in Moscow, was to target the appropriate viewers for each show, however, the ultimate reason was to gain the attention of the largest number of viewers during their leisure time.²²² Television managers measured the viewing statistics and tried to fit their programming accordingly. They had to take into consideration not only the various time zones and daily working schedules of citizens, but also national peculiarities as Soviet Central Television had to be synchronized with national programming and regional broadcasting. There were still many inconsistencies between regional, national and all-union broadcasting. Mickiewicz and Evans admit that in early Soviet television very few programmes were allocated regular weekly slots and even the country's most important program, *Vremia*, did not have a regular time slot until 1972.²²³ This situation gave local managers a certain degree of flexibility or even independence in their programming. In certain cases, programmers and editors in Soviet Ukraine took advantage of this and scheduled regional artistic programmes or national news in prime time²²⁴ slots. For instance, television programmers in Kyiv sometimes tried to shift *Vremia* from 21.00 to 22.30 to broadcast national news programmes.²²⁵ Thus, in the 1960s official still urged regional media editors and directors to stop “independent broadcasting” (meaning undisciplined programming) and to synchronize programming properly by making coherent media schedule [sitka peredach].²²⁶

By the end of the 1960s it was clear that Soviet television programming was organised around the news and the important information that officials wanted to deliver to the population (see **Figure 1.2.**). The information (news and public affairs) on Soviet Television sometimes occupied more than 40% of the broadcasting time, 48% was allocated to feature films, culture, and sports.²²⁷ The main Soviet information program *Vremia* from Moscow was shown before and after artistic programming, normally at 21.00. Programmers tried to fit republican or regional news before cultural programmes (around 19.00)²²⁸ which meant that those wanting to watch cultural shows often ended up watching the news as well. In the 1970s

²²¹ “Protocol #16 (programmes reviews)” (Lviv Television and Radio Committee, November 25, 1958), Fond P-1357, Opys 1, Sprava 374, DALO, The State Archive of Lviv Region.

²²² Evans, “From Truth to Time (2010),” 73.

²²³ Mickiewicz, *Split Signals (1988)*, 10; Evans, “From Truth to Time (2010),” 81.

²²⁴ The English language *prime time* Soviet officials would call in Russian ‘*samoie smotrovoe vremia*’ [the most-watched time], see: Evans, “From Truth to Time (2010),” 72.

²²⁵ “Letters and notes (programming)” (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1968), Arkush 144, TsDAVO of Ukraine, Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5044, TsDAVO of Ukraine, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

²²⁶ “Protocols” (Communist Party Cell of Lviv Television Studio, 1962), Fond 2504, Opys 1, Sprava 10, DALO, The State Archive of Lviv Region.

²²⁷ Mickiewicz, *Split Signals (1988)*, 151.

²²⁸ One survey from 1967 showed that the most audience television attracted at 19.00 (52% and 66% in provincial cities) and 21.00 (62% and 76% in the provinces), see: Evans, “From Truth to Time (2010),” 72.

the spot between 19.00 and 21.00 normally attracted 66-76 percent of Soviet television viewers and in the 1980s the audience of *Vremia* constituted 80 percent of population or astonishing number of 150 million people.²²⁹

Figure 1.2. Ellen Mickiewicz’s pie chart on weekday programming of Soviet Central Television, 1980s.

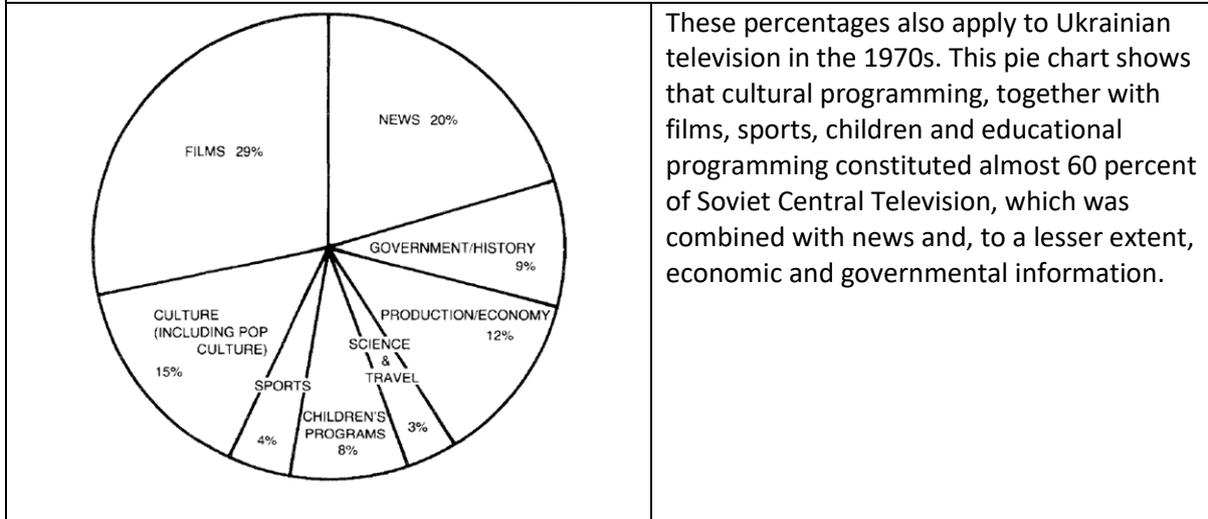


Table 1.1. Daily schedule for Ukrainian television in 1972.²³⁰

11.00	Television news
11.15	Music programmes (repeated or from exchange) and the program <i>School Screen</i>
Brake	Usually no broadcasting or transmissions from Moscow
16.55	Programmes [Programa peredach]
17.00	Socio-political programmes [Hromadsko-politychni peredachi] of Ukrainian television
17.30	Regional broadcasting
18.30	Program for children, youth and pupils (students)
19.00	Information program (news)
19.30	Artistic programming, such as transmission from the theatres, concert halls, films and dramas broadcast from the studio. This time spot was also reserved for broadcasts from stadiums and sport halls.
20.45	Good Night Children (this programme was often shown between other programmes)
21.00	Television premieres, new films of Ukrtelefilm, literary programmes, artistic programmes or line-ups for villagers
22.30	Programmes for youth, a concert or evening sport program
23.00	Television news, programming for the next day, weather forecast

As is evident from **Table 1.2.**, artistic programming was an important part of Soviet Ukrainian television in the late 1960s and often was intermingled with sport, national or all-Soviet information or regional news. But in total numbers of hours, informational programs dominated the republican screen while films, sport, and entertainment mainly were watched

²²⁹Mickiewicz, *Split Signals* (1988), 8.

²³⁰ See the list of tables for the sources.

on Central Television. In the late 1960s and 1970s on Saturdays and Sundays, or on the days before important celebrations and during celebrations, TV programming was extended to 24.00; from 11.00-15.00 on weekends viewers watched an educational program called *The Screen for External Students*, especially designed for people who studied after work. Thus, these 45 hours of local content that L'viv Television had to produce raised important questions: What should be broadcast? How to show locality? How could homegrown television content be made to relate to all-union demands and local specificities?

Table 1.2. Television programming in the 1970s, differentiated by Soviet Central (CT) and regional television (UA).

Types of Soviet broadcasting	Hours		As a percentage of total broadcasting	
	UA	CT	UA	CT
Informational programmes	6.3	5.25	14.6%	9.16%
Documentaries, socially oriented programmes	8	5.45	17.3%	9.8%
Music programmes	7.3	7.0	16.9%	11.8%
Literary/drama programmes	1.45	5.25	3.9%	9.1%
Film broadcasting	7.3	11.1	16.9%	18.8%
Programmes for youth and children	5.3	6.55	12.4%	11.6%
Sport programmes	1.15	4.05	2.8%	6.9%

1.3. Soviet turn to entertainment in the 1960s

Kristian Feigelson maintains that in the 1960s Soviet culture became “a new mass media culture in the sense that it was shared and consumed by the vast majority of society, even though it was fundamentally different from western mass culture.”²³¹ The Soviet desire to make culture for the masses but not the mass culture required well-prepared viewers and listeners.²³² Broadcasting classical music or poetry was not enough to produce cultured citizens and viewers and listeners needed explanations as to why certain works were considered great and what were the correct modes to understand them. In February 1968, the vice editor of the *Ostanni Visti* [Late News] radio program F. Vengerov acknowledged that their listeners often disliked light music for, as he claimed, “the dubious sounds it produced”²³³ but were happy to listen to classical music. But, while people preferred classical music, they also desired a wider variety of music entertainment. Listeners often asked for explanations about classical music, since it often required a specific knowledge of history and culture.²³⁴

²³¹ Kristian Feigelson, “Soviet Television and Popular Mass Culture in the 1960s,” *Euxeinos* 8, no. 25–26 (2018): 80.

²³² On educative function of media in socialist countries see: Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time* (2011), 270; Sabina Mihelj, “Popular Television in Socialist Times,” in *Popular Television in Eastern Europe During and Since Socialism*, ed. Timothy Havens, Anikó Imre, and Katalin Lustyik (Routledge, 2012), 18; Feigelson, “Soviet Television and Popular Mass Culture in the 1960s,” 75; Kirsten Bönker, Julia Obertreis, and Sven Grampp, eds., *Television Beyond and Across the Iron Curtain* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016), xiv.

²³³ Most probably he meant the big influence of foreign (dubious) music on Soviet light music.

²³⁴ “TsDAVO of Ukraine, Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5044 (1968),” Arkush 7.

Viewers and listeners in socialist countries in the late 1950s and 1960s often sent letters to the television headquarters to complain that television programming was dreary, lacking sincerity and boring.²³⁵ Socialist broadcasting was aimed at moulding and educating perfect citizens, thus programming was intended to teach viewers social norms according to the states' expectations.²³⁶ However, audience research in socialist countries disclosed that people "were using television primarily as a source of entertainment and relaxation."²³⁷ Pleasurable programming frequently rivalled the popularity of official primetime news programmes and people in socialist countries enthusiastically searched for tranquil or cheerful radio or television programmes on channels broadcast from the capitalist west.

Socialist television had to adjust to new tendencies since it wanted to compete with capitalist broadcasting for the hearts and minds of viewers. "After running all day long" people wanted to enjoy themselves in front of the television set, but socialist television often failed to fulfil the demands of their ordinary citizens.²³⁸ Propagandizing, educational programmes were often too strongly tailored to the demands of intellectual elites or ideological discourse and were detached from the masses.²³⁹ The feeling that socialist television should become more entertaining was wide-spread through the entire socialist bloc.²⁴⁰ In some socialist countries, like the GDR, officials recognized their inability to compete with their western capitalist opponents, especially in broadcasting light entertainment. So, they decided to adapt.²⁴¹

The need to wrap communist ideology into an attractive form was not new for Soviet culture. In the 1930s, Soviet film administrators believed that a film's success was directly linked to the degree of entertainment in the storyline. That is why Boris Shumyatsky stated that "we are obliged to require our masters to produce works that have strong plots and are organised around a story-line" otherwise they "cannot be entertaining, can have no mass character and hence the Soviet screen will not need them."²⁴² The task of this mass cinema or, as some called it, Sovetskii Hollywood, was "the creation of a good, joyful spectacle" for working people since "the victorious class wants to laugh with joy." The promotion of Stalinist

²³⁵ See for instance Czechoslovak cases, Bren, *The Greengrocer and His TV (2010)*, 119. Christine E. Evans stressed that Soviet television producers till certain time ignored those viewers, who expressed concerns about boring programming, see: Evans, *Between Truth and Time (2016)*, 50–51. In early 1970s, Erich Honecker described East German television as boring, and called on broadcasters to provide their audiences with more Entertainment, see: Havens, Imre, and Lustyk, *Popular Television in Eastern Europe During and Since Socialism*, 18.

²³⁶ Mickiewicz, *Split Signals (1988)*, 26–27.

²³⁷ Mihelj, "Popular Television in Socialist Times," 17.

²³⁸ Bren, *The Greengrocer and His TV (2010)*, 121.

²³⁹ Television producers in Moscow envisaged that their viewer is educated and strived to appeal to mindful people, however already in 1960s media had to differentiate the audience and made programming according to various tastes, see: Evans, *Between Truth and Time (2016)*, 63–73.

²⁴⁰ In USSR, already in late 1960s, officials were concerned about addicting to television watching and often strived to teach Soviet people 'to watch television as little as possible', see: Evans, 66–67.

²⁴¹ Mihelj, "Popular Television in Socialist Times," 18–19.

²⁴² Cited after Taylor in: Richard Taylor, "Boris Shumyatsky and the Soviet Cinema in the 1930s: Ideology as Mass Entertainment," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 6, no. 1 (January 1, 1986): 48.

notions of “happiness: and “joy”²⁴³ was to be one of the principal functions of Soviet filmmaking in the socialist realist style adopted at the First Congress of Soviet Writers in August 1934.²⁴⁴ Similarly, the Soviet people of the 1960s and 1970s, desired an entertainment free from direct ideological constraints.

Soviet television consequently underwent a structural change in the late 1960s. Christine Evans states that between 1968-1970, two of the most popular genres produced in Moscow, holiday musical programmes and game shows, underwent a *procedural shift*. Musical programmes and game shows created by the Musical Programming Desk [Glavnaia redaktsiia muzykalnykh programm]²⁴⁵ and the Youth Programming Desk [Glavnaia redaktsiia programm dlia molodezhi] respectively, aimed to unite diverse Soviet audiences.²⁴⁶ Their programmes set the example for not only republican but also for regional broadcasters, which followed the centre. Holiday music programmes and game shows thus became the standard form of Soviet television entertainment, both ideologically correct and aesthetically attractive.

In the 1960s the socialist audience was attracted to capitalist television programmes, so officials had to change their vision on programming accordingly. Due to their proximity to the west, the GDR’s television was the most exposed to the “capitalist other” and it was among the first in the socialist block to react to entertainment programming.²⁴⁷ As Paulina Bren showed, many Czechoslovakian citizens also received television signals from west Germany and Austria and party members estimated that by the end of the 1970s the entire socialist territory would be covered by western satellite television broadcasting.²⁴⁸ Soviet officials thus attempted to attract more people to socialist broadcasting, understanding that

²⁴³ “*Life has improved, comrades. Life has become more joyous*”, this slogan derived from the Stalin's speech to the First All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites on 17 November, 1935. See the speech:

<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1935/11/17.htm>

²⁴⁴ Taylor affirms that socialist realism had two forms: critical realism and revolutionary romanticism and referred to Lunacharskii who stated that socialist realism admits reality not as it is but as it should be.

Lunacharskii indicated: “*A Communist who cannot dream is a bad Communist. The Communist dream is not a flight from the earthly but a flight into the future,*” see: Richard Taylor, “Singing on the Steppes for Stalin: Ivan Pyr’ev and the Kolkhoz Musical in Soviet Cinema,” *Slavic Review*, 1999, 145.

²⁴⁵ See recollections about the early years of this programming desk by the editor who worked there in the 1960s: Anisim Gimmervert, “Glavnaia redaktsiia muzykalnykh program: gody 1950e-1960e, pervyie shagi i stanovlenie,” Internet museum of Soviet Television, <http://www.tvmuseum.ru/> (blog), accessed May 11, 2016, http://www.tvmuseum.ru/catalog.asp?ob_no=7827.

²⁴⁶ Evans, “From Truth to Time (2010),” 10–11. See also: Evans, *Between Truth and Time (2016)*, 47–81.

²⁴⁷ Mihelj, “Popular Television in Socialist Times,” 18.

²⁴⁸ In Czechoslovakia aerials that could receive television signals from abroad were widely available in the late 1960s and early 1970s. These antennas were produced in Pilsen until the end of 1971 but even in 1972 street committees strived to restrain locals from using antennas directed to the West, see: Bren, *The Greengrocer and His TV (2010)*, 120. In the western territories of USSR aerials could catch among foreign mostly socialist broadcasting. But even if socialist and Soviet ideologies were considered the same often officials discouraged using antennas, which allowed catching ‘western signals’ and urged citizens to watch only Soviet television. On Romanian subversive use of television antennas see: Dana Mustata, “«The Revolution Has Been Televised...». Television as Historical Agent in the Romanian Revolution,” *Journal of Modern European History* 10, no. 1 (2012): 76–97.

the audience often searched for entertainment and light music. For instance, in the late 1950s, the Department of Regional Broadcasting at the Ukrainian Committee of Radio and Television recommended cutting back on thematic programming, at least in the evening time, and adding more music programmes and line-ups for young people.²⁴⁹ Socialist officials, as Sabina Mihelj argues, “had to find a way to reconnect with, or at least pacify, the masses, and popular entertainment offered a suitable tool.”²⁵⁰

Television officials in the GDR and Czechoslovakia could not afford to ignore western broadcasting. Given the numbers from a survey conducted in the GDR in the early 1970s, 60 percent of television owners watched only west German television, 20 percent watched both eastern and western television and only 20 percent preferred east German socialist television.²⁵¹ East German television was thus the first to embrace light entertainment as a genre and the task was to produce programmes that would be at least comparable to capitalist aesthetics, but strong in socialist ethics. Soviet consultants who helped to normalize Czechoslovakia’s media after 1968, advised their socialist colleagues to increase the number of programmes dedicated to light genres. They recommended focusing on the wider public and not only on mature and culturally advanced socialist viewers.²⁵² However, in the USSR, Soviet media managers could not introduce light entertainment easily. The ideological approach to television in the USSR contradicted audience expectations. As in socialist countries, early sociological research showed that Soviet viewers favoured entertainment, however, editors followed the party line to educate ideologically correct and enlightened citizens.

In Soviet western border cities like L’viv, technical specialists were aware that satellite television would soon cover the Soviet territories and that it was futile to try and stop citizens using old-style antennas to receive western broadcasts.²⁵³ Soviet managers employed different approaches to try and combine entertainment with education or information. In 1966, the chief editor of the Literature and Theatre Programming Desk [Lit-dram-veschaniye] in Moscow N.P. Karpova admitted that:

Comrades calculated that economic television programmes attract a very small percentage of the population. But we cannot willingly follow public opinion, to replace the economic broadcasting for the popular *Goluboi Ogoniek*. We already know what the expectations of

²⁴⁹ “Reports (Upravlinnia mistsevoho movlennia)” (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, May 8, 1957), Arkush 1, Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 1831, TsDAVO of Ukraine, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

²⁵⁰ Mihelj, “Popular Television in Socialist Times,” 18–19.

²⁵¹ Bren, *The Greengrocer and His TV (2010)*, 122.

²⁵² Bren, 122.

²⁵³ In 2013 author had a personal talk with Mykhailo Khvoinytskyi, an editor and camera man at L’viv studio (1970s and 1980s) and the head of L’viv Television in 2017. He admitted that in 1972 he has discussed television broadcasting technology with the director of L’viv Telegraph Equipment Factory, who was a hero in documentary produced by television crew. Director explained to Khvoinytskyi basic principles of satellite technology and envisaged its coming soon to USSR, claiming that Soviet attempt to fight old-fashioned antennas was futile. This expectation was mostly overstatement: satellite television although professionally used in the USSR from the 1960s, became widely spread among population only in the 1990s.

our audience are. We have experience with advocacy and party work. Our programming must be both voluntarily and forcibly [nashe programmirovaniie dolzhno byt dobrovolno-prinuditelnym], in a good way, in the propaganda logic, the party sense.²⁵⁴

However, this “voluntarily and forcibly” educational programming was constantly challenged, especially if officials wanted to keep their audience. Media professionals and their supervising officials consequently introduced more programming dedicated to light music. Yet, by the early 1970s, “the temptation to maximize the television audience simply outweighed the ideological commitment to limiting and coordinating viewing for a differentiated audience.”²⁵⁵ As Christine E. Evans claims:

Torn between conflicting imperatives to both shape viewers and limit their viewing, Central Television’s scheduling staff came to embrace entertaining programming both as a means of gathering the largest possible audience for the highest-status political programming [...] and as an end in itself.²⁵⁶

In the early 1970s, media became an important and integral part of everyday life for the Soviet people. Sociological studies in the mid-1960s showed that books and newspapers, radio and television were enjoyed by millions of Soviet citizens.²⁵⁷ Studies showed that 81.6 percent of all those surveyed read newspapers, 70.9 percent listened to the radio daily, and 69.6 percent read books at least several times a week. Most visitors of the Estrada concerts were people with secondary and higher education (43% and 37%), students (47.9%), office workers (43.5%), intelligentsia (40.9%), and workers (38.4%). The turn to amusement and light programming in Soviet television started in the early 1960s, when party members and the Soviet intelligentsia reconsidered the importance of light music genres and entertainment. In addition, there was another visible difference in the 1960: the mass consumption of television, which was slowly transforming active Soviet citizens into rather “inert members” of society.²⁵⁸

In the Soviet Union, the introduction of light entertainment and other changes in programming were not equally implemented across the centre and peripheries. Western Soviet areas were exposed to foreign radio stations but, in contrast to them, there was almost no access to television from capitalist broadcasters, except in Estonia where Soviet citizens watched Finnish television. West Ukrainian media officials enthusiastically embraced this turn towards entertainment in socialist countries. In February 1968, Ivan Petriv, the head of L’viv Television and Radio Committee visited neighbouring Polish media centres (mainly television) and was impressed by the number of entertainment genres available for local viewers. In his

²⁵⁴ “Snova skandaly,” Internet museum of Soviet Television, *www.tvmuseum.ru* (blog), Page 5, accessed April 27, 2016, http://www.tvmuseum.ru/catalog.asp?ob_no=4623&page=5. “Dobrovolno i prinuditelno,” was widely spread Soviet comment, which defined that many things in USSR were made by heart but with certain pressure.

²⁵⁵ Evans, *Between Truth and Time* (2016), 76.

²⁵⁶ Evans, 81.

²⁵⁷ The free time of Soviet people increased by 25% between 1959 and 1963, see: Tsipursky, *Socialist Fun* (2016), 164.

²⁵⁸ Boris Grushin, *Svobodnoie Vremia: Velichena. Struktura. Problemy. Perspektivy* (Moscow: Pravda, 1966), 24.

report to higher officials in Kyiv, he revealed that in Poland, as in the USSR, there were two main channels and that all the regional studios prepared programmes for national TV.

Except for sanctioned and educational information, Petriv claimed, television delivered plenty of youth programming, like contests, quizzes and programmes like *Vielka Gra* [Big Game] which reminded him of the Soviet *KVN* [Klub Veselykh I Nakhodchevykh], aired for the first time in 1961.²⁵⁹ Petriv liked the idea that Soviet television might follow the Polish model, so that regional and republican studios would become active creators of federal programming. Overall, in his view, Polish socialist television allocated plenty of time to everyday subjects: each week there were two or three theatrical broadcasts, half hour music programmes, and evening entertainment series. Petriv concluded that Polish broadcasting lasted until late in the evening (22.30), which was an hour longer than Soviet TV, so many regions in western Ukraine switched to Polish television, especially in the evening. In some north-west regions of UkrSSR (like the Volyn region), Soviet television was barely present due to the poor signal, so many local viewers watched Polish television instead.²⁶⁰

Researchers indicate that in the 1970s up to two-thirds of the adult urban population of L'viv and probably the whole youth population watched music festivals transmitted from Polish Sopot or Zielona Gora.²⁶¹ Polish singers and performers attracted the Soviet audience with their "loose" postures on the stage (in contrast to Soviet "calmness"), emotional appeal and western style, and because the live audience was allowed to react and even shout. Such behaviour and attitudes were not tolerated on the Soviet television screen. A shift towards watching Polish television took place in the late 1970s, when individuals in L'viv and across the region installed special antennas that allowed them to watch two major Polish programmes directly. These antennas attracted the attention of local officials and many people were asked to remove their illegal aerials. In some cases, Soviet L'vivians built "temporary" antennas, installing and removing them as and when required. Above all, people were attracted to westerns, films (especially Alfred Hitchcock's films), popular music concerts and other artistic broadcasting.²⁶²

The widespread availability of socialist television from Poland and its active audience created a specific local mediascape, in which Soviet Central television was accompanied by Kyiv's republican television, regional media and two Polish channels. People learned the Polish language and those who attended afternoon school watched children's television in the morning. In addition, Polish radio played an important role in spreading music which was not aired by Soviet broadcasters. Knowledge of the language also enabled individuals to read in Polish and Polish books became widely available on both the black market and official shops carrying literature from socialist countries. In such places one could buy texts by Kafka, Sartre,

²⁵⁹ "TsDAVO of Ukraine, Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5044 (1968)," Arkush 20.

²⁶⁰ "TsDAVO of Ukraine, Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5044 (1968)," Arkush 22.

²⁶¹ Aleksandra Matyukhina, *W Sowietkim Lwowie: Życie Codzienne Miasta w Latkach 1944-1990* (Kraków: Wydaw. Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2000), 158.

²⁶² Matyukhina, 158.

Camus, Becket and Eliot, which were translated into Polish and not into Ukrainian or even Russian.²⁶³

The Socialist media, broadcasting from Poland into western Ukraine (see Figure 2.1. in Chapter 2.), gave locals the possibility to compare two systems²⁶⁴ and provided access to cultural products scarcely available in the UkrSSR. Popular music bands, which arrived in Ukraine because of the exchange system, brought in the sounds of the 1960s, including western rock as interpreted by Polish musicians.²⁶⁵ These bands discussed important issues for their generation: the search for one's personal place in the world, love, individuality, protest, and creativity.²⁶⁶ After 1968, and in reaction to the events in Prague,²⁶⁷ Soviet television staff were urged to focus on youth issues, patriotism, and good taste, and to make genuine Soviet content that would be attractive to millions (like the musicals produced in the 1930s).²⁶⁸ Editors also had to react to the growing popularity of western music among the Soviet youth and to include correct versions of this music in their programming. Entertaining line-ups were usually connected through programming to the news or important Soviet events, be it New Year celebrations or the party congress.

1.4. Soviet cafés and television: new forms of public space

In the 1950s Soviet interest-based clubs spread all over the USSR and soon they turned to special places, youth cafés²⁶⁹ that became the symbols of the 1960s. The earliest interest-based cafés, like jazz clubs,²⁷⁰ appeared already in 1958 in Leningrad, a year after *The International Youth Festival* took place in Moscow.²⁷¹ Moscow's cafés that opened in the early 1960s, became semi-liberal places where Soviet poets or writers and the Moscow intelligentsia, frequently presented their works to the public. Cafés offered a place to listen to music and to hold lectures, and they soon became extremely popular "unrestricted" spaces: youths would gather there to chat.

In various Soviet republics, this dynamic was different since local powers had a special attitude to light music. In L'viv, the first jazz café *Veselka* (later *Festyvalne*) functioned under

²⁶³ Matyukhina, 159. Some works, like Margaret Mitchells' *Gone with the Wind* was known to local Ukrainians only due to Polish translations.

²⁶⁴ See for instance similar arguments in: Weiner, "Robust Revolution to Retiring Revolution: The Life Cycle of the Soviet Revolution, 1945–1968."

²⁶⁵ On transborder travels with Poland see: Zbigniew Wojnowski, "An Unlikely Bulwark of Sovietness: Cross-Border Travel and Soviet Patriotism in Western Ukraine, 1956–1985," *Nationalities Papers* 43, no. 1 (2015): 1–20.

²⁶⁶ Matyukhina, *W Sowieckim Lwowie*, 161.

²⁶⁷ See how Ukrainian officials and general public reacted to *Prague Spring* in 1968: Wojnowski, *The Near Abroad*, 105–40.

²⁶⁸ Gleb Tsipurskyi claims that debates about socialist upbringing and youth tastes intensified already in 1956–1957, see: Tsipursky, *Socialist Fun* (2016), 134–63.

²⁶⁹ Tsipursky, 173.

²⁷⁰ S. Frederick Starr, *Red and Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union 1917–1991* (New York: Limelight Editions, 1985), 263.

²⁷¹ Tsipursky, *Socialist Fun* (2016), 171.

Komsomol auspices (curated by V. Zakharov, an official from L'viv Obkom of Komsomol)²⁷² between 1964 and 1968 and was closed after the Prague spring.²⁷³ Here, L'vivians could listen to jazz music three times a week and many professional musicians started their careers there. In L'viv, jazz bands were usually attached not to cafés but to cultural houses, some of them even receiving backing from the police. One jazz club in L'viv enjoyed the protection of the Regional Police Department because its head was a music lover and supported a band.²⁷⁴ In Dnipropetrovsk in eastern Ukraine, a jazz club was opened in 1961, though often musicians from this city would travel to the Soviet west to get new records or technology on the black market.²⁷⁵

Early Soviet cafés attracted television professionals who were actively looking for new content and innovative forms of youth entertainment. Valentina Shatrova, who worked at the Central Television's Musical Programming Desk from 1957 and was responsible for television Estrada, stated that the initial idea (of the *Little Blue Flame* TV programme) was to broadcast music programmes from the café, similar to making a live reportage or a live transmission from a concert.²⁷⁶ However, editors disliked the idea, so the creative team from Soviet Central Television took the concept of a café, where interesting people came for a short visit (na *ogoniek*)²⁷⁷ to have a coffee and to discuss present-day matters or artworks, and created a television café. The program was called *Goluboi Ogoniek* [Little Blue Flame]. Its hosts improvised and moved from table to table talking to invited guests and making light conversation, while the musical performances "occurred naturally" in between the short conversations.²⁷⁸ The first screening of *Little Blue Flame* took place in April 1962, during the latest broadcasting slot on Saturdays (22.00-24.00) and it soon became immensely popular among the Soviet public.²⁷⁹ As Daria Zhukova acknowledged: "In its essence, the idea of a

²⁷² Volodymyr Kononchuk, "Dzhazove Zhyttia Lvova XX St.: Geneza Ta Evoliutsiia," in *Muzykoznavchi Studii*, vol. 26 (Lviv: ZUKTs, 2012), 166.

²⁷³ Later it was reopened as one of the central city's restaurants.

²⁷⁴ Kononchuk, "Dzhazove Zhyttia Lvova XX St.: Geneza Ta Evoliutsiia," 165.

²⁷⁵ Sergei Zhuk, *Rock and Roll in the Rocket City: The West, Identity, and Ideology in Soviet Dnipropetrovsk, 1960-1985* (Washington, D.C: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2010). Sergei Zhuk while discussing Dnipropetrovsk's rock scene named the concluding chapter in this book "Between Moscow and L'viv," specifically referring that music scene in his town was shaped between two poles—Moscow in the East and L'viv in the West.

²⁷⁶ Valentina Shatrova, "Vospominaniia," Internet museum of Soviet Television, www.tvmuseum.ru (blog), accessed April 27, 2016, http://www.tvmuseum.ru/catalog.asp?ob_no=10536.

²⁷⁷ L'viv Television factory that functioned from 1957 produced popular black and white TV-sets *Ogoniek*, that were released from the early 1960s and on. So, if people were supposed to come for *ogoniek* in café to talk, soon they would come for *ogoniek* to consume socialist information and entertainment.

²⁷⁸ Some scholars argue that discussion at the table in café made an impression of privacy and intimacy, which was so demanded by public in the 1960s, see: Anri Surenovich Vartanov, ed., *Televideniie Mezhdru Iskusstvom I Massmedia* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennyi Institut iskusstvoznaniia, 2015), 309–10.

²⁷⁹ From Café to Contest: Soviet Central Television's New Year's Shows, 1962-1982 in PhD dissertation Evans, "From Truth to Time (2010)," 114–40. Also Chapter 3 in: Evans, *Between Truth and Time (2016)*. See the recording of *Goluboi Ogoniek* produced in 1981 featuring Sofia Rotaru (as big Soviet Estrada star) and rock band Mashina Vremeni while audience still featured folkish dressed Ukrainian girls: Igor Netrebchuk, "Happy New 1982 Year," Video recording of television broadcast, *Goluboi ogoniek* (Moscow: Soviet Central Television, 1981), 19, 30 min., Gosteleradiofond, http://cccp.tv/video/Goluboj_ogonek/.

television cafe was quite provocative regarding norms of official ideology, but it reflected the turn to values of privacy and sincerity, which took place in this period.”²⁸⁰

The idea of using an unrestrained public space in the form of a café, where Soviet citizens could meet, spend their free time and enjoy friendly conversations fascinated the young intelligentsia in L’viv. From the late 1950s, the young and promising poet-communist, Rostyslav Bratun’ (1927-1995), continuously expressed the need to have a café that would foster cultural life in the city.²⁸¹ In 1961, during a meeting between the intelligentsia and party officials in L’viv, the writer Iryna Vilde (1907-1982), openly asked officials for an open public space in the form of a café, similar to those already existing in Leningrad and Moscow.²⁸² She organised a tour of L’viv in 1962 for the soon to become dissident Ivan Dziuba (born 1931), accompanied by the promising poets Ivan Drach (1936-2018) and Mykola Vinhranovskii (1936-2004). Such a café would have served as a place of public meetings with representatives of the young Ukrainian intelligentsia, however, with no such café in L’viv, young poets and writers visited the most advanced urban public space, the television studio.²⁸³

When Moscow started to broadcast and promote the Soviet café, other writers and poets joined and frequently articulated their desire for something similar.²⁸⁴ Party officials urged local developers and architects to design such spaces for the city and to do so quickly. Consequently, in 1963, L’viv architect Iaroslav Nazarkevych built the first Soviet café for young people in the city,²⁸⁵ and from 1964 café *Veselka* began its work. At the end of the 1960s and in the 1970s, coffee houses in L’viv, Chernivtsi, and many other cities of western Ukraine turned into popular places for the local intelligentsia, where classical musicians would often meet with artists, hippies and writers.²⁸⁶ These places also functioned as neutral intermediary zones for various forms of cultural exchange: the trade of information, music, and sometimes even commodities took place here. The Soviet coffeehouses of the 1960s quickly turned into newly discovered socialist public spaces and television was part of the renewal of the public sphere.

²⁸⁰ Vartanov, *Televideniie Mezhdru Iskusstvomu i Massmedia*, 310.

²⁸¹ “Protocols” (Lviv branch of the Ukrainian Union of Writers, September 10, 1959), Fond 3808, Opys 1, Sprava 32/33, DALO, The State Archive of Lviv Region.

²⁸² “The Intelligentsia gathering (protocol),” 1961, Arkush 255, Fond P-3, Opys 8, Sprava 255, DALO, The State Archive of Lviv Region.

²⁸³ Mykola Petrenko, Concentration camp, television and queues to buy books, interview by Taras Baziuk, April 17, 2018, http://tvoemisto.tv/exclusive/lyudy_tvogo_mista_mykola_petrenko_pro_kontstabil_zoloti_chasy_ltb_ta_nichni_chergy_za_knyzhkamy_92694.html.

²⁸⁴ See the protocols of the meeting of party officials with L’viv intelligentsia in January 1961: “DALO (1961), Fond P-3, Opys 8, Sprava 255,” Arkush 255.

²⁸⁵ See the photo in: Iryna Kotlobulatova, “Sporudzhennia budynku na prospekti Svobody,” www.lvivcenter.org, *Center for Urban History (Lviv)* (blog), 1963, <http://www.lvivcenter.org/uk/uid/picture/?pictureid=8600>.

²⁸⁶ Bohdan Shumylovych, “Alternatyvni Prostory Lvova 1980–2000-Kh Rokiv,” in *Misto i Onovlennia: Urbanistychni Studii* (Kyiv: Heinrich Boell Foundation, 2013), 67–81, <http://ua.boell.org/uk/2014/01/27/misto-y-onovlennya-urbanistychni-studiyi>.

The *Little Blue Flame* television programme became an iconic Soviet show and its form was repeated in numerous variations in regional and republican Soviet television studios.²⁸⁷ In 1965, L'viv Television professionals acknowledged that among the most important transmissions was the live broadcast of the *Little Blue Flame*, during which they presented the artistic and cultural life of the city.²⁸⁸ Some of the performances (especially Estrada and L'viv jazz band Medicus) that were broadcast from Moscow's Central Television were considered by local officials as too frivolous or of "poor quality". Officials testified:

[...] the L'viv third *Vognyk* [Ogoniek] captivated viewers by its colour [kolorynistiu], by music and poetic artistry of pre-Carpathian region [Prykarpatskyi krai] [...] but we also presented some inferior compositions that were imbedded with banal intonations trying to imitate the style. Presenters [konferans] performed poorly and Khoma's orchestra²⁸⁹ did not manage to fulfil the task [...] Similar, lowering of the standards we distinguished in the recent concert, aired to Moscow's Central Television.²⁹⁰

The preference for folk and classical music over jazz and Estrada was characteristic of regional officials and critics in Soviet Ukraine. Anything new was often considered as unsafe by Soviet administrators and innovations were habitually measured by the aesthetic standards developed during the 1930s.

For dedicated party personnel, even the modest and calm music of the L'viv composer Kos-Anatolskii was too light; they invited artists to produce songs that uplifted people rather than be "penetrated by the mood of relaxedness."²⁹¹ Others stated that Kos-Anatolskii's composition *Black Crow* [Chornyi Voron], broadcasted on L'viv Television, was "borrowed from the Polish cellar of the late 1930s."²⁹² Obviously, television as a new public sphere often did not correspond to the conservative tastes of local Ukrainian communists. Not surprisingly, Alexei Kozlov, a Muscovite and a Soviet jazz performer, recalled:

As for contemporary music, the officials fought with it there [in Ukraine] much more zealously than in Russia. We heard rumours that after a visit to Kiev, a conventional vocal and instrumental ensembles or innocent variety art collectives from Moscow could receive in the central Ukrainian press a devastating review written not from the standpoint of musical criticism, but from a political point of view, with the allegations of the bourgeois aesthetics, adulation [to the west], departure from national roots, etc. After this press,

²⁸⁷ See the chapter 'From Café to Contest' in: Evans, *Between Truth and Time* (2016). Started in 1962, Little Blue Flame by 1970 became exclusively a holiday programme, broadcast on March 8, May 1, May 9, November 7, and the night of December 31–January 1. As Evans admits, 'The transformation of Little Blue Flame from a weekly programme into a holiday show took place gradually, as a solution to the specific problems of television broadcasting in the Soviet 1960s.'

²⁸⁸ "Report, party leadership and cultural work" (Lviv Television Studio's Communist Party Cell, 1965), Arkush 109, Fond 2504, Opys 1, Sprava 16, DALO, The State Archive of Lviv Region.

²⁸⁹ Famous in L'viv jazz orchestra directed by Ihor Khoma that was often criticized by the local officials for its spoiled music.

²⁹⁰ "DALO (1965), Fond 2504, Opys 1, Sprava 16," Arkush 110-111.

²⁹¹ "Intelligentsia meeting" (Lviv Obkom of Ukrainian Communist Party, Special Sector, May 12, 1962), Arkush 87, Fond P-3, Opys 8, Sprava 424, DALO, The State Archive of Lviv Region.

²⁹² "DALO (1962), Fond P-3, Opys 8, Sprava 424," 126. The same accusations to his composition *Black Orable Soil* [Chorna Rillia Izorana], that reworked folk Galician song, would be voice in the 1970s.

which once reached Moscow's censors, the [music] collective could have great complications at home.²⁹³

In order to tame the criticism on peripheries, the central Communist Party newspaper *Pravda* stated that regional television (including Ukrainian television) was too didactic and needed to implement more entertainment for young people (as in the issue on 19 August 1965).²⁹⁴ Although the centre commanded Kyiv to “relax”, the first arrests of Ukrainian intelligentsia took place in the same year, in August and September 1965, while the literary critic Ivan Dziuba made his public declaration about the return of Stalinism in Ukraine during the premiere of Parajanov’s film in Kyiv.

Thus, the *procedural shift* that Evans identified in the late 1960s and early 1970s also spanned to regional and republican broadcasting practices. Firstly, it was an ongoing trend across socialist countries to produce a so-called correct version of mass culture, and, secondly, the socialist media empowered local creators, amateurs and professionals. Central Television in Moscow required not only programmes produced in the centre, but also those which represented the diversity of the Soviet people. Broadcasters often focused on the inhabitants of the peripheries – the real rural and urban people [narod] who practiced amateur art and music. In the 1960s, Moscow promoted republican and regional television programmes as exotic, showing “local colour” [mestnyi kolorit], and of good quality.

At this time, some cultural initiatives in regional television looked more advanced than those in the centre, which attracted the attention of Moscow’s programmers. For instance, in 1965, Estonian theatres began staging the American musical *West Side Story*, (probably the first American musical staged in the USSR) and produced the first Soviet performances of George Gershwin’s *Porgy and Bess*.²⁹⁵ By contrast, the Ukrainian western peripheries interested Moscow television music producers mostly because of their exotic folklore or stylized contemporary Estrada. In this way, western Ukraine’s popular culture played a role in creating a new Soviet media imagination, which often borrowed old imperial models.

1.5. The Carpathians as a source of (tele)visual pleasure

As the broadcasting of purely news, political events and developments in local economics did not suffice in the 1960s, regional media managers had the challenge of finding attractive and fresh programming. The Soviet Central Television broadcast from Moscow became the main source of audio-visual entertainment, a certain mediatized high culture. The republican and regional media also followed the tendency to “embrace all aspects of the everyday.”²⁹⁶ In general, television programmes became less political and more related to various aspects of regional culture. They had to combine high values of Soviet socialism with entertainment, which was not easy. At the same time, Soviet television had the important

²⁹³ Alexei Kozlov, *Kozel na sakse*, *Moi 20 vek* (Moscow: Vagrius, 1998), 158.

²⁹⁴ This article was discussed at the meeting in L’viv, see: “DALO (1965), Found 2504, Opys 1, Sprava 16,” Arkush 119.

²⁹⁵ Risch, “A Soviet West (2015),” 76.

²⁹⁶ Feigelson, “Soviet Television and Popular Mass Culture in the 1960s,” 77.

task of shaping a new Soviet man.²⁹⁷ It was evident that television could unite entertainment with ideology only as a specific visual media, picturing “imagined” and representing “physical” reality.²⁹⁸

An important aspect of the regional imagination was the natural landscape. In the 1960s, Ukraine was second after the RSFSR in population and economic gross production. Its forty-five million inhabitants, who were recently elevated to the status of “great people”,²⁹⁹ lived on the territory, which stretched 1300 kilometres from east to west and 900 kilometres from north to south. As one author impressed upon his readers, the territory of Soviet Ukraine could hold all the European countries, including England, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, Greece, Portugal, Switzerland, and Cyprus.³⁰⁰ Besides the Dnipro river which divides this vast country into its western and eastern parts, Ukraine possesses an important natural landmark, the Carpathian Mountains.

The western Ukrainian landscape was associated not only with the cities of L’viv, Uzhhorod, Chernivtsi, Ivano-Frankivsk and Lutsk, but also with the Carpathian Mountains. In the past, the Carpathians and ancient forests created a natural border between the Hungarian crown, Czech and Polish crown lands to the west and the Rus medieval state to the south-east. These mountainous lands functioned as important border regions, frontiers, or outer limits (for Slavs, Hungarians and Romanians),³⁰¹ being natural as well as political boundaries.³⁰² These natural borders, as often indicated by Soviet Ukrainian writers, later would become national.³⁰³ Historically, the Carpathians became a specific European *contact zone*, being construed as both embodied, material phenomenon and, at the same time, a figurative idea, emphasizing “interconnections as well as conflict.”³⁰⁴ This was a transcultural zone, where different cultural groups met and interacted, often in conflict, while various ethnic groups of Hutsuls, Jews and Rusyns modified own identities in relations to each other.³⁰⁵

²⁹⁷ Svetlana Boym, *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), 39; Rufus W. Mathewson, *The Positive Hero in Russian Literature* (Northwestern University Press, 2000).

²⁹⁸ Feigelson, “Soviet Television and Popular Mass Culture in the 1960s,” 78.

²⁹⁹ Fairbanks Jr., “National Cadres as a Force in the Soviet System: The Evidence of Beria’s Career, 1949–1953,” 175.

³⁰⁰ E. Arhipets, *Ukraina - Krai Turizma* (Kyiv: Zdorovie, 1967), 6.

³⁰¹ This concept of frontier was developed by Frederick Jackson Turner (1861-1932), who presented in 1893 paper “The Significance of the Frontier in American History,” at American Historical Association, later published as a book, see: Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt and Co, 1920). About the concept see: Nurit Kliot and Stanley Waterman, *Pluralism and Political Geography: People, Territory and State* (Routledge, 2015), 139.

³⁰² Political boundaries as modern definitions of territorial sovereignty discussed in: Peter Sahlins, *Boundaries: The Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees* (University of California Press, 1989), 2–7.

³⁰³ Yuriy Slyvka, ed., *Ukrainskiiie Karpaty: Istoriia*, vol. 3 (Kyiv: Naukova Dumka, 1989), 42.

³⁰⁴ Kye Askins and Rachel Pain, “Contact Zones: Participation, Materiality, and the Messiness of Interaction,” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 29, no. 5 (October 1, 2011): 805.

³⁰⁵ The idea of ‘transcultural zones’ is discussed in: Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (Routledge, 2007), 32–33.

Having been colonised across the centuries by various ethnic groups, the Carpathians turned into the space of colonial encounters in the eighteenth century, after incorporation into the Habsburg Monarchy.³⁰⁶ As with many other natural European landscapes, the uniqueness, beauty and cultural diversity of the Carpathians were only discovered in the nineteenth century. The important role in this re-imagination performed the *Tatra Society*,³⁰⁷ and Polish nobles stood behind the “rediscovery” of the southern-most border of Galicia and Bukovina. These mountains, mostly populated by orthodox and Greek-Catholic Rusyns or highlanders such as Hutsuls, gradually became a *cultural space* and, increasingly, a *national space*.

In the 1920s and 1930s, the newly emerged Polish republic strived to submit this land and its people to a new national project, while local Ukrainians desired to make or to enforce cultural and national distinctions. At this time, non-Soviet Ukrainians³⁰⁸ anticipated shaping a nation based on various highlands and non-Catholic ethnic groups, while the Poles, Czechs and Slovaks included highlanders into their new political nations.³⁰⁹ After the First World War governments actively used the latest media in the process of national imagination, especially cinema. The Carpathians and its exotic inhabitants were often depicted in Pathé newsreels in the 1920s and 1930s, bringing new attention to the region from cinema directors as much as politicians.

The Carpathian landscape proved to be a powerful visual statement in interwar films. In 1933, the first Polish film was produced, which depicted the life of the Hutsul people, discovered by the Austrian emperor in 1880 and actively visualized in the early twentieth century.³¹⁰ In 1934, several Czechoslovakian films won prizes at the Venice Film Festival, two of which depicted mountains inhabited by Slovaks and Rusyns. These were Karel Plicka’s *Zem Spieva* [The Earth Sings] (1933) and Tomáš Trnka’s *Bouře nad Tatrami* [Storm Over the Tatras] (1932). In 1934, a year after the film *Przybłąda* [The Stray] was released in Poland, the Czech film director Vladislav Vančura (1891–1942), together with the screenwriter Karel Novy

³⁰⁶ Larry Wolff, *The Idea of Galicia: History and Fantasy in Habsburg Political Culture* (Stanford University Press, 2012); Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*, 1994.

³⁰⁷ Originally it was the *Galician Tatra Society*, established in 1873, later renamed into *Polish Tatra Society* (*Polskie Towarzystwo Tatrzańskie*). This society was founded in 1873, at the same time was formed *Hungarian Carpathian Association* [Magyarország Kárpátgyesület, Ungarischer Karpathenverein], see: Patrice M. Dabrowski, “Constructing a Polish Landscape: The Example of the Carpathian Frontier,” *Austrian History Yearbook* 39 (April 2008): 57.

³⁰⁸ In USSR Soviet Ukraine became one of the founders of the first world socialist state and communists often empowered locals.

³⁰⁹ Hutsuls were often featured on interwar Polish photographs as part of cultural delegations to various Polish cities, exemplifying to ordinary Poles that Orthodox or Uniate highlanders belong to Polish state and should become part of the new and modern nation.

³¹⁰ The film was premiered in Warsaw on the 16th of November 1933 and received a title *Przybłąda* (English title was *The Stray*). This film was produced and distributed by the studio Blok-Muzafilm, directed by Jan Nowina-Przybylski (1904-1938) on the screenplay of Marceli Tarnowski (1899-1944) and supplemented with the music of composer Jan Maklakiewicz (1899-1954).

(1890-1980) produced the experimental film *Marijka Nevěrnice* [Unfaithful Marijka].³¹¹ Vančura was attracted by Ivan Olbracht's (born Kamil Zeman, 1882-1952)³¹² writing about the Carpathian people and decided to produce a film on a similar subject. By merging picturesque landscapes, evocative music, and a semi-ethnographic gaze, such movies (Polish *Przybłęda* and Czech *Marijka Nevěrnice*) were perceived as beautiful visual elegies on the Carpathians and local people. Such contemplation of the landscape in Czech and Slovak cinema was later called *lyricism*.³¹³

In Soviet Ukraine, the Carpathian Mountains had already been cinematically reimaged in the 1950s and featured in some Soviet socialist realist films. Only in the 1960s, however, did the Kyiv-based Dovzhenko Film Studios produce similar Carpathian films, which received the title *poetic cinema* and allegedly represented genuinely Ukrainian cinema.³¹⁴ The description of Ukrainian cinema as "poetic" followed that used by the national intelligentsia to define European cinema during high modernism.³¹⁵ The mountains obtained recognizable features for the all-Ukrainian and the union-wide audience. They became part of the Soviet world, an imagined landscape of the big motherland. Even in the mid-1970s, one Ukrainian author claimed that the Carpathians embodied the strength of the Ural Mountains and the tenderness of Crimea, the stillness of Altai and the grandness of the Caucasus, while still having its own peculiar beauty.³¹⁶ If, for the average Soviet person, these mountains were a familiar tourist site associated with military history, for Ukrainian intelligentsia they became a sacred place, where the national spirit was preserved in the form of picturesque folk culture.

The idea locality or home (like German *Heimat*) was an important element of identity construction in western Ukraine after 1945, and local media played a crucial role in the

³¹¹ Film premier took place in March 1934, most probably Polish and Czechoslovak Carpathian movies were produced at the same time, during late summer and autumn 1933, see more information on the film at Czechoslovak online film database, <http://www.csfd.cz/film/9283-marijka-nevernice/prehled/>

³¹² Kamil Zeman was born in Podkarpatska Rus (in his time part of Hungarian kingdom and called Hungarian Rus), which is currently the Ukrainian Trans-Carpathians [Zakarpattia]. He was a socialist and like Ivan Franko, who often travelled to his native region to depict its underdevelopment in literature and multiple articles. In 1933, he wrote a book *Nikola Šuhaj Loupežník* [Nikola Šuhaj, Outlaw] based on the real story and it became almost a folk story for interwar Czechoslovakia. The story about Carpathian Robin Hood (having the title *Nikola Šuhaj*) was screened in 1947 as a film drama by director Miroslav Josef Krňanský. In 1970s a writer Milan Uhde (born 1936) produced a screenplay, adapted by film director Vladimír Sís (1925-2001) and combined with music of Miloš Štědroň (born 1942), to a television musical *Balada pro banditu* [A Ballad for a Bandit], which was popular until the end of socialist Czechoslovakia, and remains well known also today, see: <http://www.csfd.cz/film/8844-balada-pro-banditu/prehled>.

³¹³ Peter Hames, *Czech and Slovak Cinema: Theme and Tradition* (Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 112.

³¹⁴ J.J. Gurga, "Echoes of the Past: Ukrainian Poetic Cinema and the Experiential Ethnographic Mode" (PhD Thesis, London, University College London (UCL), 2012), 16–18; Joshua J. First, *Ukrainian Cinema: Belonging and Identity during the Soviet Thaw* (I. B. Tauris, 2014).

³¹⁵ See for instance how Dmytro Pavlychko, young and acknowledged poet and writer from western Ukraine, wrote in the magazine *Literaturna Ukraiina* (15 September 1964) an article about Olexandr Dovzhenko, entitled 'Siatel vichnoho' [The Sower of Eternal]. See Joshua First discussing the name of 'poetic cinema' in: Joshua First, "Ukrainian National Cinema and the Concept of the 'Poetic,'" *Kino Kultura*, 2009, <http://www.kinokultura.com/specials/9/first.shtml>.

³¹⁶ See touristic guide on Yaremcha, a town in Carpathians selected by Soviets as a center for tourism and war commemorations, R.P. Krasii, *Yaremcha* (Uzhhorod: Karpaty, 1976).

making of this identity. Since the late 1950s, when television was established in the region, the visual imaginary of the Carpathians extended to Soviet regional/*Heimat* television. This local television had the goal of promoting the socialist *Heimat* in Soviet western Ukraine. There were practical as well as symbolic reasons why the Carpathians and its people captured the imagination of Soviet television broadcasters and filmmakers. Firstly, the L'viv and Chernivtsi television studios had the task of Sovietizing western territories by means of audio-visual technology. They therefore received relatively good technical and professional support. This was one of the reasons why L'viv Television emerged so early and became the biggest televisual institution in the western part of Soviet Ukraine, and one of the best in the republic. Secondly, Carpathian folk culture was as picturesque and exotic for Kyiv as for Moscow, appealing even to those who had become urban dwellers only recently. Thirdly, while the Soviet Union promoted internationalism and the friendship of peoples, promising that the various nations of the USSR would finally merge into one Soviet (Russian speaking) people, the Romanticism, which was recovered in the late 1950s,³¹⁷ urged many to look for the national identity. This was seen as “miraculously preserved” in the language, dress, songs of folk people and in the landscapes of the Carpathians.

In the 1960s, former Galicia (L'viv, Ivano-Frankivsk and Ternopil regions), Bukovina (Chernivetska region) and Podkarpatska Rus (Zakarpatska region), then western provinces of the UkrSSR, experienced social and economic changes. The Soviets strove to build an industrial culture in the Carpathians and this process brought high numbers of rural workers from the villages into the cities.³¹⁸ The west-Ukrainian proletariat was not “naturally” urban: most individuals in this class in the 1960s were former peasants. A new wave of romantic imagination discussed in the USSR in the late 1950s coincided with Soviet-style regional urbanization. Migration and urbanization were similar to those social changes which happened almost a century earlier in the German lands and created a new culture of Romanticism. Under Soviet rule, the numbers of peasants in the region decreased from 5,000,000 employed in the agricultural sector in 1938 to only 920,000 in 1976.³¹⁹ If, in 1938, workers constituted only 5 percent of L'viv's population, by 1950 Soviet L'viv could claim 20 percent of the proletariat, which mostly arrived from local villages. By 1984 more than 529,000 of L'viv's 753,000 official inhabitants were Soviet urban workers.³²⁰ It was a similar scenario across the region. By 1959, 46 percent of the inhabitants in L'viv oblast were

³¹⁷ Lauren G. Leighton, “The Great Soviet Debate Over Romanticism: 1957-1964,” *Studies in Romanticism* 22, no. 1 (Spring 1983): 41–64.

³¹⁸ For the rural-urban migration to Lviv in the 1960s see: Bodnar, *Shchodenne Zhyttia Ochyma Pereselentsiv Iz Sil (50–80-Ti Roky XX St.)*; Tarik Cyril Amar, “The Founding of Industrial Lviv,” in *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv: A Borderland City between Stalinists, Nazis, and Nationalists* (Cornell University Press, 2015), 185–220.

³¹⁹ The high number of agricultural settlers and low availability of land was considered as a source of underdevelopment of Galicia, which was considered in Vienna a ‘model of backwardness and development’, see: Wolff, *The Idea of Galicia*, 49; Pieter M. Judson, *The Habsburg Empire* (Harvard University Press, 2016), 122.

³²⁰ Amar, *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv*, 190. 265,200 inhabitants were employed in industry and 124,000 in building, transport, and trade; city also possessed more than 100,000 intellectual workers.

categorized as living in urban settlements.³²¹ The new urban working class in western Ukraine, which was shaped in the 1950s and 1960s, shared a folk popular culture combined with the urban love for media.³²²

Western Ukrainian regional and local television entertainment programmes attracted a big audience as they gave amateur artists and professional composers alike the chance to perform. In 1966, the future Soviet popular music star Sofia Rotary, together with her sisters, sang cheerful peasants' songs in the Moldovan language (Soviet definition for the Romanian language) at the small studio of Chernivtsi television. Such performances from Bukovina were often transmitted to the entire Ukrainian audience and even attracted the attention of Moscow's producers. In February 1966, comrade Soboleva N., an editor from the Chief Editorial Office of Programmes for Children and Youth [Glavnaia redaktsiia program dlia detei i molodezhi] from Central Television visited Bukovina to find fresh content. She ordered the short film *A Team Leader from Bukovina* [Lankova z Bukovyny], which was shown on Central TV.³²³

Central Television's editors enjoyed the colourful nature of Bukovina's folklore and often invited performers from western Ukraine to come to Moscow or broadcast them live. Exotic Bukovina dancers, Galician performers, and Transcarpathian wood loggers always received positive responses and were warmly welcomed. The year after the Moscow editor visited Chernivtsi looking for fresh television content, media advancements allowed Bukovina regional television to broadcast live to Soviet Central Television for the first time. It consisted of three features: *A Word About Chernivtsi* (a 5 minute long audio-visual narrative about the city), *The Happy Country is Singing* (a 40 minute folk music concert) and the short story *Visiting Bukovina Loggers* (7 minute long narrative about the Carpathians).³²⁴ Evidently, early broadcasts from Bukovina predominantly showed peasants or forest workers and their artisanal culture, often performed by semi-professional artists.

Sometimes the newly discovered land in the Soviet west became the subject of a musical, shaped according to kitsch tastes. When, in the late 1960s, the Sverdlovsk Film Studios decided to produce a musical, they turned to the "Carpathian" subject. The kitsch musical titled *Trembita*³²⁵ (after an instrument used by Carpathian shepherds) was directed by Oleg Nikolaievskii and produced in 1968. It attracted almost sixty million viewers in 1969, the fourth highest grossing film in Soviet cinema. The plot unfolded not around Galicia or Bukovina, but former Podkarpatska Rus, where the large palace of the German aristocratic Schönborn family – the biggest landowners in the region – was a constant reminder of pre-

³²¹ By 2001, nearly 60 percent of the oblast's population lived in towns or cities.

³²² Grushin, *Svobodnoie Vremia*, 27.

³²³ "DACHO (1966), Fond P-2162, Opys 1, Sprava 761," Arkush 29.

³²⁴ "DACHO (1966), Fond P-2162, Opys 1, Sprava 761," Arkush 28.

³²⁵ *Trembita* was successful operetta in Moscow, which combined Ukrainian clichéd imaginary with Carpathian landscape. Libretto was produced by Vladimir Mass and Mikhail Chervinskii, co-authors of the famous operetta *Cheryomushki*. Scenario for the film musical was produced by Vladimir Mass and film director Oleg Nikolaievskii, camera man Ivan Artiukhov, composer Yurii Miliutin, choreographer Vladimir Kersanov.

Soviet times. The film recounted how local aristocrats escaped, but still planned various disturbances to challenge the Soviet rule in the region.

Television producers in L'viv hesitated between making programmes about “the people” in the natural landscape or in an urban setting. The city and its surrounding nature, that was symbolically concurred by socialism, often featured in the first films and programmes of L'viv Television. However, films depicting the Carpathian Mountains and its exotic and colourful people were especially popular among the first short films made by the L'viv studio. For instance, when selecting regionally produced films for the Intervision exchange in 1965, media officials picked the documentary *Hutsul Wood Carvers* over an account of urban factories.³²⁶ Visually, the mountains were far more attractive to audiences and the emotional turn towards the mountains coincided with the “search for national substance”,³²⁷ which was omnipresent among the Ukrainian intelligentsia during this period.

In addition, the highlands were considered a place where real folk and artisanal culture endured, as exemplified by amateurs like Mykhailo Mashkin (1926-1971). His family, which was originally from Dnipropetrovsk region, moved to the west Ukrainian Transcarpathia region in 1945 and he became an artistic director of the local folk dance collective *Borzhava* in the village of Dovhe (Irshava district). This amateur ensemble, which supposedly performed local folk art, was promoted from the level of village amateur dancing club to the representative of Soviet Ukraine, and Mashkin became a celebrity. Mykhailo Krechko (1925-1996), who served as the conductor of the state-sponsored regional choir [Zakarpatskyi Khor]³²⁸ between 1954-1969, described Mashkin as a romantic hero, who was a “spokesman for the creative power of the people.” For him, Mashkin embodied “the force that gives birth to musicians, creators of songs, storytellers, craftsmen” and when he was playing on a squeezebox (or accordion), accompanying his songs, “he looked like a torch with burning eyes.”³²⁹ Local newspapers still remember this:

The popularity of Mashkin was extremely large, and his songs became hits [shliahery]. They were transmitted on the radio several times a day. He was promoted by oblast, republican, whole-union newspapers and magazines. Based on examples of his artistic work, grew all important folk and amateur collectives that are still known in the region.³³⁰

People like Mashkin in western Ukraine were exemplary Soviet imaginative workers, who promoted the idea of creative working-class people. *Borzhava*, the dance collective led by

³²⁶ “Reports” (Lviv Television and Radio Committee, 1971), Fond R-1357, Opys 1, Sprava 1186, DALO, The State Archive of Lviv Region.

³²⁷ I mean here preoccupation with ethnographic culture and history, which even though supported by officials, could lead to undesirably strong affiliations and even nationalism.

³²⁸ This choir was founded by Soviet powers in September 1945, soon after this region was liberated from Nazi occupants. It had a title *Zakarpattia Ensemble of Song and Dance* [Zakarpatskyi Ansambl Pisni I Tantsiu], in 1947 became a ‘folk choir’ and in 1959 this collective as part of regional philharmonics was acknowledged as ‘honored collective of UkrSSR’ [zasluzhenyi kolektyv URSR]. Current title of this professional artistic collective is *Honored Academic Transcarpathian Folk Choir*.

³²⁹ Yurii Turianytsia, “Perervana pisnia Mykhaila Mashkina,” *Uzhhorod*, January 28, 2010, 2 (574) edition.

³³⁰ Turianytsia.

Mashkin, involved and made an artist every seventh person at the local wood processing factory. These people belonged to the large family of Soviet amateur artists, whose number exceeded 11 million in the late 1960s.³³¹ Ukrainian amateurs constituted half of this number. They were symbolically guided by professional Soviet artists, and the goal of their creativity was an envisaged global victory of socialism. L'viv Television and radio often promoted such folk and semi-professional amateur creativity as an ideology in their programming.

Even though amateurs and folk artists produced an image of flourishing socialist culture in the 1960s, which mobilized more than three million Ukrainian artists in the Republican Festival of Amateur Creativity in 1967,³³² many intellectuals were dissatisfied. Ukrainian folk songs were often heard on Soviet radio and television, but the national language was disappearing from everyday use. Joshua First admits that during the Thaw period intellectuals in Kyiv had a feeling of loss.³³³ Without a national language and other ethnic features, which were slowly vanishing, there were no other markers for Ukrainians.³³⁴ Thus, in the 1960s, Ukrainian nationality was often not an issue of rights and political representation, but rather a question of conscious self-rediscovery,³³⁵ which had both personal and collective meaning. The Carpathian Mountains played a vital role in this rediscovery, and its exotic peoples and picturesque culture were frequently shown by media as conforming to the Stalinist folklore of national representations.³³⁶ They proved that the Ukrainian national substance was not a stereotype, but was preserved in remote places, undisturbed by Soviet modernization.

1.6. Making the new Carpathian myth: the birth of *Chervona Ruta*

The audio-visual field in the USSR saw a crucial progression in the 1960s. Already in the mid-1960s, it was enough to have a single broadcast on Central Television to make a singer or a song popular in remote areas of the huge territory of the USSR. For instance, the famous opera singer Mykola Kondratiuk admitted that performing the Ukrainian song *Na Dolyni Tuman* [Fog on the Valley] on Central Television's show *Little Blue Flame* [Goluboi Ogoniek] in Moscow in 1965 made it instantly popular. As he described this media phenomenon: "It was enough to sing a song [*Fog on the Valley*] in the Moscow's *Little Blue Flame* television

³³¹ Leonid Shekhtman, *Iskusstvo Millionov* (Moscow: Znaniie, 1968), 7. In 1961 L'viv region had 1192 clubs (with houses of culture the number was 1612), where functioned 3734 amateur collectives, that comprised in total 150 thousand participants. In 1975 the number of clubs increased to 1506 and amateur artists grew to 290 thousands, see: *Narysy Istorii Lvivskoi Oblasnoi Partiiinoi Organizatsii*, 210, 291.

³³² Shekhtman, *Iskusstvo Millionov*, 68. In 1978 the total number of artists involved in amateur creativity in Soviet Ukraine was almost 5 million people, to include children the number was even bigger, 7 million.

³³³ First, *Ukrainian Cinema* (2014), 8.

³³⁴ In contrast to those racial qualities characteristic to people from Caucasian or Central Asian republics, see: Erik Rattazzi Scott, "Familiar Strangers: The Georgian Diaspora in the Soviet Union" (PhD Thesis, Berkeley, University of California, 2011).

³³⁵ In nationalist discourse, the real Ukrainian is a conscious person, who re-discovers his/her identity through active deeds and maintains this identity. Similarly, communists envisaged a real Soviet person to be conscious and active.

³³⁶ See on Carpathians as a place of ethnographic authenticity, which was promoted by Ukrainian cinema, First, *Ukrainian Cinema* (2014), 78–79.

show, to come to Sakhalin [near Japan] right after the show and the local audience demanded from you to sing *Fog on the Valley!*"³³⁷

In the late 1960s, Soviet regional television was able to not only visualise local *Heimat* through new technology and record popular songs, but it also had the power to create new cultural myths. In 1968, Chernivtsi television sound editor Vasyl Strikhovych recorded the song *Snowflakes Are Falling* [Snizhynky padaiut] by the newly created popular beat band Smerichka from Vyzhnytsia (Chernivtsi region). He had been preparing the new year's amusement programme and invited local bands to play their songs, which was normal practice for regional television. Though the song was good, the young soloist Vasyl Zinkevych's (born 1945) voice was trembling and the sound editor and ensemble leader Dutkovskiy decided to replace him.³³⁸ Producers invited another young amateur composer and singer, Volodymyr Ivasiuk, who studied medicine in Chernivtsi. Thus, from 1968, 'amateurish' Ivasiuk, who did not belong to any of the established Soviet music associations, developed friendly and professional relations with both Dutkovskiy (Smerichka) and Strikhovych (Chernivtsi television) bringing them to review his musical compositions.

In 1970, Ivasiuk brought to Strikhovych³³⁹ his two songs, *Chervona Ruta* [Red Rue] and *Vodograi* [Fountain]. Rather simple and in common time, the songs attracted the attention of the sound editor and both artists (the professional music editor and the amateur composer) produced new sound recordings. This was not the first time Strikhovych used compositions produced by Ivasiuk. In 1969 he had already broadcast the song *Ya Pidu v Daleki Hory* [I Will Go to the High Mountains] on Ukrainian television's entertainment programme *Kamerton Dobroho Nastroiu*.³⁴⁰ In September 1970,³⁴¹ Strikhovych invited Ivasiuk (as an amateur artist) to perform his two songs together with another amateur singer, Elena Kuznetsova,³⁴² for a live broadcast to Kyiv (see **Figure 1.3.**).

³³⁷ Yulia Lazarevska, "Na dolyni tuman," Television Programme, *Pisni sertsia. (Documentary series about the history of ten famous Ukrainian songs)* (Kyiv, Ukraine: 1+1, Kontakt studio, 2004), 2 min. 20 sec-3 min. of broadcasting, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=RhNEsAkaHlk>.

³³⁸ Vasyl Strikhovych, "Spohady," Commemorative web page of Volodymyr Ivasiuk, <http://www.ivasyuk.org.ua> (blog), accessed April 26, 2016, http://www.ivasyuk.org.ua/names.php?lang=uk&id=vasyl_strihovych.

³³⁹ In this period Strikhovych was an experienced musician and sound mixer, who produced records for such famous Soviet music stars as Muslim Magomaev, Iosif Kobzon, Edita Piakeva or Radmila Karaklaich, see: Paraskoviia Nechaieva, "Dohana za... 'Chervonu Rutu,'" *Den [Day]*, January 13, 2006, 1 edition, sec. Kultura, <http://day.kyiv.ua/uk/article/kultura/dogana-za-chervonu-rutu>.

³⁴⁰ Paraskoviia Nechaieva, "Spivavtor 'Chervonoi Ruty' Vasyl Strikhovych vidznachaie Iuvilei," *Den [Day]*, December 23, 2010, 236 edition, sec. Kultura.

³⁴¹ A month before, in August 1970, Smerichka and Chernivtsi television produced a first 'video-clip' in natural settings of Kosiv (Ivano-Frankivsk region), where Ivasiuk has met a young soloist, the future star of Ukrainian ethno-pop Nazarii Yaremchuk, see: Zhan Makarenko, "Spohady," Commemorative web page of Volodymyr Ivasiuk, <http://www.ivasyuk.org.ua> (blog), accessed May 2, 2016, http://www.ivasyuk.org.ua/names.php?lang=uk&id=zhan_makarenko.

³⁴² The music was performed by the ensemble *Karpaty* directed by Valerii Hromtsev (born 1949), later known music producer from Chernivtsi and Lutsk and the founder of multiple vocal and instrumental ensembles in Ukrainian SSR.

It was for the same programme *Kamerton*, but this time the sound editor did not agree (the screenplay was signed by officials but Ivasiuk's songs were not in it) the line-up of the concert with the senior officials. Such disobedience (normally unintentional) often happened in the settings of regional television during its formative years. However, the next day the head of Chernivtsi Television and Radio Committee invited Strikhovych for a hard talk: he had received complaints from the regional branch of The Union of Amateur Composers.³⁴³ Semi-official amateur composers were outraged that Chernivtsi television broadcast two songs by a composer who did not belong to any of the existing official unions. Yet, despite the negative reaction on the regional level, the songs attracted positive responses and thousands of letters from all over Ukraine and the performance from Chernivtsi received a distinction in Kyiv. Hence, regional and national television made Ivasiuk a national star.³⁴⁴ When the popular magazine *Ukraina* published the verses and notes of his song in 1971, he admitted that the authorship should be divided between him and professionals from regional television.³⁴⁵

Figure 1.3. Volodymyr Ivasiuk and Olena Kuznetsova perform the song *Chervona Ruta* for the first time, September 1970.³⁴⁶



This song by amateur composer Volodymyr Ivasiuk and Vasyl Strikhovych (Chernivtsi Television) had its first live broadcast to Kyiv and to the national audience in Ukraine from Chernivtsi's main square. This broadcast made the song popular with the Ukrainian audience and it spread to all Soviet stations. Thus, the song was produced at television studio, broadcast by regional television to a national audience, and promoted through a television musical. It was a media phenomenon.

The young amateur composer offered his songs to be performed by Smerichka, which became famous and was acknowledged with the laureate diploma in Moscow in 1971. Smerichka became the finalist of the first television contest show *Song of the Year-1971*, which was showed on Central Television in December 1971 and January 1972. This way, the song *Chervona Ruta* was aired by Soviet Central Television's entertainment show and, as this was the first ever Soviet song contest, the song became a union-wide hit. Smerichka continued its way to socialist television-music glory and the ensemble received two

³⁴³ Strikhovych received an official reproval for his misbehavior, but later the head of television committee changed it on official distinction.

³⁴⁴ Strikhovych, "Spohady (Strikhovych), http://www.ivasyuk.org.ua/names.php?lang=uk&id=vasyl_strihovych."

³⁴⁵ Nechaieva, "Vasyl Strikhovych vidznachaie Iuvilei (2010)."

³⁴⁶ Performers were singing in front of the Chernivtsi Opera House, built during Austrian rule by the proud inhabitants (predominantly Jews) of the provincial imperial city.

distinctions in union-wide television shows: *Song of the Year-1972* (song *Vodograi* composed by Ivasiuk) and *Allo We Are Looking for Talents!* (song *Horianka* composed by Dutkovskii).

In the summer of 1971, before the all-union success in Moscow, the L'viv and Chernivtsi television studios created the television musical film *Chervona Ruta* in cooperation with Ukrtefilm. The screenplay of the film envisaged the story of a worker from the Donbas industrial region searching for love in the mountains (see Chapter 3.).³⁴⁷ This television musical was hugely popular in Ukraine. It was broadcast right before the final show of *Song of the Year* in Moscow, after which the winning song would inevitably enjoy 'global' success. In 1971, the vocalist Sofia Rotaru, who played the main character in the television film, and the musician Anatolii Yevdokymenko created an ensemble at Chernivtsi Philharmonics called *Chervona Ruta* (see Chapter 8.).³⁴⁸

<p>Ty pryznajsya meni, Zvidky v tebe ti chary, Ya bez tebe vsi dni U poloni pechali. Mozhe, des' u lisax Ty char-zillya shukala, Sonce-rutu znajshla I mene zcharuvala!</p>	<p>Just admit it to me. You're controlling my feelings. Though my heart was in pain With your spell it is healing. In the forest you knew Of the midsummer flower That when kissed by the sun Has a magical power.</p>
<p>Excerpt from <i>Chervona Ruta</i> [Red Rue] (1968) by Volodymyr Ivasiuk, English adaptation by Stepan Pasizcnyk.</p>	

By this time *Chervona Ruta* was an iconic music hit in Soviet Ukraine, performed in the east and the west and even by drunken hooligans.³⁴⁹ As William Risch argues, this song united

³⁴⁷ "The Production of Film *Chervona Ruta*" (Ukrtefilm, Kyiv, 1971), TsDALMU, Fond 1104, Opys 1, Sprava 396, TsDALMU, Central State Archive of Literature and Arts of Ukraine.

³⁴⁸ Rotaru was a Romanian girl from Bukovina village and Ievdokymenko belonged to Ukrainian party official's family from Chernivtsi, together they created an imaginary Soviet family, international and national at the same time. Ievdokymenko for the first time saw Rotaru on the cover of Ukrainian magazine *Ukraina* (as a winner of amateur song festival) while he was serving military service in Siberia and since this moment he desired to marry this girl. The important figure to foster Rotaru's all-Union music career was Chernivtsi Philharmonic's impresario Phalic Pinkhas (1909-1985), see: "'Zamdirektora' Falik," Internet newspaper My Zdes [We are here], [Http://Newswe.Com](http://Newswe.Com) (blog), 2009, <http://newswe.com/index.php?go=Pages&in=view&id=1781>. He was known Jewish cultural activist, the husband of famous Bukovina actress and popular Jewish singer in the Yiddish language Sidi Tal (1912-1983, real name Sorele Birkental), see: Asya Vaisman, "Sidi Tal and Yiddish Culture in Czernowitz in the 1940s-1980s," Commemorative web page of Jewish community from Czernowitz, [Http://Czernowitz.Ehpes.Com/](http://Czernowitz.Ehpes.Com/) (blog), accessed May 11, 2016, <http://czernowitz.ehpes.com/stories/vaisman/vaisman.html>; "Sidi Tal (the 100th anniversary of birthday)," DACHO, State Archive of Chernivtsi Region, <http://cv.archives.gov.ua> (blog), 2012, http://cv.archives.gov.ua/sidi_tal.html.

³⁴⁹ Risch, *The Ukrainian West* (2011), 232. Similar current phenomena critics call media viruses, see for instance: Douglas Rushkoff, *Media Virus! Hidden Agendas in Popular Culture* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1996).

different generations of Ukrainians and managed to bridge local melodies with western music trends. The Soviet Ukrainian poet Roman Kudlyk recalled that this song:

Literally flooded all around and sounded daily on radio and television. It was heard from variety stages [Estrada], from opened windows of apartments and just on the street, it was being sung by the sellers of ice cream, taxi drivers, and teachers, and porters at the train station.³⁵⁰

Moreover, it was performed by young people, like Nazarii Yaremchuk, Vasyl Zinkevych and Sofia Rotaru.³⁵¹ It was the song of the young Soviet Ukrainian generation which matured in the 1970s.

The following year, in 1972, Rotaru and the band *Chervona Ruta* participated in a tour of socialist Poland to popularize new Soviet music (the programme was called *Pesni i Tantsy Strany Sovetov* [Songs and Dances of the Country of Soviets]) and she also performed for the Soviet cosmonauts at the Baikonur. The latter performance was apparently proposed by the Chernivtsi Philharmonic orchestra producer Falik Pinkus (1909-1985),³⁵² who strove to establish working relations with the Soviet cosmonauts. In 1973, she received the First Prize at the international (mostly socialist) song contest of *Golden Orpheus* in Burgas (Bulgaria),³⁵³ performing the song *Moy Gorod* [My city] about Chisinau. Following her success in the Balkans, Rotaru won the first prize singing Ivasiuk's song at the international music contest *Sopot International Song Festival* in Poland in 1974,³⁵⁴ marking the growing popularity of Ukrainian music (from Bukovina) not only in the USSR but also in eastern Europe more

³⁵⁰ Roman Kudlyk, "Do Rivnia Vichnykh Partytur," Commemorative web page of Volodymyr Ivasiuk, *Ivasiuk.Org* (blog), 2004, http://ivasiuk.org.ua/names.php?lang=uk&id=roman_kudlyk.

³⁵¹ Rotaru was a Moldovan girl from Bukovina therefore Moldovans considered her as their national singer, and often invited to perform for Moldovan public. The song *Moi Gorod* performed by Rotaru featured in the Soviet film about Chisinau and became an anthem for the city.

³⁵² Falik was a husband of Sidy Thal, also known as Sorele Birkental (1912-1983). She was a prominent, popular Jewish singer and actress in the Yiddish language, born in Czernivtsi.

³⁵³ *The Golden Orpheus* [Zlatniyat Orfey] was an international and Bulgarian song contest, held annually between 1965 and 1999 in different concert halls located in *Sunny Beach* (Bulgaria). In 1975 the other rival to Rotaru female star of Soviet Estrada Alla Pugacheva received the Grand Prix of the festival.

³⁵⁴ The first *Sopot International Song Festival* was initiated and organised in Sopot and Gdansk in 1961 by Polish musicians Władysław Szpilman (the hero for the character of Roman Polanski's film *The Pianist*) and Szymon Zakrzewski. In the early 1970s Polish song contest in Sopot was extensively broadcasted by Polish television and since Soviet Union was not a part of *European Broadcasting Union* (and could not participate in *Eurovision* song contest) it initiated its own song contest under supervision of socialist *Intervision*. Between 1977 and 1980 *Sopot International Song Festival*, was renamed into the *Intervision Song Contest* and was still held in Sopot. Unlike the *Eurovision Song Contest*, the *Sopot International Music Festival* often changed its formulas to pick a winner and offered many different contests for its participants (through most of its history the main prize at the festival has been *Amber Nightingale*). The festival was closed due to *Solidarnosc* movement and political calamities of the 1980s in Gdansk and reopened few years later with the title *Sopot Music Festival*, see: Steve Rosenberg, "The Cold War Rival to Eurovision," Information web portal, *Bbc.Com* (blog), May 14, 2012, <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-18006446>. In recent years Russian government decided to revive the festival, see: Anthony Granger, "Russia: Intervision to Return This October," *Eurovision* song contest web page, *Http://Eurovoix.Com* (blog), May 23, 2014, <http://eurovoix.com/2014/05/23/russia-intervision-to-return-this-october/>.

widely.³⁵⁵ What was the reason for such astonishing success in the USSR and abroad? Kyiv musicologist Oleksandr Riznyk admits that there are no clear aesthetic markers that would differentiate Ivasiuk's songs from many similar works of the time.³⁵⁶ The text of the song referred to romantic ideas of love, the melody had distinct folk-sounding and the rhythm had a stronger beat section, allowing listeners to have a bodily response.³⁵⁷ Many bands in Soviet Ukraine of the time performed the same way.

The phenomenon of Ivasiuk's song is hard to grasp without understanding the context of socialist romanticism in this period. Coming from the family of the Bukovina writer Mykhailo Ivasiuk (a member of the Soviet Writers' union), he had a tentative attitude to texts and literary Romanticism, a predominant style of Ukrainian prose and poetry since the nineteenth century. As a young man, Ivasiuk found in the library of his father an edition of folk songs (*Kolomyiky*, 1905-1907) collected in Carpathians by the famous Galician ethnographer Volodymyr Hnatiuk (1871-1926).³⁵⁸ In this book he discovered a mythical story about the red rue (chervona ruta, rhododendron myrtifolium), a flower that blossoms rarely and those who find the blooming flower find love and happiness. In the summer of 1970, the film crew from Dovzhenko studio (Kyiv) filmed a movie in Bukovina that would later become one of the most well-known examples of Ukrainian poetic cinema.³⁵⁹ According to legend, during this expedition one of the villagers told Ivasiuk the myth about the red rue.

So, the young amateur composer and poet produced the text and composed a melody that would become the epitome of Soviet Ukrainian romanticism. The work developed over several years, from his encounter with Hnatiuk's kolomyiky (meeting ethnographic content) in 1968, to being captivated by the myth in the Carpathians, to finally hybridizing the old story with new music in 1970. This final stage was inconceivable without television sound editors and reached its ultimate peak through national broadcasting (from Bukovina to Kyiv and to the whole country in 1970) and union-wide broadcasting (*Pesnia Goda* in Moscow in 1971).

The work of Volodymyr Ivasiuk in the late 1960s was reminiscent of similar activities by the nineteenth-century intelligentsia, described by Miroslav Hroch as Phase B of

³⁵⁵ In 1973 Rotaru also was awarded the *Merited Artist of the Ukrainian SSR* [Zasluzhenyi artyst]. Later, the songs which she performed in Romanian language *Codru* and *Moy gorod*, became soundtracks for the Soviet music film *Vesenniye Sozvuchiya – 73*.

³⁵⁶ Olexandr Riznyk, "Nerealizovanyi pop-idol chy spivets muchenyk (Volodymyr Ivasiuk)," in *Heroi i Vidomi Liudy Ukraïnskoi Kultury*, ed. Olexandr Hrytsenko (Kyiv: Ukrainian Center for Cultural Studies, 1999), 259, <http://litopys.org.ua/heroes/hero11.htm>.

³⁵⁷ Sometime this music is defined in terms of *folk revival* (see: Fred Woods, *Folk Revival: The Rediscovery of a National Music* (Blandford, 1979). *roots revival* (see: Michael Bakan, *World Music: Traditions and Transformations* (McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2007). or see an international project <http://roots-revival.com>) or folk-rock, though in Ukraine this popular music style still is not researched on academic level.

³⁵⁸ Pylyp Iuryk and Vira Sereda, "Chervona ruta: 45 rokiv pid vitrylom ukrainskoi pisni," Writers' web portal, *pilipyurik.com* (blog), September 16, 2015, http://pilipyurik.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=664:q-q&catid=1:latest-news.

³⁵⁹ This was a film *The White Bird Marked with Black*, directed by Iurii Illienko, starring Ivan Mykolaichuk, the native of Bukovina famous Ukrainian film actor.

nationalism.³⁶⁰ He actively used cultural materials collected by ethnographers in order to create and promote new forms of national culture. In his search, Ivasiuk and other Ukrainian writers and poets of the 1960s were not looking for the historical past or religion, but rather for mythical infinity. His poetic story about true love was connected to the Carpathians and its folklore. At the same time, the simple verses of the mountain's magic flower had the power of myth, turning reality into a fairy-tale. Since Ivasiuk had great charisma and performed this song on television several times — on the Ukrainian national channel (September 1970) and Soviet Central Television (December 1971) — he himself became a romantic idol for the Ukrainian audience.³⁶¹

As Ivasiuk's father recalled in the 1980s, *Chervona Ruta* "was a kind of explosion of longing for something higher, purer in life,"³⁶² and this explosion of higher, romantic feelings was produced by Soviet television. Television was present in the process of producing and mediating the song: a romantic composer brought it to the professional sound editor, together they produced the content, it was then broadcast regionally and nationally, and finally television made it known across the whole USSR and eastern Europe. Thus, a new *Chervona Ruta* myth was born in Ukraine in the early 1970s. It was not only a myth about pure love but rather a story about successful Soviet Ukrainian popular media.

Conclusion

1. Between roughly 1957-1965, Soviet regional television had a certain degree of autonomy, since central officials could not have total control and were unable to properly synchronize regional and central programmes. At this stage, when officials built extensive media infrastructure to broadcast to all regions of the Soviet Union, all programmes, produced locally or elsewhere, were transmitted on the First Channel of Soviet television. Often local media producers had the power to swap important centralised broadcasts for their own local production, as there was no possibility of controlling the situation. At that time, there was no national broadcasting in Ukraine and regional studios had almost the same treatment as the big studio, located in Kyiv.
2. Those who managed regional television in L'viv had a good familiarity with the area and its culture. In the western part of Soviet Ukraine, the new workforce hired to run editorials frequently came from the nationally-minded local intelligentsia, many of whom returned from the Stalinist camps in the 1950s. In the context of de-Stalinization, they produced specific networks that united local professional music and amateur arts with transnational tendencies brought about by Soviet Central Television.
3. During the 1960s, regional television developed its programming to reflect the local character (often framed as "local colour") and socialist advancements, organised around important information and news. State officials attempted to reserve local news for the regional media, national news for Kyiv and international and union-wide news for

³⁶⁰ Păltineanu, "Miroslav Hroch's Model of Small Nation-Formation and Begriffsgeschichte," 815.

³⁶¹ Riznyk, "Nerealizovanyi pop-idol chy spivets muchenyk (1999)," 273.

³⁶² Mykhailo Ivasiuk, "Monoloh Pered Oblychchiam Syna," *Zhovten*, no. 9 (September 1988): 19–60.

Moscow. Thus, regional television developed close connections with the local industry and culture, which often awoke strong patriotic feelings, frequently reinforcing regional pride. The Carpathian Mountains played an important role in this regional imagination. As had occurred in the Habsburg Monarchy in the late nineteenth century, these mountains were rediscovered in the 1950s and 1960s by various groups of Soviet intellectuals, poets, writers, and visual artists, including television editors.

4. Specific features of local and regional television, such as sound recording, made this institution closely connected to amateur, semi-professional, and professional music culture in the region. Television sound editors not only discovered local talents but also trained them to use technology (like electronic microphones) in their performances. In many cases, television was not only a magnifying glass for local culture or an intermediary between established artistic circles and the Soviet audience, but also a co-producer of popular media content. This cooperation was especially obvious in the case of the success of *Chervona Ruta*, which was produced on regional TV and spread through television to the national as well as the transnational audience. In such a situation, regional television as a public space shaped symbolic media-rituals, where people, like Volodymyr Ivasiuk, bridged the “lower communitas” (and their folk culture) with “upper” social structures (and the new urban population).³⁶³ In addition, the mythical power of a flower promised to bring love (*Chervona Ruta*), or in other words, to bring back the important life’s constituent.
5. In the 1960s popular media-culture in the UkrSSR strived to answer to the important for socialism question – “what is the meaning of life?” The longing for the ideal often appeared in Europe as a result of modern urban life that brought alienation. Katerina Clark states that it was Marx who proposed communism as a solution to the alienation and many east-European intelligentsias “had been attracted by this as a scientific solution to [...] the manifold social contradictions.”³⁶⁴ However, by the late 1960s, the Soviet intelligentsia seemed to once again doubt the nature of modern life, this time with a renewed sense of loss. This sense of alienation was shared by those in the urban settlements near the Carpathians, who similarly experienced modern Soviet life and its rapid industrial advancement. The feeling loss of ethnic identity, I believe, was the predominant reason why some Ukrainian songs became so popular in the 1970s.

³⁶³ For the dichotomy between social structures and communitas see: Victor Turner, “Liminality and Communitas,” in *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, vol. 94–113 (Chicago: Aldine Publishing, 1969).

³⁶⁴ Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual*, 3rd Ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 245–46.

Chapter 2. Integration, concentration and consolidation: from regional to national media, 1965-1972

Introduction

In the 1960s, culture and politics in the UkrSSR combined ethnic romanticism with socialist pragmatism. To be effective, the statecraft of the socialist empire required constant reorganization and some decentralization. The socialist party-state developed an extensive media infrastructure stretching from the far east to newly sovietized west, and large Soviet television centres were connected to one another by cables or through smaller retransmission centres. Even though these institutions were technically connected to the centre, Moscow could not realistically impose full control over all its regions. Therefore, between 1957-1967, the USSR developed Central Television in Moscow and a set of regional media in various republics, which often had certain autonomy on the ground.

This system had the centre (Moscow) and semi-national broadcasters (regional studios), but in the early 1960s, there was no Ukrainian television as a unified national enterprise. There was a republican studio in Kyiv which slowly strove to consolidate its national programming, but it was lacking resources. From the mid-1950s to mid-1960s regional television studios in Soviet Ukraine (and the USSR in general) had autonomy but could not really advance. They were supposed to produce local programming and to rebroadcast centrally made programmes, but it was difficult to maintain good quality everywhere. In the second half of the 1960s, Moscow officials focused less on media development in the peripheries and more on the centres. In the 1970s, the USSR did not manage to reorganise its complicated regional media system into a more democratic, thriving, and productive enterprise. After Sergei Lapin became the head of the state media committee in Moscow in the early 1970s, the main plan was the continuous consolidation of programming around Central Television. Moscow became the main producer and trend-setter of high quality cultural and entertainment television programmes for the Soviet people, while regional studios had to focus on issues of the socialist economy or on local news and cultural “colour”.

Like Moscow, the Ukrainian republican centre, even though lacking in resources, implemented centralisation with the aim of creating its own national programming. This television programming was achieved in the mid-1960s by concentrating regional media content on the republican channel, implementing this way technically complicated and ideologically important enterprise. Media professionals in Kyiv had to synchronise live and recorded regional broadcastings on one television channel, which required confident scheduling and technical proficiency. This chapter consequently argues that Soviet Ukrainian television developed steadily, first building its regional infrastructure (1957-1967), before then developing its own brand (1965-1975). What was initially a regional and republican media enterprise slowly turned into a unified instrument of national imagination.

2.1. The organizational scaffolding of regional television

The history of Soviet media in Western Ukraine starts after the occupation of Polish Lwów in 1939. The Soviet powers established the Regional Radio Committee [Oblasnyi Radio Komitet] in now Ukrainian L'viv. This committee, together with other Soviet printed media, used widely available media-infrastructure that had been left over by the Poles. When the Soviet Army returned to the region in July 1944, the work of the Regional Radio Committee was re-launched under a new title, the L'viv Regional Committee of Radio Installation and Radiobroadcast [L'vivs'kyi oblasnyi komitet radiofikatsii i radiomovlennia].³⁶⁵ In August 1947, the L'viv Regional Committee of Radio Installation and Radiobroadcast was reorganised into the L'viv Regional Committee of Radio Information [L'vivskyi oblasnyi komitet radio-informatsii] and this title lasted until 1953.³⁶⁶

From January to December 1954, this committee functioned as a division of radio at the L'viv Regional Department of Culture and in 1955 it was reorganised into the Regional Editorial of Radio Information [Oblasna redaktsiia radio-informatsii] within the same department of culture. In 1955, regional officials not only renamed the media committee into editorial, but also introduced a plan to build a new radio and television technical centre in L'viv. On the 16 October 1957, the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR and the Central Committee of the Communist Party issued a decree (other Soviet republics issued similar documents) regarding the creation of the State Committee for Radio Broadcasting and Television, directly subordinated (in the case of L'viv region) to the Executive Committee [Vykonkom] of the L'viv Regional Council of Workers' Deputies. The 1957 decree did not anticipate intervening into the procedure of Soviet television, its methods and aesthetics, but prescribed what should be broadcasted. It clearly stated that Soviet Television was an *instrument* to propagate the position of Communist Party as an organiser and initiator of the victories of the Soviet people.³⁶⁷ Evans states that the number of television sets in the Soviet Union reached 1 million in 1957 which encouraged officials to realize an important role of Soviet television media.³⁶⁸

In May 1957, to avoid managerial interference from the Ministry of Culture and to prepare more effectively for the international festival, the State Committee for Radio Broadcasting and Television was reorganised and subordinated to the Council of Ministers [Gosudarstvennyi komitet po radioveshchaniiu i televideniiu pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR]. The Central Committee of the Communist Party also created a special radio and television sector,

³⁶⁵ According to the decree 'On Radio Service for the Population of the Region', issued by the Regional Committee of Communist Party on 16th of August 1944, the minimum regional broadcasting time for that period was four hours per day, see: Volodymyr Kliukvak, "Lvivske oblasne radio u 40h - 60h rokakh XX st.," The State Archive of Lviv Region, accessed May 4, 2016, <http://www.archivelviv.gov.ua/materials/publications/articles/lvivske-oblasne-radio-u-40-kh-60-kh-rokakh-khkh-st/>.

³⁶⁶ "DALO (1971), Fond R-1357, Opys 1, Sprava 1186," Arkush 42.

³⁶⁷ "Orders and decrees" (Lviv Television and Radio Committee, October 1957), Fond P-1357, Opys 1, Sprava 346, DALO, The State Archive of Lviv Region (Lviv, Ukraine).

³⁶⁸ Evans, "From Truth to Time (2010)," 26. See also: Evans, *Between Truth and Time* (2016).

which was intended to supervise the ideological branch. Similar executive sectors soon appeared in the republican centres, reflecting the growth in the television audience. The renaming and reorganisation of the state media committee reflected the ambiguity of the Soviet powers in relation to the new media. It was not clear how television would find its place within the infrastructure of Soviet culture (theatre, cinema culture, practices of reading and collective entertainment), political communication (propaganda) and within Soviet homes (see **Table 2.1.**).

Table 2.1. The change of official titles of the state media committee that supervised television and radio in the Ukrainian SSR. ³⁶⁹		
1933 – 15.08.1949	The Committee for Radio Installation and Radio Broadcasting at the Council of People’s Commissars of Ukrainian SSR	Structural division at the regional government
15.08.1949 – 08.05.1953	The Committee for Radio Information at the Council of Ministers of Ukrainian SSR	Radio as prevalent media for propaganda
08.05.1953 – 16.08.1957	The Main Office of Radio Information at the Department of Culture of Ukrainian SSR (Ukrradio)	Radio as part of Soviet culture
16.08.1957 – 12.07.1962	The Committee for Radio Broadcasting and Television at the Council of Ministers of Ukrainian SSR	Television as part of the state apparatus
12.06.1962 – 1965	The State Committee at the Council of Ministers of Ukrainian SSR for Radio Broadcasting and Television	The media committee received higher status
1965 –1970	The Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting at the Council of Ministers of Ukrainian SSR	The status of the committee got lower
31.12.1970	The First Secretary of Communist Party Leonid Brezhnev greeted the Soviet People on television making the first new year speech in the USSR	
1970 – 1986	The State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting at the Council of Ministers of Ukrainian SSR (Derzhkometelradio since 1979)	Reorganisation of Soviet media under Sergei Liapin
1986-1991	Title the same, but reform took place	<i>Perestroika</i>

There were six months between the central government’s May decree and the UkrSSR republicans’ October decree in 1957, which shifted television away from the domain of culture under direct governmental supervision (creation of the special State Committee for Radio Broadcasting and Television). This move indicates that reorganisation in the Soviet media was initiated in Moscow in the spring of 1957 as the preparatory mission for the sixth World Festival of Youth and Students that took place in the Soviet capital in July of the same year. The development of Soviet television was widely encouraged in order to use the media to disseminate information about various international events. After the successful completion of the youth festival,³⁷⁰ the new organisational structure for Soviet radio and television was established in all republics and autonomous republics of the USSR in the

³⁶⁹ Since 1971 the official title of regional committee in L’viv was the State Committee of L’viv Regional Executive Office for Television and Radio [Derzhavnyi Komitet Telebachennia I Radio Vykonkomu L’vivskoi Oblasnoii Rady Deputativ Trudiashchikh].

³⁷⁰ Pia Koivunen, “The 1957 Moscow Youth Festival: Propagating a New, Peaceful Image of the Soviet Union.,” in *Soviet State and Society Under Nikita Khrushchev*, ed. Jeremy Smith and Melanie Ilic, 2009, 46–65.

autumn of 1957. But the first important document issued by the Soviet Communist Party that prescribed the future development of media and precise tasks for Soviet television, was published as late as the 26 January 1960.³⁷¹

The International Youth Festival (1957)³⁷² had a major impact on television development in the 1950s. Similarly, the broadcasting of Yuri Gagarin's celebration in 1961 worked as a media-event that was highly broadcasted by Soviet media. National and transnational events broadcasted by media were part of socialist party-state reform, initiated by Nikita Khrushchev. Khrushchev's internal policies, which combined experiments and liberalisation in the public sphere with a certain form of autocracy, produced many conflictual issues for Soviet statecraft.³⁷³ But they also produced Soviet media-people. In this period, there were already 2.5 million registered television sets in the USSR, 4.5 million radio receivers and more than 7 million radio connections (wired radio) in private apartments, thus turning the Soviet people into an increasingly media-driven people.

The L'viv Television studio was subordinated to the regional media committee, namely the L'viv Committee for Radio Broadcasting and Television³⁷⁴ that followed the structure of the same committee within the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR. The highest hierarchical Ukrainian committee consequently reported to the identical committee within the Council of Ministers of the USSR. Later the central media committee in Moscow was renamed into Gosteleradio, and in Ukrainian it was Derzhkomteleradio.³⁷⁵ Two major institutions managed Soviet media in the USSR: the respective governments (central and national within republics) and the ideological departments of the Communist Party. There was an additional institution – Glavlit, which, since its introduction in the early 1920s, was designed to check programme scenarios and media texts for possible errors or mistakes. However, as Ellen Mickiewicz indicates, media professionals had effective self-censorship.³⁷⁶ In a country where party members comprised around 10 percent of the total population, the majority of media professionals (85%) belonged to a professional union, 80 percent of which

³⁷¹ This was the decree "On the future development of Soviet television", see: *KPSS o Sredstvakh Massovoi Informatsii i Propagandy (1987)*, 539–45.

³⁷² Evans, *Between Truth and Time (2016)*, 24–26. In 1957 officials also introduced in Moscow's Central Television 'Letters and Work with the Masses Desk', which was responsible for handling audience requests, which was assumed to influence programming, see: Evans, 52.

³⁷³ Khrushchev was not the first who unsuccessfully tried to reform state apparatus of USSR. Already after 1945 Soviet state managers strived to make system more efficient, see: Yoram Gorlizki, "Anti-Ministerialism and the USSR Ministry of Justice, 1953–56: A Study in Organisational Decline," *Europe-Asia Studies* 48, no. 8 (1996): 1291. But in general organizational mess, which was common for after-war USSR continued in other decades. Weiner, "Robust Revolution to Retiring Revolution: The Life Cycle of the Soviet Revolution, 1945–1968," 215.

³⁷⁴ According to 1957 decree and regulation, it was part of the L'viv regional government, L'viv Vykonkom [Executive Office].

³⁷⁵ "Orders" (Lviv Television and Radio Committee, 1970), Arkush 23, R-1357, Opys 1, Sprava 923, DALO, The State Archive of Lviv Region.

³⁷⁶ Mickiewicz, *Split Signals (1988)*, 22.

were party members.³⁷⁷ It was not any secret that the party considered the media as a crucially important Soviet institution of propaganda and entertainment.

When the major media reorganisation happened in 1957, there were one million television sets in the USSR. Within three years, the number had increased to 2.5 million. The consumption of media equipment in the L'viv region increased continuously from the second half of the 1950s. From 1956 to 1958 urban stores sold 40540 radios and 6000 TV sets in the L'viv province alone.³⁷⁸ Between 1950 and 1960, radio facilities grew in total numbers by 7.2% in cities and by 14.4% in rural areas. In 1960 ownership reached almost 600000 radios and around 23000 TV sets.³⁷⁹ As we see from official statistics, at the time stores sold around 3000 TV sets per year. So, when the regional L'viv Television studio started producing organised television broadcasting in 1960, the number of available in the region TV sets covered only 5% of the population. In order to increase the audience, officials established special rooms for the collective watching of television in urban and rural culture clubs, which was similar to group television watching in Europe, for instance in Milan in the late 1950s.³⁸⁰

In the late 1950s, Soviet TV sets received television signals from seventy TV centres scattered over the vast socialist state. In the early 1960s, the total Soviet television audience apparently comprised 70 million active viewers. This data was provided in the important decree "On the Future Development of Soviet Television", issued by the Communist Party on 29 January, 1960, and aimed at outlining the ideological tasks for the medium.³⁸¹ Communists indicated in this decree that television still failed to innovatively depict Soviet achievements in economic and cultural life, and the "new values of the new people". Therefore, party managers urged that the tasks enumerated of the previous decree (1957) be fulfilled,³⁸² and recommended further encouragement of the decisions from the Party Congresses and Plenums of the Communist Party's Central Committee.

From 1961-1970 the budget that the USSR spent on the television industry rose from 54.8 million roubles to more than 140 million.³⁸³ Television signal covered 70 percent of the territory by March 1969, and in 1979 the audience for Soviet television comprised 200 million active viewers. This period was also important due to the concentration and consolidation that took place in the Soviet media around Central institutions in Moscow. An important

³⁷⁷ Mickiewicz, 22.

³⁷⁸ *Narysy Istorii Lvivskoi Oblasnoi Partiinoi Organisationsii*, 207.

³⁷⁹ *Narysy Istorii Lvivskoi Oblasnoi Partiinoi Organisationsii*, 212.

³⁸⁰ John Foot, "Television and the City: The Impact of Television in Milan, 1954–1960," *Contemporary European History* 8, no. 03 (1999): 379–394.

³⁸¹ The general overview of television regulation can be found here: *KPSS o Sredstvakh Massovoi Informatsii i Propagandy (1987)*, 540–42.

³⁸² On the 16th of October 1957, the Council of Ministers of Ukrainian SSR and the Central Committee of Communist Party issued a decree (similar documents issued other Soviet republics) about the creation of the State Committee for Radio Broadcasting and Television, subordinated (in the case of L'viv region) directly to Executive Committee [Vykonkom] of L'viv Regional Council of Workers Deputies. This decree prescribed major tasks for regional television.

³⁸³ Feigelson, "Soviet Television and Popular Mass Culture in the 1960s," 79.

reform that took place in 1970 finally put an end to the division between technical production (the TV centre, which was subordinated to the Ministry of Communications) and content production (the editorial and creative department). According to this reform, the L'viv television studio (as a content producer) and L'viv Television centre (as technical provider subordinated to the Ministry of Communications) were liquidated and from the 1 July 1971, both became part of the L'viv State Television and Radio Committee. The title of the state television agency was again changed into the Committee of Television and Radio of the L'viv Executive Council. The head of the state media committee in Ukraine issued the Order #187 (17 July 1971) that prescribed a new structure for the regional committee. According to this structure, L'viv Television had the Main Editorial of Artistic Programming that included four sub-editorials: music, literature and drama, youth and children, and programmes for young people. This structure basically remained unchanged until the end of the USSR.

2.2. From concentration to consolidation

The concentration of main Soviet television programming in Moscow in the late 1960s, caused similar tactics of concentration on the republican level, for instance in Kyiv. To increase of programming in the center triggered the permanent decrease and steady stagnation of regional media production. On federal and republican levels, officials and media producers aimed at the concentration and integration of media. After major Soviet regional media infrastructure was developed between 1957 and 1967, officials strove to make them effectively function. To make regional or republican media more effective and to increase the audience, Kyiv introduced integrative policies between the center and periphery.

The term *integration* is an economic concept that describes formal linking arrangements between one organization and another.³⁸⁴ Usually, business researchers identify horizontal (merger or take-over of similar companies) or vertical (linking along the production process) integration, which normally leads to further concentration and consolidation.³⁸⁵ *Concentration* means focusing on a single market or a product. When the company is developing, it needs to go through the *concentration phase*, namely to ensure that the chain of production of a certain product, for instance, a television programme, is coherent and functions well. One needs an operational television centre, transmitters, TV-receivers, studios and editorials [redaktsii], cameras, lights, etc., to produce a television programme. Therefore, the final product, like a television programme, depends on the integration of various intermediaries that are concentrated on the final product.

³⁸⁴ For the example of integration in tourism see: Chris Cooper, *Tourism: Principles and Practice* (Pearson education, 2008).

³⁸⁵ I owe the idea of differentiation between concentration and consolidation to professor Yusef Cassis, see: Youssef Cassis, "Business Consolidation in Western Europe" (Consolidation of Power in Post-1945 Europe: Patterns of Integration after Crises and Upheavals, European University Institute (Florence, Italy), 2017). He generalised the idea of European business consolidation in: Youssef Cassis, "Introduction: A Century of Consolidation in European Banking – General Trends," in *A Century of Banking Consolidation in Europe: The History and Archives of Mergers and Acquisitions*, ed. Manfred Pohl, Teresa Tortella, and Herman Van der Wee (Ashgate Publishing, 2001), 3–17.

When the process of making television programmes functions coherently, but there is still a restraint on further growth, producers need to involve other content makers in one production line, in either vertical or horizontal integration. Thus, media can go through another phase, which can be called *consolidation*. Consolidation is the act of fusing or uniting various producers in a bigger company, in the form of a corporation or a holding. Thus, consolidation is the same as concentration but not around one product or company, but rather around the merger of various companies into one larger organisation. This integration through concentration and consolidation aims at bringing in more revenue (both financial and cultural) by decreasing spending. Similar processes of concentration and consolidation can be seen in the history of Soviet media institutions, which I show in the following arguments.

In the history of the media in the USSR, which is divided into several stages or periods, we may identify a similar cycle of integration. The central Soviet media started to concentrate from 1946-1956, and in the second half of the 1950s there was an immense investment in the regional broadcasting of the Soviet Union. Most of the regional studios in Soviet Ukraine started their work in the late 1950s (the Kyiv studio functioned since 1949, but active work began in the late 1950s) and advanced in the early 1960s, broadcasting on the same First Channel of Soviet Central Television from Moscow. Therefore, federal, national and regional broadcasting coexisted (having different time spots) on the same television channel of Soviet TV. Regional studios often had the power to broadcast their own media content in spite of centrally broadcasted programming. Regional television producers could and often did replace programmes broadcast from Moscow or Kyiv with their own programmes due to various reasons. Similarly, Kyiv or Moscow television programming interfered with important time spots, specially reserved for local broadcasters.

During this period, it was important for Soviet media professionals to foster an extensive network of technological equipment and to establish content developers that would allow important information to be delivered to various places in the USSR. The powers in Moscow were concerned that imperative information needed to be received by the widest spread of places, therefore, they strived to develop regional infrastructure, which rebroadcast central programmes. Thus, the *concentration* of media on the ground, in different regions of the USSR, was a common feature during the late 1950s and early 1960s. However, there were no technical means by which to have various television channels with several forms of specialisation (like in capitalist countries) or to differentiate precise timing for Soviet, national and regional broadcasting. Thus, in the first stage of Soviet media development, all programmes, be they made in Moscow, Kyiv, or various regions of the USSR, would share the same television channel, just having different time slots.

In 1961, when the communist party of the USSR issued programming documents for the further development of Soviet television, Kyiv and Moscow were connected by a transmission cable. Even though this cable allowed the exchange of media content between the two capitals, it was cheaper to not send programmes long distance via cable, but to broadcast them through re-transmitters. Hence, the relay transmission cable between Kyiv

and Moscow was mainly used to transfer Soviet media content to the socialist west, so the capital of Ukraine was rather a transition point and not the final destination.

In the Soviet media model that existed in the early 1960s, Ukrainian television programming, made in Kyiv, had a similar role to other regional studios. In the early 1960s, national Ukrainian programming, broadcast from Kyiv, was only accessible in seven administrative regions out of twenty-five. Therefore, during the *concentration phase* (roughly 1955-1965) regional broadcasting had almost the same importance as national broadcasting, since it played the role of state media in places where the consolidated Ukrainian state television was unreachable. Regional studios, even though integrated into a general network of Soviet media, had a certain degree of autonomy.

During the *concentration phase*, the Ukrainian Soviet state shaped and built its own media network. In 1961, there were 82 powerful television stations and 193 less powerful transmitters in the USSR. With its 15 large studios, the Ukrainian media infrastructure constituted an important share of the whole Soviet media system.³⁸⁶ At the end of the 1960s, Soviet Ukraine had a major republican and 25 regional Radio and Television Committees, 500 programming desks for urban and regional radio broadcasting, 1 major republican, and 15 regional television studios.³⁸⁷ These 15 studios coupled with the 12 powerful and 100 less powerful transmitting stations covered essentially the whole territory of the republic (603700 square kilometres) and broadcast audio-visual content to 70 percent of its population.³⁸⁸

The L'viv studio, whose first broadcast was on 24 December 1957, was among the biggest republic media institutions, covering a territory of around 3.5-4 million people. It covered L'vivska and partially the Ivano-Frankivska, Ternopilska, Chernivetska, and Volynska regions [oblasti] in Ukraine. Its signal also reached the eastern provinces of Poland. Large creative production hubs, like the L'viv Television studio, would become important producers of media content, intended not only for the regional audience but also for national viewers. An important aspect of the L'viv studio was the language of broadcasting, because, in contrast to other large television studios in Soviet Ukraine which had bilingual programming, L'viv mainly produced programmes in the national language.

The *concentration phase* of Soviet Ukrainian media reached its peak in January 1965 when the first all-Ukrainian national programming took place.³⁸⁹ In 1964, the Ukrainian state media committee issued the order "On the Coordination of Work of Ukrainian TV Studios", which required the production of national programming, compiled from regional productions.

³⁸⁶ Ivan Mashchenko, *Khronika Ukraininskoho Radio i Telebachennia v Konteksti Svitovoho Audiovizualnogo Protseu* (Kyiv: Ukraina, 2005), 215.

³⁸⁷ "Orders" (Lviv Television and Radio Committee, May 7, 1969), Arkush 3, Fond P-1357, Opys 1, Sprava 923a, DALO, The State Archive of Lviv Region.

³⁸⁸ "DALO (1969), Fond P-1357, Opys 1, Sprava 923a," Arkush 3-4. The total population of Ukraine in the 1960s was around 47 million people so Soviet television broadcasting covered more than 30 million people.

³⁸⁹ Valerii Tsvyk, *Ukrainskoie televideniie: opyt, praktika, problemy* (Kyiv: Mysterstvo, 1985), 27.

It was the first such effort in the USSR and was technically and organisationally complicated.³⁹⁰ Unlike Moscow or Leningrad, which had a developed infrastructure and employed enough professionals to produce diverse programmes, there was no possibility of making coherent national programming in Kyiv. To produce consistent national programming, the republican studio in the Ukrainian capital had to synchronize the programming of 15 of the biggest regional television studios that had been established in the country, coupled with the smaller productions of ten other media committees. In short, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Odesa, and L'viv had to deliver well-prepared programmes in particular time slots for the Kyiv studio, which would then be broadcast to the whole country.

In this way, the Ukrainian media grew into a national network. This national network was based on available regional infrastructure, developed between the late 1950s and mid-1960s and was shaped as an integrated national enterprise between 1965 and the early 1970s. Consolidated programming had been watched and heard by millions of people, through the 2.5 million registered televisions in Soviet Ukraine. From 1965, when the consolidated national programming was produced in Kyiv, Soviet Ukrainian television developed mainly in quantitative terms, turning from the regional *concentration* of media to the *consolidation* of national broadcasting. Finally, in 1970 the Kyiv television studio received national status and broadcast under the label of Ukrainian Television (UT), even though it was not fully accessible everywhere in the country. This historic progression shows that national television in Soviet Ukraine developed not through gradual emancipation from the central powers in Moscow, but through the consolidation of regional and national programming in the republican centre. I am inclined to use this technical (borrowed from business theory) and not political explanation to identify two important phases in Soviet Ukrainian television, *concentration* (1955-1965) and *consolidation* (1965-1975). The consolidation phase was marked by the further, though slow, development of national television and the gradual stagnation of regional studios during the late 1970s and 1980s.

2.3. Between centre(s) and periphery

In the late 1960s, television developed into a major source of information, propaganda, education and entertainment for Soviet Ukraine. In a decade, it also “became the most important medium of popular culture.”³⁹¹ Volodymyr Shcherbytskyi, who replaced Petro Shelest in the position of the First Secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party claimed that in the mid-1970s, television was the most important means to shape and unify the Soviet people.³⁹² Indeed, in the 1970s the informational programme *Vremia* [Time] became more popular than the main newspaper *Pravda* [Truth].³⁹³ At the same time, when the television turned to become the main instrument of all-Soviet identity building (through programmes

³⁹⁰ Tsvyk, 27–28.

³⁹¹ Prokhorov and Prokhorova, *Film and Television Genres of the Late Soviet Era*, 6.

³⁹² Volodymyr Shcherbytskyi, “Sovetskoie Televideniie,” *Pravda Ukrainy*, May 17, 1974. Cited in: Tsvyk, *Ukrainskoie televideniie: opyt, praktikaproblemy*, 80.

³⁹³ This argument is generally developed in the work of Christine E. Evans who put this shift between Truth and Time on the cover of her book about Soviet Central Television, see: Evans, *Between Truth and Time* (2016).

like *Vremia*), it also had the power to shape the national, imagined through television, community of Ukrainians.

In 1969, when the Ukrainian SSR was preparing to celebrate the birthday of Lenin and thirty years of the unified (west and east) Soviet Ukraine, the Commission of Science and Culture and the Commission of Transport at the Supreme Council of Soviet Ukraine [Verkhovna Rada URSR] issued a report-guidance.³⁹⁴ The authors of this document distinguished the L'viv Television studio together with the oldest in the country, such as Kyiv and Kharkiv studios, as being one of the finest in Ukraine, whose programmes attracted large audiences and were of good quality.³⁹⁵ In the early 1970s (and before the political crackdown on nationalists in 1973), the L'viv Television studio was continuously acknowledged to be one of the best in the republic. However, despite having a wide broadcasting coverage, L'viv also had to compete with other regional studios, and with television content produced in Kyiv, Moscow and socialist Poland.

In the 1960s there were two television networks (channels), called programmes, in the USSR. The First Channel [Pervaia Programa] was the most important, and it would broadcast all party decisions, information and news.³⁹⁶ The media infrastructure in various republics of the USSR was already capable of receiving and transmitting Soviet Central Television programming, thus covering almost every important region of the country. By the end of 1961, there were 82 powerful television stations and 193 less powerful transmitters in the USSR, that allowed all Soviet republics to receive television.³⁹⁷ These stations, connected with Moscow through antennas, relay transmitters and re-transmitters, produced 276.5 hours of audio-visual content annually in the 1960s.³⁹⁸ By the mid-1970s, there were 1800 media re-transmitters, in addition to 70000 kilometres of relay cable transmitters in the USSR, which would allow for the exchange of different media between Soviet regions and republics. Local television stations (both national and regional) had their airtime on the main channel, which required precise planning.

Regional television programming was an important part of Soviet broadcasting. Local television was broadcast in slots between major programmes transmitted from Moscow and Kyiv, usually very late or in the morning, four times a week: on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays. Six months after the first public transmission of L'viv Television, in April 1958, officials agreed on a broadcasting plan for the studio. It was supposed to air 178 hours of content, 133 hours of which were for the retransmission of films (normally borrowed from local film deposits) and 45 hours for locally produced programmes.³⁹⁹ The important part

³⁹⁴ The official title was as follows: *On the Further Development of Radio Broadcasting and Television and Strengthening its Programming*, see: "DALO (1969), Fond P-1357, Opys 1, Sprava 923a."

³⁹⁵ "DALO (1969), Fond P-1357, Opys 1, Sprava 923a," Arkush 7.

³⁹⁶ Mickiewicz, *Split Signals* (1988), 5.

³⁹⁷ Mashchenko, *Khronika Ukraininskoho Radio i Telebachennia* (2005), 215.

³⁹⁸ Mashchenko, 215.

³⁹⁹ "Protocols, programming" (Lviv Television and Radio Committee, April 19, 1958), Fond R-1357, Opys 1, Sprava 374, DALO, The State Archive of Lviv Region.

of this locally produced content constituted various forms of news and information (see Chapter 1.2.).⁴⁰⁰ Editorials were responsible for making plans which were agreed by the Radio and Television Committee and often by regional party organization, and scripts had to be supervised by a special office. However, in practice, scripts were often submitted too late for possible re-writing, and this situation was frequently discussed at the committee or party meetings.

Struggling to control multiple studios, the Ukrainian Communist Party issued a resolution in 1964 and called for the “elimination of independence” of some studios and to be more disciplined in building Soviet Television in Ukraine.⁴⁰¹ However, even in 1970, Ukrainian television professionals still reshuffled content brought from Moscow or replaced centrally produced programmes with their own.⁴⁰² This improvisation on the regional level was only overcome in the early 1970s when a central administration for local broadcasting was established at Soviet Central Television.

In 1964, in the system of Ukrainian regional and republican television, worked 140 salaried correspondents, 700 public editorials and civic [hromadski] correspondent offices: 120 editorials existed within regional committees, 81 on television, 24 on national radio and hundreds in subregional districts. Every day national radio from Kyiv broadcast eight episodes of the news programmes *Ostanni Visti* [Latest News] received by 15 million radios. Every twentieth Soviet Ukrainian family had a private TV set to watch national and union television programmes. However, even though the infrastructure was vast, Soviet television producers frequently felt the scarcity of available content, which could be safely transmitted to the home audience.

The antennas in Moscow, Leningrad, and national capitals still had a limited broadcasting capacity, therefore each republic provided a network of transmitters which repeated or transferred the signal of another station, usually to an area not covered by the original signal. These rebroadcasting stations served to expand the broadcasting range of television or radio stations beyond the primary signal’s coverage area, and to improve service in areas which received a poor signal due to topographical limitations. In order to overcome the difficulties of broadcasting across long distances, the Soviet media employed satellites and special transmitting stations. The satellite information system *Orbita* [Orbit] consisted of 70 land stations that received signals from special satellite *Raduga* [Rainbow] in orbit since 22 December 1975. The Soviet media empire thus reached its highest peak. Although Soviet Ukraine was second after the Russian Federation in the USSR in the extension of media development, it still had “blind spots” without Soviet broadcasting.

⁴⁰⁰ In July 1958 editors of the L’viv studio were able to produce its own regional news [oblasni visti], covering specific socialist development that happened in the region, see: “DALO (1958), Fond R-1357, Opys 1, Sprava 374,” July 18, 1958..

⁴⁰¹ Mickiewicz, *Split Signals* (1988), 5.

⁴⁰² Sometimes it could happen due to bad signal from Moscow or some other technical interruptions, so the central programmes would be replaced by local or national content.

Sometimes, poor signals from media centres were also caused by other factors. For instance, some of the radio transmitters in the L'viv region in the 1950s were reconfigured for ideological broadcasts to territories beyond the USSR.⁴⁰³ Because of this situation, locals were deprived of good quality Soviet programming and often turned to Polish radio. In the late evenings, people had no other options but to catch foreign signals on their radio receivers and often these foreign waves were harmful to Soviet ideology (see Chapter 4.2.). Only in 1959 were the Soviet powers in western Ukraine able to build a new station (transmitting station RV-175) that allowed the combined broadcasting of regional radio, national programmes from Kyiv and all-union programming.⁴⁰⁴

The introduction of new technology was intended to attract Soviet citizens and to stop them from listening to foreign radio programmes. However, already in 1962, this equipment was also directed to Soviet foreign broadcasting. L'viv officials complained to Kyiv in October 1962 that, after 20.00, hundreds of thousands of Soviet citizens in western Ukraine could not have proper broadcasts and again switched to foreign radio waves.⁴⁰⁵ The region remained unprotected from the enemy's radio bombardment, moaned one L'viv official, claiming that "we cannot educate people in an accurate Soviet manner and to teach them anti-bourgeois ideology."⁴⁰⁶

Figure 2.1. (A and B) shows the issues of uncertain media coverage in the western regions of the Soviet Ukraine. This map was sketched by the L'viv Television and Radio Committee chairman Ivan Petriv in 1968 when he prepared a report for Kyiv after his official trip to socialist Poland. In the late 1960s western Ukrainian regions were covered by television programmes in the Polish language and often local officials were looking for technological or cultural transfers from neighbours. The green line identifies the territorial cover of the First Channel of Soviet Central Television (rebroadcast by the L'viv Television Centre), the blue line outlines the exposure of the Second Channel, which normally broadcast regional and national Ukrainian programmes. The dotted line shows the territory covered by Polish socialist television, retransmitted through Rzeszów Television Centre.

In the northern Volyn region bordering Belarus, Soviet and L'viv regional broadcasting was not present at all in the late 1960s (see **Figure 2.1.B**). This region was partially covered by L'viv Television and by central broadcasting from Moscow (including rebroadcasting through Belarusian TV): the red line is the First Channel of Soviet Central TV (plus L'viv programme), the green line is the Second Channel. But in total the Volyn region, including its administrative centre in Lutsk, Soviet television was accessed with troubles. Instead, people

⁴⁰³ "On regional evening radio broadcast" (Lviv Obkom of Ukrainian Communist Party, General Sector, October 8, 1962), Fond P-3, Opys 8, Sprava 446, DALO, The State Archive of Lviv Region.

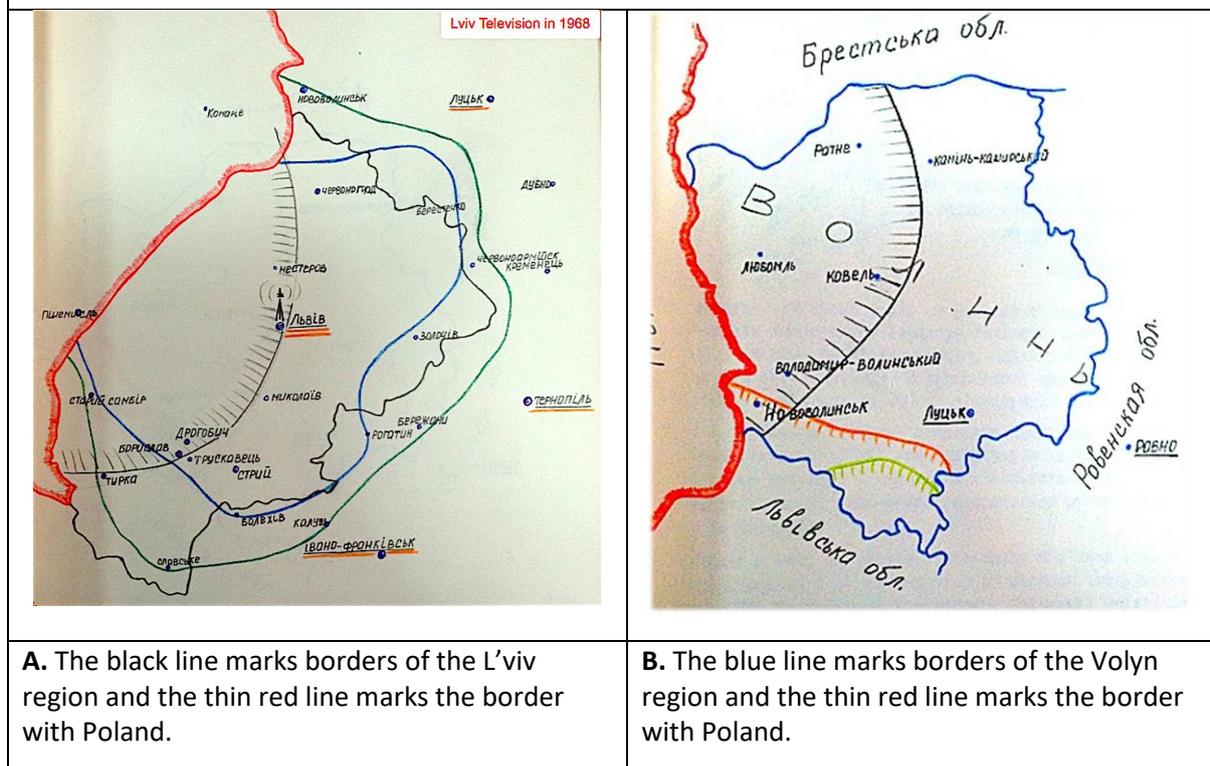
⁴⁰⁴ "DALO (1962), Fond P-3, Opys 8, Sprava 446," Arkush 48.

⁴⁰⁵ "DALO (1962), Fond P-3, Opys 8, Sprava 446," Arkush 49. Signals arrived from Kyiv through wired technology and were rebroadcasted in L'viv by re-transmitter in ultra-short waves. In this situation only close to the city of L'viv regions had strong signal from Kyiv or Moscow, while those remote from the city relied on foreign broadcasting

⁴⁰⁶ "DALO (1962), Fond P-3, Opys 8, Sprava 446," Arkush 50.

enjoyed socialist broadcasting from neighbouring Poland. The dotted line shows that half of the territory of the Volyn region in 1968 was covered only by Polish socialist television since Soviet broadcasting could not reach these lands. Usually, officials called this situation “an uncertain signal from Moscow.” In addition, this map shows that a substantial part of the L’viv region had the possibility to receive Polish television broadcasting (see Chapter 1.3.).⁴⁰⁷

Figure 2.1. Map of television signal coverage, as broadcast by the L’viv TV centre in the late 1960s.



Ukrainian officials had constant trouble not only with technology and the quality of broadcasting, but also with content. To improve media content, socialist countries in Europe initiated exchanges of home-produced films and programmes. On 9 December 1961, socialist countries within the Organisation Internationale de Radiodiffusion et de Télévision (OIRT) created *Intervision* and Soviet Ukraine became a member of this organisation. Since the GDR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary already had radio and television relay transmitters that allowed them to exchange data and television content between national committees, the wider international socialist exchange of media content was warmly welcomed. By 25 November 1965, four years after the launch of *Intervision*, Moscow was connected to Berlin (GDR) by a cable that went through Kyiv (Ukraine), Katowice (Poland) and Prague (Czechoslovakia). So, for the first time, all European socialist countries were connected by means of relay transmitters and could exchange programmes and televisual information. This

⁴⁰⁷ In the late 1970s I have personally learned Polish language by watching every morning television kindergarten (Domowe Pszedzskole) caught by Soviet antennas.

consolidation of socialist media coincided with the creation of the first Ukrainian national programming in 1965.

2.4. National television programming

In 1970, Ukrainian Television produced and broadcast a total of 688 hours of content: films, concerts (music concerts and short clips amounted to 11.6 hours annually, roughly an hour of national content per month), various TV genres (including educational content), and news.⁴⁰⁸ The Ukrtefilm studio produced yearly 20.5 hours of content on 35mm film especially for television broadcasting, while 741.2 hours were recorded on video and film for further broadcasting. Regional Ukrainian television studios were expected to broadcast 14.4 hours of media content per day, with less than an hour of their own (regionally produced) content. Normally they rebroadcast national programming from Kyiv and Central Television programming from Moscow. In 1970, seven Ukrainian studios produced less than an hour (51 minutes) of their own content, another five made 3 hours and 13 minutes per day, while some, like L'viv Television studio, produced media content for 4 hours and 7 minutes of regional broadcasting.⁴⁰⁹

The merged load of regional broadcasting in Soviet Ukraine in 1970 comprised 50 hours of local news and programmes per day (this number was a total television production of 14 Ukrainian studios per day) and shared 150 hours from elsewhere. These 150 hours combined 114 hours of rebroadcasted Soviet Central Television programmes from Moscow and only 33.6 hours of national programming from Kyiv (16.8% from the total Soviet broadcasting load). Thus, national and regional programming constituted almost twenty percent of total media load and it was soon to be shrunk.

In February 1971, the head of the Ukrainian radio and television committee Mykola Skachko (he served as a leader of Ukrainian media development for 30 years, 1949-1978) prepared a report for the communist leadership of the republic.⁴¹⁰ According to this report, in 1970 Ukrainian television media production was organised around 25 television and radio committees (having one in each administrative region), 14 television centres (technical broadcasting) and 14 regional studios (content programming), a republican studio in the capital, coupled with the film studio for producing television movies, Ukrtefilm, and a national office for radio and sound recording in Kyiv.⁴¹¹ Thus, even though media committees were present in each Ukrainian region, only 14 had a good capacity for local production.

⁴⁰⁸ "Reports (Skachko)" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, February 9, 1971), Arkush 38, Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5941, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

⁴⁰⁹ "TsDAVO (1971), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5941," Arkush 36.

⁴¹⁰ Most probably all Soviet national media committees had to provide such reports to Moscow after Sergei Lapin was appointed the head of Gosteleradio in 1970. Since his arrival to Soviet Television the massive consolidation of media was planned and implemented in USSR.

⁴¹¹ "TsDAVO (1971), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5941," February 9, 1971.

Regional television studios were united by multiple transmitters and retransmitters. TV centres were connected through relay transmitting and radio cables, which in the early 1970s expanded to 9113 kilometres.⁴¹² Each committee had a teletype connection to receive news and instructions from Moscow and Kyiv. However expansive this network was, producers often had to take their films in heavy rolls and personally bring them by train to Moscow or to other studios in Ukraine. In addition, as Soviet Ukraine was a transit territory, many of the important media cables that ran to the west were reserved for transnational broadcasting. This situation often affected the regional media. Even though the regions of Soviet Ukraine were covered by media transmitters, the cables that carried information were often out-dated and people in the peripheries received a poor television reception.⁴¹³

Among the biggest Ukrainian television studios, five broadcast their own programming for less than an hour per day, while the other seven varied between two and four hours. Therefore, major content (news and programmes) for Ukrainian Television in the early 1970s was produced by seven powerful studios (like Donetsk, Odesa, Kharkiv, L'viv, Kyiv and Dnipropetrovsk), which would cover the centre and the southeast regions of the country. The less powerful studios would mainly focus on local news, economic programmes and the rebroadcasting of content made elsewhere. In this scheme, L'viv Television was the biggest content producer in the western part of Ukraine, supported by the studio in Chernivtsi (Bukovina), and much smaller studios in Uzhhorod (Trans-Carpathian region), Ternopil, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Lutsk (Volyn region in the North).

Even though the USSR media infrastructure and production in Moscow increased, the republican media constantly experienced a scarcity of resources. The Ukrainian Socialist Republic could not afford to keep up to date with media technology. The studio in the capital of Ukraine could not produce content for several television programmes, even though the Ministry of Information was able to install the necessary equipment. There was not enough space for editorial and production offices as well as for the necessary equipment. The situation was so critical, that on 27 January 1971, Mykola Skachko explained to Volodymyr Shcherbytskyi that without proper studios and editorial spaces, the state media committee would not be able to fulfil party tasks and requirements.⁴¹⁴ Skachko urged party bosses to develop a national studio in Kyiv, though this was never fully finished.

Soviet state policy did not support building large republican/national studios in the 1960s. As a point of comparison, in November 1963, Leningrad received a new television studio and equipment (the TV antenna was 321 metres high – among the tallest in Europe), which could broadcast three programmes and had thirteen production workrooms. At the

⁴¹² "TsDAVO (1971), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5941."

⁴¹³ See for instance a report which states that consumers in certain regions of western Ukraine could not receive colour TV programming because of bad quality of relay transmitters, see: "Reports (New scheme)" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, November 16, 1971), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5941, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

⁴¹⁴ "Reports (Kyiv)" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1971), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5941, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

same time, Kyiv had far fewer financial and technical resources and only two working studios for producing television content.⁴¹⁵ Therefore, Kyiv was not interested in spending scarcely available funds on regional media and strived to consolidate programming (and technology) in the republican center. So, if Moscow was not concerned in heavy investments in media infrastructure of national republics, the republican centres did not want to increase spending on regional media production. In the early 1970s, regional studios had to use or adjust old technical equipment that was installed at the end of 1950s and 1960s, because Kyiv and Moscow were not interested in spending the media budget in the peripheries. They envisaged the *consolidation* of the media in the centres and not its *concentration* in the peripheries.

The lack of technical investment improved gradually, but even in the early 1970s the state media committee had to beg Moscow and the Council of Ministries of Soviet Ukraine for a new television studio.⁴¹⁶ State investments seemed high, however, these funds still did not cover the costs of updated facilities and new technology. In 1970, the UkrSSR spent 22.2 million roubles on television, out of which 6.8 mln or 30.8 percent went on making national and regional programming.⁴¹⁷ These television programmes (in mid-1972) were planned and implemented by 4898 people who worked for Ukrainian television and radio, 42.9 percent of whom had attended higher education. This was the ideologically important for the state industry, which due to socialist political restrictions was not supposed to generate financial income, rather being substantially subsidized as an institution of culture and dogma.

The *consolidation phase* in Soviet television was completed in the mid-1970s when almost the whole Ukrainian territory had access to radio and television media. Moscow producers were interested in consolidating Soviet central programming on the First Channel and in relocating national and regional broadcasting to the Second Channel of Soviet Television. In this period, television content in Soviet Ukraine was broadcast by 26 main media transmitters (including 16, which could broadcast two existing Soviet television programmes) and 119 retransmitters (94 of which had reduced power).⁴¹⁸ In 1976, 90 percent of the Ukrainian territory received Soviet Central Television content on the First Channel and 60 percent had the ability to watch two main Soviet TV programmes. It means that Soviet Central Television, consolidated in the First Channel, was accessible almost everywhere and by most urban people, while only more than half of the population could watch consolidated national Ukrainian television from Kyiv. Thus, even though every 10 families in Ukraine owned 8 TV sets at this time (0.8 TV set for a family), depending on the region and settlement they had the possibility to watch rather different television programming.⁴¹⁹ Obviously, Russian

⁴¹⁵ Mashchenko, *Khronika Ukraïnskoho Radio i Telebachennia* (2005), 225.

⁴¹⁶ "Reports (financial)" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, May 27, 1971), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5941, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

⁴¹⁷ Mashchenko, *Khronika Ukraïnskoho Radio i Telebachennia* (2005), 248.

⁴¹⁸ In 1976, the number of powerful transmitters increased to 40 and total number of re-transmitters grew to 240. In 1981, Ukraine had 87 powerful transmitters and 350 re-transmitters in addition to 27 thousand kilometers of relay cable transmitters.

⁴¹⁹ Mashchenko, *Khronika Ukraïnskoho Radio i Telebachennia* (2005), 267.

language and more universal Central Television had a preferable position, while national broadcasting in both languages (Ukrainian and Russian) with a regional focus was much more marginal.

In the mid-1970s, officials strove to outline the further development of Soviet media, thinking about colour broadcasting and satellite television. In spring of 1976, the Ukrainian Communist Party stated that the growth of Soviet television should focus on colour and satellite broadcasting, while central broadcasters from Moscow especially aimed to reach distant regions in Siberia.⁴²⁰ In this period, television programmes in the USSR were produced by 130 large television studios (78 in Russia, 14 in Ukraine and 38 in other republics), making a total of 2,000 hours of content per day.⁴²¹ Two programmes on Soviet Central Television were accessible in the ten biggest towns of the Russian Federation and in all republican centres of the USSR. Soviet television enjoyed a large audience, which often gave feedback to the media producers.⁴²² The outcome of centralization and concentration of media in the 1970s, turned the Soviet Union into a socialist media empire, having the most important media content produced centrally in Moscow. At the same time, a high concentration of media infrastructure took place also in Soviet republics, like Ukraine, which followed the example of the Soviet capital.

2.5. From consolidation to stagnation

Between 1965, when the first national programming took place in Soviet Ukraine, and 1970, when Kyiv broadcast its branded Ukrainian Television (UT),⁴²³ Soviet media underwent a *consolidation phase*.⁴²⁴ During this phase, Moscow anticipated producing common federal television (mainly entertaining and informational programmes) for the Soviet people, which was broadcast on the First Channel. Republican/national and regional programming in various republics was moved to the Second Channel. In Soviet Ukraine, Kyiv wanted to decrease the status of regional studios and to make its own national television, following the model of Soviet Central Television. In 1971, Mykola Skachko complained that autonomous regional studios in Ukraine worked satisfactorily, however, their relative independence did not lead

⁴²⁰ The XXVth Communist Party congress issued on 5 March 1976 its 5 years plan, named *Main Directions of Development of National Economy [narodnoho khoziaistva] of USSR in 1976-1980.*

⁴²¹ Mashchenko, *Khronika Ukraïnskoho Radio i Telebachennia (2005)*, 264.

⁴²² In 1978 Soviet Ukrainian television received 77,613 letters, out of which almost quarter was sent to editorials of sport programming, see: Mashchenko, 265.

⁴²³ It is important to mark that these developments happened under Petro Shelest and his 'autonomous' politics, see: Yurii Shapoval, "Petro Shelest v Konteksti Politychnoyi Istoriyi Ukrayiny XX Stolittia," *Ukraïns'kyi Istorychnyi Zhurnal*, no. 3 (2008): 138–39. Volodymyr Shcherbytskyi is not associated with major media turn in Soviet Ukraine, though he continued conservative politics of further development of Soviet and national infrastructure, see: Yurii Shapoval, "Ostannya Barykada: Volodymyr Shcherbyts'kii Pid Chas 'Perebudovy,'" in *Ukrayina XX Stolittya: Kul'tura, Ideolohiya, Polityka*, ed. Yurii Shapoval and Olexandr Iakubets, vol. 21 (Kyiv: Institut istorii Ukraïny UAN, 2016), 12–27.

⁴²⁴ Evans called this drive towards centralization of Soviet media the 'dramatic centralizing change', see: Evans, *Between Truth and Time (2016)*, 144.

to, as Skachko framed it, “conscious responsibility.”⁴²⁵ He therefore recommended uniting television and radio committees with studios to the Council of Ministers, probably to increase responsibility of regional cadres.

Regional audiences could often not receive colour programming due to technical troubles. Programmes produced by local studios or committees were frequently within the second and third categories of quality (which was low), and regional powers did not help to resolve issues of space scarcity or the technical fatigue of the studios’ equipment. Kyiv realized that the existing media structure in the republic was insufficient for good quality production. Instead of developing further regional media, Ukrainian state officials envisaged the only possibility to solve various production troubles through making competitive and good programming in Kyiv. Consolidation of media around national production in Kyiv offered a possibility to control quality and to deliver a better programming. However, the Ukrainian media committee in Kyiv did not have the funds for such consolidation.

In the early 1970s, the national media committees would take over television centres and other technical facilities from the administration of the Ministry of Information in order to concentrate all resources under one “roof.”⁴²⁶ In the spring of 1971, various talks about the reconstruction, reorganization, and concentration of Soviet regional media were turned into state policy. Gosteleradio, under the leadership of Sergei Lapin, a powerful Soviet media manager closely affiliated to Politburo,⁴²⁷ undertook the consolidation of media content production and state investments around most powerful studios of the USSR. In Kyiv, the new framework for national and regional television was continuously discussed at the Committee of Television and Radio and in May 1971, the senior officials at the Council of Ministers even held hearings regarding the further development of Soviet Ukrainian TV.⁴²⁸

Moscow commenced the consolidation of Soviet television around the First Channel, which predominantly broadcast in colour from the media complex in Ostankino. Since 1972, and until the end of the USSR, national and union-wide broadcasting were divided between

⁴²⁵ Most probably he meant poor financial discipline of certain studios, which over-financed some projects and under-financed another endeavors. Often financial troubles arrived from the dubious planning procedures. For instance, the Council of Ministers of UkrSSR could plan budgets for television with high honoraria for script writers, actors and external content producers, while intended small amounts for stage production and scenography. This caused an issue that television producers could afford actors and writers but remained without stage scenography, therefore sometimes envisioned budget for making TV theatre staging was unfulfilled and producers remained without media content, see: “TsDAVO (1971), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5941,” May 27, 1971, Arkush 130-134.

⁴²⁶ Before this concentration of centers and studios in common ventures, television programming (studios) and television broadcasting (media centers) subordinated to different ministries and often quarreled on the issues of quality and production.

⁴²⁷ In April 1970, he replaced previous director of all-Union media committee Nikolai Mesiatsev and worked there as a chief Soviet media manager for the next fifteen years, up until Gorbachev’s Perestroika. Sergei Lapin was an experienced state manager and strong ideological worker. He worked for *Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union* (TASS) from 1967 and starting from 1970 he was among the major actors behind Soviet Television concentration and consolidation of the 1970s and early 1980s.

⁴²⁸ “TsDAVO (1971), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5941,” May 27, 1971.

the First and the Second Channels. In those regions, where the local audience could not have two channels of Soviet TV, the programming would remain merged on the First Channel, partially broadcast in colour. In Soviet Ukraine in 1971, 80 percent of the population had only the First Channel and 20 percent (mostly in big cities) had access to two programmes.⁴²⁹

Only 11 main television centres in Soviet Ukraine had the technical ability to broadcast two channels and even this possibility could be partially fulfilled. The programming of the Second Channel of Soviet television (now mainly reserved for national/republican programmes) was broadcasted during only 4-6 hours a day, that was received by 25 percent of the population.⁴³⁰ Thus, since 1971 individuals living in big towns in Soviet Ukraine could normally watch national programming on the Second Channel, while the majority of people in the country still watched programming of the First Channel of Soviet Central Television, interrupted by national and local broadcasting, which entered on the same frequency. The insertion of regional and national broadcasting on the all-union frequency was chaotic because officials simply required that the 5 hours of daily regional broadcast did not interrupt “important and entertaining programmes” from Moscow.⁴³¹ In the 1960s and early 1970s, there was no clear prescription regarding which programmes were particularly important (except news), especially when it came to culture and entertainment.

Soviet executives were dissatisfied with the low levels of coordination between regional, national, and union-wide media content. The Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party, following instructions from Moscow, required that the organization of national broadcasting on the separate Second Channel took place already in March 1972. To fulfil this task the Ministry of Information of the UkrSSR necessitated producing more two-channelled media re-transmitters and to dig more relay cables in the republic.⁴³² They aimed to have detached broadcasting in the Russian language on the First Channel of Soviet TV and separately organised national broadcasting in Russian and Ukrainian languages on the Second Channel. The consolidation of Soviet media around centres was indicated on the top political level and after the 24th Congress in 1972, the Communist Party of the USSR demanded the implementation of two channel television broadcasting on the territory of the whole union.⁴³³

In the early 1970s, most inhabitants of the Ukrainian Socialist Republic could access national news from Kyiv only through the First Channel of Soviet Television and 20 percent watched national programmes on the Second Channel of Central Soviet TV (from 1972).⁴³⁴ Following directives from Moscow, in February 1972 Ukrainian communists issued the resolution “On the Organisation of Two Channel Broadcasting in Ukraine” and already in March the system was implemented, at least on paper. From then, universal, global and

⁴²⁹ “Letters (cover)” (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, May 6, 1971), Arkush 81, Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5940, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

⁴³⁰ “TsDAVO (1971), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5941,” 1971, Arkush 1-2.

⁴³¹ “TsDAVO (1971), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5941,” Arkush 1.

⁴³² “TsDAVO (1971), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5941,” Arkush 2.

⁴³³ *Meterialy XXIV Siezda KPSS* (Moscow: Izdatelstvo policheskoi literatury, 1972), 271–75.

⁴³⁴ “TsDAVO (1971), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5941 (1971).”

Russian language programming was broadcast on the First Channel of Soviet Central Television and detached from national and regional broadcasting, which received time slots on the Second Channel. However, due to technical restraints (media re-transmitters and many studios could not broadcast two television channels), this did not happen in the whole country until the end of the 1970s, and many regional and national studios still merged with major broadcasting from Moscow on the First Channel. Even in the early 1980s, not all regions of Ukraine were covered by national broadcasting on the Second Channel. Even though 93 percent of the population had access to TV sets, only 70 percent could watch Ukrainian television on a daily basis.⁴³⁵

From March 1972, for those viewers who could not receive the Second Channel of Soviet TV (with national broadcasting), Ukrainian television reserved a slot (18.00-19.00), specially dedicated to regional broadcasting on the First Channel of Soviet Television. Similarly, Ukrainian national broadcasting had a spot from 19.00-20.00 on the same channel of the all-union television, coming to viewers right after the regional news. Each region did not receive equal representation. In this period, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, L'viv, Odesa and Kharkiv had two hours of daily broadcasting, while other studios could only afford less than an hour. Therefore, Kyiv had to develop a complicated scheme of media exchange between regions and with other Soviet republics. Overall, the Derzhkomtelradio (state media committee) continuously side-lined regional studios: for instance, in 1971, regional studios in Ukraine made 23.1percent (17918.6 hours) of all national television production but, already in 1972, the numbers were decreasing twofold, down to 13.5 percent (13,000 hours).⁴³⁶ Accordingly, the rebroadcasting of Soviet Central Television and other programmes increased from 76.9 percent to 86.5 percent.

In the first half of the 1970s, the Derzhkomtelradio envisaged shortening local production in favour of central transmissions from Moscow and national broadcasting from Kyiv. Thus, the Ukrainian media consolidation scheme followed examples established in Moscow. For 1975, the media committee planned to stop low quality programming and to reduce regional radio broadcasting from 44.6 to 42.7 hours per day.⁴³⁷ Ukrainian television broadcasting had to increase from 213.6 to 381.5 hours per day by increasing the broadcasting of centrally produced content and lessening the regional content from 50.2 to 34.8 hours per day (see **Table 2.2.A-B**).⁴³⁸ Regional studios were supposed to stop showing movies from local collections,⁴³⁹ as the First Channel of Soviet Central Television would become the major source of televisual entertainment for the Soviet audience. The airtime

⁴³⁵ Tsvyk, *Ukrainskoie televideniie: opyt, praktikaproblemy*, 58.

⁴³⁶ Mashchenko, *Khronika Ukrainiskoho Radio i Telebachennia (2005)*, 251.

⁴³⁷ "TsDAVO (1971), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5941 (1971)," Arkush 139.

⁴³⁸ "TsDAVO (1971), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5941 (1971)," Arkush 140.

⁴³⁹ Each studio had its own film fond or used films from centrally organized boroughs of film distribution that supplied cinema houses with media content.

was supposed to be filled not only with Central Television content but also with national media content from other Soviet republics.

Table 2.2.A-B⁴⁴⁰ is designed to exemplify the author's general claim that Ukrainian regional broadcasting increased until a certain point, mainly until 1969-1970, after which the number of regional broadcasting hours continuously decreased in favour of centralised Soviet and republican broadcasting. The years 1961, 1965 and 1972 indicate major turning points in Soviet Ukrainian media development. The table shows that if in 1965 the correspondence between regional broadcasting and republican/central rebroadcasting was 46.6/78.1 hours, in ten years this proportion was drastically different – 35/332 hours per day. During this period the number of TV sets in Soviet Ukraine increased from 2.5 million to almost 10 million, yet the national broadcasting network and centralized model was still developing.

Table 2.2.A. From concentration phase to consolidation phase of Soviet media, 1958-1969												
Years	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969
Regional UA broadcasting (hours per day)	17.5	31.4	44.5	46.9	51.2	48.1	47.1	46.6	47.9	48.6	46.8	50.0
Union/UA re-broadcasting (hours per day)	2.6	4.8	7.7	19.2	33.1	45.7	64.4	78.1	91.8	98.0	118.9	154.1
Total broadcasting	20.1	36.2	52.2	66.1	84.3	98.8	111.5	124.7	139.7	146.6	165.7	204.1
Number of television sets (in millions)		0.6 Ukr	2.5 USSR	6 USSR			13 USSR	2.5 Ukr ⁴⁴¹				5 Ukr
Number of radio receivers (mln)			4.431				15					20
Number of radio connections (in millions)			7.203									
Ukrainian audience (in millions)												30

Table 2.2.B. From concentration phase to consolidation phase of Soviet media, 1970-1981												
Years	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981
Regional UA broadcasting (hours per day)	50.0	49.0	35.5	10.3+ 34.5%	10.3+ 38.5%	34.8	35	34.2	32	32.9	32.8	34.7
Union/UA re-broadcasting (hours per day)	149.9	163.9	228.8	55.2%	51.2%	---	332	333.5	344.6	360.8	381.4	434.7
Total broadcasting	199.9	212.9	264.4	315.5	335.8	---	367.4	367.7	376.6	393.7	414.2	469.4
Number of television sets (in millions)	16 USSR	6 Ukr ⁴⁴²			9.7 Ukr	394 world						12.8 ukr

⁴⁴⁰ This table combines various data, provided by the former head of Ukrainian television Ivan Mashchenko, historian of Soviet Ukrainian TV Valerii Tsvyk and confirmed by the author's own archival findings, see: Mashchenko, *Khronika Ukrainiskoho Radio i Telebachennia (2005)*; Tsvyk, *Ukrainskoie televideniie: opyt, praktikaproblemy*.

⁴⁴¹ Tsvyk, *Ukrainskoie televideniie: opyt, praktikaproblemy*, 32.

⁴⁴² Tsvyk, 32.

Number of radio receivers (mln)	8.1					961 world						11.4 443
Number of radio connections (mln)	10.2											17.7
Ukrainian audience (mln)	33											92.5 / 72%

To avoid ideological mistakes, officials replaced live broadcasts with pre-recorded content that had been revised by special editors.⁴⁴⁴ To have enough good quality programmes on Central Television, which would show the international character of the Soviet media empire, officials had to come up with a working scheme for media (recorded on video or another kind of tape) exchange. In such a scheme, the First Channel of Soviet Central Television would show regional (from different republics) programmes per one hour twice a month. Thus, each republic had to prepare some content for Central Television.

National television centres were supposed to produce content for their regional studios, in order to have a rotation of good quality shows for Soviet Central Television. At the Gosteleradio committee, the Main Editorial for Programming [Glavnaia Redaktsiia Program] managed the rotation of regional programmes by producing a plan which had to be finalized before 1 July each year.⁴⁴⁵ Three months in advance of the broadcast, regional studios had to send Moscow a script plan and the final script with financial calculations had to be sent a month later. One month before the release, the regional or national programme had to be ready for review and two days before airing, 3-4 people from the periphery were supposed to bring the tape to Moscow.⁴⁴⁶ After a successful broadcast, the Central Television management wrote a short review and paid for the produced content.

Although this scheme looked coherent, national media managers complained that regional television content, if broadcasted in Moscow, was considered to become the property of Central Television after airing. In such cases, media managers in Kyiv could not calculate and report their regional production within the planned load for the whole year, as it normally happened under command economy. It means that if a Ukrainian studio produced good quality content and it was accepted by Central Television in Moscow for the all-union broadcasting, it had to produce additional programming in order to fulfil the republican yearly plans. The Ukrainian committee also protested that regional producers were supposed to

⁴⁴³ In addition, there were in Soviet Ukraine 7.4 mln of radio receivers that could operate 3 or more programmes. see: "Report" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1981), Arkush 4, Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 574, TsDAVO of Ukraine, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

⁴⁴⁴ Already in the early 1970s Kyiv had 50% of its televisual content recorded on video tape, although main Ukrainian and all-national studio preserved recording on 16mm film even in the 1990s. In 1971 Kyiv had 850 recorded hours of media content and planned to have 1244 hours next year, see: "TsDAVO (1971), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5941 (1971)," Arkush 140.

⁴⁴⁵ "TsDAVO (1971), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5940."

⁴⁴⁶ "TsDAVO (1971), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5940," Arkush 116.

receive payment according to Central Television calculations, which were higher than in the periphery, which could lead to misbalance on the ground.⁴⁴⁷

This was not the only instance where, undertaken under the leadership of Lapin, caused concern in the peripheries. In July 1971, Mykola Skachko asked Moscow's officials not to halt Ukrainian language broadcasting on the frequencies of the Soviet radio station Rodina, which was intended to reach an audience beyond the borders of the USSR.⁴⁴⁸ Moscow envisioned optimization of media production in the republics, thus it was considered to hold Ukrainian language programming only in Kyiv. Skachko's concerns related to the letters of Ukrainians who lived outside the USSR and listened to Soviet radio, and who claimed that signals from Kyiv often were not reachable, while Moscow's radio signals were easily received. Skachko argued that decreasing of Ukrainian broadcasting from the USSR would only satisfy the 'bourgeois nationalists', as he claimed - "vyzovet buriu likovaniia." He stressed in the letter that since the Soviet Union leads the war against various forms of nationalism such optimisation, or in fact lessening, of ideologically correct Ukrainian broadcasting from Moscow could be ill-prepared.⁴⁴⁹

Despite the technical obstacles and limitations of national broadcasting, the mere creation of all-Ukrainian programming was a great endeavour. According to Soviet journalist Valerii Tsvyk, who became an important theoretician and the historian of Soviet television, the concentration of regional media in the form of the Ukrainian national network between 1965 and 1972 was the first and experimental in the USSR endeavour, and probably unique on the global scale. He claimed that this concentration in the early 1970s was extremely complicated since it required the coordination of 25 television committees and 14 studios (half of which were very large).⁴⁵⁰ If Soviet Central Television programming was predominantly produced in Moscow, Ukrainian national programming included content made not only in Kyiv, but also in Odesa, Donetsk, Kharkiv or L'viv, including production from other Soviet republics. At the same time Ukrainian television continued direct entering of regional studios on the Second Channel of Soviet Central Television. Such a scheme required a high coordination of regional and central media, which were often poorly equipped with technology.

The drive for optimisation and consolidation of Soviet media around Moscow dominated throughout the 1970s. Some scholars consider the period between 1965 and 1972

⁴⁴⁷ "TsDAVO (1971), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5940," Arkush 120.

⁴⁴⁸ "Letters (Rodina)" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, July 12, 1971), Arkush 96, Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5942, TsDAVO of Ukraine, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

⁴⁴⁹ "TsDAVO (1971), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5942," Arkush 99. Skachko crossed out from the letter his statement about "vyzovet buriu likovaniia" [would make the storm of happiness] and changed it into "odobreniie" [approval] of nationalists, which indicates his thorough attention to the issues of supposed Ukrainian nationalism and its connection to media.

⁴⁵⁰ Tsvyk, *Ukrainskoie televideniie: opyt, praktikaproblemy*, 29.

as a national phase in Soviet Ukrainian television (*consolidation phase* in my definition).⁴⁵¹ The number of TV sets increased in the UkrSSR from 2.5 million in 1965 to more than 6 million in 1972, and the audience in Soviet Ukraine already constituted a whole new “media nation.” This was a time when different Soviet republics developed their own media networks out of previously established (during the *concentration phase*) regional media. It is interesting that this consolidation and nationalisation of media in Soviet Ukraine happened at the same time as Kyiv initiated an antinationalist campaign: from the first arrests in 1965 to operation *Blok* launched by the KGB in 1972.⁴⁵²

National leaders understood the power and importance of television and believed that due to its vast audience, rapid spread and emotional power, it was the first and most important means of educating, entertaining and informing the Soviet people.⁴⁵³ Soviet officials agreed that the First Channel of Soviet Central Television was the major source of international and Soviet information, as well as the source of the best entertainment, while national and regional media should focus on local events and peculiarities.⁴⁵⁴ The same differentiation and segmentation of the audience was confirmed by Shcherbytskii during the spring Communist Party Plenum in 1974, who stated that the Soviet audience should be divided by various interests.⁴⁵⁵ The First Channel was reserved for Russian-speaking Soviet people, whose existence Brezhnev proclaimed in 1972, while those who preferred broadcasting in the Ukrainian language had to turn to much more tedious and informative Second Channel.

The differentiation of Soviet media between the First Channel with the most important broadcasting and the programming of national/regional media in Second Channel remained intact until the very end of the Soviet Union. A load of programming would increase constantly, however not in regional broadcasting, but rather by centrally produced broadcasting (mostly in the Russian language). In such a situation, those who preferred local broadcasting had limited options. For instance, in 1978 the party leader of the Chernivtsi region (Bukovina), Volodymyr Dikusarov asked Kyiv to increase local (television and radio) broadcasting in the Moldovan (Romanian) language. This region had a large national minority and local people constantly complained that they did not have enough regional television programming in their own language or there was no possibility to watch Moldovan national television.⁴⁵⁶ Kyiv colleagues responded negatively and claimed that in order to increase broadcasts in Moldovan they would need to cut national Ukrainian or Central Soviet

⁴⁵¹ Tsvyk, 32.

⁴⁵² Bazhan, “Spetsoperatsia KDB URSR Blok.”

⁴⁵³ Shcherbytskyi, “Sovetskoie Televideniie.”

⁴⁵⁴ “Publitsistika Golubogo Ekрана,” *Pravda*, August 31, 1973.

⁴⁵⁵ Within these interests would fit various programmes intended for youth or working people, political reviews or fiction films as well as differentiation between regional and federal programmes.

⁴⁵⁶ The media committee reserved for the Moldovan programmes 50 minutes per day on Chernivtsi regional television and several hours on regional radio.

programming, which contradicted the party decree “On Internationalist Education of Workers by the Means of Radio and Television”.⁴⁵⁷

Soviet national politics protected domestic and local broadcasting, therefore, all the republics had their own television in national languages. The Soviet system did offer Moldovan Television in the native language, therefore those Moldovans living in Bukovina were expected to merely adjust to the limited vernacular broadcasting or encourage their regional officials to build retransmitters that would allow them to watch Moldovan TV. This situation reminded Yuri Slezkine’s metaphor about the Soviet Union as a communal apartment.⁴⁵⁸ Soviet regional and national broadcasting had to remain for long time, however, their role would be much narrower, often focusing programming on uninteresting regional statistics and tiresome local folk or amateur culture events. The younger generation of Soviet viewers would turn their attention to Moscow’s high-quality programming in the Russian language or products of western culture (like rock music), that penetrated cities, at least in the European part of the vast Soviet Union.⁴⁵⁹

At a certain point, Ukrainian officials realised that regional studios, which had played an important role in Soviet media development in the 1950s-1960s, became a burden on national and federal budgets. In 1978, the main Ukrainian media manager Mykola Skachko⁴⁶⁰ proposed shutting down regional television studios to the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party. He suggested reorganizing regional TV studios into three groups,⁴⁶¹ and smaller centres into much more compact correspondent offices so they would serve as mere local offices for national and Soviet Central Television.⁴⁶² Their task would be to focus on socio-political issues of regional development (2/3 of programming) and some cultural development (1/3), thus turning regional television into a mere local information source. This way, regional broadcasting had to be shortened even more, from 12.5 hours a day to 5 hours a day.⁴⁶³ In this new scheme, Skachko envisaged that large Ukrainian studios would make one

⁴⁵⁷ “Letters (Dikusarov)” (General Sector of Central Committee of UCP, February 24, 1978), Arkush 1, TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 1684, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine. The common basis for Soviet internationalism was considered socialist economy, common Soviet federal state, same social structures, communist goals and socialist worldview, therefore it was unnecessary to ‘love excessively’ national minorities, see: A.I. Khamidov, “Sovetskii Narod - Novaia Istoricheskaia Obshchnost Liudei,” in *Materialy Nauchnoi Konferentsii* (Problemy neftianoi i gazovoi promyshlennosti, Ufa, Russian Federation, 1973), 225.

⁴⁵⁸ Yuri Slezkine, “The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism,” *Slavic Review* 53, no. 2 (July 1, 1994): 414–52.

⁴⁵⁹ Zhuk, *Rock and Roll in the Rocket City*.

⁴⁶⁰ He never received the same important role in Ukraine as Sergei Lapin in Moscow, who was a Central Committee member, and even in his highest ranks, Skachko remained only as a candidate to Central Committee of Ukrainian Communist Party, so not getting to the very top till the end of his carrier. This ‘not that important’ position of the chief media manager in Soviet Ukraine comparing to Moscow could also exemplify ‘lower status’ of national and regional media in general.

⁴⁶¹ He proposed to have big centers that would make 100 hours of media content per year constituted the first group, the television studios of second group would produce 75 hours, and others 50 hours per year.

⁴⁶² “Letters (Skachko)” (General Sector of Central Committee of UCP, May 12, 1978), Arkush 5, TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 1684, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

⁴⁶³ “TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 1684,” Arkush 15.

hour of daily media content for Central Television and four hours for national broadcasting, while the rest of the Ukrainian studios would shrink into smaller journalist offices.⁴⁶⁴

At the time of Skachko's proposal, Central Television could be accessed by 81.9 percent of the population in Ukraine; 62 percent had the First and Second channels; and 9.1 percent still accessed Soviet TV from Moscow and regional or national news on the same First Channel (merged scheme).⁴⁶⁵ Skachko's proposals fitted well into the logic of Soviet media consolidation. In the 1970s people mostly watched the First Channel of Soviet Central TV, which offered the most current, interesting and high-quality programming, and there was almost no need to switch channels and watch regional or even national television. He wanted to decrease regional production and to accumulate resources around national broadcasting in Kyiv to avoid the complications of constant coordination and control of regional studios.

Skachko's proposal to reform regional broadcasting in the late Soviet Ukraine was oriented towards effective functioning of media, but still it was unfavourable. Large studios in Soviet Ukraine in the late 1970s employed more than 1000 television professionals, who annually produced 944.6 hours (1071 stories) of content for national broadcasting and 51.6 hours (1221 stories) for Central Television.⁴⁶⁶ Regional officials had no possibility to employ these creative workers elsewhere, therefore regional studios had to remain working. At the same time, there was no need to invest more in local television production. Thus, regional and national studios faced stagnation by the end of the 1970s: they were vital institutions, just not for their content, and they consequently received funds to stay afloat rather than for development. Skachko's proposal was ultimately rejected by Communist Party officials who claimed that he could not grasp the intricacy of this situation.

Ukrainian television entered the last decade of Soviet history with a limited infrastructure and good human capital. Regional committees employed 1308 creative workers, with most employees having received a higher education (943); 471 belonged to the party and 161 were members of Komsomol. This group was mainly bi-national, with the ratio of Ukrainians to Russians as 2:1 (813 Ukr. and 395 Rus.), and with a majority of male workers (792 male and 516 female).⁴⁶⁷ In the early 1980s, Ukrainian regional television studios still produced a total of 50 percent of the national programming in Soviet Ukraine and they had one hour of their own daily broadcasting on the Second Channel of Soviet Television.⁴⁶⁸ These

⁴⁶⁴ In the end of 1970s Ukrainian studios produced 8 minutes per day for Soviet Central Television, and 2 hours 48 minutes for national television. In this period, Central Television accepted for broadcasting from peripheries only news programmes and almost no artistic content, which was normally (due to technical limitations) low quality production.

⁴⁶⁵ This report was prepared by the Ukrainian Communist Party secretary, who argued that Skachko's proposals were not on time, see: "Letters (Ielchenko)" (General Sector of Central Committee of UCP, June 30, 1978), Arkush 5-6, TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 1684, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

⁴⁶⁶ "TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 1684," Arkush 6.

⁴⁶⁷ "Statistics" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1981), Arkush 73, Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 51, TsDAVO of Ukraine, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

⁴⁶⁸ Tsvyk, *Ukrainskoie televideniie: opyt, praktikaproblemy*, 62.

studios usually had 15 minutes of regional news that followed 30 minutes of the national news programme *Visti* [News] (till the end of the 1970s) or *Actual Camera* [Aktualna Kamera] (till 1983). All these regional and national news shows on the Second Channel were supplemented by Moscow's programme *Vremia* [Time], which was shown on all channels at the same time.

By January 1981, officials calculated that Soviet Ukraine had 12.8 million TV sets, 17.7 million radio transmitters, and 11.4 million portable radio receivers.⁴⁶⁹ In 1985, Soviet statistics indicated that there were 13 million TV sets in the USSR and viewers had possibilities to watch multiple programmes.⁴⁷⁰ In 1981, 26 regional media committees in Soviet Ukraine broadcast 13.4 hours of the First Channel, 13.2 hours of the Second Channel and 11.8 hours of national Ukrainian production.⁴⁷¹ The Socialist state spent 200.36 roubles on one minute of television production, which totalled 1,682,022 roubles per month.⁴⁷² It was a large and expensive socialist enterprise, whose task was not to generate income but to attract millions of dedicated viewers and enlighten them.

In the first half of 1980s, Ukrainian Television produced 1000-1200 informational releases for Central Television, which were predominantly pre-recorded and brought to Moscow by train or through the relay cable.⁴⁷³ Regional broadcasting had increasingly less importance in the Soviet media, however, production numbers remained at the same level. In 1989, Soviet Ukrainian television broadcast 674 hours of daily programming with only 31.4 hours of regional and national content.⁴⁷⁴ Thus, regional television was stagnating for almost twenty years. Besides financial problems, regional television also had rigid structures that could not change over time. It was difficult to maintain a creative approach to everyday socialist life, which regional studios had to present on a daily basis. Many local stories about technical innovations or socialist development had been already presented on local TV, however, the party demanded that they continue to present these developments into the late 1970s.

⁴⁶⁹ "Letters" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, January 1982), Arkush 4, TsDAVO, Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 572, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

⁴⁷⁰ Tsyvk, *Ukrainskoie televideniie: opyt, praktikaproblemy*, 59.

⁴⁷¹ "Planning" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1981), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 21, TsDAVO of Ukraine, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine. Each media committee in Soviet Ukraine had its own load of production, which depended on the collective and technical possibilities. For instance, in Western Ukraine in 1981 Uzhhorod (Transcarpathian region) produced daily 0,7 hour of television content (employed 98 creative workers), Chernivtsi (Bukovina) – 1,7 hour (employed 84 creative workers), and L'viv (former Galicia) – 3,5 hours (employed 114 creative workers), see: "TsDAVO (1981), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 51," Arkush 4-10.

⁴⁷² "TsDAVO (1981), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 574," Arkush 4. The minimal salary in USSR in early 1980s was 70 roubles and the average 120-140 roubles, therefore the cost of Ukrainian television per month (without technical spending) equalled 13 thousands average Soviet salaries, which was considered an investment in social and cultural well-being of Soviet people.

⁴⁷³ Tsyvk, *Ukrainskoie televideniie: opyt, praktikaproblemy*, 72.

⁴⁷⁴ In 1981, regional daily programming had 34.7 hours, thus 3.3 hours more than in 1989.

In addition, due to the scarcity of good professionals some editors that, for instance, specialised in agriculture, were obliged to make programmes about culture. Thus, regional programming often was not made according to high standards, and it was rather not typical that produced on the periphery television cultural programme would be admitted in Kyiv for national television broadcasting. However, regional television studios possessed valuable information about local society, economy, and culture – a sensitivity which was beyond the central journalists.

There was an obvious need for a change of the Soviet media scheme in the late 1970s. Political and economic centres had better television equipment and financial possibilities to make good quality entertainment and artistic television programmes, while the peripheries possessed extensive local knowledge. Together, they produced a specific Soviet media system and mediascape, which balanced the universal with the regional, and the all-Soviet with the national. But, as many studies in *system approach*⁴⁷⁵ in this period claimed, the ultimate reason for the stable system was not its rigidity or strength, but rather a constant renewal of the structural elements. Obviously, the Soviet Union failed to sustain the renewal of structural elements in the media system on peripheries, it was unable to reform regional broadcasting. Soviet powers maintained the strong, powerful and centralised system around Moscow. A side product of these media relations between centre and periphery was the creation of a Ukrainian national television, which coincided with repressions in the cultural sphere in the context of the anti-nationalist campaign.

In May 1988, the future first president of independent Ukraine, and then high party official,⁴⁷⁶ Leonid Kravchuk reported to Central Committee that its decree from 20 August 1984 “On the Development in 1984-1990 of Material and Technical Base of Television Broadcasting in Ukraine”, was partially accomplished. According to this report, on average 95 percent of the population of Soviet Ukraine watched Central Television from Moscow (including 89.5 percent of the rural population), while Ukrainian Television was accessible to 87.5 percent (including 78.9 percent of the rural population).⁴⁷⁷ In various regions, access to central and national television was different, but the average numbers were even. For instance, on 16 June 1988, the media committee of the L’viv region reported that Soviet Central Television was accessed by 97.2 percent of the population, and Ukrainian Television by 96.3 percent. In the Odesa region, Central Television was accessible to 96 percent of people, including 87.3 percent of rural dwellers.⁴⁷⁸

1989 was an important year for the Ukrainian media to finalise reports and to analyse achievements. In 1990, officials in Kyiv prepared to celebrate 25 years of the consolidated

⁴⁷⁵ See for instance works of Abbasova O.S. (*System Approach to Study Socialist Society*) frequently cited by Tsvyk in his study of Ukrainian television, Tsvyk, *Ukrainskoie televideniie: opyt, praktikaprobemy*, 100.

⁴⁷⁶ He was the head of Propaganda and Agitation Department at Central Committee of Ukrainian Communist Party, which was responsible for work with Soviet media.

⁴⁷⁷ “On Television Development” (Ukrainian Communist Party, 1988), Arkush 1-3, TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 3327, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

⁴⁷⁸ “TsDAHO (1988), Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 3327,” Arksuh 10.

programming of Ukrainian Television. In almost a quarter of a century, twenty-five regional Ukrainian media committees and fifteen large television studios had shaped and maintained their regional and national audience. In the late 1980s, Ukrainian Television produced two hours of daily content which comprised 730 hours yearly. This programming involved not only the Kyiv republican studio but also fourteen large Ukrainian media committees and many cultural and media professionals.⁴⁷⁹

Even though the accomplishments in developing Soviet media in Ukraine were immense, there was still plenty of work to do. Thirty years after the introduction of television in the republic and twenty years after national television programming was introduced, more than 20 percent of people who lived in rural areas of Soviet Ukraine still could not watch Ukrainian television. Since Kravchuk's report gave average numbers, it is difficult to estimate how many people out of almost forty million citizens comprised the stable audience of Ukrainian Television. Usually, Soviet television viewers would switch between a few available channels,⁴⁸⁰ based upon their personal preferences. If the First Channel broadcast an interesting film or a concert it was highly unlikely that people would watch the regional or republican content on the Second Channel.

Yet, even if half of the Ukrainian population who had access to republican/national television in the late 1980s watched its programming, this audience could be estimated between 20 and 25 million viewers. This was the biggest regional audience in the USSR after the Russian Federation. These twenty million people shaped also the media-community of common feelings. For instance, the report from 20 May 1987 claimed that the weekly television programme *Soniachni Klarnety* could mobilise more than 8000 artists and millions of viewers.⁴⁸¹ The Soviet Ukrainian media could mobilise its audience and gather people not only in front of their television screens but also in public spaces, for example in the singing fields. There was a possibility that the "community of sentiment,"⁴⁸² shaped by regional Soviet television, could turn into an imagined and at the same time the real national community.

Conclusion

1. This chapter shows the general development of television in the USSR during the late 1960s and 1970s. In doing this, I intended to show paradox tendencies: Soviet practices of empire in the 1970s (anti-nationalism) and the consolidation of media (nationalizing broadcast) as a result of socialist statecraft in Soviet Ukraine. I have exemplified that by concentrating and consolidating Soviet media around the First Channel of Soviet Central

⁴⁷⁹ "Teleradiovisnyk" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1989), Arkush 4, Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 4287, TsDAVO of Ukraine, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

⁴⁸⁰ Federal/national first channel and regional/republican second channel were supplemented with few other local programmes only in big cities, like Kyiv.

⁴⁸¹ "Dovidky" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1987), Arkush 22, TsDAVO, Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3430, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

⁴⁸² Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 8.

Television, which aimed to attract a maximum of attention of Soviet people, officials also fostered the development of national television networks, which did not exist prior to the early 1970s. The mere existence of this national network in Soviet Ukraine shaped the new national imagination through widespread practices of clichéd nationalism, even though officials fiercely battled any possible signs of conscious nationalism.⁴⁸³

2. The specificity of Soviet regional television was its close connection to place, a certain locality with its culture and social networks. Such relations were especially productive during the semi-autonomous period (*concentration phase*, 1955-1965) in Ukrainian regional television development. Throughout this decade media managers, editors, authors, and camera or sound experts, not only learned how to make television content but also combined local landscape and its culture with the all-Ukrainian and Soviet mediascape.
3. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Soviet Ukrainian officials consolidated media production more in Kyiv than in the peripheries. This shift coincided with the general turn from the concentration of Soviet media (1955-1965) to the consolidation (1965-1975) of media production in the centres of the USSR. Between 1965 and 1970 Kyiv implemented an extremely complicated system of synchronised broadcasting of its 14 regional studios in order to develop national network. From 1970, Ukrainian Television appeared in the Soviet Union as a brand, and from 1972 Moscow required that its programming was relocated to the Second Channel of Soviet Central TV. Thus, learning from Moscow how to consolidate media power and being afraid of regional autonomy (or even extremes) in content production, Kyiv officials developed united and controlled broadcasting for the whole of Ukraine.
4. Ukrainian Television was more informational and less entertaining since the most interesting programmes were broadcast by the First Channel of Central Television. Tsvyk correctly admitted that the production of TV mini-series, good quality Estrada concerts or union-wide song contests, and another entertainment for the Soviet people was an expensive endeavour, therefore, such content was produced in Moscow and centred on the First Channel of Soviet Central Television.⁴⁸⁴ Thus, national Ukrainian broadcasting had to cover regional news and events in its united programming.
5. The mere availability of the Ukrainian national media network prompted the production of certain television programmes, like *Soniachni Klarnety*, which aimed to unite all regions of the country. It was a complicated task because Ukrainian Television was not reachable everywhere in Ukraine, but it nonetheless created the imagined community of Ukrainians.

⁴⁸³ Such everyday common events as news or all-national cultural media competitions, like song contests or sports foster certain form of banal nationalism, an imagination practiced through certain forms of national clichés, see: Billig, *Banal Nationalism*.

⁴⁸⁴ Tsvyk, *Ukrainskoie televideniie: opyt, praktikaproblemy*, 169.

Chapter 3. Carpathian fairy-tale reality, 1965-1975

Introduction

Katerina Clark acknowledges that in the Soviet Union, the story in myth informed the rituals of the culture in which it existed.⁴⁸⁵ There was a mutual interdependence between myth and ritual, and Soviet people were supposed to re-enact certain socialist values in all their daily activities. Similarly, Serhy Yekelchuk states that the Stalinist state developed a set of political rituals and the form of publicly expressed emotions to mark a citizen, to indicate that the person was included in the political world.⁴⁸⁶ To be a good Soviet citizen, a person had to learn to speak in the right manner, to express the right feelings and most individuals accepted this public performance.⁴⁸⁷ The evidence from Soviet Ukraine shows that the regional media, despite using Stalinist clichés, had the power to transform both Soviet myth and ritual (everyday boredom imbedded with purpose), turning them into a media spectacle or new media folklore. Combining visual media and sound, regional TV hybridized the imagined and the real. Television combined fairy tales with the socialist reality into a fairy-tale reality.

Regional television in western Ukraine in the 1960s and early 1970s mostly focused on local events, popularizing the region in the Soviet Ukraine or even the USSR. It also played an important role in the revival of Soviet Romanticism as it was engaged in the production of new forms of socialist entertainment, which developed in the context of the cultural Cold War. This longing for a lost world and the nostalgia for nature had roots in both national Ukrainian culture and Stalinist fiction (which partially originated in Romanticism). Lenin differentiated between dreams as an escape from life and dreams as an affirmation of life. Therefore, Soviet Romanticism could proclaim a revolutionary future while renouncing utopian dreams.⁴⁸⁸ An active idealist, a person with principles, in the aesthetics of Socialist Realism was supposed to affirm the communist basis of Soviet life in the name of an ideal. “Good romanticism” was not a dissociation from reality but rather an aspiration for the future.

An important part of socialist entertainment was reserved for television musical films and romantic feelings or romantic heroes played a vital role in these musicals. This chapter follows Neia Zorkaia’s proposal to consider Soviet television as not just an ideological or informational institution, but as a form of media folklore.⁴⁸⁹ In following this argument, I also

⁴⁸⁵ Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 252.

⁴⁸⁶ Serhy Yekelchuk, *Stalin’s Citizens: Everyday Politics in the Wake of Total War*, Oxford Scholarship Online (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 3.

⁴⁸⁷ Stephen Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization*, Berkeley, Calif. (University of California Press, 1995), 220; Igal Halpin, *From Darkness to Light: Class, Consciousness, and Salvation in Revolutionary Russia* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000); Jochen Hellbeck, *Revolution on My Mind: Writing a Diary under Stalin* (Harvard University Press, 2009).

⁴⁸⁸ Leighton, “The Great Soviet Debate Over Romanticism,” 45.

⁴⁸⁹ Neia Zorkaia, “Khorovod v elektronnom luche,” in *Fol’klor i viktoria: narodnoie tvorcestvo v vek televideniia*, ed. V. Maksimov and A. Sokolskaya (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1988), 32–46.

refer to Jack Z. Bratich, who states that television has the same transformative power as a fairy-tale, creating a fairy-tale reality. He maintains: “The powers of transformation once embodied in the wonder tale now find expression in reality television’s immersion in everyday life.”⁴⁹⁰ Similarly, Olexandr Mykhed, who analysed television reality-shows, sees “faireality” as a part of modern cultural performativity, where real and imagined are often merged.⁴⁹¹ Even though the concept of faireality was developed within debates on reality TV, I think in a form of fairy-tale reality it can be used to understand late Soviet television musicals. In western Ukraine, the Carpathian Mountains played an important role in shaping such media fairy-tale reality. As in European Romanticism, artists used mountains and highlands to show sublime feelings, romantic love, or national roots. However, in regional television musicals, mountains also fragmented the Soviet master-narrative developed during high Stalinism: they had the power to offer new cultural meanings.

3.1. The need to make regional television films

Soviet regional television appealed to already highly mediatized nation whose creative forces were looking for “romantic substance.”⁴⁹² Former peasants, with traumatic memories of recent war, who had moved to rapidly industrialized cities, merged with the local pre-war urban intelligentsia. This rural/urban mix, which took place after the Second World War in western Ukraine brought new feelings of loss. Village culture with its references to nature and the national landscape became an attraction for new socialist urban people, who were searching for cultural or national substance. Regional television, with its focus on locality (Heimat), combined the socialist imaginary, national imagination, folk traditions and regional memories.

In Soviet Ukraine the Ukrkinokhronika and Dovzhenko Film Studios were the most experienced media institutions to produce films on national subjects. The lack of films and the constant demand by television managers provoked the Ukrainian government to establish the special studio Ukrtefilm in 1965, that would make films solely for television.⁴⁹³ As this studio was a new institution and did not have its own production facilities, it often had to cooperate with the big film studios, as well as with regional television studios.⁴⁹⁴ The request

⁴⁹⁰ Jack Z. Bratich, “Programming Reality: Control Societies, New Subjects and the Powers of Transformation,” in *Makeover Television: Realities Remodelled*, ed. Dana Heller (I.B.Tauris, 2007), 20.

⁴⁹¹ Olexandr Mykhed, *Bachyty, Shchob Buty Pobachenyym: Reality-Show, Reality-Roman Ta Revoliutsiia Online* (Kyiv: ArtHuss, 2016), 78.

⁴⁹² Leighton, “The Great Soviet Debate Over Romanticism.”

⁴⁹³ *Ukraiinska Studiia Televiziinykh Filmiv*, in English – *The Ukrainian Studio of Television Films*, hereinafter Ukrtefilm.

⁴⁹⁴ Soviet film studios had special production facilities often called production factories [vyrobnychi tsekhy]. Here the film was developed, edited, would receive the voice over, etc. Creative workers, like camera operators, directors and artists would be ‘attached’ to the production and after finishing the particular film they would be relocated to another movie. Since films were produced according to central planning and had the multiple stages of development it was extremely difficult for television producers to use film factories’ facilities for their own purposes. In addition, it was almost impossible to attract a movie specialist to television production because of formal affiliations – industry legally employed its specialists and if one wanted to relocate a camera man from film to television, the procedure would be over-complicated. Therefore,

to produce films on regional level echoed the more general lack of films on Soviet TV (late 1950s-1960s), since the number of movies produced by the Soviet film industry was too small. Soviet television showed as many movies in a month as state film studios produced in a year, and therefore endlessly repeated the same films.⁴⁹⁵

Valentin Ksenofontov, the Komsomol leader and editor of the Children's Programming Desk at Soviet Central Television in the 1950s (he also wrote books about children and television) admitted that in the mid-1950s the number of films on TV was small and that nobody had heard about special television movies. The students of VGIK Iu. Chuliukin and G. Shatrov produced the first two Soviet television films in 1954, but regular production only took place in the 1960s.⁴⁹⁶ Even the central Soviet newspaper *Pravda* criticized Soviet television in 1965 for its lack of films:

Central and local television studios still weakly attract to broadcasting outstanding scientists, writers, industry professionals, and agricultural innovators. As in previous years, professional playwrights and prominent writers almost did not participate in the work of TV stations. To produce television programmes and films *Telefilm* studio has not been established yet, television movies are badly broadcast, especially those issued by the local media committees. Instead of the new and attractive programmes, Soviet television transmits series, movies, and performances that have been seen many times and are already familiar to viewers.⁴⁹⁷

The task of producing films was problematic since regional studios did not have enough equipment, time, or professional labour. Above all, they lacked ideas and scripts. Television music genres and forms required good sound editing and mixing sound engineers. Steadily, regional studios mastered the profession and already in the mid-1960s, they were well prepared to fulfil more difficult tasks.

Managerial staff insisted that directors and editors produced films, as they were a vital component of Soviet television programming.⁴⁹⁸ Television movies could attract an immense audience, which from the 1960s searched for "entertainment and escapism that made the Soviet audience not much different from any other."⁴⁹⁹ However, the choices that Soviet people had in regard to television were limited. So, reacting to the growing demand from high officials to produce ideologically correct and interesting programming for Soviet television

Ukrtelelfilm had to rely mostly on television personnel from the central and regional television studios, but at the same time to cooperate with film industry. Oleh Chorny, Soviet Ilife in Kyiv, interview by Bohdan Shumylovych, Recorded audio interview, August 5, 2015, Urban Media Archive, Center for Urban History of East-Central Europe (Lviv, Ukraine). Also oral interview with notes, 06 May 2016.

⁴⁹⁵ Normally Soviet films were shown on television several years after production and distribution within the network of movie theaters, therefore movies, specially made for television, were cheaper and more efficiently to broadcast, see: Mickiewicz, *Split Signals* (1988), 152.

⁴⁹⁶ Valentin Ksenofontov, "Eto ne film, eto po nastoiashchemu," *Ogoniok*, January 1, 1968.

⁴⁹⁷ "Sovetskoie Televideniie," *Pravda*, August 19, 1965, 1.

⁴⁹⁸ Certainly, television was not prepared to produce 35 mm film like a movie studio since it lacked professional personnel and needed special equipment for production, however it was able to make short black and white films and from the late 1960s color films, with running time between 15 minutes up to 45 minutes.

⁴⁹⁹ Mickiewicz, *Split Signals* (1988), 153.

viewers, L'viv Television urged its editors to focus on short film genres. Thus, the L'viv studio started experimenting with short films. Usually, these were black and white documentaries with a running time up to 15 minutes, that would reflect current socialist developments (like industrial growth) and the people behind this progress.⁵⁰⁰ The Musical Programming Desk at L'viv Television also tested various forms of visualizing socialist music: live broadcasting from concerts and theatre performances, television concerts transmitted from the studio, music evenings, and thematic music programmes. However, they did not produce any musical films.

The most important person behind film production at L'viv Television was Taras Brykailo (born in 1942), who came to work at this institution when it was built between 1955 and 1957. As a pupil, he visited the pioneers' club in L'viv, where he learned about film production and some principles of camera work. As he recalls in an interview, he "got infected with the idea" to produce films in L'viv.⁵⁰¹ However, since there was no filmmaking in the city, he decided that television would be the right place for him to work. He started as a technical apprentice and cable worker and soon, after returning from military service, was promoted to work within the editorials. To start film production at L'viv Television in the mid-1960s, Brykailo collected various technical equipment, including used cameras, from other media enterprises, film studios and television companies, above all from Derzhkino (Kyiv),⁵⁰² which managed film production in Soviet Ukraine.⁵⁰³ Thus, working on the edge between what was legally allowed⁵⁰⁴ and regionally imagined, using personal connections and Soviet institutional confusions, Brykailo found the basic technical support for early film production in Soviet L'viv.

The first short film, produced in 1965, told the story of the L'viv Bus Factory, a local socialist enterprise.⁵⁰⁵ Later the studio produced the film *The City of Stonebreakers*⁵⁰⁶ (in two parts) that would reflect the revolutionary character of the main city in the Soviet Ukrainian west. Here the authors reproduced typical Soviet tropes about a young socialist city that was developing into the communist future under the intelligent regulation of the Communist Party. In the second half of the 1960s, the L'viv Television studio could produce good quality film content that attracted attention not only in Kyiv but also in Moscow. Apparently, this

⁵⁰⁰ "DALO (1971), Fond R-1357, Opys 1, Sprava 1186," Arkush 42.

⁵⁰¹ Brykailo, On film production at Lviv television (2019).

⁵⁰² State Committee of the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR on Cinematography (Derzhkino of the Ukrainian SSR) was responsible for film production in the republic and supervised between 1963 and 1972 by Sviatoslav Ivanov (1918-1984).

⁵⁰³ Brykailo, On film production at Lviv television (2019). This equipment was never legally allowed at L'viv Television and caused many troubles for Brykailo.

⁵⁰⁴ The transfer of equipment from Derzhkino (state film committee) to Derzhtele-radio (state media committee) needed resolutions of high state officials and a special decree of the Council of Ministers of UkrSSR, thus it was not a simple enterprise. To obtain the most Brykailo often played on the edge of legal possibilities.

⁵⁰⁵ "DALO (1971), Fond R-1357, Opys 1, Sprava 1186," Arkush 42-43.

⁵⁰⁶ *Misto Kameniariv*, this title has the reference to Galician poet and writer Ivan Franko's famous social poem *Kameniariv* [Stonebreakers], published in the magazine *Dzvin* in 1878. This poem was interpreted by communists as an example of Ukrainian socialist art, though it also imbued references to Romanticism and Masonic symbolism, see more about Franko: Tamara Hundorova, *Franko ne kameniar. Franko i kameniar* (Kyiv: Krytyka, 2013).

shift in quality was characteristic of many studios in Soviet Ukraine and, since 1965, some, like Kharkiv television, offered television content to the republican television in Kyiv.

After addressing the subjects of socialist production and the socialist city, filmmakers turned their attention to nature and its people. In 1967, L'viv Television producers selected one short film about the Hutsul people (*Hutsul Wood Carvers*) to be broadcast through the *Intervision* television network. This film, as an example of national Soviet culture, was included in the catalogue of television films prepared by Soviet Central Television for international exchange.⁵⁰⁷ In addition, Soviet Central Television ordered a short film showing the picturesque character of the Ukrainian people from the Ukrainian film studio, Ukrkinokhronika, which specialized in newsreels and documentaries. The Kyiv-based studio, which had an office in western Ukraine (in L'viv), produced a film about Hutsul people from the Carpathians, called *Hutsul Wedding* [*Hutsulske vesillia*] (director A. Slesarenko, operator I. Katsman). The ethnography of the Carpathians and peasant culture attracted the attention of media producers at this time.

Folk aesthetics continued to shape Ukrainian media production in the following years. In 1968, Ukrtefilm studio produced several films that focused on ethnographic subjects from western Ukraine. This time producers combined the Carpathian landscape with folk and neo-folk music. Ukrtefilm produced story-based film-concerts [*siuzhetnyi film concert*] such as *Bukovynski Vechirky* [Bukovina Celebrating], *Lemkivski Melodiyi* [Lemkos' Melodies], *Sestry Baiko* [Baiko Sisters], *Shchedryi Vechir* [Merry Evening].⁵⁰⁸ In all these short films, nature and the highland landscape provided a picturesque background for folk or neo-folk singing. In this period, the film *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* (1965), produced by Dovzhenko Film Studios and directed by Sergei Parajanov, brought the Carpathian landscape, "experimental ethnography",⁵⁰⁹ and Ukrainian folk imagery into the heights of poetic cinema. By the end of the 1960s, films featuring exotic Ukrainian highland people and the Carpathian landscape had already found their way into the Soviet media imagination and even entered the international market.

What made L'viv Television stand out from the other Ukrainian regional TV studios was not only the special regional landscape but also its focus on musicals. Soviet musical film developed as a genre of comedy in the 1930s and combined the aesthetics of existing pre-war Russian music, Estrada, and operetta, mingled with the new visual media of cinema.⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁷ *Filmy Sovetskogo Televideniia* (Moscow: Studii mezhdunarodnogo obmena telefilmami, 1967). Soviet Central Television offered other Soviet entertaining films, that depicted various national peculiarities of big socialist empire, like *Mountain Melody* (songs from North Ossetia), *Melody-66* (singing Estonian songs in Tallinn), *Kiev Melodies* (singing songs on the streets of Ukrainian capital), etc.

⁵⁰⁸ "TsDAVO of Ukraine, Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5044 (1968)," Arkush 51-52. It is interesting that special focus on folklore and peasant culture from the mountains in the late 1960s, was common for the Soviet Ukrainian official cultural institutions as well as for dissidents, prosecuted by communist officials.

⁵⁰⁹ First calls the combination of ethnography, cinematic time and camera aesthetics in the 1960s an 'experimental ethnographic mode', see: First, *Ukrainian Cinema (2014)*, 78–81.

⁵¹⁰ An. Vartanov, "Esteticheskiie Problemy Vzaimootnoshenii Estrady i Televideniia," in *Televizionnaia Estrada*, ed. An. Vartanov and Iu. Bogomolov (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1981), 10.

Such features (the combination of Estrada and film) were characteristic of Stalinist films as well as of the Thaw comedies and the extremely popular television films of the Brezhnev era. For instance, the famous Soviet movie *Circus* (1936, directed by Grigorii Aleksandrov, music by Isaak Dunaievskii) was an adaptation of the successful Moscow circus programme.⁵¹¹

Even though Soviet musicals attracted a large audience, after Stalin's death the genre was placed on hold. One reason for this was the personal attack of Nikita Khrushchev on Soviet musical films, which he considered to be "lakirovka deistvitel'nosti" [varnishing of reality], or namely kitsch. In a secret speech to the delegates to the Twentieth Party Congress in February 1956, Khrushchev singled out Soviet filmmakers for their part in establishing and maintaining Stalin's cult of personality.⁵¹² Khrushchev argued that musicals distorted the real life of the Soviet countryside, which was not as merry as in musical films. He claimed that Stalin only knew the country and Soviet agriculture from such films and not from real experience.⁵¹³ Khrushchev considered musical films of the 1930s among the most celebrated achievements of Stalin's aesthetics, and for this connection they often were banned from the cinema houses in the late 1950s and 1960s.⁵¹⁴

Musicals returned in the early 1960s. This return commenced with the film (it was a successful Moscow operetta) *Moskva, Cheriomushki* (1963), directed by Gerbert Rappaport, and with a music score by Dmitri Shostakovich, which attracted more than 30 million viewers. Such effective hybrids of music and film helped to create a new genre of television in the 1960s and which reached its peak in the 1970s in the television comedies of Eldar Riazanov.⁵¹⁵ Soviet musical comedies of the 1930s, directed by Grigori Aleksandrov and Ivan Pyriev, acquired a second life when they were restored and reissued for public consumption during

⁵¹¹ N. Khrenov, "Razvlekatelnyie Funktsii Estrady," in *Televizionnaia Estrada*, ed. An. Vartanov and Iu. Bogomolov (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1981), 35.

⁵¹² Taylor, "Singing on the Steppes for Stalin," 143.

⁵¹³ Khrushchev in a secret speech referred to films of Pyriev, the founder of a genre of 'kolkhoz musical,' who at the time was the head of Mosfilm Film Studios, the major producer of Soviet musical films. Khrushchev himself was once an admirer of the musicals and his criticism was based on statements borrowed from literary authors (like Viktor Nekrasov or Vladimir Pomerantsev), who called for honesty and sincerity in Soviet art and named Stalinist aesthetics as 'varnishing of reality', see: Taylor, 143–44. Joshua First mentions that before 'secret speech' French left critics criticized Soviet films for their kitsch character, see: First, *Ukrainian Cinema* (2014), 25. However, first famous accusation of Soviet culture to prefer kitsch instead of reality arrived from USA, see: Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," *Partisan Review*, 1939, Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center (Boston University).

⁵¹⁴ Rimgaila Salys, "The Strange Afterlife of Stalinist Musical Films" (National Council for Eurasian and East European Research, 2003), iii.

⁵¹⁵ Riazanov together with his friend Braginskiy initially created popular theatre music comedies, which later got adapted for television. Consider for instance extremely popular film *Ironia Sudby ili s Lehkim Parom* [The Irony of Faith of Enjoy Your Bath!] that originally was a performance and its film adaptation was broadcast by the First Channel of Soviet Central Television in 1976, turning theatrical work into a Soviet media cult. The success of this music comedy and its repetition on TV attracted almost all 'media population' of USSR, see: M. Krigel and L. Danilenko, "Ironiia Sydby Ili s Legkim Parom!," in *Liubimoie Kino*, vol. 12 (Kiev: Publishing house UMH, 2012), 10.

the Brezhnev years.⁵¹⁶ There was even an attempt to revive *Kuban Cossacks*, but since not so many people were willing to participate in such a rebirth, the idea was abandoned.⁵¹⁷

Thus, L'viv TV producers turned to musicals in 1968, when the genre had not only returned but slowly shifted from cinema to television.⁵¹⁸ In the late 1960s, this genre was placed in a new political and cultural context. The protagonists of Soviet fiction in the 1960s, like in the film *Cheryomushki*, were largely managers and career people, however, the difference with the previous films was in the attention to the ordinary individual. Artists and film directors of the 1960s tried to reintroduce sincerity and the lyricism in visual art and literature.⁵¹⁹ The issue of sincerity was brought into public discourse by Vladimir Pomerantsev in 1953.⁵²⁰ The other famous Soviet critics coined important metaphors of decade, like those of after-Stalin's *Thaw* (arrived from Ilia Erenburg⁵²¹) or arguments of Viktor Nekrasov about "simple and great words".⁵²² The calls for sincerity in the late 1950s and the 1960s seemed fresh (though appeared in Soviet culture already in the 1930s), and the criticism of Stalinist aesthetics was shared by many artists.

3.2. Singing in the mountains: making early provincial musicals

From 1957-1967, the L'viv Television studio became a large media enterprise integrated into the mechanics of Soviet culture and entertainment. It was able to produce films, which was uncommon for regional television studios. The initiative to produce Carpathian musicals came from the professionals of the Music Programming Desk of L'viv Television, like Roman Oleksiv (1926-1996), Myroslav Skochylias (1935-1999), and, to a lesser extent, Oksana Palamarchuk

⁵¹⁶ Salys, "The Strange Afterlife of Stalinist Musical Films," 2.

⁵¹⁷ Yurii Liubimov, in the 1960s already a director of Taganka theatre but in the 1930s an actor of the film, recalled the episode from the filming site and promised himself not to participate in such 'trash' any more, see: Salys, 4.

⁵¹⁸ What I call here a 'musical' is not the same as the typical genre of musical film, in which songs, sung by the characters and sometimes accompanied by dancing, are interwoven into a complicated narrative. Soviet Ukrainian short television musicals, running around thirty minutes, were named 'muzychnyi film' [musical film] or 'film-kontsert' [film concert]. Some critics argue that the plots in such short musicals are 'sacrificed' and function as an excuse for mere music scenes. In my interpretation, such short musical films were more complicated in their narrative structures and plots than film concerts and could be called 'story-based film concerts.' No matter how rudimentary the short sequences or intermezzos, they still can be integrated into a distinguishable plot, which can be analysed and interpreted. I prefer to call them musicals or musical films since they have a common narrative, although derived not from literary sources but rather from songs' lyrics and their interpretations. See: Sandra Heinen and Roy Sommer, *Narratology in the Age of Cross-Disciplinary Narrative Research* (Walter de Gruyter, 2009), 161–62.

⁵¹⁹ Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 215.

⁵²⁰ Vladimir Pomerantsev, "Ob Iskrennosti v Literature," *Novyi Mir*, December 1953. In this text Pomerantsev discussed problems of Soviet kitsch, which he famously named "varnishing of reality" [lakirovka deistvitelnosti] (page 219) for its extensive mimicry but not representation of real life (page 218). In February 1956, Khrushchev will repeat Pomerantsev's arguments, but instead of literature he will accuse kolkhoz musicals (especially Pyriev's *Kazaki*) for varnishing peasant life.

⁵²¹ Ilia Erenburg, "Ottepel," *Znamia*, May 1954.

⁵²² See sub-chapter 'Narrative and Aesthetic Preoccupation of the Thaw,' which discusses influence of Thaw on Soviet Ukrainian cinema, see: First, *Ukrainian Cinema (2014)*, 25–27.

(1931-2006). However, it would not have been possible without Taras Brykailo, who organised film production at the L'viv Television studio. As he recalls:

In August of 1968, I heard in L'viv the noisy sounds of airplanes, which were departing to Prague with the Soviet military. Unexpectedly, the studio emptied of all the senior officials, who left for Czechoslovakia. I got the chance to make the first musical without extensive negotiations with the top officials. Thus, we quickly made a simple scenario, grabbed the film crew and in one week shot the main scenes of the movie. In the autumn, we were ready to send this film to Kyiv or Moscow for approval.⁵²³

Thus, the first black and white musical film *Zalytsialnyky* [Philanders] produced by L'viv Television in 1968,⁵²⁴ was the result of "anticipated accident".⁵²⁵ The title of the musical followed the name of the popular song *Philanderers*, written by the local artist and poet Bohdan Stelmakh and the composer Bohdan Yanivskyy. The latter was the head of the official orchestra of L'viv state media committee, and this orchestra featured in the musical.⁵²⁶ This film introduced the music of Yanivskii, Olexandr Bilash and depicted L'viv jazz band Medicus (directed by Ihor Khoma) together with the orchestra, subordinated to regional media committee.

The musical was the first product by professionals from the L'viv Television Musical Programming Desk and aimed at merging the national landscape with Ukrainian music. In doing this, the producers strove to avoid the clichés of typical television music concerts, frequently broadcast by central and regional television. According to Lesia Stadnyk, who featured as the female protagonist, the film was conceived and prepared mainly by Roman Oleksiv and Myroslav Skochyliias, both professionals from L'viv Television's music editorial.⁵²⁷ They were also behind the decision to bring music to nature, thus combining the local landscape with current popular music.

In the film, a young man from the city travels to the village to (unsuccessfully) convince a beautiful girl to marry one of him. The story has no dialogue and the plot unfolds only through songs and melodies. The film seemed exotic and ethnographic at the same time, combining folk music and jazz interpretations of works by Soviet Ukrainian composers. Formally speaking, it was produced according to the party demands, reflecting "good traditions" (folk music) adapted to current music by genuinely Soviet composers and

⁵²³ Brykailo, On film production at Lviv television (2019).

⁵²⁴ On the Prague Spring and the limits of De-Stalinization, see: Wojnowski, *The Near Abroad*, 105–40.

⁵²⁵ Film was directed by Roman Oleksiv, based on the screenplay prepared by Myroslav Skochyliias and edited by Oksana Palamarchuk, all experienced editors of L'viv Television. The whole film crew was as follow: director R. Oleksiv, chief manager T. Brykailo, screenplay by R. Oleksiv and M. Skochyliias, camera V. Khotinov and Iu. Matora, production sound mixer/recordist/engineer A. Ivantsov, artists O. Dufanets and B. Hrynyk, editor O. Palamarchuk. Films running time was 27 minutes. This first work of L'viv TV required certain courage from its creators since they had any practical experience in making movies.

⁵²⁶ Oleh Kolubaev, "Sources of Songs by Bohdan Yanivskyy," *Studii Mystetstvoznavchi (Academy of Science of Ukraine)*, no. 3 (2012): 46–52.

⁵²⁷ Stadnyk sung as a vocalist in Medicus jazz band and worked at L'viv Television's editorial for children. See: Lesia Stadnyk, On musical "Philanders," interview by Bohdan Shumylovych, Recorded interview with notes, September 20, 2016, Center for Urban History of East-Central Europe (Lviv, Ukraine).

embedded in the regional landscape. Its catchy melodies had all the necessary features of light entertainment and it received enormous success. Producers managed to escape the formal character of the Soviet television concert by bringing local performers to natural settings, thus bringing “colour” to the film. Merging the western Ukrainian landscape and popular music through television films had the same aesthetic power as the integration of landscape and time in Ukrainian poetic cinema.⁵²⁸ In both cases, producers created appealing, picturesque movies, which captivated viewers’ imaginations.

The film also received positive feedback from Kyiv and Moscow.⁵²⁹ However, local L’viv officials were reluctant to broadcast it through a regional television network. Taras Brykailo and Roman Oleksiv understood that the film needed union-wide broadcasting on Central Television. Producers sent the *Philanders* musical to Moscow, namely to the editorial of regional programming at Central Television, where Halyna Greshylova, the former employee of L’viv TV, and devotee of the film director Roman Oleksiv, was employed. Brykailo admits that he witnessed a phone talk between Greshylova and Oleksiv, during which she informed the latter that musical film from L’viv was enrolled by her to participate in the second *All-Union Festival of Soviet Television Films* (held in Leningrad).⁵³⁰ Soon, the media committee of the L’viv region and senior officials from the television studio received congratulations from Moscow as the *Philanders* musical was acknowledged to be among the best television music films made in the USSR in 1968 and the authors were accredited with special distinctions. In May 1969, the film was broadcast in the Russian Federation, being called a fiction film.⁵³¹

Thus, the first musical from L’viv Television, after being recognized in the centre of the Soviet empire, established a new genre on regional TV. After a successful first attempt, the L’viv Television musical editors produced another movie called *Siisia Rodysia* [Inseminate and Give Birth]⁵³² (running time 37 minutes) that was issued in 1969. This was a colour film and to make it Brykailo purchased an old and barely functioning film camera from the Odesa Film Studio. The camera was very heavy and the cameramen had to constantly fix it, as Yevhen Chekh admits: “We were recording film scenes at night and fixing cameras during the day.”⁵³³

⁵²⁸ Filmmakers of Ukrainian ‘poetic cinema’ were interested not only in folklore or Dovzhenko’s cinematic heritage, but also in avant-garde cinemas (surrealism and expressionism) or in French New Wave. For these experimental styles the relations between time and space were often of crucial importance. See: First, “Ukrainian National Cinema and the Concept of the ‘Poetic.’”

⁵²⁹ Mykhailo Maslii, ‘Dlia Moskv Na L’vivskomu Telebachenni Myroslav Skochylias Zavzhdy Robyv “Shto Nibud” Ekzaticheskaie”, Tobto Ukrainske!’’, *Vysokyi Zamok*, 2015, 02 February edition.

⁵³⁰ Brykailo, On film production at Lviv television (2019).

⁵³¹ “Letters and reports” (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1969), 43, Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5917, TsDAVO of Ukraine, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

⁵³² Film crew was as follows: director Roman Oleksiv, screenplay Myroslav Skochylias and R. Oleksiv, director’s assistant H. Yarema, camera Yevhen Chekh, artist A. Pavliuk, director Taras Brykailo, sound editor Anatolii Ivantsov, film editing O. Deriazhna, makeup V. Karlin, lighting A. Astakhov. Except Baiko sisters film screened musicians from the Bohdan Yanivskii orchestra and some of the television editors. Most of the work was produced in L’viv, except screening natural landscape and travel in Carpathians.

⁵³³ See recollections of its creators: Liubov Kozak, “Siisia Rodysia,” Video recording of television broadcast, *Skarby Ivivskoho teletitopysu [Treasures of Lviv television]* (Lviv, Ukraine: Lviv State Regional Television (LDTRK),

Following the Soviet tradition of the 1960s, the film was set as a New Year's romantic fairy-tale, configured according to socialist ethics and aesthetics.⁵³⁴ Television professionals, aware that television gathered an extremely large number of viewers during the winter holiday, usually strove to produce a concert or a short film in keeping with the winter celebration.

Siisia Rodysia featured the well-known western Ukrainian singing trio, the Baiko Sisters [Sestry Baiko], who were originally from the Lemky ethnic group in the Carpathians.⁵³⁵ In the film,⁵³⁶ sister-singers (in real life professional singers from the L'viv Philharmonic) travel from L'viv to a remote village in the Carpathians to "borrow" songs (the original title of musical was *Do Mamy za Pisniamy* [Going to Mom to Pick Up Songs]) from their mother. Happily singing, they encounter villagers carrying a big Soviet star (big "zvizda" or a star, which directed shepherds to newly born Christ, was a pre-Soviet folk Christmas tradition) and singing carols. After the pleasant scene at home, which shows common singing, the whole group travels to café (rather very atypical possibility for the 1960s in the Carpathians), where they continue the celebration in the style of Moscow's *Goluboi Ogoniek*.⁵³⁷

The story combined the city, mountains, folk songs, new year (inferred Christmas) and aesthetics of television celebration (*Goluboi Ogoniek*) and became tremendously popular in western Ukraine. Liubov Kozak, a L'viv TV professional claimed that airing this film on television in the mid-1970s,⁵³⁸ years after it was issued in 1969, regularly resulted in sacks of letters from viewers, thus finally satisfying the party officials.⁵³⁹ This Carpathian musical fairy-tale, which combined elements of myth and socialist reality, fulfilled the needs and expectations of the western Ukrainian working class, which was formed of former peasants and small-town dwellers. Producers and consumers of mountain musicals by the majority were people of the same class, born in villages or provincial small settlements (or occasionally in Stalinist camps), and educated in the socialist cities. To a certain extent, the L'viv Television

2007), 19th minute of broadcast, Lviv Television's institutional archive, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z99vCiS1M4Y>.

⁵³⁴ This musical directed to the subject of Soviet youth and tourism, see: Anne E. Gorsuch, *All This Is Your World: Soviet Tourism at Home and Abroad after Stalin* (Oxford University Press, 2001).

⁵³⁵ Sisters Danyila (born 20 August 1929), Maria (03 March 1931), Nina (05 August 1933) and Zenoviia (born 1927) were born in mid-war Poland, in the village of Yablunysia, Berehovo district in *Lemkivshchyna* (ethnographic zone) in nowadays Podkarpackie wojewodstwo in Poland.

⁵³⁶ The title of musical derived from the popular song, composed by Anatolii Kos-Anatolskyi. This composer had well-established Soviet position, but also strived to unite the new Soviet Ukrainian *Eстрада* with pre-Soviet light entertainment, see: Oleh Kolubaev, "Principles of Forming Ukrainian Pop-Eстрада and Song Tradition in Galicia," *Scientific Papers of the Lviv National Music Academy Named after. M.V. Lysenko*, Performative Arts, no. 27 (2013): 208–218; Volodymyr Kononchuk, "Tantsiuvalni Zhanry v Tvorchosti A. Kos-Anatolskoho (Fokstrot, Rumba, Tvist, Charlston)," *Molode Muzykoznavstvo (Naukovi Zbirky LDMA Im. M.Lysenka)*, no. 7 (2002): 52–56.

⁵³⁷ From 1965 Moscow television's *Goluboi Ogoniek* became a new year show suitable to the yearly rituals of common Soviet people. This was the main New Year's show on Soviet Central Television until *Pesnia Goda* [Song of the Year] replaced it in the early 1970s. See: Vartanov, *Televideniie Mezhdru Iskusstvom I Massmedia*, 310.

⁵³⁸ The film was shown several times every year and normally for each new year eve through 1970s and till early 1980s.

⁵³⁹ Kozak, "Sijsia Rodysia (2007)"; Kozak, Interview on history of Lviv TV (2015).

producers made a genuine socialist art for “authentic” Soviet Ukrainians – national in form and entertaining in content, which functioned as an important ritual for social change.

The third Carpathian musical produced by L’viv Television in cooperation with the sound editor from Chernivtsi television, Vasyl Strikhovych, furthered the idea developed in *Siisia Rodysia*, to combine contemporary Ukrainian light music with beautiful mountain scenery. Strikhovych, who was behind the early recordings of Sofia Rotaru, the ensemble Smerichka in the late 1960s, and the song *Chervona Ruta* by Volodymyr Ivasiuk in 1970, convinced his L’viv colleagues to make a film musical about rising popular Estrada from the Soviet Ukrainian West (mainly the Bukovina and Ivano-Frankivsk region). Initially, the film was part of the planning of the music editorial at L’viv Television (it was planned for the second quarter of 1971).⁵⁴⁰ However, the Ukrainian media committee decided to hand over production to Ukrtefilm. The musical film was conceived as an entertaining story about the life and work of the Soviet youth and the beauty of Ukrainian light music, which was seen to shape better Soviet citizens and encourage a sensitivity and appreciation of the natural beauty of the region. Producers wanted to show working class people and students in the university auditoriums and at work, relaxing in the beautiful Carpathian setting.⁵⁴¹

The film was not solely the work of L’viv professionals since it also involved sound recorders from Chernivtsi, amateur bands and semi-amateur dancers from Bukovina and Galicia. However, it was never made by L’viv Television, and the whole enterprise was developed and finished in Kyiv by the Ukrtefilm studio. There were several reasons for this to happen, and among the most important was the close attention of local television officials to popular content produced by Brykailo and Oleksiv. Roman Oleksiv spent some years in Stalinist camps before being employed by L’viv Television, and even though there were no reasons for distrust, administrators were anxious that his films became so popular with the regional audience.⁵⁴² To avoid further discussions with the senior officials, he made the decision to relocate from L’viv Television to the Ukrtefilm studio in Kyiv, and thus took the musical with him to the capital.

The title of this next Carpathian musical film was borrowed from the name of the Ukrainian hit “Chervona Ruta” (see Chapter 1.6.). The song was recorded by Vasyl Strikhovych in Chernivtsi and broadcast in September 1970 to the whole country through the Kyiv-based television programme *Kamerton Dobroho Nastroi* [Tuning Fork for a Good Mood]. “Chervona Ruta” was a song about the search for love in the Carpathian Mountains, which promised to bring a romantic meaning to life. In addition, it became widely popular in the USSR after being awarded with a credential in December 1970 on the first edition of *Pesnia*

⁵⁴⁰ In January 1971, this film was acknowledged among the few musical films that L’viv media committee wanted to produce in upcoming year. The title *Chervona Ruta* was provisional and producers wanted to make a film to propagate current Ukrainian Estrada music with amateur and professional dancers and music bands from L’viv, Ivano-Frankivsk and Chernivtsi, see: “Reports (programming about Lviv)” (Lviv Television and Radio Committee, 1971), Arkush 78, Fond 1357, Opys 1, Sprava 1186, DALO, The State Archive of Lviv Region.

⁵⁴¹ “DALO (1971), Fond 1357, Opys 1, Sprava 1186,” Arkush 79.

⁵⁴² Brykailo, On film production at Lviv television (2019).

Goda, the new entertainment programme on Soviet Central TV. The growing popularity of this song urged Ukrainian television producers to make a musical about popular music stars from western Ukraine. Thus, in the spring and summer of 1971, the L'viv and Chernivtsi television studios, in cooperation with Ukrtefilm specialists, worked in various locations in the Carpathians and TV studios. They started by producing recordings of songs, most of which were made by Volodymyr Ivasiuk (Chapter 1.6.), a young amateur composer from Chernivtsi, and performed by western Ukrainian music bands.⁵⁴³

When the film production was moved from L'viv to Kyiv, the screenplay of the film was changed according to new demands from the capital. The first scenario showed workers and students relaxing in the Carpathians.⁵⁴⁴ In Kyiv producers with the help of party functionaries, developed a fresh plot. The new storyline by L'viv TV editor Myroslav Skochylias was signed and reviewed by officials on 21 May 1971, and told the story of a worker from the Donbas industrial region searching for love in the mountains.⁵⁴⁵ So, while in the first version of the story the young people from L'viv were intended to travel to the Carpathians for rest, in the new version they combined the industrial Donbas and the mountainous Carpathians through train tourism.⁵⁴⁶

Commentators admitted that the newly developed film plot was simple and smoothly connected songs, which were selected by producers with good taste. The viewers would have the chance, remarked the Ukrtefilm studio's chief editor N. Luchyna and the editor A. Vashchenko, to see the amateur collectives from Ivano-Frankivsk (*Rosynka*), Vyzhnytsia (*Smerichka*), Chernivtsi and L'viv (*Medicus*, directed by I. Khoma⁵⁴⁷).⁵⁴⁸ They also recommended reducing the number of dialogues in the film in order to let the characters' eyes, situations and songs talk for themselves.⁵⁴⁹ Reviewers admitted that for a television film, the number of scenes should be condensed to only those necessary passages that allowed for a smooth transition between songs.

Kyiv editors and producers wanted to make another short and simple Estrada television concert with a Carpathian background. This reductionism brought an advantage to the film, which became more minimalist, with a story comparable to a fairy tale. However,

⁵⁴³ Six out of fifteen songs, that featured in the film, performed amateur ensemble *Smerichka* from Vyzhnytsia, four songs by band *Rosynka* from Ivano-Frankivsk, two songs by band *Karpaty* (including Russian song performed by Raisa Koltza) from Chernivtsi, and others combined *Estrada Youth Orchestra*. Producers also invited dancing collective *Evrika* from Ivano-Frankivsk.

⁵⁴⁴ "DALO (1971), Fond R-1357, Opys 1, Sprava 1186," Ankush 79.

⁵⁴⁵ "TsDALMU (1971), Fond 1104, Opys 1, Sprava 396," Arkush 10.

⁵⁴⁶ On train tourism and Carpathians, see: Anne E. Gorsuch and Diane P. Koenker, eds., *The Socialist Sixties: Crossing Borders in the Second World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 232–33.

⁵⁴⁷ This band was later excluded from the shortlist, most probably the reason was aesthetic difference between jazz of *Medicus* and new Ukrainian Estrada, shaped around the beat sound.

⁵⁴⁸ "TsDALMU (1971), Fond 1104, Opys 1, Sprava 396," Arkush 9-10.

⁵⁴⁹ The early screenplay proposed to present characters, like Andrii from Donbass (the final name chosen for the character was 'less national' Boris), orchestra from L'viv, or soloist from Vyzhnytsia, see: "TsDALMU (1971), Fond 1104, Opys 1, Sprava 396," 10.

this was not the last change in the storyline, because the film still lacked an important element: a story about friendship across the USSR. The simplest way to convey Soviet friendship was to add a few songs in the Russian language to show that the Ukrainian youth was not nationalistic. In addition, Russian songs would allow the film more easily enter Soviet-wide broadcasting. Finally, producers decided to make two versions of the musical, one in Ukrainian for the national audience, the other in Russian for the Soviet broadcast. In July 1971, an additional reviewer (music editor T. Derzska) who examined film director's proposals on the basis of the screenplay, admitted that the film would be especially successful [matyme bazhanyi uspikh] if they added two Russian songs (*Bezhit Reka* [The River Runs]⁵⁵⁰ and *Proshchai Liubymyi Gorod* [Goodbye Beloved City], produced in 1941 by Vasilii Soloviov-Sedoi on the verses of Alexander Churkin).⁵⁵¹ Apparently, this war-time song about sailors did not fit the Carpathian landscape. Therefore, the producers left only one melancholic Russian song, about the search for love by a lonely woman.

In August 1971, the director of Ukrtefilm studio, R. Furtak, signed an order to send a crew of filmmakers to the Carpathians.⁵⁵² Since most of the songs were ready (pre-recorded), the operators and film director mainly needed to film the mountain scenery and the artists lip-syncing in the background. Because of this, in the final picture, many performers had voice-overs by different singers. On 26 October 1971, the Ukrtefilm studio issued a final review for *Chervona Ruta*: officials seemed satisfied since the musical showed a politically correct version of the new Ukrainian Estrada predominantly performed by amateur singers or collectives.⁵⁵³

The tale of a working man from the eastern Ukrainian industrial region seeking love and meaning in the western Carpathians was a success. In December 1971, *Chervona Ruta* received the first rank [persha katehoriia] by an order [nakaz] of the head of the Ukrainian media committee, Mykola Skachko, and was recommended for union-wide broadcasting.⁵⁵⁴ After this broadcast on Central Television, Ukrainian songs connected to highland imagery became widely popular in the USSR. Most of those involved would go on to become big stars in the 1970s, including the composer Volodymyr Ivasiuk. The musical film promoted regional Estrada and amateur arfts, while at the same time Kyiv received a story about east-west Ukrainian friendship in a light, entertaining format. Notably, Moscow recognized and

⁵⁵⁰ The song *Bezhit reka* [The River Runs] was produced in 1960 by composer Eduard Kolmanovskii and poet Yevgenii Yevtushenko, both well-established among official culture elites. This lyrical so-called female song describes the character's sadness caused by the absence of 'good love' [liubvi khoroshei].

⁵⁵¹ Derzska admitted that these two songs make the compositional structure more vivid, see: "TsDALMU (1971), Fond 1104, Opys 1, Sprava 396," Arkush 12. In fact, these songs were artificially added to the plot in order to exemplify friendship of the Soviet people. Because this practice of supplementing a literary publication or a concert in national language with Russian text or songs was omnipresent during late socialism, artists would often call it 'a steam engine' meaning that Russian or official communist content helped to pull and drag the whole work, so that it would be published more easily.

⁵⁵² "TsDALMU (1971), Fond 1104, Opys 1, Sprava 396," Arkush 8.

⁵⁵³ "TsDALMU (1971), Fond 1104, Opys 1, Sprava 396," Arkush 12.

⁵⁵⁴ 'Orders' (L'viv Television and Radio Committee, 1971), Arkush 8-9, Fond P-1357, Opys 1, Sprava 1083, DALO, The State Archive of L'viv Region.

acknowledged new Soviet Ukrainian style, fashioned in a form of ethnographical-national clichés, revised, and exotic at the same time.

3.3. Fragmented mythologies of socialist entertainment

The musical film as the combination of music and technical vision (camera), originally appeared in the USA. The first sound films were commonly musical comedies. Consider, for instance, the film *The Jazz Singer* (issued in October 1927) featuring Al Jolson, which is often described as the first sound movie. The success of *The Jazz Singer* was due largely to Jolson, who was already an established American music star, but the film established a new genre.⁵⁵⁵ Similar to early American musicals, music films that were produced by L'viv Television in the late 1960s also borrowed their titles from already renowned songs and featured popular music performers. Musicals developed from the practices of the music hall and operetta, being closely connected to entertainment and popular urban culture. Similarly, Soviet musical film comedies of the 1930s combined the aesthetics of existing pre-war Russian Estrada or operetta with the new visual media of cinema (see Chapter 2.1.). In western Ukraine musicals also borrowed from local Estrada and other popular genres, though we can easily recognise that this borrowing was often not just Soviet or Russian: producers looked to the west and evoked the regional past, especially the traditions of pre-war Ukrainian, Polish and Jewish variety shows.

Soviet film administrators understood that a film's success was often directly linked to the degree of entertainment in the storyline. In October 1964, when the Communist Party of the USSR removed Khrushchev from power, Soviet musical comedies about love and happiness in the newly built houses in Moscow's experimental district of Cheryomushki, became a hit, attracting millions of visitors. How was it possible that the important elements of Stalinist aesthetics, like laughter and simple joy, were restored so quickly after Khrushchev's criticism of Stalinist tastes? Apparently, officials banned films produced under Stalin, but there was no restriction on the enjoyment and music comedies produced under the new political establishment. Film producers were consequently free to emphasize a person and his/her private desires and needs and not solely the collective as a driving force of history. The lyrics from the libretto to the *Cheryomushki* operetta⁵⁵⁶ include a young couple dreaming about their private life in their new Soviet apartment:

Here the hall, it is ours... here the clothes hanger, it is also ours... here is our room... the whole apartment belongs to us... and the kitchen is ours... our windows, our doors, I can't

⁵⁵⁵ The music movies profits proved to the industry that the sound technology in films was worth for further development, see: Harry M. Geduld, *The Birth of the Talkies: From Edison to Jolson* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975), 166.

⁵⁵⁶ *Moscow, Cheryomushki* was a successful operetta, staged at the Moscow State Academic Theatre of Operetta (or Moscow Operetta) in late January 1959. Film was produced by Lenfilm, directed by Gerbert Rappoport, on the screenplay and libretto by Issak Glikman, Vladimir Mass and Mikhail Chervinskii; music for this comedy wrote Dmitry Shostakovich. See: Dmitry Shostakovich, "Moskva, Cheryomushki," *Sovetskaia Muzyka*, no. 4 (1959): 43.

believe my eyes... here is a cosy working room... now we can invite all our friends and even have a place to dance.⁵⁵⁷

Indeed, the subjects of personal life – love, privacy and happiness – were stressed in Soviet art in the early 1960s. Writers, poets and theoreticians strove to re-examine the notion of the Soviet romantic figure as well as Romanticism as a style and attitude.⁵⁵⁸ From the second half of the 1950s, Soviet artists and literary scholars discussed the power of the romantic hero to foster socialism, which was certainly disagreement with Stalinist aesthetics.⁵⁵⁹ Katherina Clark admits that Khrushchev's secret speech encouraged writers to be braver in exposing the excesses of Stalinism. Tropes that were criticized in the late 1950s and 1960s included the monumental hero (paternalistic views), constant alertness (looking for enemies), the image of a hard-driving and fearless leader (an exemplary communist), the duty of the state to monitor the private lives of its citizens, the Zhdanovist literary doctrines of pacifism (imposed from 1946).⁵⁶⁰ Despite these attacks on the very maxims of Stalinist's aesthetics,⁵⁶¹ often being criticized as kitsch, artists and writers did not go to the opposite extreme, which was the cult of the "little man" that developed in the Soviet literature of the 1930s.

Elena Prokhorova acknowledges that the major master narratives of Soviet socialist realist artworks were fragmented after Stalin's death, especially in the late 1960s and 1970s. In Soviet television mini-series, master plots usually were changed through "complication of a narrative structure" or by "reconfiguring relation between the sign and the coded message."⁵⁶² She uses the metaphor "fragmented mythologies" to describe these reconfigurations of basic schemes and narratives that were developed during Stalinism.⁵⁶³ She found such fragmented or re-worked mythologies in Soviet television films of the 1970s, and I think it is apply this approach to audio-visual entertainment produced in the Soviet peripheries in the late 1960s.

Soviet myth functioned as a special type of plot (as in Roland Barthes' model of myth), which naturalized historical intentions with a narrative justification. This myth was a set of values, which did not describe a natural state of the world but emulated the state of the world.⁵⁶⁴ The arts were subordinated to the basic Soviet myth and Stalinist musicals

⁵⁵⁷ 'Vot peredniaia nasha, nasha... vot I veshalka nasha... nasha komnata nasha... vsia kvartira nasha, nasha... kukhnia tozhe nasha, nasha... nashi okna, nashi dveri, ia glazam svoim ne veriu, iest uiutnyi cabinet... mozhna vsekh druzei pozvat, mozhna dazhe tantsevat.' Translated by Shumylovych from the operetta performance.

⁵⁵⁸ Leighton, "The Great Soviet Debate Over Romanticism," 42.

⁵⁵⁹ Leighton, "The Great Soviet Debate Over Romanticism."

⁵⁶⁰ Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 210.

⁵⁶¹ On Stalinist aesthetics see: T. Lahusen and E.A. Dobrenko, eds., *Socialist Realism Without Shores* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997); Eric Naiman and Evgeny Dobrenko, eds., *The Landscape of Stalinism: The Art and Ideology of Soviet Space* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2003).

⁵⁶² Prokhorova, "Fragmented Mythologies," 68.

⁵⁶³ See also publications where such 'fragmentation' is analysed: Alexander Prokhorov, *Unasledovannyi Diskurs: Paradigmy Stalinskoi Kultury v Literature i Kinematografe "Ottepeli,"* Sovremennaia Zapadnaia Rusistika 66 (Sankt-Peterburg: Akademicheskii proekt, DNK, 2007); Prokhorov and Prokhorova, *Film and Television Genres of the Late Soviet Era*, 6–7.

⁵⁶⁴ Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 37.

functioned as a part of Soviet myth-making,⁵⁶⁵ which aimed to create a new Soviet identity.⁵⁶⁶ The core of Soviet art was mostly about class, the party, ideological-mindedness, and new consciousness. This consciousness required the work or self-cultivation of each individual.⁵⁶⁷ In the German literary tradition this self-cultivation was called *Bildung*, which was reflected in the genre of *Bildungsroman*. Soviet myth unfolded through a master plot; the film showed how the protagonist, under the guidance of an ideological supporter, transforms from being spontaneous (and not mindful) into an ideologically conscious person.⁵⁶⁸ Thus, socialist realist narratives describing the deliberate transformation of the individual provided the core Soviet myth well into the 1970s and early 1980s.⁵⁶⁹

Conventional (older communists) and nonconforming (younger communists) forces did not really stand on different sides but were rather locked within one arrangement of beliefs. Both Stalinists and their opponents used the same metaphors (like that of mythological Greek hero Prometheus or the historical Spartak),⁵⁷⁰ and reflected on the notion that there was a distinct knowledge of history, accessible only to exceptional people (like in a religious sect)⁵⁷¹, namely members of the Soviet Communist Party or intelligentsia. Katherina Clark admits that in the early 1960s, Soviet intellectuals discussed the questions of intellectual truth in general and the problems of compromise between the state's interests and the needs of the individual. How was one to distinguish between the private, the communal and the state in socialist society? Or, as Clark described this conflictual question:

How is it possible to maintain the individual citizen's identity, intellectual integrity, dignity, and private life without voluntarily or involuntarily submitting to the demands of "the organisation" (in the Soviet case, the Party or state), and how is it possible to foster initiative while yet assuring efficient administration and achievement as the major goals?⁵⁷²

Soviet television in the 1960s marked a new period in Soviet media-spectacle, the turn to entertainment. In the Soviet media culture of the 1960s, this turn took place within the framework of debates on the personal and the collective. Soviet musical films resolved this conflict in funny and joyful ways, giving viewers, if not so much promises, then entertainment. The important feature of this renewed Soviet spectacle was the diffusion of genres across cinema, popular culture and television.⁵⁷³

⁵⁶⁵ Soviet mythmaking involved plenty of folk or other myths. Campbell stresses that "the symbols of mythology are not manufactured; they cannot be ordered, invented, or permanently suppressed. They are spontaneous productions of the psyche, and each bears within it, undamaged, the germ power of its source," see: Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (Princeton University Press, 2004), 3.

⁵⁶⁶ Prokhorova, "Fragmented Mythologies," 23.

⁵⁶⁷ Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 17–18.

⁵⁶⁸ Clark, 46–47.

⁵⁶⁹ Prokhorov and Prokhorova, *Film and Television Genres of the Late Soviet Era*, 16–17.

⁵⁷⁰ In Soviet symbolism suffering was part of salvation, see: Aleksandr Etkind, "Soviet Subjectivity: Torture for the Sake of Salvation?," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 6, no. 1 (2005): 171–186.

⁵⁷¹ On sects and Soviet culture see: Alexander Etkind, *Khlyst: Sekty, Literatura i Revoliutsiia*. (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 1998), 663–663.

⁵⁷² Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 222.

⁵⁷³ Prokhorov and Prokhorova, *Film and Television Genres of the Late Soviet Era*, 6.

In the following sections I will deconstruct regional television musicals and show that their popularity was connected to inherently fairy-tale-like plots that fulfilled and, at the same time, fragmented the Soviet meta-narrative. In the late 1960s and 1970s the Soviet myth embedded in socialist realism was changed by television mini-series through their complication of the traditional narrative, which “weakened the hierarchical structure of Stalinist master plots.”⁵⁷⁴ Television films marginalized and destabilized the centre (Moscow, as a “holy” place in Stalinist films) and made the *Bildungs* plot incomplete. In addition, regional television musicals, which were produced in L’viv, symbolically celebrated nature and the village over urban modernity, which can be interpreted as a symptom of this time.

3.4. L’viv Television music films and their semiotics

In the semiotics of the Soviet musical, the village and natural landscape may be perceived as female and the city as male, so the latter usually conquers the former. At the same time, Moscow as magic and the super-real place often functions as a space for remarkable encounters of film characters. The connection of women (most female characters are villagers or are somehow connected to the land) to the countryside suggested backwardness, passivity and nurture, while men (like tractor drivers) were connected to the city, industry, and power.⁵⁷⁵ This male/female relation was inscribed on many medallions and posters in the early Soviet years, like a man with a hammer and a woman with a sickle, and it found codification in Vera Mukhina's renowned statue in Moscow,⁵⁷⁶ *Worker and Kolkhoz Woman* (built 1935-1937).⁵⁷⁷

Women were often symbolically connected to the land and nation through the culture of Romanticism, and both (female and land) were imagined as being protected by men.⁵⁷⁸ As Kenneth Olwig claims, the concept of landscape, while encompassing a cultural as well as a physical identity, is linked to a *sexual cosmology*,⁵⁷⁹ which is fundamental to the very human notion of “realness”. Geography often portrays landscapes in feminine and attractive terms, often turning landscape, as Gillian Rose asserts, into representation and not an object of research.⁵⁸⁰ Thus, the representations of landscapes were and often are grounded in the gendered power relationships which characterize societies: “Woman becomes Nature and Nature Woman [...] both can thus be burdened with men’s meaning and invite interpretation

⁵⁷⁴ Prokhorova, “Fragmented Mythologies,” 65–68.

⁵⁷⁵ We can also treat these media characters as mythology’s “*dramatis personae*”, described by Propp, see: Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale*, trans. Laurence Scott (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968), 26.

⁵⁷⁶ Citations from musicals and film titles (like ‘Swineherdess and a Shepherd’) often in vernacular parlance referred to the Mukhina’s monument of a factory worker and a peasant woman in the 1960s already turned into ironic jokes, widely used by common Soviet people.

⁵⁷⁷ On Soviet jokes that connected the statue of male worker and female farmer with cinematic swineherdess and a shepherd (musical *Doiarka i Pastukh*) see: Stites, *Russian Popular Culture*, 83–84.

⁵⁷⁸ Annette Pritchard and Nigel J. Morgan, “Constructing Tourism Landscapes - Gender, Sexuality and Space,” *Tourism Geographies* 2, no. 2 (January 2000): 120.

⁵⁷⁹ Kenneth Olwig, *Sexual Cosmology: Nation and Landscape at the Conceptual Interstices of Nature and Culture Or: What Does Landscape Really Mean?* (Odense University, 1992).

⁵⁸⁰ Gillian Rose, *Feminism & Geography: The Limits of Geographical Knowledge* (University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 89.

by masculinist discourse.”⁵⁸¹ Indeed, as Labbe argues, it was the masculine in Romantic culture that ultimately asserted authority,⁵⁸² therefore the first people who managed “to see”, for instance, the Carpathian Mountains, were men.⁵⁸³ The tradition-makers were often artists, so as Labbe maintains, to really “see” a landscape “one must possess capabilities at once inborn and cultivated through proper training.”⁵⁸⁴

In trying to merge popular music with the picturesque scenery of the Carpathian Mountains in 1968, 1969 and 1971, the L’viv Television producers turned to new forms of popular culture. Due to the exoticism and popularity of performed songs, L’viv musicals were acknowledged in the Soviet centres (Kyiv and Moscow) and became extremely popular in the western region of Ukraine as well as nationally and transnationally. If early musicals like *Philanders* (1968) or *Inseminate and Give Birth* (1969) initiated the genre of Carpathian television music film, the *Red Rue* (1971) gave it the ultimate form. Musical films produced by L’viv Television or in cooperation between regional studios and the Ukrtelevision studio (Kyiv) in 1968-1971 featured male-female relations as a core element of the plot.

In the semiotics of Stalinist musicals, the village and natural landscape may be seen as a female in contrast to city or technology as male, thus a man who tries to conquer a woman symbolizes modernity’s conquering of nature. In Stalinist kolkhoz films, most of the female characters are villagers or connected to the land through their jobs and a man usually comes from the city, exemplifying the industry and modern power.

In Soviet popular culture, singers often were named in a reference to nature. For instance, in the early years of her career Sofia Rotaru received the moniker “nightingale” for her beautiful voice. One of the first Ukrainian television music films that depicted popular arts from Bukovina in 1966, had the title *The Nightingale from the Village of Marshintsi* [Solovei iz sela Marshintsi],⁵⁸⁵ and featured Sofia Rotaru, a young student at a music college. She was the winner of the regional amateur song festival and the film crew came from Kyiv to Chernivtsi to record her singing. The narrator happily announced that songs of Sonia, who is called a *Carpathian Nightingale* [karpatskyi soloveiko], some years ago excited and made happy not only her native villagers, but also people in Moscow and Leningrad. “This daughter of a Bukovina farmer”, continued the narrator, “frequently performs in the concert halls of Kyiv and represents the beautiful amateur culture from the Carpathians”.⁵⁸⁶

⁵⁸¹ Rose, 94. Cited in: Bárbara Bender, ed., *Landscape: Politics and Perspectives* (Berg, 1993), 307, 310.

⁵⁸² J. Labbe, *Romantic Visualities: Landscape, Gender and Romanticism* (Springer, 1998), 56.

⁵⁸³ Since gendering of nature has been a characteristic feature of European culture for long time, the involving of femininity into landscape representation was widespread in history and international politics, see: Pritchard and Morgan, “Constructing Tourism Landscapes - Gender, Sexuality and Space,” 119. See also: Karen Dubinsky, “‘The Pleasure Is Exquisite but Violent’: The Imaginary Geography of Niagara Falls in the Nineteenth Century,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 29, no. 2 (1994): 80.

⁵⁸⁴ Labbe, *Romantic Visualities*, 53.

⁵⁸⁵ Film director R. Synko, camera A. Suskyi, desing N. Iskra, running time 12 minutes, Ukrtelevision, 1966.

⁵⁸⁶ *Solovei iz sela Marshintsi*, Video recording of television film (Kyiv: Ukrtelevision, 1966), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1eLFYOiOdM>.

Thus, the sequence of this short film represents the correct hierarchy: a local singer of Moldovan origin is recognised as having the beautiful “natural” voice like a nightingale and performs for the people; she is recognized in Moscow and Leningrad (the mythological centres of Soviet empire) and is therefore also relevant for a national audience (Kyiv), thus indicating the status of the Ukrainian centre as a subaltern metropolis. In a few years, Sofia Rotaru would become a music star across the whole Soviet Union and her entire career would be tightly connected to Soviet television. While Soviet officials considered her as an exemplary socialist-international artist, Moldovan, Ukrainian and Russian nationalists similarly claimed her as their national artist, and some western scholars would see her as a Soviet style Estrada singer.⁵⁸⁷ Probably, she was both a national and transnational (Soviet) actor, produced in the peripheral Bukovina by the Ukrainian media and Central Soviet Television.

The narrative of the first music film produced by L’viv Television in 1968 (*Zalytsialnyky* [Philanders]) had suggestive connotations, combined with the Stalinist aesthetics of city/male and rural/female order, and travel from the centre to the periphery. According to the screenplay proposed by the L’viv Television producers, film director Roman Oleksiv and Myroslav Skochyliias from the Music Editorial Department, a group of three young men travel to a remote village in the mountains with a music band. Since one of the men is seeking the love of a local young woman, they come to convince her to marry him. Most probably they bring the whole music orchestra (which travels in a traditional horse carriage while the philanders ride a modern motorbike) to impress the potential bride and her family. They also bring a large barrel of beer and proceed to consume so much of it that one might consider this a sort of hidden advertisement for beer.⁵⁸⁸ The young man courts the local woman with the help of his friends, however, she eventually chooses a local man.⁵⁸⁹

The story evolves through songs written by established Ukrainian composers (like Bohdan Yanivski) and young musicians (like Olexandr Bilash). The music was performed by the jazz band Medicus (directed by Ihor Khoma) and the Orchestra of L’viv Radio and Television (directed by Bohdan Yanivskii).⁵⁹⁰ As the plot is so simple, there is almost no dialogue between characters on the screen, who communicate mainly through facial

⁵⁸⁷ See the chapter dedicated to Rotaru and Ponarovskaia and their artistic personalities in: David MacFadyen, *Red Stars: Personality and the Soviet Popular Song, 1955-1991* (Montreal: McGill Queens University Press, 2001), 137–75. MacFadyen admits that the story of Rotaru is one that can be ‘*distilled to the very Soviet dichotomy between periphery and centre, between private and public.*’

⁵⁸⁸ Beer production was also part of socialist development of L’viv though not openly advertised by L’viv Television or media. L’vivske pyvo [L’viv beer] became in the 1960s a strong brand in Soviet Ukraine and was extensively consumed, still being an important part of city’s economy after the collapse of USSR.

⁵⁸⁹ The musicians are common for the wedding semiotics and since protagonists arrived at the village to gallant the purpose and the role of music performers is a bit blurred, most probably their aim is to celebrate the possible engagement of lovers which never happened.

⁵⁹⁰ Film starred Lesia Stadnyk, Marko Sribnyi, Olexandr Panyk, Ivan Bihan, Anatolii Mishchenko, Oleh Liashenko, Lesia Borovets, Ihor Levynets, Iaroslav Chuperchuk (a returnee from the Stalinist camps). Songs are performed by Lesia Stadnyk, Lesia Borovets (a promising student of L’viv Conservatory), Ihor Levynets and Olexandr Shcheglov (a singer and a contrabass player from L’viv Conservatory, the first performer of songs written by A. Kos-Anatolskii). The selection of performers and musicians showed that producers had profound knowledge in the past and current development in light entertainment of L’viv.

expressions.. There is no certainty as to the activity of the female character, however, as she lives in a country house, dresses in national (embroidered) dress and sings Ukrainian songs, a viewer estimates that she is connected to country life (see **Figure 3.1.**). On the contrary, the men who come to woo her, wear urban outfits or black suits. At the end of this short story, the young woman, after singing a sad song about unhappy love, favours a handsome and modest man who comes to her house with three friends, also performing musical instruments. The urban philanders are ashamed and must leave the house and the village, and even children are laughing at them while the whole family remains happy with positive resolution.

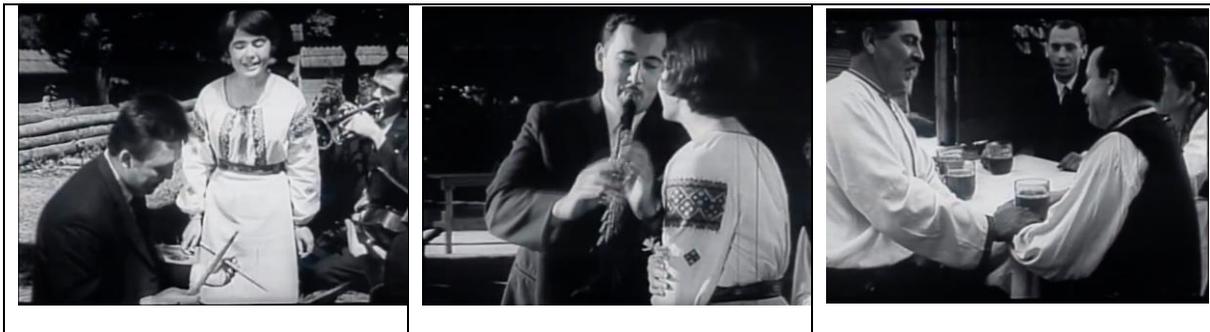


Figure 3.1. The ensemble Medicus and the orchestra of L'viv TV studio, conducted by Bohdan Yanivskii. The female character is the main “object” of urban male desire. Stills from the film.

The plot unfolds the fairy-tale type of relation between the imaginary location of modern characters (the city, most probably L'viv, as the major city in the region) and the location of pre-modern nature, countryside. The men as urban dwellers come to the mountains to “conquer” a female character, who symbolically represents nature. In addition, ethnic and national stereotypes, provincial humour, and the natural landscape played an essential role in films of the 1930s (see Chapter 1.5.).⁵⁹¹ The main character is typically moving from a village to a city or vice versa, he (commonly this is a masculine character) comes to the province to conquer nature (often represented by a female character) for Soviet needs, to bring civilization or to resolve the conflict, that usually takes place on periphery. Film characters talk about the beauty of the natural and national landscape;⁵⁹² they fall in love and work for the motherland with the natural landscape in the background. The beautiful natural scenery works as a background where unfolds a light-hearted conflict between “good” (the selfless work of a hero) and “redeemable evil” (selfish desires of bad characters). The mere

⁵⁹¹ Consider how the opening and closing sequences of *The Kuban Cossacks* (1949) use conventions familiar from the Hollywood musical to distance the audience from any expectation of reality: they depict a stylized countryside and suggest what life in the Soviet Union could be like.

⁵⁹² For instance, consider the scene in *Tractor Drivers* (1939) when the main character, who is Ukrainian, meets in the train a Russian and a Georgian, and they describe the beauty of their native lands. Russian character is dressed like an urban dweller and talks about Moscow and economic progress, while two other characters talk about the beauty of their national countryside. See the chapter ‘Stalin, De-Stalinization and the Ukrainian in Soviet Cinema’, in: First, *Ukrainian Cinema* (2014), 31.

conflict and its successful resolution aimed to demonstrate the possibility of individual transformation of the Soviet man.

However, while masculine men usually conquered the (female) countryside in Stalinist musicals, in the L'viv Television musicals of the late 1960s, they usually failed. They are mocked, look funny and even though they wear urban dress and use new urban technology, the local girls always prefer the local men. Thus, we see a deliberate continuation of plots from the Stalinist musical comedies, but which are fundamentally transformed or fragmented. The village resists the city through laughter,⁵⁹³ and the beauty of the landscape, as communicated by peasant women, dominates over the urban characters.

Within the Thaw's ethics of de-Stalinisation and a general turn to romanticism, this media-fairy-tale from L'viv, with all its clichés and myths, was warmly welcomed in the Soviet centres. *Philanders* received a positive response from Kyiv and the Ukrainian Radio and Television Committee recommended sending this film to Moscow for all-union broadcasting. In December 1968, it was shown as a "humorous concert" on Soviet Central Television in Moscow, and people in the most remote corners of the Soviet socialist empire had the possibility to enjoy a televisual fairy-tale from the exotic Carpathians. The daughter of Myroslav Skochyliias recollected that he had received a letter and a phone call from Moscow and comrades from Central TV who, impressed by the landscapes and "strange" songs, asked for more such colourful content ("exoticheskikh istorii").⁵⁹⁴ Moreover, this film received one of the highest among the 26 awards at the Vtoroi Vsesoiuznyi Festival Televizionnykh Filmov [All-Union Festival of Television Films] in Moscow.⁵⁹⁵ Since the film received positive feedback and was warmly accepted by officials in Ukraine and in Moscow, the L'viv team of music editors decided to proceed with a similar production.

The next short musical issued by the L'viv media committee in 1969, was entitled *Siisia Rodysia* and had tropes of travel, urban-rural connections, and gendered nature/landscape. Like *Philanders*, the film developed through the popular music of Bohdan Yanivskii and Anatolii Kos-Anatolskii (who attempted to revive the pre-war Galician tradition of light music entertainment); the jazz ensemble of Ihor Khoma, who adapted Ukrainian songs to jazz rhythms in the 1950s; and Olexandr Bilash and Myroslav Skoryk,⁵⁹⁶ who were among those "inventors of traditions" who produced the new Soviet Ukrainian Estrada of the 1960s. The

⁵⁹³ See Mikhail Bakhtin's laughter as a form of opposition: Renate Lachmann, Raoul Eshelman, and Marc Davis, "Bakhtin and Carnival: Culture as Counter-Culture," *Cultural Critique*, no. 11 (1988): 116–18.

⁵⁹⁴ Mykhailo Maslii who popularizes and researchers Ukrainian popular culture admits that for Moscow producers exotic often meant Ukrainian national content, see: Maslii, 'Dlia Moskvyy Na L'vivskomu Telebachenni Myroslav Skochyliias Zavzhdy Robyv "Shto Nibud" Ekzoticheskaiie', *Tobto Ukrainske!*"

⁵⁹⁵ The first such festival took place in Kyiv in 1966, see: "Short history of Soviet TV." The second festival was held in Moscow in January 1968 (over new year eve between 1967 and 1968), gathering 60 Soviet television studios and 10 film studios while also attracting critics and theoreticians who tried to define the nature of Soviet television film. One of the viewers acclaimed at the festival that: '*These are not films, this is reality*', see: Ksenofontov, "Eto ne film, eto po nastoiashchemu," 22.

⁵⁹⁶ Skoryk was a classic composer who later even defended a PhD on Prokofiev, but in the late 1960s he also was involved in producing light genres for Ukrainian audience.

plot revolved around the Baiko Sisters [Sestry Baiko] (see **Figure 3.2.**). Since they were known in the region and across the whole UkrSSR, producers decided that this film would set the performers as notable Ukrainian celebrities going to the mountains to celebrate New Years' Eve with their mother (Mahdalyna Baiko).

Figure 3.2. Sestry Baiko (Danyila, Mariia, Nina) trio singing songs by Ukrainian composers and re-arranged folk songs at the L'viv Television studio. Live broadcast from L'viv to Kyiv in 1968.



The performers are dressed in gowns typical of 1960s fashion, though with additional with folk decoration and Komsomol signs. They stand in front of a folklore ensemble. Sestry Baiko were famous in the region and nationally thus, in 1969, the producers of L'viv TV chosen them as the main characters for the music film.

While the urban centre of the previous musical had not been clearly specified, *Siisia Rodysia* undoubtedly opened in L'viv, the centre of Soviet western Ukraine.⁵⁹⁷ In the historical centre of the city, on the medieval market square, a group of young people, some carrying skis, wait for the bus which would take them to the mountains. They talk in polite Ukrainian language, conveying the image of Ukrainian-speaking Soviet urban dwellers. Moreover, the first song of the film is dedicated to the bus driver, and the characters, sat in a newly produced L'viv Bus Factory bus, travel all through the city (the urban scenery is visible from the bus windows) before heading to the Carpathians.⁵⁹⁸ Sovietized into Ukrainians and modernized into urban dwellers, the Carpathian-Lemko sisters from the Baiko family travel to the mountains as new urban Soviets. They dress in modern outfits, have current haircuts and carry fashionable handbags. Obviously, they are not there to conquer land and nature, rather they, as the first name of the film indicates, go to the Carpathians to borrow some national cultural "substance," namely folk songs.

Traveling on a bus together with the tourists, television viewers witness breath-taking, changing natural scenery. The sisters soon must go through another magical

⁵⁹⁷ Prokhorova also find the fragmentation of Stalinist plots by marginalizing and destabilizing the center. For instance, television mini-series His Highnes's Adjutant [Adjutant iego prevoskhoditelstva] popular in the 1970s, featured Kyiv and not Moscow as the center of the narrative, see: Prokhorova, "Fragmented Mythologies," 68.

⁵⁹⁸ L'vivians (both city dwellers and party officials) were very proud that busses produced in L'viv spread all over the USSR. They would normally accompany Soviet cosmonauts and were featured in multiple films. Busses, like locally produced TV-sets, enforced local proud.

shift/transgression (like in a fairy tale): they change from the modern bus to a pre-modern horse carriage, which will bring them to the home of their mother. At home, they sing beautiful old songs, accompanied by their mother,⁵⁹⁹ and encounter young people who come to the house to ring in the approaching New Year. These visitors in ethnic dress carry signs that can be read as a Christmas star (though in the shape of a communist star), but they also bring a live bear and an electric guitar to accompany folk singing (see **Figure 3.3.**). For the film screenwriters, this combination of old and new traditions probably fulfilled party demands; however, they looked more old-fashioned – especially the bear, which reminded some of old Russian fairs, not the traditional setting of Carpathian carols.

Figure 3.4. Television professionals singing New Year carols in 1965 at the apartment of the famous L'viv communist worker Volodymyr Hurhal.⁶⁰⁰



Hurhal was an exemplar employee, an innovator and journalist, frequently broadcast on Soviet newsreels and well known by television staff. This photo shows how the Soviet powers tried to replace old rituals with new.

Figure 3.3. The scene from the film *Inseminate and Give Birth* (1969) produced by L'viv Television. Film frame captures (37 minutes)



The scene shows guests singing carols and using socialist “zvizda”, a star used in a traditional “vertep” or puppet theatre. For the regional audience this scene combined the Soviet New Year’s Eve with Christmas.

The group of young singers invite the sisters to continue the celebration in a café, which was unlikely for a Carpathian village in the 1960s. Indeed, this transition seems to look like another magic shift/transgression, through which characters were transported back to L'viv to celebrate New Year’s Eve in a manner popularized by the Soviet Central Television’s *Little Blue Flame*. Thus, the viewer sees the constant exchange between the fairy-tale landscape and urban visual setting, which supposedly presents the notion of harmony between natural/national/magic with Soviet and modern reality.

⁵⁹⁹ On the table stands traditional candlestick, which reminds Ukrainian ‘tryzub’, currently national emblem and in the 1960s – the sign of bourgeois nationalists.

⁶⁰⁰ See also representation of Hurhal in the Soviet newsreels: V. Sychevskii, *Hurhal Journalist*, Documentary newsreels, vol. 40, Radianska Ukraina (Kyiv: Ukrainian studio of News and Documentary Films, ‘Ukrkinokhronika’, 1966), http://www.L'vivcenter.org/uk/uvd/record/?vd_movieid=149.

Like *Philanders*, the film used ethnic and folk clichés that were characteristic of Stalinist musicals. At the same time, it broke with old cinematic modes and created a new televisual hybrid. We still have a female (mother) signifying the national and natural landscape; a journey, which connects the city and periphery; and magical transformations.⁶⁰¹ However, what is missing is the figure of the father/patriarch or an urban man, who comes to conquer nature (see **Figure 3.5.**). Instead, we have modern, urban and happy female singers, who symbolically reconnect the city and village in Soviet Ukrainian popular culture. An important visual component here is L'viv, which symbolically stands in place of Moscow as the imaginary centre of Soviet modernity. This reading supports Prokhorova's arguments regarding marginalizing the centre⁶⁰² since, in the case of musicals, the centre was either absent or replaced by a regional city, namely L'viv.

Figure 3.5. The sisters coming to visit their mother on New Year's Eve. Women symbolically merged modernity and the wild beauty of the Carpathians. In this film the mother and nature combined into mythical mother-nature or motherland. Film frame captures. Stills from the film.



The plots of regional western Ukrainian musicals still have connotations with Stalinist film aesthetics (Soviet myth) of male/female conquest, rural/urban relations, and travel from the centre to the periphery. However, some elements of the Soviet *Bildungs* plot were incomplete or even inverted. The connection between “industrial” man and “peasant” woman in Soviet myth and culture was omnipresent and remained so even in the 1970s. But, while the Stalinist masterplot featured a male hero from the city modernizing nature or the village, the peripheral musicals of the late 1960s and 1970s inverted this dynamic, with nature symbolically dominating over the city.

The third musical, created in cooperation between Chernivtsi, L'viv and the Ukrtefilm studio in 1971, had similar features. *Chervona Ruta* tells the story about the coal miner Boris, who travels on a train from the eastern Donetsk (the Ukrainian capital of coal-mining) to western Verkhovyna (former village of Žabie) in the Carpathians, an important

⁶⁰¹ In folk studies and anthropology there are various theories on hero myth narratives, including Edward Burnett Tylor, Otto Rank, or Lord Raglan. In his 1949 work on hero's journey Campbell described the basic narrative patterns on this monomyth, see: Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 45–236.

⁶⁰² Prokhorova argues that Soviet television films marginalized and destabilized the centre (Moscow, as a ‘holy’ place in Stalinist films) and made the *Bildungs* plot incomplete, see: Prokhorova, “Fragmented Mythologies,” 65–68.

village for the Ukrainian “inventors of tradition” in the early twentieth century. Such a railway connection between Donetsk and Verkhovyna existed only in the imagination of filmmakers (see **Figure 3.6., 3.7.**).

Indeed, this imagined road connected industrial city Donetsk (whose old name *Stalino* referred to steel and Stalin), with Verkhovyna, a place where the Polish and Ukrainian intelligentsia (like Ivan Franko or Mykhailo Kotsiubynskiyi) created a national imaginary based on the local Hutsul people and the surrounding mountains. Boris’ friends in Donetsk hope for him to find the “chervona ruta” – a magic flower – in the Carpathians, which has the power to transform a human through love. Indeed, Boris meets a young woman named Oksana on the train who is heading home to the Carpathians (performed by Sofia Rotaru) and falls in love with her. After his arrival at the tourist camp, he tries to find the girl he met on the train (symbolically trying to find a “magic flower”) and gets lost in the picturesque nature of mountains. When Boris is found by Komsomol youth he is already transformed: dressed in a folk (national) outfit and singing together with Oksana at the concert organised by Komsomol tourists.

Figure 3.6. Oksana, a female character associated with love and the mountains, performed by Sofia Rotaru, and supported by the dance ensemble Evrika. Screening the film *Chervona Ruta* in August 1971 took place in the village of Yaremche, Ivano-Frankivsk region.



The traditional dress worn by Rotaru was not prepared in advance for the film and the diploma work – a folk-style female costume – of the young fashion designer Alla Dutkovska (the wife of Smerichka’s founder) was eventually used by producers. Dutkovska later produced multiple costumes for Rotaru in the Ukrainian national style.

Figure 3.7. The coalminer Boris (singer Vasyl Zinkevych) from Donbas region looks for love in the Carpathian Mountains. Stills from the film.



In the film, a romantic worker from the industrial region is “transformed” from an urban man into a rural young man. The romantic affair between a man from the city and a woman from the mountains brings the symbolic substance – the urban/rural matrimony, embedded in people.

As in the previous musicals, we encounter a gendered nature (see **Figure 3.6. and 3.7.**), as Sofia Rotaru stands for the mountains (the Carpathian girl Oksana) and Vasyl Zinkevych (the singer from *Smerichka* who plays Boris) stands for Soviet urbanity and the city. The story presents the individual transformation of this male urban character, who discovers the meaning of life through travel and the search for a “magic flower”. We assume that this meaning is the love of a woman, however, since woman is connected to nature and the land (which is typical for Stalinist aesthetics), it may also imply the pure love of the Soviet Ukrainian, national motherland, not the Soviet state.

Figure 3.8. Characters travelling in Carpathian television musicals. Stills from the film.



There are various means of travel: motorbike and horse carriage (1968), newly produced bus (1969) and train that connects imaginary places (1971). In the first film, the trope of travel unites the imagined urban centre with the mountains; in the second, it connects L’viv and the Carpathians; and in the third, it connects Donetsk (a big industrial city in the east of Ukraine) and Verkhovyna (a small village in the mountains, former Żabie).

The viewer does not see in the musical any signs of conquering by a male character of his female protagonist. We might rather think that through love and nature he has found his own substance. He has become a nationally conscious man [natsionalno svidomyi], discovering his identity within the landscape. Boris, dressed in stylized Carpathian costume, becomes a part of nature. This television musical does not transform nature or locality, as usually occurs in Stalinist musical films. On the contrary, nature dominates over urbanity and modernity (see **Figure 3.7.**). I deconstruct *Chervona Ruta* as a genuine fairy-tale, which tells the story of the magic transformation of a Soviet man from the city into a rural Ukrainian man, who falls in love with the national landscape. By recreating the ethnoscape of the Soviet Ukrainian western periphery by means of cinematic stereotypes, this domesticated ethnicity delivered national identity to those who had lost it. Disassembling established mythologies, Ukrainian television producers created fairy-tale reality, which combined the imagined and the real around the new Soviet-Ukrainian identity.

3.5. Soviet Carpathian imagery and Estonian inspiration

In 1965, Kyiv filmmakers proved that it was possible to combine Soviet ethnographic stereotypes and natural landscapes. This was shown through the film *Shadows of Forgotten*

Ancestors produced by the film director Sergei Parajanov (Dovzhenko Film Studios), an Armenian born in Georgia, who worked in Soviet Ukraine. This film told a quaint and sad love story, based on a novel by Mykhailo Kotsiubynskii.⁶⁰³ As Josephine Woll admits, *Shadows* swayed Soviet film-makers because of its “mixture of lyricism, highly individual directorial vision and scrupulous attention to the physical particularity of a milieu and a community.” Such an approach became exemplary of Ukrainian national cinema in the late 1960s.⁶⁰⁴

Even though the cinematic landscape and national stereotypes of Soviet people had the power to colonize the socialist empire, turning its various peoples into a simplified Soviet nation, they also operated as instruments of emancipation. Joshua First argues that even within the new aesthetics of de-Stalinisation, Ukrainian cinema used folklore and landscape as liberating forces.⁶⁰⁵ If, for Russian cinema, the call for sincerity and a turn to everyday culture helped it to decolonize itself from the clichés of Stalinist artistic norms, for Ukrainian film directors and officials such process relied on Dovzhenko’s cinematographic heritage. The experimental films of Dovzhenko merged Ukrainian folk culture with modernism, his visual method embedded and sometimes even dissolved film plot in the natural landscape. Within Thaw culture, all these features were used and reconsidered.⁶⁰⁶ Thus, folklore (as a nation), landscape (as background) and artist-creator (as a romantic, sincere subject) all remained important features of Soviet Ukrainian media culture in the 1960s and 1970s.

In 1968, Dovzhenko Film Studios produced an important Carpathian film, *Kaminnyi Khrest* [Stone Cross], fashioned in a newly discovered national style.⁶⁰⁷ The film features short stories by Vasyl Stefanyk, a local writer from the Carpathians. These tales are sad, but suitable for the Thaw and possess nothing like the Sots-realist glorifications of labour. In contrast to films by Dovzhenko Film Studios of the time, another form of exoticizing imagery of the Carpathians we find in the film made outside Soviet Ukraine. In film *Trembita* produced during the same 1968 by Sverdlovsk Film Studios, which made an adaptation of successful operetta,

⁶⁰³ Kotsiubynskii wrote a story in 1912, after visiting the village of Zhabie, currently Verkhovyna (see the connection of train in the musical *Chervona Ruta*), during trip from Italy back to his home city in Ukraine. Film was not widely shown in USSR till Perestroika, however it had enormous influence over Ukrainian film makers and intelligentsia. The current popularity of the film shows that *Shadows* created strong cultural memory being an artistic precedent for Ukrainian culture of the 1960s. See the catalogue of the recent art show dedicated to cultural history of the film, *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors. Exhibition* (Kyiv: Artbook, 2016), <http://yagallery.com/en/publishing/shadows-of-forgotten-ancestors-exhibition>.

⁶⁰⁴ Josephine Woll, *Real Images: Soviet Cinemas and the Thaw* (IB Tauris, 2000), 186.

⁶⁰⁵ First, *Ukrainian Cinema* (2014).

⁶⁰⁶ First, 24.

⁶⁰⁷ The issue of style became crucially important for Ukrainian filmmakers in this period, see an article by Vitaly Chernetsky on *Kaminnyi khrest*, in which he highlights the use of non-actor, local residents in the making of this movie, that was produced in Stefanyk’s native village. Similar avant-garde approach (local residents as actors and no adaptation of local language) was used by Czech and Slovak filmmakers who re-invented cinematic imagination on Carpathians in the 1930s. Vitaly Chernetsky, “Visual Language and Identity Performance in Leonid Osyka’s *A Stone Cross: The Roots and the Uprooting*,” *Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema* 2, no. 3 (January 1, 2008): 269–80. Cited in Gurga, “Echoes of the Past: Ukrainian Poetic Cinema (2012),” 29.

film director used all the possible visual stereotypes and clichés about Ukrainians; the producers even created artificial Carpathian landscapes inside the studio.

Kyiv continued its experimental Carpathian ethnography in 1971 with the film *Zakhar Berkut* (historical trope, adaptation of I. Franko's novel), which was followed by the tremendously influential movie *The White Bird Marked with Black* [Bilyi Ptakh z Chornoïu Oznakoiu] (directed by Iurii Iliienko), which was released in 1972.⁶⁰⁸ This was the final, most appealing Carpathian film produced in Kyiv, which aimed to reconsider national identity through its dramatic plot set in the Ukrainian mountains.⁶⁰⁹ The same year, the main Ukrainian communist Petro Shelest was accused of nationalism and removed from his position of power. The anti-nationalist campaign in Ukraine lasted through the 1970s. It trapped the Ukrainian culture in irreconcilable contradictions – the desire to make the socialist “future” and the need to preserve the national past.

It is no surprise that the next musical about Carpathian culture arrived not from L'viv, Chernivtsi, or Kyiv but from Tallinn. An Estonian television producer and filmmaker, Virve Koppel, for the first time encountered the culture from the Carpathian Mountains in 1974, in Tallinn. In the summer of that year, Soviet Ukraine presented its best professional and amateur collectives at the cultural festival in Soviet Estonia. Koppel admired Vasyl Zinkevych and Nazarii Yaremchuk from Bukovina's ensemble Smerichka. The band was at the peak of its fame, frequently performing (including the song “Chervona Ruta”) in various republics of the USSR and socialist Europe. Performers, dressed in stylized Carpathian costumes to imitate highlanders, sang cheerful songs about love, while the audience was attracted to the fashionable sound of the new Ukrainian Estrada, popularized by the *Chervona Ruta* musical. Koppel knew about Carpathian style and Ukrainian poetic cinema and was fascinated by the movie *The White Bird Marked with Black*.⁶¹⁰ She could not believe that the scenery of this film was produced not in the studio but in the highland villages – “they looked too fairy-like and picturesque to be real”, admitted Koppel.⁶¹¹ She also was personally attracted to the male

⁶⁰⁸ Ukrainian film historian Larysa Briukhovetska admits that film received many international prizes, in Sorrento (Italy), in Tegeran (Iran), San Francisco (USA), Tokyo (Japan), Sidney, Melbourne (Australia) and others, see: Larysa Briukhovetska, “Film iak rezultat chaklunstva,” *Den [Day]*, June 3, 2011, <https://day.kyiv.ua/uk/article/kultura/film-yak-rezultat-chaklunstva>.

⁶⁰⁹ All Carpathian films would become the core adaptations for Ukrainian poetic cinema, see: Gurga, “Echoes of the Past: Ukrainian Poetic Cinema (2012),” 19.

⁶¹⁰ Ukrainian poetic cinema gained transnational appreciation and already in 1970, Polish film critic Janusz Gazda called movies produced by Dovzhenko studio ‘a Ukrainian school of poetic cinema,’ see: Gurga, 17. Poetic film making was common in Europe and Soviet Union of this period, thus Ukrainian films were not unique, they rather exemplified a national school of common approach. Josephine Wall claims that ‘timeless spirit’ of Ukrainian films from this period attracted film directors from other countries, see: Woll, *Real Images*, 186. Sometimes such types of poetic film making that employed *timelessness*, is associated with ‘minor cinema,’ see: David Martin-Jones, *Deleuze, Cinema and National Identity: Narrative Time in National Contexts* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 6.

⁶¹¹ Virve Koppel, Making Estonian film about Smerichka, interview by Bohdan Shumylovych, Recorded audio interview, April 2015, Urban Media Archive, Center for Urban History of East-Central Europe (Lviv, Ukraine).

singers and found them exceptionally “natural,” unlike most Ukrainian performers from Kyiv who were too stiff and formal.⁶¹²

Visiting the Carpathians right after the Ukrainian Days in Soviet Estonia,⁶¹³ Koppel realized that there were plenty of crafts and decorative arts in the mountain villages. She decided to produce a television musical for the Estonian audience. The film was released in 1975. Named *Laulab Ansambel Smeritška* [Singing Ensemble Smerichka],⁶¹⁴ it was intended to illustrate the connection between mountains’ landscape, local arts and crafts and the new Ukrainian Estrada. The film starts with the characteristic narrative, which denotes that “real culture” can be found not everywhere but in a very remote place, unreachable to modernity. The songs of Smerichka, says the narrator, were supposedly born by “the beauty of the land” which remained untouched in the highlands:

And her song as a wing raises you to the mountain paths, to the waterfalls, to the pastures, and to the very sky. Not a single car will get there, and there are no real roads. One must go by himself, rise higher and higher. And when it seems that one has no more strength and can not go on, then suddenly a world of incomparable beauty unfolds, the land where these songs were born, the songs of Smerichka.⁶¹⁵

After showing smiling singers, imitating an electric folk performance in the mountains (they used electric guitars), the narrative continues to show the ultimate association between land and national culture. The Estonian narrator explains to viewers that happiness, an important substance for the Soviet 1970s, is born when people fight for it:

Nothing in life is easy and happiness is not given... not a single piece of bread has gotten here without worries... no field has been ploughed without sweat... For thousands of years, people have fought for the fate of the people, grandfathers fought for the commune [za komunu], fathers stood for Soviets [za soviety], and their children were taught to defend freedom... and the people retained their language, their songs.

In other words, the fulfilment of Soviet promises of a prosperous life under socialism can not lead to happiness unless people are involved in creative work, preferably connected to folk

⁶¹² There were similar comparisons in Moscow when *Smerichka* received a distinction at *Pesnia Goda* television festival in 1971. Soviet Central Television managers were attracted by freshness and real youth passion by performers from Soviet Bukovina.

⁶¹³ The Estonian delegation was guided through certain mountain villages by Bukovina officials together with Lev Dutkovskiy, the founder of *Smerichka*, see: Lev Dutkovskiy, Creation of Smerichka (Chernivtsi, Ukraine), interview by Bohdan Shumylovych, An interview with notes, April 24, 2015. Communist officials did not like the idea that Ukrainian culture attracts so much attention since overtly tentative attention to national features was unwanted since 1972, sometimes even dangerous.

⁶¹⁴ Film was produced by Eesti Telefilm (Estonian studio specially created to make television films, like Ukrtefilm in Ukraine) in two languages and directed by Tiiu Saarestik. Virve Koppel was an art director and co-authored film scenario with Ene Hion. Vello Aruoja was behind the camera and Chernivtsi Television sound editor Vasyl Strikhovych cooperated with Jaak Elling to make sound phonograms for the musical, see: <http://www.efis.ee/en/film-categories/movies/id/3611/>

⁶¹⁵ These texts are translated by Shumylovych from the film narration, see: Virve Koppel, *Laulab ansambel “Smeritška,”* Television film, Musical (Eesti Telefilm, 1975), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l3zvgk4Z52I>.

culture and the culture of the people. The narrator explains this metaphysics of Soviet happiness in the following narrative, which connects land, work, and beauty:

The ability to create a splendour that begins with a patterned cradle and a painted hut is transferred through the gardens to the fields, through the mountains to the factories. The miraculous power is at the heart of the Hutsul: it makes a tree speak, rings the metal, and smiles on the earth. To live in prosperity is not particularly skilful, in our day it is available to everyone, but only those who can feel the joy of creation, who sings when the raft rushes along the river, who rejoices leaving to the polonina [highland pastures], who wants to dance when the sun rests in the highland meadows – can live not only in prosperity but in beauty.

Such poetic descriptions by the Estonian narrator in the Russian language were entangled with cheerful songs by the Ukrainian ensemble Smerichka. Local highland peasants, who stated on camera that creativity was part of the everyday life of the Hutsuls, spoke in regional dialects. This hybrid docu-musical, which combined the Estonian socialist vision of happiness with Ukrainian Carpathian culture, aimed to appeal to Soviet viewers who were searching for the meaning of life in the mid-1970s. Although successful in Soviet Estonia, the film had little chance in mid-1970s Ukraine, as communist officials were desperately fighting to turn the Soviet Ukrainians into international Soviet people, national only in form but transnational in substance.

Conclusion

1. A local singer recalled to me in an interview that people working in regional television editorials were the “praporonosti” [the flag bearers] of the post-war Soviet Ukrainian culture.⁶¹⁶ They not only connected various media, like literature, broadcasting and theatre with new technology but also produced new a media-culture. As a result, regional television in the 1960s roused strong feelings and affection for locality,⁶¹⁷ which sometimes contradicted party policies, that strove to create universal/translocal Soviet people. Thus, introduced by the Soviet system media and policies could produce opposing effects: they could foster Soviet transnationalism, and at the same time provoke regionalism (or even nationalism).
2. Television visualised the region and its natural landscape and made it relevant to the needs of the local audience. It changed the romanticised landscape of the Carpathians and its folklore into a media-landscape (or mediascape), giving viewers and listeners the possibility to believe and to dream that there was something higher, remote from the burdens of socialist reality. New Ukrainian popular music, which developed in the late 1960s, combined with the visual scenery of television musicals or other programmes, had

⁶¹⁶ *Praporonosci* [The Flag Bearers] (1946-48) was a title of a renowned book by Oles Honchar, who was acknowledged for this text with Stalin's Prize. Stadnyk worked at L'viv Television in the 1960s in editorial of children programming and at the same time sung cheerful songs at ensemble Medicus, see: Stadnyk, On musical “Philanders.”

⁶¹⁷ These could be personal feelings, sincere love to the region and a city but also national feelings, that could easily connect to tropes of nationalism.

the power to create media fairy tales, accepted by two sides of society – officials and the people. Thus, Soviet regional media managed to shape a specific media reality in the 1960s which promoted the escape from socialist life rather than its affirmation.

3. Television music films made in 1968, 1969 and 1971 followed the basic principles of a genre that was shaped in the 1930s, but at the same time fragmented the Soviet master narrative, embedded in this genre. Using a typical (also for a fairy-tale) narrative of travel between the city and the village, television producers did not follow the early Soviet idea that the urbanity/industry should dominate over nature. Moreover, regional musicals avoided representing overtly masculine values associated with the figure of the father/patriarchy. Soviet regional musicals fragmented the core Soviet myth, giving more agency to nature and female characters. To do this, television editors looked at the powerful imagery of the Carpathian Mountains, regional folklore and Estrada, producing very attractive cultural hybrids (films and programmes).
4. This media-landscape created by means of the media-spectacle and media fairy tales produced a new type of the Soviet imagination, a certain fairy-tale reality, in which television musicals created new cultural myths. Thus, musicals produced by socialist regional television were not only ideologically driven or conceived as purely artistic forms, but rather presented a modern form of media-folklore through simplified and formulaic representations.⁶¹⁸ Fairy-tale plots and transparent narratives, the spectacle and the wide exploitation of stereotypes – all these features were present in Carpathian musicals.
5. By producing a successful and attractive media culture, western Ukraine became the cultural frontrunner in the Soviet Ukraine in the late 1960s. It was popular music, the imagery of the Carpathian landscape, and European romanticism that gave impetus to the excessive popularity of western Ukrainian culture at the time.

⁶¹⁸ Neia Markovna Zorkaia, *Folklor, Lubok, Ekran* (Moscow: Isskustvo, 1994), 96. In her PhD dissertation Prokhorova used Zorkaia's understanding of television as methodological tool, thus analyzing Soviet television mini series as embodiment of Russian folklore, see: Prokhorova, "Fragmented Mythologies." Western critics sometimes prefer to criticize television under capitalism as media-spectacle, see: Kellner, *Media Spectacle*.

Chapter 4. Politicizing popular media culture in the late 1960s and early 1970s

Introduction

In the mid-1960s, sociological studies showed that media became an integral part of everyday life for Soviet people. Television was a widespread phenomenon. Radio brought the new sounds of The Beatles to Soviet Ukraine. From the fictional accounts of peasant life, people learned that “the village has become a symbolic panacea for the evils of modern life” and that the return to nature or rural roots could remedy the “greatest evil of all, alienation.”⁶¹⁹ The amateur music band Smerichka (formed between 1965 and 1967) was among the first to use electric instruments and beat rhythms in the Ukrainian SSR: they became Bukovina’s Beatles.⁶²⁰ The romantic composer and pop-idol, Volodymyr Ivasiuk, adapted national sounds to western music trends. Soviet television entertainment programming merged this together in making *Chervona Ruta* (1971) into something new for Soviet Ukraine: a modern and attractive popular media culture.

The focus of television on locality and regional culture, amateur, folk, and classical art produced vivid images comparable to those developed by the Romantics in the nineteenth century and it laid the ground for countless cultural nationalisms in Europe. Soviet Ukrainian popular media culture absorbed distinctive tropes and moods of Romanticism, which in certain cases were interpreted by the Communist Party as dangerous signs of nationalism. This contradicted the Soviet internationalism which aimed at maintaining nationalities but ultimately producing Soviet people, a nation of proud creators of global communism. So, ideologists had to react and contest what they understood as Ukrainian nationalism in the late 1960s and 1970s. Some of the most ardent ideologues believed that nationalism spread through Soviet Ukrainian institutions like a disease and needed to be destroyed.

As Isabelle de Keghel claims, the 1960s culminated in the television serial *Seventeen Moments of Spring* [Semnadsat’ Mgnovenii Vesny] (1973), that featured Soviet spies and KGB officers.⁶²¹ This new decade was a reaction against the liberal 1960s: “The series communicates an understanding of patriotism and masculinity that is heavily oriented toward Stalin-era patterns and stands in contrast to the cultural production of the Thaw.”⁶²² Indeed, this chapter confirms that certain forms of culture (like beat music or nationally oriented jazz) that developed in the 1960s in the Soviet western peripheries were placed under scrupulous

⁶¹⁹ Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 245.

⁶²⁰ *Smerichka* is often called the *Carpathian The Beatles*, see for instance: “Karpatskyi Beatles: istoria stvorennia VIA Smerichka,” Online magazine, *korrespondent.net* (blog), February 7, 2012, <http://ua.korrespondent.net/journal/1316173-korrespondent-karpatskij-bitlz-istoriya-stvorenniya-via-smerichka>.

⁶²¹ de Keghel, “Seventeen Moments of Spring, a Soviet James Bond Series? Official Discourse, Folklore, and Cold War Culture in Late Socialism,” 82.

⁶²² de Keghel, 84.

supervision in the 1970s. After the experiments of the 1960s, officials were more inclined to return to the high cultural values actively promoted under Stalin. Normally, new forms of music, which aesthetically followed western patterns were not banned, however, when combined with the national language they could be considered dangerous. The politicization of light music in such ensembles as Vatra, Smerichka, Quo Vadis or the neo-folk professional collective Bukovina, show that officials strictly followed what popular artists were making, performing and even privately saying. The development of television and popular media culture in Soviet Ukraine was not possible without *politicizing* these arts. Here I refer to the famous quote from Walter Benjamin:

Humankind, which once, in Homer, was an object of contemplation for the Olympian gods, has now become one for itself. Its self-alienation has reached the point where it can experience its own annihilation as a supreme aesthetic pleasure. Such is the aestheticizing of politics, as practiced by fascism. Communism replies by politicizing art.⁶²³

The Soviet practice of politicizing art meant complete compliance with the party ideology. Professional or amateur art had to serve the working-class people of the USSR, and be politically correct and avoid financial excesses, namely artists were not allowed to gain a lot of money. New forms of culture in the USSR were usually perceived with a certain degree of suspicion, because officials avoided any risk of being accused of producing non-Soviet art. To be accepted within the field of official Soviet Ukrainian popular culture, artists had to dress in stylised costumes and perform their nationality in a “recognisable” manner. Thus, when the Soviet elites acknowledged the new hybrid popular media culture, they regulated it by means of professional infrastructure and subordination. This meant that all new forms of culture, for instance, an amateur band or an ensemble, had to become part of a professional institution, like a house of culture or regional orchestra, which had already implanted systems of control.

This chapter is dedicated to various instances of politicizing Ukrainian popular media culture in the late 1960s and 1970s. It is mainly shaped by debates around national culture and nationalism discovered by officials in popular music (and bands) and television programming. Communists endeavoured to suppress nationalism that derived from Soviet romanticism. So, the Ukrainian popular media culture was characterised between 1965 and the late 1970s by an obvious paradox: new forms of state-sponsored media culture mobilised nationalism, and at the same time, state institutions acted to stop this mobilisation. Officials favoured keeping national culture within the “frozen” frames of folklorism, which ultimately stagnated it. This triggered a situation in Soviet Ukraine where young people turned to popular culture in the Russian language as well as western culture, which brought further concerns among nationally minded intellectuals.

⁶²³ Walter Benjamin, *The work of art in the age of its technological reproducibility, and other writings on media*, ed. Michael William Jennings et al. (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 42. See continuation of this debate: Giorgio Agamben, *The Man without Content* (Stanford University Press, 1999), 3–5. On Benjamin merging aesthetics with politics see: Jon Simons, “Benjamin’s Communist Idea: Aestheticized Politics, Technology, and the Rehearsal of Revolution,” *European Journal of Political Theory* 15, no. 1 (January 1, 2016): 43–60.

4.1. “This should not be forgotten”

In 1954, five years after Yaroslav Halan’s death, Gorky Film Studios issued the film *Least We Forget* [Ob etom zabyvat nelzia].⁶²⁴ This year, Soviet Ukraine officially celebrated the 300th anniversary of its so-called “re-unification”⁶²⁵ with Moscow.⁶²⁶ The country was filled with various propaganda products, industry produced souvenirs and officials renamed cities,⁶²⁷ also changing the status of Crimea from the Russian province into a Ukrainian one. However, some of the cultural media texts were intended not just to glorify the historical event of 1654 that “detached” Ukrainians from Poles and “attached” them to Russians, but also attacked Ukrainian nationalists, who still posed a challenge to Soviet powers in western Ukraine. Thus, in the summer of 1954, the L’viv cinemas showed not only films that glorified the historical reunion, but also the movie *Least We Forget*. This film told the story of a local writer in western Ukraine (supposedly Yaroslav Halan, who was killed in 1949) who apparently faced persecution from nationalists for his anti-religious and anti-nationalist publications.

According to the aesthetic demands of the period, the hero of the movie could not die. With the help of friends, he would defeat the enemies of the Soviet state. Being a typical Sots-realist trope, the film depicts a young Ukrainian man who falls under the influence of the wrong books and people (he is redeemably evil) and with the help of ideologically-conscious colleagues he manages to realize his mistakes, transform into a hero and bring the film to a happy, didactic ending. **Figure 4.1. (A and B)** shows two marine soldiers who most probably came on vacations to L’viv in the summer of 1954 and took their photograph with the poster of the film in the background. A poster designer depicted the dramatic encounter of the two protagonists on the first plane – good and bad characters; in the background plane one can see a couple sitting on the bench and having a conversation. This couple feature in an important scene from the subordinate plot, which depicts a young student, Rostislav, talking to his friend. Rostislav studies history at the university and is apparently being “infected” by nationalist ideas. His female friend tries to understand why the young man has changed: he refuses to socialise and behaves as though he is ill. She wants to help him and to save a young man from the nets of the nationalists.

The “bench scene” in the film depicts a supposed Ukrainian nationalist discourse; it offers markers for the viewers on how to recognize this sinful ideology. When the girl asks

⁶²⁴ Leonid Lukov, *Ob etom zabyvat' nel'zia*, Fiction film (Moscow, Gorky Film Studio, 1954), sequence on nationalist language at 38-45 min., <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wFuUP5GfBWM>.

⁶²⁵ These conceptual frames, namely unification [pryednannia] or re-unification [vozziednannia] with Russia would be debated in following decades.

⁶²⁶ See the chapter on Pereiaslav agreement anniversary in Soviet Ukraine: Serhy Yekelchuk, *Stalin's Empire of Memory: Russian-Ukrainian Relations in the Soviet Historical Imagination* (University of Toronto Press, 2004), 154–59.

⁶²⁷ The city of Proskuriv was renamed into Khmelnytskyi, after the Ukrainian hetman of the 17th century, who brought his Cossack regiment and controlled by its forces territories from Polish kingdom under the Moscow tsar.

Rostislav why he has changed so much, he replies that he is different from others because he is writing poetry. He goes on to cite some of his writings about the Ukraine:

You [Ukraine] are close to me with your eternal beauty [...] smoke of centuries strips upon you, through the ancient woods [...] yes, with this image of you I am getting closer and closer, and so I see you more and more often like this... and it seems to me as if in a delirium that I am a Hetman, the son of Ukraine [...] if I go to a battle with a mace and all around are the ruins of the ashes [...] clinking swords, sharp gasping of mad horses and the endless voids covered with smoke... I love Ukraine further stronger, everlasting and immutable, nothing compares to it – ancient, wise and inspired [...] everlasting and unchanging.⁶²⁸

Figure 4.1. *Ob Etom Zabyvat' Nelzia* [Least We Forget], 1954.



Figure 4.1.A. A poster in L'viv, which advertised the film *This Should Not Be Forgotten* (1954). In the background one can see a couple sitting on a bench.



Figure 4.1.B. A sequence from the movie depicting a dialogue on the bench between Galina and Rostislav. Stills from the film.

Galina interrupts Rostislav's passionate reading and starts a dialogue:

Galina: What-what? Let me see this... "I love Ukraine further stronger, everlasting and immutable" ...

Rostislav: Read, read more.

Galina: ... "nothing compares to it – ancient, wise and inspired" ... Why did you write it?

Rostislav: I am not a professional – I write for myself.

Galina: Ok, I can take that. However, you are not a school pupil but a student of the history department, so when you write poems about Ukraine in such an intonation.

Rostislav: What kind of intonation? I do not get it? I don't understand what you dislike, form or content?

Galina: Both! These are rotten verses Rostislav!

Rostislav: Oh, why are you so rude?

⁶²⁸ Translation is mine, based on the film narrative. Compare these artificial 'verses' of Rostislav with the real verses of Mykola Petrenko, established Soviet poet in L'viv: "My flower – My youthful L'viv, You are blooming in eternal spring. Your glory goes further into centuries, Your daring does not have limits." (1972)

Galina: Don't you understand that such a poem can be assigned to an enemy?

Rostislav: But I glorify the Ukraine, I love it, I believe in it, how can you?

Galina: Rostislav, Rostislav... You, for instance, are carefully listening to the lectures of professor Yurchak in the history of Ukraine, you know the heroes, and abominable traitors of the country but you perceive it [history] not through our eyes...

Rostislav: But that is nonsense!

Galina: You look at Ukrainian history with the eyes of Hrushevskii!

Rostislav: No, you have lost your mind!

Galina: What kind of love you describe in your verses? What Ukraine you depict? This is not our Ukraine, not Soviet Ukraine! You sing the strange voice in the tone of the former priest from Drohobych.

Rostislav: Whom do you imply?

Galina: I am talking about Stepan Bandera.

Rostislav: Stop! I do not see any reason to continue this pointless quarrel.

At the end of this movie, Rostislav (like some other characters, including a teacher) recognizes his mistakes and stands together with the main character, the local writer who embodies the communist intelligentsia stood against nationalists and western enemy influences. What was so wrong in the writings of Rostislav, except that he produced an awful piece of poetry? He expressed excessive love for Ukraine: "further stronger love, everlasting and immutable, nothing compares to it," the country is 'ancient, wise and inspired, everlasting and unchanging." Rostislav dresses in a traditional embroidered shirt (see **Figure 4.2.**) and he is compared by his female friend to the two exemplar Ukrainian nationalists: the historian Mykhailo Hrushevskyy and Stepan Bandera.⁶²⁹ He represents the wrong attitude, a nationalist. He spends his free time in the book shop where he is seduced by spoiled texts; he takes the role of a self-proclaimed poet and becomes endangered by solitude. But, since his friends are on alert and recognize his "sickness", it is possible to save him from drowning in the swamp of nationalism.

The writers of the movie convince their viewers that the happy life of the Ukrainian people can only exist as part of the Soviet Union and in the context of communist guidelines. Officials justified the struggle against Ukrainian nationalism by claiming that the nationalists were closely associated with first the Germans, who carried out mass terror against the civilian population, and later with spies and agents from the western countries, especially with the Uniate Church (officially illegal in the USSR from 1946), that survived abroad. Thus, authors symbolically placed the Ukrainian nationalists, German Nazis, Uniat (Greek-Catholic) church members and western infiltrators – all alleged enemies of the Soviet state – in a single teleology.

⁶²⁹ Bandera was a radical nationalist leader who had its own branch in the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists. He was killed in Germany in 1959 by KGB agent five years after the film completion. See: John Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), 159.



Figure 4.2. Rostislav (performed by the Russian actor Viacheslav Tikhonov) is supposed to represent a young Ukrainian intellectual.

A nationalist person supposedly believes that he/she belongs to the group of chosen people, being better than others. He/she falls in love with abstraction, with the land and country, and is consequently detached from reality. Thus, the best way to cure nationalists is to show them the collective life and make them socialise with Soviet people and work on common projects. This work of socialist redemption was reminiscent of socialist realism, and the Sovietisation of western Ukraine is sometimes compared by historians to an artwork:

In a mode fundamentally resembling the operating principle of Socialist Realism, in the Gesamtkunstwerk of Sovietisation western Ukraine's locals were expected to incarnate the present and the end—a present still reflecting an unredeemed past but about to be overcome by a socialist future.⁶³⁰

The constant problem with turning locals into proper Soviets in western Ukraine was difficult not only in relation to their problematic past. The mere proximity to the west posed a threat to Soviet ideology, and media played a crucial role in this regard. For instance, through media locals in Western Ukraine learned that socialism had reformed in Poland and Hungary, so people expected similar changes in their own region.⁶³¹ In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Ukrainian officials tried to quiet the problematic claims of the nationally minded intelligentsia.⁶³² Since 1965 several counteractions were implemented, which aimed not only to talk to opponents but also to prosecute or intimidate those who had conflicting views. Often these actions were framed as antinationalism and aimed to defeat nationalists or western influences (including samizdat) in the republic.⁶³³

⁶³⁰ Amar, *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv*, 16.

⁶³¹ Weiner, "Robust Revolution to Retiring Revolution: The Life Cycle of the Soviet Revolution, 1945–1968," 226–27.

⁶³² Kasianov, *Nezgodni: Ukrainska Inteligentsia v Rusi Oporu 1960-80-h Rokiv*, 47–88.

⁶³³ Behrends and Lindenberger, *Underground Publishing and the Public Sphere*, 9–10, 12.

Historians differentiate between different phases in the Ukrainian antinationalist campaign of 1960s-1970s. The most active phase started with the launching of Operation Blok.⁶³⁴ This campaign started in Soviet Ukraine in December 1971, prior to the dismissal of the Ukrainian party superior Petro Shelest in May 1972. Operation Blok primarily targeted the spread of illegal publications⁶³⁵ in Ukraine and aimed to liquidate connections between Ukrainian intellectuals and their western counterparts.⁶³⁶ In January 1972, the Soviet secret police arrested Yaroslav Dobosh, a Belgian citizen of Ukrainian origin, who during his stay in USSR contacted multiple dissident intellectuals, like Viacheslav Chornovil, Ivan Svitlychnyi, Yevhen Sverstiuk, and many others. Later, Soviet prosecutors accused these people of providing Dobosh with anti-Soviet information (*samvydav*), which was frequently published abroad and broadcast to the Soviet Union from foreign stations.⁶³⁷ Officials considered dissidents as being infected by the western secret police and capitalist propaganda, so, as in the movie, this ideological “poison” had to be cured.⁶³⁸

The head of *Tovarystvo Ukraina* (the society which maintained cultural connections with Ukrainians abroad), M. Ilnytskyi, stated in the spring of 1972 that local intellectuals in Soviet Ukraine were exposed to ideological diversions from abroad. He argued that Ukrainian nationalists abroad:

Having lost the feeling of reality, they endure the crazy dream of turning the wheel of history back and to restore the capitalist orders on the Soviet land, to tear up Ukraine from the fraternal Soviet republics, and to sit again on the neck of the Ukrainian people.⁶³⁹

All intellectuals who discussed the colonial status of Soviet Ukraine in the USSR, and objected to state supported Russification and the abandonment of national culture were considered to be influenced by external forces.⁶⁴⁰ Diaspora Ukrainians in Europe and the USA and Canada believed that economic and cultural development in Soviet Ukraine may lead to a cultural revival, which would ultimately bring national independence.⁶⁴¹ The western media heavily broadcast these ideas to Soviet Ukraine, so officials strove to block the spread of foreign information.

Operation Blok was the start of a thoroughly planned anti-nationalist campaign in Soviet Ukraine and it aimed to liberate the country from the remaining nationally minded

⁶³⁴ “Information” (KDB [Komitet Derzhavnoi Bezpeky], 1985), Arkush 68, HDASBU, Fond 16, Opys 7, Sprava 5, HDASBU [Special State Archive of Security Service of Ukraine]. Cited also in: Bazhan, “Spetsoperatsia KDB URSS Blok,” 32. Mykhailo Kosiv claims that dissidents knew that operation against them was thoroughly planned by KGB, see: Kosiv, *Arrests in 1965 and national dissent* (interview, 2015).

⁶³⁵ “On arrests” (General Sector of Central Committee of UCP, April 27, 1972), Arkush 1-2, TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 666, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

⁶³⁶ “Information,” Arkush 68.

⁶³⁷ “TsDAHO (1972), Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 666.”

⁶³⁸ M. Ilnytskyi, “Reports (Society for external relations)” (General Sector of Central Committee of UCP, May 29, 1972), Arkush 9-10, TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 666, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

⁶³⁹ “TsDAHO (1972), Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 666,” Arkush 7.

⁶⁴⁰ “TsDAHO (1972), Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 666,” Arkush 8.

⁶⁴¹ “TsDAHO (1972), Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 666,” Arkush 15.

intellectuals. This was important endeavour, especially in the wake of the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Soviet Union. A Decree issued in Moscow to commemorate this event stated that:

Conscious proletarians constantly sought the closest uniting of the workers and the poorest peasantry in the struggle against reaction, sweeping away any forms of bourgeois-nationalist ideology, whether great-power chauvinism or local nationalism, national swagger or national nihilism, anti-Semitism, or Zionism.⁶⁴²

As in the Socialist realist film of 1954, the Ukrainian collective “body” and “soul” had to be cured from the sickness of local nationalism (national leaning), national swagger (excessive love of the past) or national nihilism (cosmopolitanism) to prepare it for its new status, proclaimed by Leonid Brezhnev: the arrival of the Soviet nation. An example of such a cured personality was Zynovia Franko, the granddaughter of the famous Ukrainian writer Ivan Franko. After being “converted” from nationalism back to socialism by KGB officers, she was often broadcast on radio and television trying to prove that dissidents were wrong. As she claimed in official Ukrainian newspaper at the end of April 1972: “There will be no return to the past! I want that those who continue to boast of their special position, which can be called only the position of internal migration, to understand their mistakes.”⁶⁴³

The start of the anti-nationalist campaign was reminiscent of film *Least We Forget* (1954): the arrest of a Belgian citizen in 1972; a highly mediatized trial, the detentions of nonconformists; the “conversion” (from nationalism to socialism) by KGB intellectuals who often appealed to Soviet Ukrainians through popular media.⁶⁴⁴ Protesting in 1965 against the arrests of conscious or nationally minded Ukrainians, dissidents appealed to a wider public in the cinema. Ivan Dziuba, referring to arrests and the silence of the Soviet media, wrote a letter in 1966 to party functionaries⁶⁴⁵ and asked for transparency and clarity: “Human imagination, excited by various hints, replaces the missing factual information.”⁶⁴⁶ At the same time Petro Shelest, who supervised these arrests in the mid-1960s, was criticised in 1972 and finally dismissed for a book publication. In the turn of 1960s various media (radio, books, letters, films or television programmes) could serve as a means of dissent (samizdat).

Thus, the antinationalist campaign in Soviet Ukraine started as a Sots-realist film detective with spies and local villains. Some representatives of Ukrainian intelligentsia that

⁶⁴² Communist Party of USSR, “O podgotovke k 50-letiiu obrazovaniia Soiuza Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik. Postanovleniie Tsentralnogo Komiteta KPSS 21 fevralia 1972 goda.,” in *Ob ideologicheskoi rabote KPSS: sbornik dokumentov* (Moscow: Izdatelstvo politicheskoi literatury “Politizdat,” 1977), 348.

⁶⁴³ “TsDAHO (1972), Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 666,” Arkush 2.

⁶⁴⁴ Soviet power would call opponents as ‘the self-proclaimed’, consider as in Czechoslovakia officials called opponents the ‘usurpers’ or ‘the self-proclaimed’, see: Jonathan Bolton, *Worlds of Dissent: Charter 77, the Plastic People of the Universe, and Czech Culture under Communism* (Harvard University Press, 2012), 177.

⁶⁴⁵ Similarly Václav Havel was writing open letter to head of Czechoslovakia Gustáv Husák in April 1975, see: Vaclav Havel, “Letter to Dr. Husak,” *The Vaclav Havel Library Foundation* (blog), 1975, <https://www.vhlf.org/havel-quotes/letter-to-dr-husak/>.

⁶⁴⁶ Ivan Dziuba, *Internatsionalizm Chy Rusyifikatsiia?* (KM Akademia, 1998), 12. He was imprisoned for anti-Sovietism in 1973.

became self-aware during Khrushchev's liberalisation, were accused of the same ills as Rostislav, the character from the 1954 movie: excessive love of the motherland, interest in national history, contacts with western enemies (and publishing abroad), and an unnecessary focus on the Ukrainian language. The anti-nationalist campaign employed not only the secret police and old methods such as denunciations, letters of complaint, and media attacks, but also new approaches like talks with "polite agents", "delicate" intimidations and persuasion, beatings on the street by unknown people, and public ostracism.

4.2. Foreign broadcasting and airing abroad

The western peripheries of the USSR were highly exposed to foreign broadcasting which could and indeed did influence the local population in Soviet Ukraine. Already in the mid-1950s, many locals in western Ukraine who frequently listened to foreign broadcasting, wondered why Khrushchev's secret speech was not popularized if it was correct.⁶⁴⁷ Many learned anti-Soviet arguments from the radio and questioned Stalinist national and rural policies, especially since there were plenty of returnees from the Soviet camps.⁶⁴⁸ The radio transmitted official Soviet patriotic songs, but by tuning the receiver to foreign waves it was possible to listen to jazz from Poland⁶⁴⁹ or other light music from socialist Hungary or Czechoslovakia. Even though it was jammed, regional media also gave access to western news and culture.⁶⁵⁰

Shortly Soviet powers could identify young people who, while being absorbed by foreign media, avoided socialist life and values.⁶⁵¹ In some western Soviet republics, like Lithuania, officials found out only non-Soviet music in concerts organised for students, they completely missed Soviet cultural content. Often young people were absorbed by foreign

⁶⁴⁷ Amir Weiner, "Foreign Media, the Soviet Western Frontier, and the Hungarian and Czechoslovak Crises," in *Cold War Broadcasting: Impact on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. A Collection of Studies and Documents*, ed. A. Ross Johnson and Eugene R. Parta (Budapest; New York: Central European University Press, 2012), 301.

⁶⁴⁸ Weiner, 302.

⁶⁴⁹ Christian Schmidt-Rost, "1956 - A Turning Point for the Jazz Scenes in the GDR and Poland," in *Meanings of Jazz in State Socialism*, ed. Gertrud Pickhan and Rüdiger Ritter, 1st ed. (Frankfurt am Main; New York: Peter Lang Pub. Inc., 2015); Igor Pietraszewski, *Jazz in Poland: Improvised Freedom*, Tra edition (New York: Peter Lang GmbH, Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften, 2014); Rüdiger Ritter, "Broadcasting Jazz into the Eastern Bloc—Cold War Weapon or Cultural Exchange? The Example of Willis Conover," *Jazz Perspectives* 7, no. 2 (August 1, 2013): 111–31.

⁶⁵⁰ Jamming foreign radio waves was an important endeavor for Soviet engineer though in the late 1950s they officials had to admit that the whole country was open to enemy radio waves, see: Stephen Lovell, *Russia in the Microphone Age: A History of Soviet Radio, 1919-1970* (Oxford University Press, 2015), 156. In general on Soviet jamming see: Rimantas Pleikys, "Radiotsenzura," Personal web page, [Http://Radiocenzura.Tripod.Com/](http://Radiocenzura.Tripod.Com/) (blog), 2002, <http://radiocenzura.tripod.com/text.htm>., <http://www.radiojamming.info>. On foreign broadcasting to USSR see: Alexander Badenoch, *Airy Curtains in the European Ether: Broadcasting and the Cold War?*, 1st edition, Schriftenreihe Des Instituts Für Europäische Regionalforschungen, Band 15 (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2013); Arch Puddington, *Broadcasting Freedom: The Cold War Triumph of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2000); A. Ross Johnson and Eugene R. Parta, eds., *Cold War Broadcasting: Impact on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. A Collection of Studies and Documents* (Budapest; New York: Central European University Press, 2012).

⁶⁵¹ Kristin Roth-Ey, "'Kto Na p'edestale, a Kto v Tolpe? Stiliagi i Ideia Sovetskoi 'Molodezhnoi Kurtury' v Epokhu 'Ottepeli,'" *Neprikosnovennyi Zapas* 4 (2004): 36.

Estrada, being captivated by German, Polish, Italian, or Spanish songs.⁶⁵² Therefore, the Soviet Agitprop Department realized that the Soviet popular media could counter the informational programmes of foreign broadcasters by overlapping their programming.⁶⁵³ For this to happen, the Soviet media needed better quality programming, good radio and television entertainment.

In 1957, party functionaries in Soviet L'viv received tasks from Kyiv to uncover and ideologically fight *stiliagi*, young people "infected" by foreign media. Officials had little knowledge of how to deal with this new music and the manners connected to it, nor could they recognize the origins of this "wild sound".⁶⁵⁴ The only option they had was to compare *stiliagi* with wild animals and to recommend listening to more classical music produced by the Ukrainian and Soviet composers.⁶⁵⁵ Respondents (who were young in the 1950s), interviewed by William Risch for his research on L'viv, confirmed that local, Soviet and foreign sounds coincided, making a specific regional soundscape.⁶⁵⁶ L'viv residents listened to various sounds: Russian popular (Estrada) songs, Soviet patriotic songs, brass bands in clubs, foreign melodies, and jazz; at home, they were singing Ukrainian songs and listening to music records.

Officials complained that the respective units of the security services did not block foreign voices and broadcasting sufficiently.⁶⁵⁷ The professor of the L'viv conservatory Maria Krykh (born in 1934, she was a music student in the 1950s) recalled that jazz was often heard from American movies, like the *Sun Valley Serenade* (1941, dir. Bruce Humberstone). Before screening the film, visitors would usually listen to the brass band performing jazz in the foyer or from the stage of the cinema theatre (see **Figure 4.3**).⁶⁵⁸ Such American or German light (often musical) films were brought to L'viv as war trophies and were repeatedly screened in multiple cinemas. Some L'vivians, who came up with the money for record players, had the possibility to listen to music at home, and the black market allowed them to buy either original jazz records, usually brought from Moscow or from socialist countries, or to have illegal recordings made on X-ray film-plates.⁶⁵⁹

⁶⁵² Weiner, "Foreign Media, the Soviet Western Frontier, and the Hungarian and Czechoslovak Crises," 303.

⁶⁵³ Weiner, 310.

⁶⁵⁴ William Jay Risch, 'Mass Culture and Counterculture', in *The Ukrainian West: Culture and the Fate of Empire in Soviet L'viv*, Harvard Historical Studies 173 (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2011), 222.

⁶⁵⁵ 'Report on fighting non-soviet behaviour in L'viv' (L'viv Obkom of Ukrainian Communist Party, General Sector, 1957), 164–65, Fond P-3, Opys 6, Sprava 7, DALO, The State Archive of L'viv Region.

⁶⁵⁶ Risch, "Mass Culture and Counterculture," 223.

⁶⁵⁷ "Postanova 243-012 (media)" (Ukrainian Communist Party (Chernivtsi), September 27, 1954), Arkush 17-19, Fond 2, Opys 12, Sprava 59, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine; "Postanova 1563/43 (media)" (Ukrainian Communist Party, September 23, 1954), Arkush 20-21, Fond 2, Opys 12, Sprava 59, TsDAVO of Ukraine, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

⁶⁵⁸ Orest Tsymbala, "L'viv Vshanuye 80-Litnij Yuvilei Zasnovnyka Nacional'noyi Dzhazovoyi Shkoly Ihoria Khomy," *ZIK*, March 23, 2009, <http://zik.com.ua/ua/news/2009/04/23/178290>. Accessed on 12 May 2015.

⁶⁵⁹ See: Andrii Manilov, On early rock music in L'viv (L'viv, Ukraine), interview by Bohdan Shumylovykh, Audio interview with transcript, 6 January 2012, Urban Media Archive, Center for Urban History of East-Central Europe (L'viv, Ukraine).(On music black market).

Figure 4.3. TV episode *Evening in the Cinema House*, 29 October 1965. Stills from the film.



This rare visual document shows that before screening a film in 1965, L'vivians listened to two lectures, enjoyed an art exhibit, listened to a brass band, appreciated classic dances and listened to vocal and instrumental ensembles.

Indeed, the Soviets did not have a monopoly on information in western Ukraine; many people made their own sense of what was happening in the socialist world. In the mid-1960s, the population in Estonia would direct their antennas to Finland, just as the Latvians did to Sweden, while the local population in western Ukraine was exposed to Polish, Hungarian, Romanian, and Czechoslovak media.⁶⁶⁰ The regional media would play a crucial role in what Amir Weiner called “12-year cycles of crises across the rocky Soviet empire” (namely in 1956, 1968 and 1980).⁶⁶¹ During the Hungarian crises of 1956, inhabitants in L'viv would receive information not only from Soviet sources but also from Polish newspapers or foreign radio stations. Similarly, in Transcarpathia, locals reacted to events in Hungary in 1956, publicly expressing anti-Soviet attitudes.

When the next political calamities happened in 1968, one of the claims Brezhnev made to Czechoslovak colleagues regarded their influences over internal and external Soviet matters. Obviously, Soviet communist misfortunes in socialist Czechoslovakia could not be formulated as an internal national matter, since socialist newspapers and radio broadcasts were highly available in the USSR, influencing the local population on the western borders. The Czechoslovakian crises in 1968 had an important influence over the Ukrainian population and intelligentsia, and this influence was understood and felt by both party functionaries and anti-Soviets.⁶⁶² As Weiner claimed: “Thanks to Czechoslovak media, western Ukrainians, one

⁶⁶⁰ Weiner, “Foreign Media, the Soviet Western Frontier, and the Hungarian and Czechoslovak Crises,” 310–11.

⁶⁶¹ Weiner, 312.

⁶⁶² Mark Kramer, “The Czechoslovak Crisis and the Brezhnev Doctrine,” in *1968: The World Transformed*, ed. Carole Fink, Philipp Gassert, and Detlef Junker (Cambridge University Press, 1998), 143–44; Leonid Mel'nykov

of the most rebellious Soviet constituencies, could now watch, read and draw their own conclusions on issues that were still strictly taboo in their country.”⁶⁶³ Moreover, not only opponents of the regime were absorbed by western media, as Soviet elites were the main consumers of foreign broadcasts in the western peripheries.⁶⁶⁴

Both inside and outside of the USSR, anti-Soviets and communists understood that the armed struggle had ended, and the era of ideological conversion had begun. Since major western Soviet enemies tried to seduce local Ukrainians, Kyiv attempted to win the hearts of Ukrainians abroad, especially those who found themselves in capitalist countries after the war.⁶⁶⁵ The national media committee established a special department for broadcasting abroad (it started regular broadcast from 1950), which aimed to convince foreign Ukrainians that life in the UkrSSR was good and that they should return home. Sometimes this propaganda was effective. There were multiple Soviet newsreels telling the stories of

Ukrainians who returned home from the capitalist west and lived happily under socialism.⁶⁶⁶ Officials hired artists to produce emotional songs about the motherland and brotherhood that were broadcast abroad (see **Figure 4.4.**) on Ukrainian radio. Apparently, these songs often reached not only Ukrainians living in western Europe, but also those who remained in socialist countries in the west.

Figure 4.4. Performing the song “My Brothers” (1957).



This short documentary film presented the premier of the song “My Brothers” (1957), related to foreign Ukrainian diaspora, produced by the group of L’viv intelligentsia: R. Bratun (poet), A. Kos-Anatolskyi (composer) and P. Karmaliuk (singer). Voice over narrator informed viewers that authors received many thankful letters from abroad.

Kaganovich et al., “Ukraine and the Soviet-Czechoslovak Crisis of 1968 (Part 2): New Evidence from the Ukrainian Archives,” ed. Mark Kramer, *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, no. 14/15 (1998); Weiner, “Foreign Media, the Soviet Western Frontier, and the Hungarian and Czechoslovak Crises,” 313.

⁶⁶³ Weiner, “Foreign Media, the Soviet Western Frontier, and the Hungarian and Czechoslovak Crises,” 314.

⁶⁶⁴ Weiner, 316.

⁶⁶⁵ Soviet Union actively broadcasted to foreign listeners. In early 1950s Kyiv broadcasted to Ukrainian diaspora at least 1 hour of content, see: Lovell, *Russia in the Microphone Age* (2015), 154.

⁶⁶⁶ See, for instance, a short story about a turner V. Rudyk, from the L’viv armature plant, who returned from the French zone of occupation in Western Austria. Rudyk was shown at work, with friends, in the library and in the theatre. Newsreel is stored at Central State CinePhotoPhono Archives of Ukraine named after H.S. Pshenychnyi (Kyiv, Ukraine). *At Home with the Family*, Film newsreels, Soviet Ukraine [Radianska Ukraina] (Kyiv: Ukrainian studio of News and Documentary Films, “Ukrkinokhronika,” 1950).

For instance, some Ukrainians that remained in Poland and did not resettle to the Soviet Union after 1945 were struck by the mere presence of radio programmes in the Ukrainian language. They used to listen to such programmes mostly in the Polish language and were not accustomed to hearing the “voice of Ukraine” from their home receivers. For some of them, this was an unbearably nostalgic experience. Stefania Heriak from the former German Beuthen and now the Polish city of Bytom, wrote to Kyiv in November 1957 that she could not sleep because of the Ukrainian radio programming. Radio in Ukrainian language, which she could access in socialist Poland, made her dream about the lost moderland. Because of the radio broadcast that continuously reminded about the lost home, she wanted to return to Soviet Ukraine, but officials refused Heriak’s requests. Trying to get Soviet citizenship she went more than six times to Warsaw (to the Soviet Embassy), however, officials ignored her applications.⁶⁶⁷ She warned Kyiv radio managers that if the embassy staff continued to disregard her application for Soviet citizenship, she would commit suicide.

Many Ukrainians abroad asked Soviet radio personnel to send them native songs that they heard on the radio, though the majority of listeners were searching for relatives lost during the war.⁶⁶⁸ Sometimes “foreign” Ukrainians complained about the overtly ideological programming and boring Soviet songs and told Kyiv managers that they would prefer to hear about Ukrainian history than the national statistics of milk production. Some even asked them to play songs performed by Ukrainian guerrilla fighters during the Great War or confessed in their letters various stories from personal memoirs.⁶⁶⁹ Obviously for many Ukrainians known and familiar local “lived space” was gradually transforming into nation-wide “mediascape.”⁶⁷⁰ This mediascape gave a person the possibility to imagine a certain space and community without being there.

The Ukrainian state media committee broadcast every day in the Ukrainian language and three times a week in English and German (30 minutes each) to the various continents to which Ukrainians had migrated.⁶⁷¹ From 1968 it also broadcast in Moldovan (Romanian) every day for 7.5 hours. However, if in the late 1950s listeners valued broadcasting for its informational character or for possibility to listen to news in national language, in subsequent

⁶⁶⁷ “Letters” (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1957), Arkush 18, Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 1887, TsDAVO of Ukraine, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

⁶⁶⁸ “TsDAVO, Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 1887 (1957),” Arkush 69.

⁶⁶⁹ “TsDAVO, Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 1887 (1957),” Arkush 45.

⁶⁷⁰ Anri Lefebvre identified ambiguous relationship between the lived space (representational space), conceived space (representation of space) and perceived space (spatial practices). Here the imagination is crucial in all three dimensions, in producing space, using space and feeling space, while the third – emotional experience of space could be practiced without the real presence, which brings us to the notion of mediascape that presupposes disjuncture from the real. See on this theory: Lukasz Stanek, *Henri Lefebvre on Space Architecture, Urban Research, and the Production of Theory* (Minneapolis [Minn.]: University of Minnesota Press, 2011).

⁶⁷¹ “Reports (on Committee)” (General Sector of Central Committee of UCP, January 17, 1974), TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 24, Sprava 1037, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

decades Soviet Ukrainian broadcasting had problems to attract massive attention.⁶⁷² Some officials proposed adding more entertainment and information about leisure time in socialist Ukraine instead of continual reports about socialist industrial development.⁶⁷³ Media managers understood that many foreign Ukrainians perceived information from the USSR not only as Soviet but also as national. Because of this, officials in Soviet Ukraine were more concerned with ideological messages than with entertainment and such programming attracted more foreign listeners than Ukrainians, to whom it was primarily directed. Consequently, in the mid-1970s they received fewer than 400 letters in the Ukrainian language from 16 countries, as compared to more than 2262 letters in German (from 18 countries) and 2050 in English (from 36 countries).⁶⁷⁴ While the Soviet Ukrainian media broadcast abroad, it was clear that they did not really understand who they were targeting.

In the following decades, Soviet officials experienced the reverse situation as Soviet Ukrainians (and not emigrants) were sending letters to the west since many regions were covered by foreign broadcasting. Petro Shelest reported to his Moscow colleagues that there was a substantial amount of people who remained under the influence of foreign broadcasting, especially due to the poor signal and quality of Soviet radio and television in certain locations.⁶⁷⁵ Catching popular foreign music on radio normally also connected a Soviet person with the ideological information from the west. Western broadcasters transmitted over the Soviet border entertaining programming, supported with political messages. Besides music, such radio stations often presented the latest texts of dissidents, about whom Soviet Ukrainians usually did not have any information in the USSR.⁶⁷⁶

Sometimes this situation could become comical. In January 1974, officials built an ice rink in the local stadium in the city of Kirovohrad, central Ukraine. Since the managers of this winter entertainment did not have recorded music, they played radio tunes for the visitors. As they could not find any proper light music to accompany skating on the Soviet radio stations, they tuned into foreign radio. However, when the manager left the sound system for a moment, the radio started broadcasting news about recent political prosecutions in the Soviet Union.⁶⁷⁷ Thus, listening to light music sounds from western radio station an average Soviet person could unpredictably encounter political news and such situation could cause many troubles for local administrators.

⁶⁷² Evans, *Between Truth and Time* (2016), 50–51. See also officials reports: “TsDAVO, Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 1887 (1957),” Arkush 45.

⁶⁷³ “TsDAHO (1974), Fond 1, Opys 24, Sprava 1037,” January 17, 1974, Arkush 5.

⁶⁷⁴ “TsDAHO (1974), Fond 1, Opys 24, Sprava 1037,” Arkush 9.

⁶⁷⁵ “Letters (Shelest)” (General Sector of Central Committee of UCP, July 1, 1968), TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 20, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine; Kaganovich et al., “Ukraine and the Soviet-Czechoslovak Crisis of 1968 (Part 2): New Evidence from the Ukrainian Archives,” 143–44.

⁶⁷⁶ Ilnytskyi, “TsDAHO (1972), Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 666,” Arkush 8.

⁶⁷⁷ “Kirovohrad” (General Sector of Central Committee of UCP, January 24, 1974), Arkush 18, TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 24, Sprava 1037, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

In the mid-1970s, Ukrainian officials reported that 35 foreign radio stations broadcast daily to the Soviet Union in 22 languages, often exceeding 200 hours of content.⁶⁷⁸ From these, eight stations broadcast in the Ukrainian language, producing a total of 107 hours of content per week. It was practically impossible to fight such an information tsunami, even though Soviet Ukraine already established a special department for media defence (it was a part of state media committee) in 1957. All these 107 hours of weekly broadcasting were regularly recorded, transcribed and reported to the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party.⁶⁷⁹ Every day a special group of trained personnel made a report about the foreign Ukrainian mediascape and, in addition, weekly reports were sent to four addresses in Ukraine and to two addresses abroad.⁶⁸⁰ This way, Ukrainian communists constantly heard (read transcripts) voices of foreign Ukrainians, who apparently often praised Soviet powers for economic achievements in the republic, were enthusiastic about the economic and cultural development. But at the same time they continuously criticized officials for destroying national culture (they mainly worried about Russification) and perceived cultural advancements not as part of global communism building but rather as a sign of national revival or the new Ukrainian renaissance.⁶⁸¹ They believed that by having a strong economy and a semi-autonomous position within the USSR, an independent Ukraine was possible. However, the Soviet government in Kyiv claimed these claims were ill-minded and manipulative.⁶⁸²

In general, wide scale exposure to foreign broadcasting in Soviet Ukraine in the 1960s-1970s was a “natural” outcome of its unification in 1939-1945, mainly through expansion to the west. Weiner argues:

The Soviet borderlands were unsettled by their exposure to relative prosperity across the frontier. This was one of the price tags of de-Stalinisation. To some extent, it was the inevitable result of the expanding economic and political horizons of the Soviet polity. The region posed a constant threat to a regime sworn to uphold an infallible ideology and to preserve a monopoly over the formulation and dissemination of information.⁶⁸³

The influence of western broadcasts did not inspire directly anti-Soviet actions, however, it provided locals with “constant reminders of a sovereign past, social and political injustices, and geographical and cultural proximity to alternative ways of life.”⁶⁸⁴ Officials from the Ukrainian Communist Party understood that this alternative way of life, as well as national issues, were the most problematic for them. Nationalists abroad, and their sympathizers within the UkrSSR, used the media to attack such problems as Russification, the decline of

⁶⁷⁸ “Media report” (General Sector of Central Committee of UCP, November 5, 1974), TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 24, Sprava 1037, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

⁶⁷⁹ “TsDAHO (1974), Fond 1, Opys 24, Sprava 1037,” Arkush 15.

⁶⁸⁰ To the Ukrainian Society of Cultural Connections with Foreign Ukrainians and the Ukrainian Society for Friendship and Cultural Connections with Foreign Countries.

⁶⁸¹ Ilnytskyi, “TsDAHO (1972), Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 666,” Arkush 15.

⁶⁸² Ilnytskyi, Arkush 7.

⁶⁸³ Weiner, “Foreign Media, the Soviet Western Frontier, and the Hungarian and Czechoslovak Crises,” 312.

⁶⁸⁴ Weiner, 317.

cultural production and the prosecution of the nationally minded intelligentsia.⁶⁸⁵ Ukrainian communists were not willing to negotiate on these issues. From the mid-1960s, they developed various counter initiatives that reached their peak in the early 1970s, during the anti-nationalist campaign in Soviet Ukraine.

4.3. Outdated values and the socialist modernity

Stalin's later crusade (often called "Zhdanov's fight") against foreign influences in Soviet culture attacked everything that was not reminiscent of the traditional Soviet socialist style. Foreign borrowings were described by Zhdanov as "anti-human" [antinarodnoie] and stifling the healthy Russian music tradition.⁶⁸⁶ However, this crusade was doomed to fail insofar as the USSR was not just an empire, but also a quickly evolving media empire.⁶⁸⁷ Foreign broadcasting, which covered the western regions of the UkrSSR influenced local cultural production. Often it made it more national by making artists and producers reflect on their style, identity, and past (history), while Soviet officials had to take countermeasures. Following their socialist colleagues, local Soviet artists and broadcasters strove to make new forms of entertainment in the national language, which was often criticized for being nationalist. Through listening to jazz music on records and the radio, locals in 1950s western Ukraine often dreamed about their own national jazz. As L'viv composer Mykhailo Manuliak, who was infected with jazz in this period, articulated: "I have always considered that Ukrainian jazz music was, even if small, but another step towards national independence."⁶⁸⁸

Apart from the developing media technology (like radio, television, or music electronic utensils), Nikita Khrushchev decided not to ban foreign culture but to compete with various forms of bourgeois cultural production. Soviet culture was supposed to be a high culture for the masses, in contrast to the mass culture of the bourgeois world. Communist ideologists believed that under socialist conditions there was no distinction between mental and manual labour, and the intelligentsia as a separate group was supposed to vanish and all working people would become creators of culture. Thus, in 1971, Leonid Brezhnev declared all citizens in the USSR as creators of Soviet culture. Soviet leaders were proud that they elevated folk and popular culture to a high status thus seemingly breaking the social and cultural barriers between people.⁶⁸⁹

However, it was an ideal situation. In the late 1950s, many Ukrainian musicians were worried about the extinction of national dynamics. After the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956, some composers vocally expressed their concern about national music. At the Third Congress of Composers, held in Kyiv on 26 March 1956, right after the party congress in

⁶⁸⁵ Ilnytskyi, "TsDAHO (1972), Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 666," Arkush 19.

⁶⁸⁶ Barbara Makanowitzky, "Music to Serve the State," *Russian Review* 24, no. 3 (July 1, 1965): 266–77.

⁶⁸⁷ Consider Introduction to: Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time* (2011).

⁶⁸⁸ Mykhailo Manuliak, Creating Vatra, interview by Bohdan Shumylovych, An interview with notes, April 24, 2015, U-stories (Urban Media Archive), Center for Urban History of East-Central Europe (Lviv, Ukraine).

⁶⁸⁹ Stites, *Russian Popular Culture*, 71–79; Karen Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous, Comrades: Celebrations in the Time of Stalin* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 35–39.

Moscow, the L'viv composer Anatolii Kos-Anatolskyi (1909–1983), who grew up under the Habsburg Monarchy and interwar Poland, and received high status in Soviet Ukraine, urged his colleagues to develop the national features of Ukrainian musical culture. He made a connection between language and music, claiming that national form should remain in Soviet Ukrainian art:

Musical culture is closely linked to language because after all, it affects the rhythm, structural composition, and harmonious features of music. When the native language is not honoured, neglected, it is the first sign of the future decline of the native [ridnoyi] and national in form and socialist in content music. While we see in Ukraine's conservatories an atmosphere of complete indifference to native language, to the traditions of Ukrainian national music culture of the past. [...] In some conservatories, the Ukrainian language only remains on the door signs and in the orders of the director, nobody there studies the Ukrainian language and does not use it [applause]. [...] Comrades, can you imagine Tchaikovsky or Glinka, who do not understand and do not know the Russian language! However, we have such a thing every day: many composers do not know the Ukrainian language and do not read Ukrainian literature. How can a composer write a Ukrainian opera or a Ukrainian song when he does not know the language?⁶⁹⁰

Captivated by the eloquent and expressive speech of Kos-Anatolskyi,⁶⁹¹ a representative from Belarus even decided not to read his formal presentation from the prepared in advance document but improvised. He agreed with Kos-Anatolskyi and expressed his disappointment with the quality of ethnographic and theoretical knowledge of the Ukrainian cadres.⁶⁹² The claims of the Belarusian comrade were accurate. Various party meetings and reports indicated in the 1950s that Soviet administrators considered conservatories and orchestras as important ideological institutions and therefore strictly supervised their programmes.⁶⁹³ These cultural institutions were not made to train nationally oriented cadres (professionals), rather they intended to educate Soviet musicians with an orientation towards Russian music (and culture); the questions of folk/national traditions were not of main priority for educators.

Moreover, any artistic experiments that involved the Ukrainian language were perceived as suspicious and potentially dangerous. According to Marusyk T., in 1946-1951, in the Ukrainian SSR, ten large-scale campaigns were launched against the creative intelligentsia to fight the manifestations of bourgeois ideology. In 1948, the composer Vasyl Barvinskii and

⁶⁹⁰ "The Third Congress of Soviet Composers [Protocols and Transcripts]" (TsDALMU, Kyiv, Ukraine, March 26, 1956), Arkush 258-260, Fond 661, Opys 1, Sprava 277, Central State Archive of Literature and Arts of Ukraine (Kyiv, Ukraine). This was a shared believe among musicians that each language creates its specific rhythm, which influences melody and music in general. According to logic of Kos-Anatolskyi thus national music was impossible if the composer used foreign language.

⁶⁹¹ Liubov Kozak, who worked with Kos-Anatolskyi at L'viv TV' music editorial office in 1970s acknowledged that he was a great speaker, knew political language of Communism (speaking Bolshevik) and often behaved on the "margin of possibilities", see: Kozak, Interview on history of Lviv TV (2015). (on Kos-Anatolskyi)

⁶⁹² Oleh Bazhan, "Movne Pytannia v Ukrainskii RSR u Dzerkali XX Ziuzdu KPRS," in *Problemy Istorii Ukrainy: Fakty, Sudzhennia, Poshuky: Mizhvidomchyi Zbirnyk Naukovykh Prac*, vol. 1, 16 (Kyiv, 2007), 390–96.

⁶⁹³ For instance, consider party report from L'viv about the importance of classical music for producing Soviet intelligentsia, where conservatory is called an 'ideological institution' and not the place of art, see: "Report (Philharmonics)" (Lviv Regional Department of Culture, 1958), Arkush 119-120, Found R-92, Opys 1, Sprava 412, DALO, The State Archive of Lviv Region.

his family were arrested and sent to camps, as was Myroslav Skoryk's family in 1947, and a number of other prominent western Ukrainian intellectuals. Musicians who remained in L'viv after 1944 were very careful when expressing their national allegiances and musical experiments.⁶⁹⁴ It was much safer to be a Russian speaking author and to avoid "unnecessary" national features, the semi-national (simplified or clichéd as folk) form in artwork was enough. For instance, a member of the L'viv Section of the Ukrainian Union of Writers, Dimarov A., indicated that most writers in this organisation were Russian speaking, which prevented them from communicating with the local, Ukrainian speaking population.⁶⁹⁵

Kos-Anatolskii expressed his anxiety about the Ukrainian language in 1956. Even though he had arrived at Congress from the Ukrainian speaking region, in the 1950s one would predominantly hear the Russian language on the streets of L'viv, the regional urban center. This was the result of the post-war re-population of the city. Poles, who had lived in the town for many centuries, were expelled to socialist Poland and the majority of Jews were killed during the Second World War (both ethnic groups constituted the majority of the city dwellers before 1939). The Soviet powers had the task of Sovietizing the city, region and culture, and language politics played an important role.⁶⁹⁶ Large factories were transferred from various places in the Soviet empire to build the local economy, and these plants usually came with a large number of Russian speaking workers. Many of them were not actual colonizers, however, they often shared the attitude of superiority in relation to local inhabitants, and this dominance was often expressed through Russian language and culture.⁶⁹⁷

Therefore, in the second half of the 1950s, the issue of national language was often debated in the circles of the Ukrainian cultural intelligentsia. In the early 1960s, officials worried that such discussions regarding the national substance of art would lead to incorrect conclusions about socialist culture in general. In 1962, party officials invited the cultural workers of L'viv to discuss ideological work. The reason was the nervousness of local officials that reacted to recent publications of Ukrainian poets and writers. In the line of the Thaw's condemnation of Stalinism, young writers criticized conservatism and the provincial character of Ukrainian socialism. Comrades did not like the melancholy and overly critical attitude towards communism that was often conveyed by the artists (writers, poets, composers, etc.)

⁶⁹⁴ T.V. Marusyk, "Natsionalnaia Politika Stalinskoho Rezhima i Zapadnoukrainskaia Inteligentsiia," in *Sovetskie Natsii i Natsionalnaia Politika v 1920-1950-e Gody: Materialy VI Mezhdunarodnoi Nauchnoi Konferentsii Kiev, 10-12 Oktiabria 2013 g.*, Istorია Stalinizma, Debaty (Moskva: ROSSPĖN (Rossiiskaia politicheskaia entsyklopedia: Prezidentskii tsentr B.N. Eltsina, 2014), 658. Also see: Kozak, Interview on history of Lviv TV (2015).

⁶⁹⁵ Marusyk, "Natsionalnaia Politika Stalinskoho Rezhima i Zapadnoukrainskaia Inteligentsiia," 257.

⁶⁹⁶ On Sovietisation of L'viv and region see: Damian Karol Markowski, *Anatomia strachu. Sowietyzacja obwodu lwowskiego 1944–1953. Studium zmian polityczno-gospodarczych* (Warszawa: IPN, 2018); Amar, *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv*; Risch, *The Ukrainian West* (2011); Jan Tomasz Gross, *Revolution from Abroad: The Soviet Conquest of Poland's Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia* (Princeton University Press, 2002).

⁶⁹⁷ Risch, *The Ukrainian West* (2011), 56. There was also a big number of Russian speaking Ukrainians who came to Sovietize region in the 1950s, so for locals it was often complicated to differentiate the 'other' (Soviet Ukrainian) from the more remote 'other' (Soviet Russian).

and consequently requested that they instead depict the complexities of Soviet life by using good examples and pleasant style.⁶⁹⁸ Officials worried that the excessively affectionate attitude of artists towards their national past and traditions could lead them in the wrong direction.

The L'viv party administrators explained to the artists that the Soviet system valued national traditions, however, some traditions were better while others were outdated [vidzhyly sebe] and should be forgotten. Moreover, officials claimed that there were new traditions that appeared under communism, such as collectivism, Soviet patriotism, hard work, and brotherly cooperation. Hence, the plenum of the L'viv Obkom of the Communist Party in 1962, criticized comrades who predominantly concentrated and admired [liubuvalys] old Ukrainian traditions and ignored the new socialist ones.⁶⁹⁹ This criticism was based on Lenin's remarks about national culture, where he stated that communists take democratic and socialist elements from each culture, while capitalists do the opposite, overemphasizing national peculiarities, which leads to nationalism.⁷⁰⁰ Thus, since the main feature of Soviet culture was socialism, which was "by nature" international, the Ukrainian culture should also become international and its practitioners needed to fight bourgeois nationalism.⁷⁰¹

Apparently, during the meeting in 1962 L'viv communists explained to cultural workers the party's requirements. English-language materials from the party congress confirmed anti-nationalist agenda and praised internationalism:

Outmoded forms [of culture] inconsistent with the tasks of communist construction drop away and new forms emerge [...] National flavour is quite natural in literature and art. And we know that only forms that are in keeping with our epoch have a future. Party ensures free development of languages, but this development should not lead to accentuation of national barriers, it should lead to a coming together of nations.⁷⁰²

This communist dialectic of culture, which admitted that Soviet art should have national form and socialist (international) content, rooted both national and transnational "seeds," which were destined to produce different "crops" in the Soviet soil/culture. Formally Soviet ideologists refused both, the all-embracing immersion with national form (nationalism) or the excessive denial of it in favour of internationalism, consequently leading to de-

⁶⁹⁸ "DALO (1962), Fond P-3, Opys 8, Sprava 424," Arkush 86.

⁶⁹⁹ "DALO (1962), Fond P-3, Opys 8, Sprava 424," Arkush 36.

⁷⁰⁰ V.I. Lenin, "Kriticheskie Zametki Po Natsionalnomu Voprosu," in *Polnoie Sobranie Sochinenii*, vol. 24 (Moscow: Izdatelstvo politicheskoi literatury, 1973), 121. These remarks would be multiplied in almost each work on national and transnational elements in Soviet culture, see for instance: A. Egorov, "O Natsionalnykh Osobennostiakh Iskusstva," in *Za Kommunisticheskuiu Ideinost Literatury i Iskusstva* (Moscow, 1957), 134; A. Khachaturian, "Za Tvorcheskuiu Druzhbu, Za Progress," *Sovetskaia Muzyka*, no. 2 (1960): 53; I. Tsamerian, "Leninskaia Natsionalnaia Politika v Deistvii," *Kommunist*, 1968, 27; I. Kon, "Natsionalnyi Kharakter - Mif Ili Realnost?," *Inostrannaia Literatura*, no. 9 (1968): 227; G. Tigranov, "O Natsionalnom i Internatsionalnom v Sovetsoi Simfonii," in *Muzyka v Sotsialisticheskoi Obshchestve* (Leningrad: Muzyka, 1969), 82.

⁷⁰¹ "DALO (1962), Fond P-3, Opys 8, Sprava 424," Arkush 37.

⁷⁰² *The Road to Communism: Documents of the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, October 17-31, 1961* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1962), 259.

nationalisation.⁷⁰³ Often in the 1960s, ideologically correct national representation was not an issue of its politics or identity, since all the instructions for artists in this regard were many times made by the communists. The question if the work of “national art” was good or bad was rather an issue of artistry and correct aesthetics that should clearly fit within already existing ideological frames.

The main L’viv jazz amateur orchestra Medicus, which developed in the late 1950s, was constantly contested by officials and at the same time popularized by the regional Soviet media. One of the party spokespersons admitted during the meeting with L’viv artists in 1962 that:

We cannot handle Khoma’s jazz [Medicus]. The regional Komsomol organisation was right to criticize it. We should finally decide: either to purge the collective from wrong elements or to dismantle them completely. We have too many sponsors [metsenaty] at various organisations that support unnecessary things.⁷⁰⁴

Seemingly, these promoters of “unnecessary things” were working at regional radio editorials and at the Musical Programming Desk of L’viv Television, which broadcast Medicus to Moscow in 1965 as an example of Soviet modern culture from the Ukrainian west. These people made the first music television film in L’viv in 1968 mainly around the music of Khoma’s Medicus, thus promoting the Ukrainian version of urban light music, although local party officials considered it unnecessary or even dangerous. Apparently, the socialist media in western Ukraine had a paradoxical position: it had the task of promoting local and national culture in competition with foreign media, and at the same time this promotion was often considered ideologically wrong by party representatives.

4.4. “How to plough with butterflies”: the power and a danger of symbols

In 1972 – the same year as Smerichka performed socialist pop-rock in Moscow, gaining widespread official recognition⁷⁰⁵ – other representatives of Soviet Ukrainian culture, like the poet Ihor Kalynets’ (born 1939) or writer Ivan Dziuba (born 1931) received indictments and camp sentences. They, and many others, were accused of anti-Soviet propaganda and nationalism for spreading illegal literature and publishing abroad. The same year, Petro Shelest moved to Moscow and the newly appointed Secretary of the Party Central Committee

⁷⁰³ In order to show problematic de-nationalization, communists used definition *rootless cosmopolitan* [bezrodnyi kosmopolit], which was an instrumental as a pejorative label during the anti-Semitic campaign in the Soviet Union after Second World War, see: Konstantin Azadovskii and Boris Egorov, “From Anti-Westernism to Anti-Semitism: Stalin and the Impact of the ‘Anti-Cosmopolitan’ Campaigns on Soviet Culture,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 4, no. 1 (2002): 66–80.

⁷⁰⁴ “DALO (1962), Fond P-3, Opys 8, Sprava 424,” Arkush 126.

⁷⁰⁵ Already in 1971, the band was invited to become part of Chernivtsi Philharmonics, thus to play professional. Levko Dutkovskiyi refused and recommended instead another band, created by Anatolii Yevdokymenko and Sofia Rotaru. This band (in few years it will become one of the most successful Soviet popular ensembles) received a name *Chervona Ruta* [Red Rue], after the Ivasiuk’s song, that was performed in 1970 by *Smerichka* and became popular after the musical film with the same name, produced in 1971 by L’viv and Kyiv film crew. This song won the first all-Union TV music contest *Pesnia Goda* and millions of Soviet people have seen it on their TV-sets and listen to it in December 1971.

Valentyn Malanchuk, who received full support from the Ukrainian central powers, commenced the anti-nationalist campaign. The ideological apparatus of the UCP (Ukrainian Communist Party) started an operation to liquidate any forms of “samvydav” (samizdat in Russian) in the Soviet republic. Officials also tried to reveal various forms of Ukrainian “national communism” and “bourgeois nationalism”. In the context of such ideological war, the major battlefield was the Ukrainian language and literature, therefore some music groups and performers were blamed for the words they sang or expressed publicly.

It was not new to politicise the language. Soviet Ukrainian artists were often accused of producing nationalist (and not socialist) content, but while these accusations were more sporadic in the late 1950s-1960s, by the early 1970s they had become systematic. A dissident author, Ihor Kalynets, who spent nine years in the Soviet camp and prison, described the devastating situation in the field of language and literary practice through the poetic metaphor: “How to plough with butterflies”.⁷⁰⁶ With this allegory, he offered an image of the suppression of a writer/artist, who creates poetry in circumstances where various forces are trying to oppress social creativity.

Figure 4.5. The amateur band Quo Vadis performs at L’viv Regional television, 1971.



After receiving a distinction at the festival Lvivska Vesna [L’viv’s Spring] in 1971 the amateur band Quo Vadis was invited to perform at L’viv regional television by the TV professional and promoter of Ukrainian music, Myroslav Skochylias, who worked as a jury member during the festival.

In the spring of 1970, following the path of Smerichka’s founder Levko Dutkovskiy,⁷⁰⁷ a young student from western Ukraine, Victor Morozov (born 1950), decided to create an amateur band at the Department of Physics and Mathematics at L’viv University. He had been inspired by the beat-rock band Berlin Bubis, which had been created in L’viv by students from east German, and who played European and American popular music. Thus, in late 1970, he created the ensemble Quo Vadis and it followed popular L’viv music in combining swing, jazz,

⁷⁰⁶ Forgotten the sober language of people, And went to plow with butterflies, Among zhurillya-herbs, Where even oxen cannot work, see: Danylo Husar-Struk, “Nevol’nycha Muza, Abo Jak ‘Oraty Metelykamy’ (Igor Kalynets’),” in *Nevol’nycha Muza. Virshi 1973-1981 Rokiv*. (Toronto: Ukr. nezalezhne vyd-vo “Smoloskyp” im. V. Symonenka., 1991), 27. Kalynets published in USSR only one collection of poems, issued in 1966 by the Kyiv publishing house *Molod* and named *Vohon’ Kupala* [Midsummer Fire].

⁷⁰⁷ Morozov created his first band in the school, where he became popular by playing Elvis and *The Beatles*.

big beat, and Ukrainian melodic traditions. In the spring of 1971, the band participated in the all-city music contest L'vivska Vesna [L'viv Spring] organised by Komsomol, and won the first prize for their jazzy interpretation of the old Ukrainian song *Chorna Rillia Izorana* [Black Arable Soil Ploughed].⁷⁰⁸ This song, which belonged to the old Galician music tradition, was re-interpreted by professional musicians in the 1920s-1930s and received a second life after Stanislav Ludkevych's classical rearrangement during the Soviet period. Thus, in the early 1970s young Morozov continued to dialogue with the past, though as a "new" Soviet Ukrainian. Like his contemporaries, he saw it as a personal duty to reformulate tradition for the new popular media culture.

In 1972, specialists from Central Television (Moscow) visited L'viv to select bands and performers for their newly initiated music contest *Hello, We Are Looking for Talent*. After preliminary rehearsals, the visitors asked some of the young people from various L'viv bands to unite and participate in the regional Ukrainian selection in Chernivtsi. The success on the local level turned the attention of other colleagues to Morozov's art-jazz composition, and soon he was invited to participate in a band created by another young man at the Regional Pharmacy Administration.⁷⁰⁹ The new group had the name Arnika⁷¹⁰ and went to Chernivtsi to participate in a regional competition for the union-wide television music contest. The two winners of the concert, Smerichka and Arnika, received invitations to play in the final event at Central Television in Moscow, where they both received laureate diplomas.

Even though the success for both west Ukrainian bands was enormous, their outcomes were different. Smerichka ended 1972 as an embodiment of Soviet Ukrainian popular vocal and instrumental ensemble and Arnika produced its first music record at Melodia, the Soviet monopolist producer of music records.⁷¹¹ The broadcast of the final concert of *Allo, My Ishchem Talanty* attracted not only Soviet workers and young people but also party functionaries. One of the L'viv officials watched the concert and asked the First Secretary of the L'viv Regional Communist Party organisation whether he liked the performance of L'viv's Arnika, which played the same song (*Chorna Rillia Izorana*) that

⁷⁰⁸ Victor Morozov, The story of Arnika, interview by Bohdan Shumylovych, An audio interview with notes and transcript, April 2015, U-stories (Urban Media Archive), Center for Urban History of East-Central Europe (Lviv, Ukraine).

⁷⁰⁹ Volodymyr Kit, who played in the 1960s in Medicus went to work in the Regional Pharmacy Administration and with Volodymyr Vasiliev, a son of the company's director Vira Vasilieva, decided to create an amateur music band. This was normal practice in the 1970s; almost every Soviet enterprise in L'viv had a house of culture or a club, equipped with simple paraphernalia that allowed semi-professional performances.

⁷¹⁰ The name comes from 'arnica' (arnikə), a genus of perennial, herbaceous plants in the sunflower family, which increases the male sexual potency and decreases chances of female pregnancy. For the young man, who created the band, this name perfectly fitted, see: Morozov, The story of Arnika (interview, 2015).

⁷¹¹ More on recording culture in USSR see: Jan Levchenko, "Discs-Mediators: Non-Academic Observations of the Phenomenon of the Socialist States' Gramophone Records Production in the Late USSR," *Labyrint: Zhurnal Social'no-Gumanitarnykh Issledovaniy*, Project "SEV" (1949–1991): Export/Import tovarov & idej, no. 6 (2014).

brought victory in the municipal music contest. The highest regional party official replied that the song was a little “too sad” and this remark brought closer attention to the band.⁷¹²

After the anti-nationalist campaign launched by the Ukrainian Communist Party in the early 1970s turned into the wide scale surveillance of literary practice and the Ukrainian intelligentsia, such attention was unsafe. After multiple arrests in L’viv in 1972, the police discovered that Morozov’s lyrics were published in the samvydav magazine *Skrynia* [Chest] which, despite not containing any politically motivated messages, was considered political by Soviet officials.⁷¹³ The L’viv University expelled the young poet and the police launched a case against him. Morozov had to visit the KGB regularly and explain why his lyrics were so sad.⁷¹⁴ Vira Vasilieva,⁷¹⁵ who made the “roof” for the band⁷¹⁶ as the director of the Regional Pharmacy Administration, recalled that, during closed party meetings, Arnika’s winning song was criticised for its nationalist sentiments and double meanings.⁷¹⁷

Vasilieva did research to prove that the song was folk-based and therefore could not be anti-Soviet. In addition, the Head of the L’viv Regional Department of Culture acknowledged that various folk choirs used the song, so it was not ideologically dangerous. Finally, party officials invited Arnika to perform their repertoire in a closed rehearsal and after the band sang patriotic Soviet songs they were allowed to play again in public venues. To save Morozov from further trials, Vasilieva came forward and proposed that he would be “ideolohichno perevyhovanyi” [ideologically re-educated] at her institution. This way after the big success in Moscow in 1972, already in 1973 Victor Morozov was fired from the university due to his “ideological mistakes.” His punishment was rather soft since he could work as a loader at the Regional Pharmacy Administration, while still playing in Arnika.⁷¹⁸

4.5. The ideological front and the ensemble Bukovina

In certain cases, officials were keen to find dangerous nationalist contexts not only in song lyrics, but also in the speeches of artists. In 1974, when the Chernivtsi Philharmonic took part in the Decade of Soviet Ukraine in the Estonian SSR, officials were on high alert. Folk oriented Esteemed Bukovina Song and Dance Ensemble and pop-band Smerichka represented western Ukraine in various venues in Tallinn and Tartu. Levko Dutkovskiy recalls that Estonians (or Ukrainians living in Estonia) often used various “doubling” techniques⁷¹⁹ in

⁷¹² Risch, *The Ukrainian West (2011)*, 229.

⁷¹³ Morozov, *The story of Arnika* (interview, 2015). (On KGB interrogation).

⁷¹⁴ KGB interrogators tried to find proves that ‘sadness of lyrics’ of Morozov bore the sign of anti-Soviet attitude, see: Morozov.

⁷¹⁵ She herself was a high party official and had an ‘Order of Lenin’ award, see: Risch, “Mass Culture and Counterculture,” 230.

⁷¹⁶ “Roof” means formal subordination of a music band to some Soviet institution, thus this institution was considered responsible for ideological correctness of band’s cultural production.

⁷¹⁷ Risch, *The Ukrainian West (2011)*, 229.

⁷¹⁸ Morozov, *The story of Arnika* (interview, 2015).

⁷¹⁹ Homi Bhabha identified ambivalent relations in colonial situation, which were seen as having *doubling effect*. He refers to Fanon’s ‘Black Skin, White Masks’, where disavowal of difference turns the colonial subject

relation to Ukrainian banned symbols, like putting yellow and blue flags in the streets of Tartu, giving singers and dancers blue and yellow flowers, or providing souvenir badges with forbidden colours featuring Neptune with a trident.⁷²⁰ Motivated by national sentiments, some performers expressed critical remarks toward the Soviet system to their colleagues. Insofar someone made a report against others to KGB the whole Philharmonic's collective was gathered on convocation upon return back home.

The first secretary of Chernivtsi Obkom Volodymyr Dikusarov, who had replaced his predecessor after the ideological purges initiated by the Ukrainian Communist Party in 1972, gave an order to discuss the issue of strengthening the ideological and political instruction of employees at the Chernivtsi Philharmonic. The general meeting was organised for the morning of 10 June 1974. Comrade Chertkov M.Y., who worked as the secretary of the party organisation at Philharmonics, explained that two artists, Kniahynyskii M.H. and Hontar H.P. from the Bukovina Song and Dance Ensemble were blamed for systematically articulating nationalistic and anti-Soviet statements.⁷²¹ During this meeting some members of the collective, like the soloist Melnychuk, accused both artists of having positive views on Andrey Sakharov and Alexander Solzhenitsyn. Others stated that it was inappropriate that artists sing glory to the USSR and at the same time denounce it. Comrade Koshikova confessed:

If you, who have lived here fifty years, do not remember what the Soviet system gave to you, we, the young people, understand this very well: education, the right to work, the mere possibility of employment on the native land. We love our country and do not judge people because of their nationality. We do not believe in Kniahynyskii and Hontar. Let them leave our collective.⁷²²

Another colleague, Semenkova, went even further and claimed that although she was born in Bukovina: "I speak Russian more now, because this is a rich and powerful language, because we can speak to the whole world using this language."⁷²³ This statement did not refer to the discussed issues, because the accused artists did not mention the Russian language in their allegedly nationalist remarks, but rather echoed the speech of Brezhnev in 1972. This remark indicated that comrade Semenkova was aware of the party's national and language policies.⁷²⁴ The collective was found guilty and sacked from the Philharmonic who publicly denounced Kniahynyskii and Hontar. They consequently had to leave the city since there was no employment for them in Chernivtsi after such a public trial.

into a grotesque mimicry or 'doubling.' See: "Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 75; 85–92.

⁷²⁰ Trident is an official Ukrainian emblem from 1917, which refers to medieval Kievan elites, Dutkovskyyi himself received a badge with Neptune and trident, that was plucked from his dress by Ukrainian party official, see: Dutkovskyyi, *Creation of Smerichka* (interview, 2015), On tour to Estonia.

⁷²¹ "Report from the Closed Assembly" (The municipal committee of Communist Party, June 10, 1974), Found P-2, Opys 08, Sprava 20, DACHO, The State Archive of Chernivtsi Region.

⁷²² "DACHO (1974), Found P-2, Opys 08, Sprava 20."

⁷²³ "DACHO (1974), Found P-2, Opys 08, Sprava 20."

⁷²⁴ "DACHO (1974), Found P-2, Opys 08, Sprava 20."

The vocalist Yaroslav Soltys (born 1948), who participated in this assembly in 1974 and condemned his colleagues, admits that (in his opinion) the KGB prepared the case before the artistic collective returned from Estonia and the major reason was to put artists under ideological stress.⁷²⁵ The major accusations against the artists were their words, supposedly expressed in various circumstances. For instance, during a tour in the Russian province, the accused artists commented (while observing Soviet provincial squalor) that Russians could not bring order to their own country but yet claimed the right to civilize others. During a tour to Estonia, they apparently commented that Estonians would do better without Russians.⁷²⁶ In general, they openly sympathised with other Soviet dissidents, and such behaviour was inappropriate at the institution, which was considered by Soviet officials as highly ideological.

Party officials had to explain to the senior officials how and why such groups appeared at the Chernivtsi Philharmonic. They reported to Kyiv that this situation possibly occurred because there was a low level of individual work for artists at the Chernivtsi Philharmonic. The political training was tedious [mnogo formalizma], and comrades usually did not inform (meaning denouncing) their supervisors about the anti-Soviet sentiments of other colleagues.⁷²⁷ However, the most inappropriate situation, as one comrade indicated, was in the “employee’s policy”: people were selected to work in this ideological institution only because of their abilities as musicians, not according to their ideological performance. The comrade from the Regional Communist Party organisation (Obkom) in Chernivtsi argued that situation had to be changed.⁷²⁸

The purge of the Chernivtsi Philharmonic in the summer of 1974 was intended to prove that this organisation was an ideological institute, which participated in the battle for proletarian internationalism. Communist instructors repeatedly reminded artists that they could not rely in their art only on personal authorship and popularity. They had to remember that their success in the USSR was possible not due to individual artistic capacities, but because of the Communist Party and its politics. They always had to be alert, looking for enemies and fighting for the common good. Artistic councils that had the power to select artists, their melodies and lyrics, thus became institutions which simply banned everything new and recommended songs that they believed were appropriate. They exercised power not only through the regulation of artistic production but also strove preserve its national form and Soviet content.

Officials similarly took hold of Estrada bands. In 1974, when the Chernivtsi Philharmonic was placed under scrupulous ideological control, the band Smerichka, which from 1973 was already a part of this organisation, received an invitation to perform on one

⁷²⁵ Yaroslav Soltys, On art and politics (Chernivtsi), interview by Bohdan Shumylovych, Oral interview with notes, April 24, 2015.

⁷²⁶ I am following cases described by Soltys insofar archival materials do not indicate exact guilt of accused artists, except them being supposedly nationalists.

⁷²⁷ “DACHO (1974), Found P-2, Opys 08, Sprava 20.”

⁷²⁸ “DACHO (1974), Found P-2, Opys 08, Sprava 20.”

of the television programmes in Moscow. Levko Dutkovskiy went to the administration to get permission for the assignment because it interrupted an earlier agreed timetable and tour. This simple formality became a challenge. The party representative (the head of a local orchestra party cell) demanded that Smerichka agree on the song to be aired in Moscow at the meeting of the artistic council. The council urged them to sing the famous patriotic Soviet song *Moi Adres Sovetskii Soiuz* [My Address is Soviet Union], usually performed by the Russian band Samotsvety. Dutkovskiy did not like the idea and replied Soviet Central Television had explicitly invited Smerichka as a Ukrainian band and expected it to perform a Ukrainian song, not a famous Russian one. However, one of the council's members from the Regional Party Committee (Obkom) stood up and loudly said: "Dutkovskiy is against the Russian language. The language, spoken by comrade Lenin."⁷²⁹ After this convincing argument, Dutkovskiy agreed to sing the Soviet ballad required by the artistic council. However, in Moscow, colleagues from Central Television were surprised, because they had received a request to display various cultures of the USSR and required a music performance in the Ukrainian language. Finally, after some hesitation, Smerichka performed its own song (written by Dutkovskiy) and comrades in Moscow were satisfied.

In Chernivtsi, officials perceived such disobedience as resistance and claimed Dutkovskiy to be a "nepravliaiemyi" [unmanageable] person.⁷³⁰ Even though the famous band brought good financial earnings and fame to the Chernivtsi Philharmonic, officials wanted to full control over the artistic director, who did not follow ideological instructions. Administrators from the regional party organisation and the Regional Department of Culture [Oblasne Upravlinnia Kultury] continued ideological talks with artists. The protocol of such debates at the Regional Department of Culture (June 1975), which administered the Chernivtsi Philharmonic, indicates that executives were anxious not about the aesthetics and the performances of various collectives, but more about their ideological positions.

Bureaucrats asked why there was no socialist competition between various music collectives within the Philharmonic, even though artists were performing several times per day, normally out-performing capitalist colleagues.⁷³¹ Comrade Bondariev E.M. was dissatisfied with the ideological level of artists, especially the artistic director Dutkovskiy, who often misbehaved and pushed the band to perform only his songs and not the songs of other Soviet composers who were members of the professional union of Soviet composers.⁷³² Officials were disappointed that out of 124 members of the Chernivtsi Philharmonic, only 15 were communists and popular ensembles did not participate in ideological work. Party officials accused artists of bourgeois behaviour: "They worry more about money and their records but do not pay attention to politics," asserted officials.⁷³³ Party officials tried to dictate

⁷²⁹ Dutkovskiy, Creation of Smerichka (interview, 2015).

⁷³⁰ Dutkovskiy.

⁷³¹ "DACHO (1976), Found P-2, Opys 9, Sprava 10."

⁷³² "DACHO (1976), Found P-2, Opys 9, Sprava 10."

⁷³³ "DACHO (1976), Found P-2, Opys 9, Sprava 10."

the philosophy of the creative process and urged artists, even those who were not communists, to express correct ideological views. Consequently, some of the executives said that the ensemble directors had to be forced to conduct personal ideological work with their performers and stressed that “all the powers of Philharmonics should be mobilized in the field of ideological instruction.”⁷³⁴

In some cases, local communist officials even tried to link Zionism to popular music’s ideological deviations. It was not a surprise in the Bukovina region, where the party tried to stop the migration of Soviet citizens to Israel. At the end of the 1960s, the official Soviet mass media widely reported about the threat of Zionist power and some journals accused Zionism of posing a “disintegrating influence” over the Polish and Czechoslovak youth in 1967-1968.⁷³⁵ It is likely that such articles influenced the ideological instructor from the Regional Party Committee in Chernivtsi,⁷³⁶ who invited Dutkovskiy for further personal training and, after a long conversation, posed a statement that sounded like accusation: “Lev Tarasovych, in your ensemble Smerichka there are eighteen members and nine of them are Jews”. Dutkovskiy, shocked by this issue, especially in the light of constant advocacy of the Communist Party regarding proletarian internationalism and effective national politics in the USSR,⁷³⁷ replied:

Yes, that is true. [...] our music collective employs Ukrainians, Russians, Moldovans and Jews, and they all dress in the costumes of Smerichka and sing Ukrainian songs. Never, not from anyone else, I heard such comments. I have invited into the team not Jews, but professional musicians and nationality have never interested me because every nationality has both good and bad people.⁷³⁸

In the summer of 1975, at the height of regional concern for the ideological knowledge of artists, a film crew from Estonian TV arrived in Chernivtsi (see Chapter 3.6.) to produce a film about the famous Soviet Ukrainian ensemble Smerichka. The Estonian film director Virve Koppel, after continued dialogues with the local party committee, was impressed by ideological “abnormality” of their personnel.⁷³⁹ She recalls that party members required her to ensure that yellow and blue (the colours of the pre-Soviet Ukrainian national flag) were absent from the film’s visuals, and demanded that the band would sing songs from the list approved by the Philharmonic’s artistic council. She was unable to agree to such terms and the situation was saved thanks to the vice director of the Chernivtsi Philharmonic, Falik

⁷³⁴ “DACHO (1976), Found P-2, Opys 9, Sprava 10.”

⁷³⁵ William Korey, “The Origins and Development of Soviet Anti-Semitism: An Analysis,” *Slavic Review* 31, no. 1 (March 1972): 133.

⁷³⁶ There is a possibility that Zionism was recalled in Bukovina by Ukrainian officials reacting to the Polish anti-Jewish campaign, see: Dariusz Stola, “Anti-Zionism as a Multipurpose Policy Instrument: The Anti-Zionist Campaign in Poland, 1967–1968,” *The Journal of Israeli History* 25, no. 1 (2006): 175–201.

⁷³⁷ Dutkovskiy used the notion ‘Soviet people’ many times during the interview.

⁷³⁸ Dutkovskiy, Creation of Smerichka (interview, 2015).

⁷³⁹ She visited Ukrainian popular performances in Estonia in 1974 and in general enjoyed art from Bukovina and films about this region. For instance, she was captivated by the Soviet Ukrainian film *The White Bird Marked with Black* (1971) and believed that the film was made in some museum settings, but not in real nature and the living culture of Carpathians. She got excited when realised that the film’s vivid imagery had a ‘real substance’ and decided to make a short documentary about the mountains and modern songs, see: Koppel, Making Estonian film about Smerichka (2015).

Pinkhas, who managed to convince the party representatives that the selection of songs would be ideologically correct.

The film, made in 1975, gained popularity in Estonia and abroad but was not screened in Soviet Ukraine (see Chapter 3.5.). It did not fit the new policies implemented by Ukrainian communists, which strove to fight nationalism and to create a new transnational Soviet People. This somewhat not sanctioned from Kyiv or Moscow attention of one Soviet periphery (Estonia) to the national popular culture of another province (Soviet Bukovina), produced concerns among Ukrainian communist comrades. They did not express delight that “other Soviet people” wanted to praise their national culture, but rather intensified their work to make this culture less national and more Soviet. Such continuous ideological pressure contributed to the dismantling of the band Smerichka. After Virve Koppel presented the Estonian film to Chernivtsi party and culture officials, she expressed her aspiration to strengthen cultural relations “between the two countries” to local comrades.⁷⁴⁰ This caused the party personnel to take an even harder line on ideology and, in the early autumn of 1975, the primary band performers and its creator Levko Dutkivskyi left the Chernivtsi Philharmonic. The band that had won the hearts of millions could not withstand the politicised reality of Soviet Ukrainian cultural battles.

As we have seen from these examples, Soviet officials had very vague understanding of the socialist substance for national art form. They actively influenced artistic content and strived to “normalise” national popular culture, namely to make it sound and look familiar (not very different) and Soviet. Party ideologists aimed to turn popular artists into ideological weapons and to achieve this goal they needed to control their activities. As W. Risch observed:

The varying degrees of cultural expression along the western borderlands suggest that Soviet practices of empire in this region were not only diffuse, but dependent on local Party and state officials who implemented policies and decided what was “bourgeois nationalist,” “alien,” or “anti-Soviet.” In this sense, the western borderlands became places where local officials regarded it as a duty, or as a professional opportunity, to display their ideological vigilance and enforce ideological purity, or to protect their public reputations.⁷⁴¹

4.6. Anti-nationalist campaign and the punishment of regional television

As in the Soviet spy drama with double agents, the launch of the Ukrainian anti-nationalist campaign in the early 1970s was designed with the participation of diaspora Ukrainians in mind. The story had to have foreign spies and villains, who converted the local ill-minded (having presupposition to nationalism) intelligentsia to nationalism. The national/international conspiracy had to be discovered by KGB agents and the court procedure needed to be mediatized to turn this court into a part of the Soviet media extravaganza.

⁷⁴⁰ Virve realized that she said something inappropriate (namely about the friendship of two countries, not Soviet republics) only after her friend punched her leg under the table, see: Koppel.

⁷⁴¹ Risch, “A Soviet West (2015),” 77.

My final example of an anti-nationalist campaign that intensified in Soviet Ukraine in the early 1970s concerns L'viv Television. Ivan Petriv, who was the head of the L'viv Radio and Television Committee in the late 1960s and early 1970s, recalled in a television interview (2007) that an anti-nationalist campaign, initiated by the KGB and the Ukrainian Communist Party in the early 1970s, aimed to discredit local groups in western Ukraine.⁷⁴² The major problems for L'viv Television arrived after the Ukrainian communist Petro Shelest was denounced and accused of nationalism after publishing a book about Soviet Ukraine in 1972.⁷⁴³ This book aimed to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Soviet statehood and the great advances of Ukraine during these years. However, Leonid Brezhnev and Mikhail Suslov considered Shelest to have been "infected" by nationalism and therefore unable to fight Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists, who alleged that Soviet Ukraine experienced new national revival since the early 1960s.

It appears that by slowing down and criticising various "national revival" tendencies initiated during the late 1950s, the Communist Party fostered the old form of denunciations and deletions, common to Soviet politics. In the 1960s, opponents used multiple "anonimky" (anonymous letters) directed against the most productive professionals and caused various debates at the television studio and during party meetings. Quarrels inside the Soviet media system were normal in the 1960s. For instance, in 1961 a disagreement between L'viv Television and the State Circus for the right to broadcast performances became a public issue. An ideology officer Valentyn Malanchuk had to write a report to his higher supervisors in L'viv Obkom about this incident. Apparently, the State Circus in L'viv refused to let the television crew broadcast a popular performance and L'viv Television representatives informed viewers in an "impolite" manner that there would be no circus show on TV.⁷⁴⁴

Malanchuk called the "tone" of this announcement as being "the ether hooliganism"⁷⁴⁵ and accused the State Circus of not fulfilling the demands of the Communist Party Central Committee Decree "On the Further Development of Soviet Television."⁷⁴⁶ Malanchuk reported to the upper party officials that Yakushchenko, the head of the L'viv Television studio, was not demanding of his personnel while editors or directors often changed programmes or cancelled previously announced broadcastings. Instead of showing motivating or ideologically important programmes, the studio often presented old movies or made obvious ideological mistakes. He mentioned that an entertainment programme, which

⁷⁴² Liubov Kozak, "Oksana Palamarchuk," Video recording of television broadcast, *Skarby lvivskoho teletipysu* (Lviv, Ukraine: Lviv State Regional Television (LDTRK), April 2007), 15th minute of the programme, Lviv Television's institutional archive, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wLOWDxl1VY>.

⁷⁴³ The title goes as *Ukraino Nasha Radianska* [Our Soviet Ukraine], which can be shortened as UNR, that stands for the first Ukrainian Peoples Republic, proclaimed after Ukrainian revolution of 1917-20. Such decoding of a book title was never used as official accusation against Shelest, however frequently cited in various Ukrainian historical texts.

⁷⁴⁴ "DALO (1962), Fond P-3, Opys 8, Sprava 446," January 9, 1962, Arkush 2.

⁷⁴⁵ He also was afraid that this broadcasting was seen in neighboring socialist Poland.

⁷⁴⁶ Since its establishment in L'viv in 1957, L'viv Television could not transmit circus performances of visiting collectives, because its director feared that such broadcasting may lessen the revenues of the circus.

was shown on 1 January 1962, featured the good music of Kos-Anatolskyi performed by classical musicians, but it was combined with the jazz of Ihor Khoma's orchestra (see Chapter 4.3.).⁷⁴⁷ According to the party ideologist, most of the works performed by the jazz orchestra had a decadent and melancholic mood, reflecting the temper of "salon and restaurant music." The manner in which certain performers played music reminded the ardent Ukrainian party functionary of the worst cases of western jazz performances. Khoma's jazz orchestra was frequently criticised by party representatives and in the local press. However, L'viv Television ignored multiple warnings and criticism since jazz music was a successful broadcasting genre.⁷⁴⁸

This case shows that there was a certain autonomy at L'viv Television. Even though party officials disliked certain forms of popular culture, television producers could still support new forms of music. Malanchuk was angry in 1962 and stated that the head of L'viv Television had fallen into the trap of actively supporting music works and performances which were alien to Soviet light entertainment, and which might have a negative impact on the rising new young generation. In 1968, six years after this incident, Khoma's orchestra featured again in the media as an important part of *Zalytsialnyky* [Philanders], the highly popular musical film made by L'viv Television. As was indicated (Chapter 3), this musical was officially broadcast union-wide level, which showed that party officials could not resolve the problematic issue of "incorrect" and "foreign to the Soviet mood" light entertainment.

New forms of popular culture in the early 1960s were often shaped around youth clubs. For instance, the Kyiv based Club of Creative Youth [Klub Tvorchoii Molodi] was primarily a place to talk about literature, poetry and to listen to jazz music.⁷⁴⁹ But, already in 1962, this youth club attracted nationally minded intellectuals who raised the issue of national culture, especially the eradication of the Ukrainian language. The official attitude of communists towards the disappearance of national languages in USSR, which was one of the major concerns of Ukrainian intelligentsia, had been expressed by the party's congress in 1961. The party stated that it was not going to prevent transnational merges, which could lead to the creation of common Soviet people:

We come across people who, of course, deplore the gradual obliteration of national distinctions. We reply to them: Communists will not conserve and perpetuate national distinctions. We will support the objective process of the increasingly closer rapprochement of nations and nationalities proceeding under the conditions of communist construction on a voluntary and democratic basis. It is essential that we lay greater stress on the education of the masses in the spirit of proletarian internationalism and Soviet patriotism. Even the

⁷⁴⁷ "DALO (1962), Fond P-3, Opys 8, Sprava 446," January 9, 1962, Arkush 3.

⁷⁴⁸ "DALO (1962), Fond P-3, Opys 8, Sprava 446," Arkush 3.

⁷⁴⁹ Kasianov, *Nezgodni: Ukrainska Inteligentsia v Rusi Oporu 1960-80-h Rokiv*, 44. On early Soviet jazz clubs see: Tshipursky, *Socialist Fun* (2016), 171–73.

slightest vestiges of nationalism should be eradicated with uncompromising, Bolshevik determination.⁷⁵⁰

On the contrary, the communists outlined the task of building a new communist society based on various nations, and nurturing a new Soviet person. The Congress of 1961 formulated the *Moral Code of the Builder of Communism*, a generalized idea of the qualities of the new man, the formation of which was the goal of communist education.⁷⁵¹ Officials believed that the culture of universal communism embodied all the diversity and richness of the spiritual life of society, the “the high ideology and humanism of the new world.”⁷⁵² This had to be the culture of a classless society, the culture of the common people: a universal culture. Media, namely press, radio, cinema, and television had to play a crucial role in the process of making these classless Soviet people, who were supposed to have a national past and an optimistic, transnational future.⁷⁵³ As the programme states:

Cultural advancement and ideological work in our country contribute to the rapprochement of the nations and nationalities. The mutual exchange of spiritual wealth between them is increasing. The achievements of the culture of some nations become the property of others. This leads to the mutual enrichment of the cultures of the peoples of the USSR, to the strengthening of their international basis, to the formation of a future single human culture of a communist society.⁷⁵⁴

The peak of antagonism between officials and cultural revivalists, who often belonged to state-run organisations, came in 1965. In August, the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party received an anonymous letter that complained about rising nationalism among the intelligentsia. Such letters often acted as triggers to launch official campaigns already prepared by the secret police and party apparatchiks. Between August and September of 1965, executives arrested multiple suspects in various Ukrainian cities, who were then interrogated. This caused fear and anxiety among “conscious” or nationally minded intellectuals, who remained outside the prison walls.⁷⁵⁵

Since the Soviet Ukrainian public space did not give opponents to the regime the space to express these anxieties, some activists decided to appeal to a wider community, for instance, to a film audience. In early September 1965, there was the premiere for the film *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* (issued in 1964)⁷⁵⁶, directed by Sergei Parajanov. The

⁷⁵⁰ XXII Siezd Komunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskoho Soiuz (Stenograficheskii Otchet) 17-31 October 1961, vol. 1 (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoie izdatelstvo politicheskoi literatury, 1962), 218; *The Road to Communism*, 260.

⁷⁵¹ Nikita S. Khrushchev, “Programma KPSS,” in *Materialy XXII Siezda KPSS*, vol. 2 (V.P.4) (Moscow: Politizdat, 1962), 408.

⁷⁵² Khrushchev, 419.

⁷⁵³ *Programmy i Ustavy KPSS* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1969), 195; Khrushchev, “Programma KPSS (1962)””; XXII Siezd Komunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskoho Soiuz (Stenograficheskii Otchet) 17-31 October 1961, 1:215–16.

⁷⁵⁴ XXII Siezd Komunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskoho Soiuz (Stenograficheskii Otchet) 17-31 October 1961, 1:216.

⁷⁵⁵ Kasianov, *Nezgodni: Ukrainska Inteligentsia v Rusi Oporu 1960-80-h Rokiv*, 50–52.

⁷⁵⁶ This date of film issue was connected to the anniversary of known Ukrainian writer Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi, who wrote *Tini Zabutykh Predkiv* [Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors], a story about Hutsuls, Carpathians highlanders after being invited to the village of Zhabie (current Verkhovyna) by Galician ethnographer Volodymyr Hnatiuk.

Ukrainian public was amazed by the evocative power of the film, its “experimental ethnographism”,⁷⁵⁷ and music,⁷⁵⁸ and the premiere attracted a large audience in one of the biggest newly built cinemas in Kyiv. Some opponents consequently decided that such an event was a good opportunity to publicly condemn the recent arrests.⁷⁵⁹ The Carpathian imaginary, as promoted by Dovzhenko Film Studios, Ukrkinokhronika, Ukrtelegramfilm and west Ukrainian television, attracted not only young and romantic Soviet citizens, but politically minded nationalists and opponents of the Soviet system.

Musicals produced by L’viv Television between 1968-1971 dealt with popular Ukrainian music and sensitive highland ethnography connected to the mountains. However, the attraction of Carpathian folklore was suddenly seen by Ukrainian communists as dangerous since it had the power to foster nationalist sentiments. Like the movie *Ob Etom Zabyvat’ Nel’zia* (1954), which found nationalism in excessive love for the motherland, the national distinctiveness soon became the typical sources of guilt. So, to “block” this growing nationalism, the KGB and party members prepared a special campaign that targeted anti-Soviet elements and supposed nationalists in Soviet Ukraine (see Chapter 4.1.).⁷⁶⁰

Volodymyr Shcherbytskyi and newly arrived at Kyiv’s Central Committee ideological administrator Valentyn Malanchuk (who criticized L’viv Television in the early 1960s) – the former colleagues of Petro Shelest, then the first secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party – initiated wide scale purges and ideological purifications within various state institutions. More than one hundred unreliable intellectuals and members of various cultural organisations were arrested and imprisoned, usually accused of anti-Soviet propaganda.⁷⁶¹ For instance, in 1972, the year that the Soviets celebrated the 50th anniversary of the USSR and the making of new Soviet people, some nationally minded intelligentsia in Ukraine celebrated Christmas as a non-Soviet ritual. Participants of the Christmas party in L’viv were arrested on 12 January 1972, a week after the antinationalist campaign was launched. After a highly mediatized trial, the Belgian citizen Dovbush returned home, however, local intellectuals went to prison.

In **Figure 4.6.** one can see the participants of this non-Soviet celebration. Four of those featured in this photograph received prison sentences in 1972, one committed suicide, and others were placed under strict control.

Figure 4.6. Christmas party in 1972 at Sadovskii’s apartment in L’viv.

⁷⁵⁷ First, *Ukrainian Cinema* (2014); Gurga, “Echoes of the Past: Ukrainian Poetic Cinema (2012).”

⁷⁵⁸ The music score was written by Myroslav Skoryk, the young composer who already moved from L’viv to Kyiv. In the 1960s he founded the *Cheerful Violins* music band and authored multiple popular melodies in Soviet Ukraine.

⁷⁵⁹ The protesters later became known Ukrainian dissidents: Ivan Dziuba, Vasyl Stus and Viecheslav Chornovil. All of them were later sentenced to Soviet prisons, accused for nationalism and anti-Sovietism.

⁷⁶⁰ On Soviet anti-nationalism in general see: Bohdan Nahaylo and Victor Swoboda, *Soviet Disunion: A History of the Nationalities Problem in the USSR* (Simon and Schuster, 1990).

⁷⁶¹ Kasianov, *Nezgodni: Ukrainska Inteligentsia v Rusi Oporu 1960-80-h Rokiv*, 134.



Nationally minded dissidents were sentenced to time in Soviet prisons normally based on Article 62 of the Criminal Code of Soviet Ukraine (similar to Art. 70 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR, enacted 01/01/1961), which prosecuted for “anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda” (Part 1 of the Article 62 sentenced to camps, Part 2 to camps of special regime, in both cases prisoners were treated as recidivist).

The poet Vasyl Stus (1938-1985) received 5 years in camps and 3 years of exile. He died in prison in the 1980s; Iryna Kalynets (1940-2012) was sentenced to 6 years in camps and 3 years of exile; Mykhailo Horyn (1930-2013) spent 14 years in camps, being released during Perestroika; Stefania Shabaturo (1938-29014) spent 5 years in camps and received 3 years of exile; Marian Hatala (1942-1972) committed suicide. All those sentenced to Soviet prisons were rehabilitated on 17 April 1991.

Officials launched an extensive “political work” (propaganda), reviewed all ideological institutions (organisations of culture) and educational bodies in western Ukraine. All persons who had questionable backgrounds were dismissed from these institutions, as did all practicing Christians.⁷⁶² The local media were mobilized in the anti-nationalist campaign: twice a month the regional audience were presented with programmes about “evil” nationalists; multiple books with titles like *Nationalist Zeroes* were published; and newspapers extensively reported the progress made in conquering nationalism and Zionism. Party professionals were endlessly giving lectures with titles like *Aesthetics, Arts and Contemporary Ideological Work* or the *Fight Between Two Ideologies on Contemporary Stage* and all members of Soviet institutions had to participate in such ideological trainings.⁷⁶³ However, high-ranking officials were still dissatisfied since not all members of western Ukrainian society were covered by “political training.” According to officials, the local intelligentsia and cultural workers, as in the 1950s, were unwilling to articulate a clear political message in their cultural productions, often giving “incorrect historical analogies and doubtful metaphors” [sumnivnyi pidtext].⁷⁶⁴

The year following Shelest’s removal from Kyiv, Malanchuk told his party colleagues that Ukrainian communists should protect folk cultures but were not interested in cultivating national distinctiveness. Ideological work, claimed party official, should be more focused in

⁷⁶² Vasyl Kutsevol, “Report (political work in the west)” (General Sector of Central Committee of UCP, July 27, 1972), Arkush 9, TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 652, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

⁷⁶³ Kutsevol, Arkush 11.

⁷⁶⁴ Kutsevol, Arkush 12.

forging the “humanistic character of Soviet people”.⁷⁶⁵ In the context of the continued anti-nationalist campaign, no matter the conflict, if it involved Russian/Ukrainian issues it would have serious consequences, normally worse for those on the Ukrainian side. For instance, it was apparent in the conflict in the L’viv region between Spodaryk S. (a Ukrainian speaking local and member of Komsomol) and Horak P. (a Russian speaking local sailor), who quarrelled over language. While drunk, the former hit the latter, who fell to the ground injuring his leg. Spodaryk received eight years in prison for this act of hooliganism, which was much higher than the usual penalty under the Soviet juridical system.⁷⁶⁶

An important element in proving Spodaryk’s guilt was his supposed nationalism. Horak sent a letter to Komsomolskaia Pravda, which was published and actively discussed during the trial. He asked in this letter: “From where do we have the corrosion of nationalism in our people”? He concluded, “I have no anger against Spodaryk, and I do not wish for revenge, but I have fury against the evil that he carries in himself.”⁷⁶⁷ Obviously, Soviet law was very attentive to cases of national conflicts, while local people often considered this as a sign of restrictive law, practiced by a dominant group. Thus, instead of fostering friendship between different nations, party policies in the 1970s often encouraged national resentment. In addition, any complaints by Russian speaking people in Soviet Ukraine about their rights being infringed by Ukrainian speaking citizens would be taken extremely seriously.⁷⁶⁸

In May 1973, a group of L’viv dwellers, military personnel (apparently Russian speakers, with various ethnic backgrounds) wrote a collective letter of complaint to their upper supervisor Andrei Hrechko, the marshal of the Soviet Army and renowned figure in the USSR.⁷⁶⁹ He, as usually occurred in such cases, redirected the letter to Sergei Lapin, the head of Gosteleradio and a close friend of Leonid Brezhnev.⁷⁷⁰ Both Hrechko and Lapin were members of Politburo and were at the top of the Soviet power hierarchy. L’vivians admitted

⁷⁶⁵ See more detailed account on purges and arrests in Soviet Ukraine in 1972-1973, Kasianov, *Nezgodni: Ukrainska Inteligentsia v Rusi Oporu 1960-80-h Rokiv*, 134–38.

⁷⁶⁶ “Reports (Zhydachiv)” (General Sector of Central Committee of UCP, September 10, 1973), Arkush 39-42, TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 877, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

⁷⁶⁷ “TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 877,” Arkush 42.

⁷⁶⁸ Party cells often reported on Ukrainian intelligentsia, who often required from the service people in hotels or other public institutions in Ukraine to talk to them in national language. Officials considered such requests as signs of nationalism and took actions against it. See: “TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 877.”

⁷⁶⁹ Hrechko was a minister of defense of USSR, a member of Central Committee of the Communist Party of USSR (1961-1976), and a major person responsible for military invasion to Czechoslovakia in 1968 (he received a medal for this operation). In 1973, when the letter was compiled he was admitted as a member of Politburo, after marshal Zhukov he was a first military representative in the highest institution that governed Soviet Union.

⁷⁷⁰ In 1973 Gosteleradio committee officially had a title *The State Committee for Radio and Television of the USSR Council of Ministers* and only in 1978 the title was changed into *Gosteleradio SSSR*. Sergei Lapin replaced Nikolai Mesiatsev as the head of the Committee in 1970. With his arrival to Soviet television many Thaw’s media practitioners associated Brezhnev’s zastoi and fostering of ideological control. In 1972, under Lapin KVN entertaining programme ceased to exist in Soviet television and ideological censoring became a normal practice. Estrada and entertaining programmes that were booming in the time when Lapin arrived in TV were placed under scrupulous censoring but at the same time various new Soviet music contests became extremely popular since 1972.

in the letter that they enjoyed various Soviet television contest shows like *Anuka Devushki* [Come On girls], or *Priglasaiem Na Ulybku* [You are Invited to a Smile], broadcast on the First Channel of Central Television, but complained about the programming of L'viv regional television.⁷⁷¹ Criticism of the socialist media was common, but this time the case was taken seriously.

The men had written that some regional programmes, especially directed towards Soviet soldiers (like the music programme *Soldatskii Konvert* [Soldier's Envelopes]) had a "nationalist odour."⁷⁷² In short, too many Ukrainian songs were played by L'viv regional television to celebrate Soviet military personnel, who were considered to be beyond any nation, which constituted the Soviet people. They also did not like the way editors often emphasized the nationality of different soldiers who were writing letters to L'viv Television. They assumed that editors selected songs uncritically and added too many "western freaks" [zapadnyie vykrutasy] to the programme. According to the letter the current television programming seemed to have: "More and more sadness, wanted by nobody affectation, some hints, and allusions, or just lachrymose yammering on the subject 'you love me, and I do conversely'."⁷⁷³ L'viv regional programming irritated conservative military personnel with its romanticism and explicit emotional appeal. Besides this, there was a more serious accusation in the letter, as its authors claimed that L'viv Television was nationalist:

Television performances have plenty of suggestions to fight for freedom and truth but it is not clear for whose freedom and truth [...] In the last performance broadcasted from Ivano Frankivsk [the city in western Ukraine] actors for two hours tempted viewers to fight and kill, but most probably this time for independent [samostiinu] Ukraine.⁷⁷⁴

According to the soldiers who signed the letter, "proper" television viewers apparently required songs that would call for "positive advancement and would awaken a yearning to make important deeds."⁷⁷⁵ The writers stated that they were not against cultural "sadness" and did not require just positive content. It appears that they wanted aesthetics, similar to the Soviet Stalinist myth (meta-narrative): "We look forward to the lyrics and thinking but about our current and beautiful Soviet life without hints and confusions, without hiding in

⁷⁷¹ "Reports" (The General Sector of Central Committee of UCP, June 20, 1973), Fond 1, Opys 24, Sprava 868, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

⁷⁷² "TsDAHO (1973), Fond 1, Opys 24, Sprava 868," Arkush 27. L'viv was a major place for Soviet Army on the western margins of UkrSSR. In May 1944, USSR organized on the newly 'liberated' territories of western Ukraine, *L'viv Military Okrug* [Command] with the head office in L'viv. In May 1946, this military structure was reorganised into *Prykarpatskyi Voiennyi Okrug* [Pre-Carpathian Military Department]. Thus, L'viv was considered as Soviet military stronghold and not the 'secret national capital of Ukraine' as some nationally minded intellectuals believed. See: *Nash Lviv. Iuvileinyi Zbirnyk, 1252-1952* (New York: Chervona Kalyna, 1953).

⁷⁷³ "TsDAHO (1973), Fond 1, Opys 24, Sprava 868," Arkush 28.

⁷⁷⁴ Writing 'samostiinaia' [independent] authors of the letter referred to Ukrainian nationalists' slogans who would envisage 'samostiina Ukraina', namely independent Ukraine. Using Ukrainian wording in Russian language letter identified that authors knew nationalist discourse or that they were involved in Soviet anti-nationalist activities, see: "TsDAHO (1973), Fond 1, Opys 24, Sprava 868," Arkush 28.

⁷⁷⁵ 'Malo pesen shtoby zvali na stroiku, na zavod, veli na podvig,' see: "TsDAHO (1973), Fond 1, Opys 24, Sprava 868," Arkush 27-28.

personal shells.”⁷⁷⁶ They wanted the editors to realise that socialist life was not the way editors it was portrayed on TV. They worried that it was not evident that viewers were, first and foremost, Soviet people.⁷⁷⁷ The letter, signed by Andrii Volkov, Bohdan Sokolyshyn, Ivan Balibei and others,⁷⁷⁸ was reminiscent of the anti-nationalist ideological repertoire of the party – they almost repeated the same wording present in ideological documents, though seemed to “sound more human”.

At the end of the letter the authors confessed that the programmes of L’viv Television, usually given romantic titles like *National Treasures* [Narodni Skarby] or *Pure Springs* [Chysti Dzherela], had successfully showed viewers all the possible “national assets”. After seeing historical riches, Soviet media consumers would like to learn more about contemporary architecture or other current matters of cultural life. Viewers questioned the need to endless show the Cossacks, who were either going to Sich⁷⁷⁹ or returning from it, in the musical programme *Song and Labour* [Pisnia ta Pratsia]. Instead, they claimed, editors could show real Soviet labour in the programme. They urged Soviet television managers to sow the “correct seeds” so that the accurate cultivating of Soviet people by media would not require repairing in the future all the pitfalls of the “blue screen” (the metaphor for a TV set).

Indeed, L’viv Television during the 1960s was preoccupied with regional culture and especially with Carpathian folklore, fulfilling general demands from upper officials to show the people [narod], its provincial culture, and local colour. During Petro Shelest’s rule in Soviet Ukraine (1963-1972), ethnographic and Cossack genres were the safest to depict, and were frequently used. Carpathian fairy-musicals in Ukrainian language gaining enormous success locally and on the all-union level became an embodiment of such policies. In 1971, L’viv Television was acknowledged as among the best in Soviet Ukraine for producing good quality regional content in the national language.⁷⁸⁰ This was done in the period when the Ukrainian branch of the Union of Soviet Writers comprised 126 members regularly writing in the Russian language despite only 92 members of the whole Ukrainian union being ethnically Russian.⁷⁸¹ The Russian language in this period was already the major language of the republic, thus L’viv Television could look like a “cultural fortress” that aimed to protect national language through high art, light music, and entertainment.

⁷⁷⁶ “TsDAHO (1973), Fond 1, Opys 24, Sprava 868,” Arkush 28.

⁷⁷⁷ “TsDAHO (1973), Fond 1, Opys 24, Sprava 868,” Arkush 28.

⁷⁷⁸ These names reflect multinational character of Soviet military personnel.

⁷⁷⁹ The *Zaporozhian Sich* was a semi-autonomous Cossacks' polity in the 16th-18th centuries, centered in the region around today's Kakhovka Water Reservoir spanning across the lower Dnipro river. The folk popular songs would usually depict a Cossack going to Sich (to become a fighter) or returning from Sich to his beloved. Petro Shelest was criticized for his overtly positive attitude to Ukrainian Cossacks and for his support to study and commemorate history about them.

⁷⁸⁰ “Socialist Competition” (Financial sector, Ukrainian Communist Party, November 1971), Arkush 1, Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 5966, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

⁷⁸¹ Ilnytskyi, “TsDAHO (1972), Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 666,” Arkush 21.

Sergei Lapin, who received the complaint from his colleague at Politburo, signed it and sent back to the First Secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party, Shcherbytskyi, in Ukraine. Since the document had all the highest resolutions and substantial accusations, regional officials had to react. Doubtfully that the complaining letter from Lviv military appeared in 1973 by the mere accident, especially if one knows that the major antinationalist strategies took place at the same time. In Soviet Ukraine many intellectuals were accused of the same sins, stressed in the letter: too much passion for the past and for the national culture and too little devotion to transnational socialism. At the end of June 1973, comrade V. Kutsevol from L'viv Obkom reported back to Kyiv that his companions are working on the "nationalism issue" and soon they will report the results.⁷⁸² Indeed, the results arrived at the end of September 1973, and the head of L'viv Television and Radio Committee, Ivan Petriv, was dismissed from his position. Officials reported that they were replacing other television personnel and fired those who were found guilty.⁷⁸³

The commission investigating the case found various instances that prompted it to react in a more radical way, accusing almost everybody from the L'viv Television's Music Programming Desk of nationalism. At the end of August 1973, the ideological instructor from L'viv Obkom wrote a report to comrade Malanchuk, the person responsible for initiating the anti-nationalist campaign in Ukraine.⁷⁸⁴ Officials undertook the so-called *frontalnaia proverka* [total investigation]: they interviewed 38 individuals (among them 24 communists), conducted a police investigation, and of course found many guilty personnel at L'viv Television.⁷⁸⁵ L'viv Television studio was already criticized by communist officials in August 1972, for the excessive admiration [zaliubuvannia] of heritage and national culture but its personnel did not make proper conclusions. The radio repeatedly aired the song *Vatrovyi Dym* by the local artist Manuliak, who was fired from the L'viv Philharmonic for his cooperation with Ihor Kalynets, a poet sentenced to prison in 1972 for anti-Soviet attitudes and nationalism.

An investigation commission sent from Kyiv checked all the possible minor instances of misbehaviour or nationalism in the studio. They were ready to decipher "hidden language," supposedly employed by ideological enemies, which sometimes led to absurd conclusions. For instance, studio personnel were found guilty for putting a willow tree, which usually was used by local Christians, in front of the camera during Easter. In the Christian tradition in western Ukraine *verbna nedilia* [willow tree Sunday] stands for the Sunday that precedes Easter, so most probably an editor intentionally put the green willow to mark the day. This

⁷⁸² "TsDAHO (1973), Fond 1, Opys 24, Sprava 868," Arkush 30-31.

⁷⁸³ "TsDAHO (1973), Fond 1, Opys 24, Sprava 868," Arkush 31.

⁷⁸⁴ V. Serhiychuk, "Vzlet i Padeniie Valentina Malanchuka," *Nezavisimost'*, November 18, 1994.

⁷⁸⁵ Often communist investigators found so-called anti-Russian statements of television staffers or their pro-American (pro-European) attitudes. For instance, editor V. Hlynchak once quarreled in the hospital because doctor did not want to talk to him in Ukrainian, or I. Petriv had positive opinion about American television after visiting USA in 1970, see: "Reports (Makoviichuk)" (The General Sector of Central Committee of UCP, August 28, 1973), Arkush 37, Fond 1, Opys 24, Sprava 868, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

case of incorrect “media symbolism” was discussed during party meetings and producers received strong criticism for merging religious symbolism with socialist culture. However, in 1973, new investigators from Kyiv found out that this incident happened in the year when Ukrainian nationalists abroad celebrated the birth of Verbytskii, the author of pre-Soviet, or in Soviet parlance, the “nationalist” Ukrainian anthem. The willow tree, which in the Ukrainian language is pronounced as “verba,” is inscribed in the last name of Verbytskii, and officials saw this as nationalist symbolism. True or not, this case was reported to the Ukrainian Communist Party headquarters as a “nationalist incident” on L’viv Television.

The commission found that at least four of the “frontally examined” [frontalnaia proverka] personnel of L’viv Television had some connections to Ukrainian guerrilla fighters (OUN or UPA), which was not a surprise for the region of former Galicia. Olexandr Herynovych (1913-1997) was one of the best L’viv Television editors,⁷⁸⁶ working there from the very beginning, but the commission found out that he had been sentenced in 1949 to 25 years in the camps and had been released in 1955 under de-Stalinisation. Another television professional, O. Hospodarskyi, had connections to the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and Roman Oleksiv, the director of music films at L’viv Television, was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment in 1950 but was released after Stalin’s death.⁷⁸⁷ Most probably, KGB officials already knew about the controversial backgrounds of L’viv Television’s personnel, but in the context of the new advance against the nationalists, such biographies became important. Moreover, the commission discovered that even Ivan Petriv, the head of L’viv Television and Radio Committee and a communist and editor of party newspapers in the 1950s, had also indirectly participated in the Ukrainian nationalist underground, and his family was involved in guerrilla fights against the Nazis and Soviets.

Such discoveries were the legitimation for purges of television personnel. The party commission concluded that the Music Programming Desk was infected with “patriarchic attitudes” [patriarkhalshchina], focused too much attention on national subjects [kolorit], and did not really understand the “class struggle” ideology. Some media professionals, like the writers Volodymyr Yavorivskyi and Mykola Petrenko,⁷⁸⁸ and the poet Roman Kudlyk, left L’viv Television in the summer of 1973. Others, like Roman Oleksiv, managed to escape the purges by relocating career to Kyiv (he arranged the move to Ukrtefilm already in 1972) or retired like Olexandr Herynovych. Ivan Petriv was dismissed from his position as the head of the regional media committee, however, he soon found another administrative job. The screenwriter and the co-author of L’viv Carpathian musicals, Myroslav Skochylias, was accused of being a nationalist and was moved to the Agricultural Programming Desk.

⁷⁸⁶ He worked at L’viv Opera House as a chief literary editor till Soviet repressions in 1949, and after returning home from exile in 1956 after Khrushchev liberalization, he worked at the *House of Teachers*. In 1957, he was invited by Yakushchenko, the head of L’viv Television who was desperately hiring good workforce for the new media. Herynovych worked for L’viv Television till the early 1970s.

⁷⁸⁷ “TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 24, Sprava 868,” 37–38.

⁷⁸⁸ Petrenko left television earlier having felt that the time of liberal period in media was over, see: Petrenko, *Concentration camp, television and queues to buy books* (2018).

The most problematic case for officials was Oksana Palamarchuk, one of the active communists in the studio, and an innovative professional in television music programming. After talks with colleagues and reviewing her music programming, the commission considered her to be a nationalistically minded person [natsionalistychno nastroiена] and recommended that the L'viv media committee fire her from her job. Most probably, her history played a role in this decision. Officials discovered that Palamarchuk's mother (with two daughters, Halyna and Oksana) was repressed and sent to exile by Soviet powers in 1940, a year after Soviet troops "liberated" the city from the bourgeoisie oppressors and initiated purges among nationally minded Polish, Jewish and Ukrainian intelligentsia.⁷⁸⁹ The family was sent to North Kazakhstan, from which they returned to L'viv in 1946 and ten years later, in 1957, Oksana found a job at the Soviet regional television.⁷⁹⁰

A biography tarnished by imprisonment or deportation was potentially dangerous, as was too great a love of folklore and the national culture: an ideological worker was supposed to keep a neutral attitude and to have Marxist ethics. Palamarchuk's work at L'viv Television represented the typical Marxist attitude, and she strove to develop national (in form) and socialist (in content) popular and high culture. Some television professionals claimed that she was purged not only because of her history but also due to the personal attack of some bitter colleagues whom she had previously criticized during party meetings.⁷⁹¹ She refused to admit to the accusations of nationalism and did not want to leave the studio voluntarily, so she was consequently fired without good legal reason. She sued the L'viv Television office in the Soviet court and even though she did not win the case, she was later employed by the L'viv Opera House, thus remaining in L'viv's cultural life.⁷⁹² Palamarchuk was a big fan of television but fell victim to dishonest accusations.

People like Herynovych or Palamarchuk had shaped the face of L'viv Television music programming in the late 1950s and 1960s, including music entertainment in the national

⁷⁸⁹ Soviet powers employed in L'viv dual technic of socialist state craft, promotion of local people and at the same time prosecution. By May 1940, Soviet forces promoted local cadres and '*there were nearly twenty-nine thousand persons promoted from among the conquered population, including seven thousand in L'viv oblast, the greatest concentration in Western Ukraine,*' see: Amar, *The Paradox of Ukrainian L'viv*, 48. At the same time '*the L'viv oblast office of the secret police alone would report having processed 20,540 arrestees since the beginning of 1940, with special task forces from Moscow and Kyiv sent in to help,*' see: Amar, 52. Among three national groups of L'viv, Jews and Poles were deported the most and Ukrainians the least, see: Amar, 55. Palamarchuk's family was among those prosecuted by liberators.

⁷⁹⁰ Roksolana Pasichnyk, "'Svit moiikh zatsikavlen...'. Vystavka-prezentatsiia arkhivu Oksany Palamarchuk (1931-2006)," The Solomiya Krushelnytska Musical Memorial Museum in Lviv, www.salomeamuseum.lviv.ua (blog), February 8, 2016, <http://www.salomeamuseum.lviv.ua/news/228.htm>.

⁷⁹¹ Liubov Kozak from L'viv TV recollected that Palamarchuk did not agree to let one editor to enter Communist Party because he has written in the application letter that he wanted to be part of communist community since his wife was Russian. This colleague apparently was among the few who would blame Palamarchuk being a nationalistically minded person. This person wrote recently recollections, where employed nasty tone about the editor, see: Havrylyshyn, *Idu Do Vas*.

⁷⁹² Later Palamarchuk made a research on the history of L'viv Opera and wrote a book about Ukrainian music programming during Nazi's occupation of the city, see: Pasichnyk, "'Svit moiikh zatsikavlen (2016)"; Oksana Palamarchuk, *A Muzy He Movchaly: 1941-1944* (Lviv, 1996).

language. Skochyliias, together with Oleksiv, created the most popular music films produced by the L'viv Television studio in 1968, 1969 and 1971. These people were the major targets of the anti-nationalist purges in the early 1970s, since their programmes and scripts paid too much attention to national or local culture. Purges, initiated by communists and the KGB, had an important impact on television entertainment programming and even though Skochyliias later returned to the Music Programming Desk, the production of cheerful neo-ethnographic musicals dropped drastically and recovered only after the dismissal of the ideology secretary Malanchuk from the party office in the late 1970s.

Since 1973, the programming of L'viv Television had become excessively ideological. The programmes about historic songs were considered unsafe to popularize and to broadcast. When editor Maria Antkiv made a television programme on old Cossack songs, officials launched an investigation and the studio was fiercely criticized for such ideological mistakes. In 1974, when Kyiv television exposed Telniuk, already a dissident intellectual, the studio faced trouble.⁷⁹³ Poets and problematic composers were scratched from the vinyl recordings, and guilty co-authors replaced in the film titles. People in Kyiv who publicly spoke the Ukrainian language could easily be considered nationalists, thus many turned to Russian as a major language.⁷⁹⁴ Most of the national institutions, like the Ukrainian Union of Composers, had documentation in the Russian language and the majority of its members preferred to speak Russian. Russification in Soviet Ukraine intensified and caused even further resentment on the side of the nationally minded intelligentsia.⁷⁹⁵

For instance, when the famous composer Stanislav Liudkevych from L'viv visited the Congress of Ukrainian composers in Kyiv, only the head of this institution spoke in the Ukrainian language. Liudkevych recalled that he could not understand why the “easterners” (he meant Ukrainians from eastern Ukraine) liberated western Ukrainians from the national oppression of Poles since the former did not value their native language. “There were only four million of us,” Liudkevych was reported to have said, “but we could have had our real Ukraine.”⁷⁹⁶ In the letter to his Kyiv publisher, on 27 May 1974, Liudkevych asked him not to write anything about anti-nationalism, which was the common feature of the time. “Please do not make me an anti-nationalist fighter,” – asked Liudkevych, – “I did encounter Ukrainian nationalism, but I saw it more amid others, especially among Poles, Germans, and Russians. I cannot say that I regret Ukrainian nationalists more than others, who occupied our people. Even Lenin admitted, that we should differentiate nationalism of dominant and subordinated nations”.⁷⁹⁷ Liudkevych was an exemplary Soviet west Ukrainian intellectual, commended by

⁷⁹³ Kasianov, *Nezgodni: Ukrainska Inteligentsia v Rusi Oporu 1960-80-h Rokiv*, 145.

⁷⁹⁴ See recollections of film director Oleh Chorny, who even though being local in Kyiv felt himself uncomfortable speaking native language on the streets of the city, Chorny, *Soviet llife in Kyiv*.

⁷⁹⁵ Dmitry Gorenburg, “Soviet Nationalities Policy and Assimilation,” in *Rebounding Identities: The Politics of Identity in Russia and Ukraine* (Washington, D.C.: Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 273–304.

⁷⁹⁶ *Spohady pro Stanislava Liudkevycha* (L'viv: Terus, 2010), 71.

⁷⁹⁷ *Spohady pro Stanislava Liudkevycha*, 78.

the *Order of Lenin* for his art, but who still felt resentment and disappointment with what he and others considered to be anti-Ukrainian or colonial politics.

Fear and anxiety blocked creativity and even though communist officials in the mid-1970s called again for innovations, inviting editors to promote creativity, the L'viv studio editors tried to avoid "unnecessary" topics. L'viv Television, like many other regional studios, faced stagnation in the 1970s, especially since the Soviet powers conducted a successful consolidation of media around Soviet Central Television. The concentration period that lasted for Soviet media (central and regional) from 1957, in Soviet Ukraine, ended in the early 1970s and from now on we may consider the period of consolidation, on federal as well as national levels (see Chapter 2).

Ukrainian popular music programming on regional television in western Ukraine was revived only in the late 1970s and early 1980s, especially after the Brezhnev's death in 1981. However, it lost its originality and freshness that was characteristic of the early 1970s. Already in 1972, Rostyslav Bratun, a communist poet who was mainly writing in the Ukrainian language, complained about a decrease of national content in literature, film, and Estrada.⁷⁹⁸ He claimed this in 1972 – the year of the highest popularity of the ensemble Smerichka, who performed in the Ukrainian language, and when the last Carpathian poetic film of Dovzhenko Film Studios, *The White Bird with the Black Mark*, was released. The following years proved that he was correct. During the second half of the 1970s, young writers and poets were not admitted to the Ukrainian Union of Writers, and many publications halted. Even though officials did not arrest and prosecute large numbers of people in Soviet Ukraine (the total count was a little more than one hundred dissidents), thousands were fired, replaced or intimidated. In the 1970s Soviet Ukraine was stuck in cultural stagnation.

Conclusion

1. After Khrushchev's de-Stalinisation, artists from western Ukraine believed that national and native forms based on the socialist way of life would constitute the core of Soviet Ukrainian culture. However, it was only the first step. For Soviet ideologists, Soviet culture had to develop further to become international, but in a specific way. It had to be a Soviet international culture. Leonid Brezhnev confirmed in 1972 that the Soviet people shared a Soviet socialist culture, which inherited traditions of all nationalities that inhabited the USSR, and this culture was socialist in content, national in form and *international in its spirit and character*.
2. Experiments or innovations in national culture often were claimed as nationalist and alien to the "real" national culture. In the context of the ideological war on nationalism, initiated by the Ukrainian Communist Party in the early 1970s, the main debated issues in popular music constituted the Ukrainian language, ideological discourse on proletariat internationalism, the symbolism embedded in words, and the personal conduct of artists.

⁷⁹⁸ Ilnytskyi, "TsDAHO (1972), Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 666," Arkush 15.

Cultural production in the Ukrainian language was reserved mainly for folklore collectives or neo-folk VIAs (vocal and instrumental ensembles), and other forms of contemporary culture were mainly produced in the Russian language.

3. The anti-nationalist campaign in Soviet Ukraine in the late 1960s and early 1970s did reach its goal. It helped to foster the *friendship of people* through Russification and moderately removed nationally minded intelligentsia from cultural institutions. The Russian language became the lingua-franca of Soviet Ukraine, pushing Ukrainian to the margins of cultural life. This situation did not necessarily mean de-nationalisation, and scholars acknowledge that even though the Russian language dominated public life in Soviet Ukraine during the late Soviet period, ethnic attachment and national feelings were rather stable.⁷⁹⁹
4. L'viv Television's entertainment programming, which effectively combined the regional landscape with new popular music, halted in the early 1970s after the "frontal examination" [total check, revision], initiated by the KGB and the Ukrainian Communist Party. Some projects, like the musical *Chervona Ruta*, that were initiated by L'viv Television, were relocated to Kyiv and other initiatives were blocked. The group of creative editors, who founded the regional television's entertainment formats, were dismissed. From then, L'viv regional TV had to focus more on anti-religious programming and anti-nationalist propaganda. Interestingly, when, in the early 1980s, one Soviet journalist discussed the possibility of reforming the Ukrainian television network, he proposed that each big regional studio have some specialisation. For instance, Dnipropetrovsk would produce programmes about technological advancements; Odesa about cultural life; and L'viv about the Soviet struggle with nationalism.⁸⁰⁰ Indeed, in the 1970s, L'viv editorials created endless programmes about the Soviet fight against nationalism.
5. By limiting the national language to only some forms of culture and attacking those who took the national ethos seriously, officials generated cultural resentment. Instead of fostering a "real" friendship of people, the anti-nationalist campaign produced strong anti-imperial antipathy among intellectuals and those Ukrainians who used their native language on an everyday basis. For these people, ideological purges in the early 1970s were reminiscent of anti-Ukrainian legislations and cultural pressures in the Russian Empire, widely implemented in the nineteenth century.⁸⁰¹ Communists won tactically, dispersing groups of intellectuals or cultural workers and targeting cultural organisations with increased ideological control, but they lost by imbalancing the difficult relations between Soviet Ukrainian intelligentsia and the party. By prosecuting and intimidating

⁷⁹⁹ This argument supports the following findings, see: Barbara A. Anderson and Brian D. Silver, "Some Factors in the Linguistic and Ethnic Russification of Soviet Nationalities: Is Everyone Becoming Russian?," in *The Nationality Factor in Soviet Politics and Society* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), 123. Statistics on Russification of Ukraine during Soviet rule see: Gorenburg, "Soviet Nationalities Policy and Assimilation."

⁸⁰⁰ Tsyvk, *Ukrainskoie televideniie: opyt, praktikaproblemy*.

⁸⁰¹ Alexei Miller, *The Ukrainian Question: The Russian Empire and Nationalism in the Nineteenth Century* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2003).

opponents the communists took control of multiple groups of dissidents, who were defined as political adversaries to the regime.⁸⁰²

6. The politicisation of Ukrainian culture and media in the context of the anti-nationalist campaign in the late 1960s and early 1970s fostered a clichéd national culture. In the following decades, the official Ukrainian state-sponsored popular culture and regional television programming often reminded kitsch and were often disliked by the young people. The cultural hybrid that featured folklorism and which mixed feelings, ideologies and styles, was reproduced, imitated, and widely spread. However, it was a political reality, or, to paraphrase Jean Baudrillard, behind the “baroque” popular images and sounds of Soviet Ukraine hid a “grey nature” of Soviet national politics.⁸⁰³

⁸⁰² See similar transformation of those, who were part of the system into political opponents in Czechoslovakia: Bren, *The Greengrocer and His TV* (2010), 11–34; Bolton, *Worlds of Dissent*, 19–46.

⁸⁰³ ‘Behind the baroqueness of images hides the éminence grise of politics’, see: Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation* (University of Michigan Press, 1994), 5.

Chapter 5. Socialist media-folklorism, late 1970s-early 1980s

Introduction

The previous chapter considers the various forms of the politicisation of popular media culture. In this period, communist officials took the supposed “national revival” and moods of cultural resentment seriously. Being unable to tame growing national aspirations, which contradicted the party doctrine of the Soviet Ukrainian nation, communists initiated an anti-nationalist campaign. Wide scale arrests were combined with ideological purges in institutions of science and culture,⁸⁰⁴ which intensified from the time of the October Plenum in 1972 when Valentyn Malanchuk replaced Fedir Ovcharenko in the position of the first secretary of ideology (see Chapter 4.1. and 4.6.).

In the first half of the 1970s, Malanchuk was supported at the highest political level and became the main combatant of “incorrect” historical monuments and cultural nationalism.⁸⁰⁵ After 1972, some cultural projects initiated under the previous first secretary Petro Shelest, especially those dedicated to Cossacks and Ukrainian military history, were frozen. For instance, the memorial to the Cossacks in the Zaporizhzhia region was closed, as were many other initiatives connected to the “suspicious” past of Ukraine. Volodymyr Shcherbytskyi, who replaced Petro Shelest in 1972, used the case of the Zaporizhzhia memorial to criticise his party boss for excessive nationalism.⁸⁰⁶ Yet, even after the “active phase” of the anti-nationalist campaign (1965-1975) in Soviet Ukraine was over and the nationally minded intelligentsia was successfully eliminated from public life,⁸⁰⁷ some memorials or cultural projects that originated in the 1960s remained.

Thus, Romanticism, which was rediscovered in the USSR during the late 1950s, generate a feeling of national revival among certain groups of the intelligentsia in the 1960s.⁸⁰⁸ Romantic moods, like folk revival and the return to national roots, family ties⁸⁰⁹ and sex,⁸¹⁰ sincerity and love, were coupled with a growing sense of irony in Soviet culture, as vividly

⁸⁰⁴ See report, specially prepared in June 1972, which indicated how ideological work was conducted in various Ukrainian institutions, Kutsevol, “TsDAHO (1972), Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 652,” Arkush 9.

⁸⁰⁵ See on some general causes of Shcherbytskyi’s national policies in the early 1970s: Yakubets, “V.Shcherbyts’kyi and Ideology: on the question of causes of ‘Malanchukivshchyna,’” 117–19.

⁸⁰⁶ “Shcherbytskyi on Khortytsia” (Ukrainian Communist Party, 1972), Arkush 63, Found 1, Opys 2, Sprava 102, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

⁸⁰⁷ Kasianov indicates that not more than one thousand people were imprisoned in UkrSSR during campaign between 1965 and 1972, the majority of whom were Ukrainians: Kasianov, *Nezgodni: Ukrainska Inteligentsia v Rusi Oporu 1960-80-h Rokiv*, 190–92.

⁸⁰⁸ The trop of revival was common in Soviet Ukraine and among diasporic communities in Northern America, see: Ilnytskyi, “TsDAHO (1972), Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 666,” Arkush 15.

⁸⁰⁹ On Soviet family and paternity feelings see: Aleksandr Prokhorov, “The Myth of the ‘Great Family’ in Marlen Khutsiev’s Lenin’s Guard and Mark Osep’ian’s Three Days of Viktor Chernyshev,” in *Cinepaternity: Fathers and Sons in Soviet and Post-Soviet Film*, ed. Helena Goscilo and Yana Hashamova (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 331.

⁸¹⁰ Edward D. Cohn, “Sex and the Married Communist: Family Troubles, Marital Infidelity, and Party Discipline in the Postwar USSR, 1945–64,” *The Russian Review* 68, no. 3 (2009): 429–450.

expressed by Vasili Aksenov in his *Ticket to the Stars* (1961).⁸¹¹ In addition, the extensive mediatisation of the USSR made romantic emotions⁸¹² and rebellious youth spirits (as an active opposition to participation in social life) widespread.⁸¹³ Soviet system shaped media spectacle and an important part of this spectacle was folklorism.⁸¹⁴ This chapter addresses Soviet Ukrainian folklorism, which had already developed in the 1930-1950s and was modified in the 1960s, but which received a new impetus in the 1970s. The major factors that influenced the new folk revival or folklorism were 1) Soviet Romanticism with its leaning towards village culture, 2) the anti-nationalist campaign that fostered clichés and performativity, and 3) the national/republican television network created in Soviet Ukraine (see Chapter 2).

The romantic feelings and attitudes that were revived by intelligentsia in late 1950s and 1960s and caused folk revival during Khrushchev rule,⁸¹⁵ sustained in the late 1970s. We may even accept that the Soviet 1980s were experienced in the context of a mediated neo-folk cultural revival, though it was never called this way. In the Soviet Union public discourse did not use the title “folk revival” for long time but multiple publications dedicated to the subject of amateur and folk culture in the USSR used the notion of the “revival of traditions,” which was an important part of socialist culture building.⁸¹⁶ In general, musicologists affirm that: “Acts of revival, restoration, and renewal have been influential forces shaping and

⁸¹¹ See on irony in Aksenov’s texts: Prokhorov, *Unasledovannyi Diskurs*, 210–17. Irony indicated an important turn to hesitation in late Soviet culture, described in various texts of Alexei Yurchak.

⁸¹² On general turn to emotions study see: Jan Plamper, “Introduction: Emotional Turn?,” *Slavic Review* 68, no. 2 (2009): 229–37; Catriona Kelly, “Pravo Na Emotsii, Pravilnye Emotsii: Upravlenie Chuvstvami v Rossii Posle Epokhi Prosveshcheniya,” in *Rossiyskaya Imperiya Chuvstv: Podkhody k Kulturnoy Istorii Emotsiy*, ed. Jan Plamper, Schamma Schahadat, and Mark Elie (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2010), 51–77.

⁸¹³ Recent studies on youth opposition see in: Gleb Tsipursky, “Citizenship, Deviance, and Identity. Soviet Youth Newspapers as Agents of Social Control in the Thaw-Era Leisure Campaign,” *Cahiers Du Monde Russe. Russie-Empire Russe-Union Soviétique et États Indépendants* 49, no. 49/4 (2008): 629–650; Sheila Fitzpatrick, “Social Parasites,” *Cahiers Du Monde Russe* 47, no. 1 (2006): 377–408.

⁸¹⁴ Historians turned their attention to Soviet neo-folk or state-sponsored popular culture recently, see: Igor’ Narskii, *Kak partiia narod tantsevat’ uchila, kak baletmeistery iei pomogali, i chto iz etogo vyshlo* (Moscow: Novoye literaturnye obozreniye, 2018); Mark Elie and Jan Plamper, eds., *Rossiiskaia imperia chuvstv: podhody k kulturnoi istorii emotsii* (NLO, Novoie literaturnoe obozreniie, 2010); Konstantin Bohdanov, *Vox populi: Folklornyie zhanry sovetskoi kultury* (NLO, 2014); Tsipursky, *Socialist Fun* (2016). On Soviet Estonian folklorism and amateur culture see the following PhD thesis: Philipp Herzog, “Sozialistische Völkerfreundschaft, Nationaler Widerstand Oder Harmloser Zeitvertreib” (phd, Wien, University of Vienna, 2010). Recent publication on Soviet amateur culture see: Zinaida Vasilieva, “Samodeiatel’nost: V Poiskakh Sovetskoi Modernosti,” *NLO* 4, no. 128 (2014), <http://magazines.russ.ru/nlo/2014/128/9v.html>; Zinaida Vasilyeva, “The 1960s and the Development of Mass Culture: Notes on the Soviet Variant of Modernity,” *Ab Imperio*, no. 1 (2013), <http://abimperio.net.ezproxy.eui.eu/cgi-bin/aishow.pl?state=showa&idart=3305&idlang=1&Code=>.

⁸¹⁵ Laura Olson identifies the origins of Russian folk revival in Khrushchev period, which coincided with development of the ‘village prose’ in literature: “*The Russian folk music revival movement was characterized by a similar nostalgia and a foregrounding of the chronotope of the pre-Revolutionary village: it represented the living past and a source of values for the present*,” see: Laura Olson, *Performing Russia: Folk Revival and Russian Identity* (Routledge, 2004), 70.

⁸¹⁶ The language of revival became dominant in the end of 1980s, within Soviet Perestroika and Glasnost, see: Olson, 106.

transforming musical landscapes and experiences across diverse times and places.”⁸¹⁷ Even though Romanticism kindled a dangerous passion for the past and national culture among intellectuals, communist officials could not prevent the promotion of folk culture. During the 1970s, it was much safer in Soviet Ukraine to promote the culture of village people (folk or folklorism), neo-folk Estrada, or classical music than it was to promote modern culture or national history. Thus, on the one hand officials strove to defeat certain forms of cultural nationalism, but, on the other, the highest officials actively promoted folk or neo-folk culture, which often kindled the same cultural nationalism.

5.1. Folklorism in socialist world

In 1988, Soviet folklorists admitted that folk content flooded Soviet television and fascinated hundreds of thousands of viewers.⁸¹⁸ In the 1980s the language of folk revival slowly penetrated the Soviet discourse. Laura Olson states that:

During the 1970s and early 1980s, the folklore revival movement opposed the government-sponsored version of folklore and remained loosely organised and free-wheeling; in the late 1980s and 1990s that situation changed. With glasnost, preservation of the national heritage became something of a buzzword, and revivalists succeeding in winning some governmental and popular attention to their concerns.⁸¹⁹

A decade before this claim, various Soviet republics opened new singing fields [spivochi polia] and places specially designed for folk choir singing. Amateur and folk arts flourished, attracting huge audiences not only in the USSR but also abroad.⁸²⁰ Numerous Soviet authors during late socialism declared that they lived in an era “when the true meaning of folklore for today and tomorrow was only beginning to be realised”.⁸²¹ At the same time folklorists and many officials hoped that people would not be locked again by neo-folk sentiments within their ethnic cultural frames.

Folk or neo-folk media content was omnipresent on Soviet radio and television, but this promotion was not just the ideological work of communists as many people admired various forms of Soviet folklorism. It is important to accentuate that folklorism is different from folklore or folk culture. Writing about the phenomenon of folklorism in the late 1990s, Guntis Šmidchens tried to normalise folklorism, trying to define it as a form of sub-folklore.

⁸¹⁷ Caroline Bithell and Juniper Hill, *The Oxford Handbook of Music Revival* (Oxford University Press, 2014), 3. In English speaking countries ‘folk music revival’ is a working title, which is widely used to describe various practices of music transformation through reinterpretation (involving alterations of both value and form) of folk materials, see: Britta Sweers, *Electric Folk: The Changing Face of English Traditional Music* (Oxford University Press, USA, 2005), 8. For instance, in Britain scholars differentiate several revivals, the first (1890-1920) and the second (1945-1969), followed by electric folk, progressive folk, folk rock, nu-folk or indie-folk. See works on American and English revivals: Gillian Mitchell, *The North American Folk Music Revival: Nation and Identity in the United States and Canada, 1945-1980* (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2007); Michael Brocken, *The British Folk Revival: 1944–2002* (Routledge, 2017).

⁸¹⁸ Eduard Alekseyev and V. Maksimov, “Fol’klor i Tekhnicheskaiia Kommunikatsiia,” in *Fol’klor i Viktorina: Narodnoie Tvorchestvo v Vek Televideniia*, ed. V. Maksimov and A. Sokolskaya (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1988), 13.

⁸¹⁹ Olson, *Performing Russia*, 106.

⁸²⁰ Vasilieva, “Samodeiatelnost: V Poiskakh Sovetskoi Modernosti.”

⁸²¹ Alekseyev and Maksimov, “Fol’klor i Tekhnicheskaiia Kommunikatsiia,” 30.

For him, folklorism denotes the conscious use of folklore as a symbol of ethnic, regional, or national culture. He states:

Folklorism refers to a subcategory of folklore, one with specific meaning and function in the lives of the performers and audience. Folklorism is the conscious recognition and repetition of folk tradition as a symbol of ethnic, regional, or national culture. This repetition may have economic or political consequences, or both, but it responds to the needs of the people who embrace folklorism.⁸²²

Thus, folklorism, as conscious usage of folk traditions and symbols of national culture, is also part of real folklore. Similarly, the Soviet media in the 1970s and 1980s was not only a means of communication but functioned as a form of sub-folklore, which also produced and maintained folklorism. Soviet officials consciously used folk arts as symbols of culture and politics in their media programming. For instance, participants (folk and amateur collectives) of the Soviet media folk festival *Raduga* [Rainbow] had to compete and were evaluated by two juries, professional and nonprofessional. These juries differentiated between folklorism and “real folk culture” and supported forms of televisual adaptations of folklore.⁸²³ Writing about such media festivals and other Soviet serial television and radio programmes, Zorkaia claimed, similarly to Šmidchens, that media in the USSR should be considered not just as a producer and communicator of folklorism, but as a certain form of sub-folklore (see Chapter 3).⁸²⁴

Indeed, Soviet media (radio and television) had actively promoted folk and amateur culture since the 1950s. The Italian actress Paola Borboni (1900-1995), while “visiting” the USSR via television cable,⁸²⁵ admitted in 1985 that she expected that television would destroy folk arts, however, it apparently promoted traditional culture and fuelled a new folk revival.⁸²⁶ In each republic there were multiple programmes on national or regional TV dedicated to folklore and folk singing. Every day there was a radio or television programme in Soviet Ukraine, which broadcast a wide range of folk and amateur music.

In 1970, The Main Editorial of Folk Arts at Soviet Central Television hired Kira Annenkova, who initiated the international television festival dedicated to folk arts. In 1975, Soviet Central Television introduced the international television festival *Raduga* [Rainbow] solely dedicated to folk arts and creativity [narodnoie tvorchestvo].⁸²⁷ This television show

⁸²² Guntis Šmidchens, “Folklorism Revisited,” *Journal of Folklore Research* 36, no. 1 (April 1999): 56.

⁸²³ Zorkaia, “Khorovod v elektronnom luče,” 37. Participating in this media event countries between 1976 and 1985 increased twofold, from 24 to 57 states.

⁸²⁴ Neia Markovna Zorkaia, *Na Rubezhe Stoletij: U Istokov Massovogo Iskusstva v Rossii 1900-1910 Hh* (Moscow: Nauka, 1976), 300.

⁸²⁵ She participated in ‘television bridge’ [televizionnyi most] between Italy and USSR.

⁸²⁶ See on folk revival and media: Zorkaia, “Khorovod v elektronnom luče,” 34.

⁸²⁷ *International Television Festival Rainbow* [Raduga] was initiated by The Main Editorial of Folk Arts at Soviet Central TV in 1975. This editorial also produced famous programmes like *Our Address – USSR, To Wider a Circle, Meeting with Stage Masters*, etc. which were broadcasted from the best places in Moscow, like that of The Kremlin Palace of Congresses, the Tchaikovsky Concert Hall, the Moscow Conservatory, the Television Theatre. See recollections of V. Kozlovskii who served as a vice director of this editorial V. Kozlovskii, *Televideniie. Vzgliad Iznutri. 1957-1996 Gody* (Moscow: Gotika, 2002); V. Kozlovskii, “Narodnoie tvorchestvo -

was conducted by the famous Soviet journalist and TV presenter Anna Shatilova and it aimed to show worldwide folk art practices on multiple television programmes. The first edition of the television festival *Rainbow* attracted 17 states as participants and in 1976 the number grew to 24 countries, reaching 34 by 1983 and 57 by 1985. This festival had a mass audience and mass participation since it featured great folk collectives from different republics of the USSR and abroad. The important feature of this festival was competition and contest. Within the USSR, on a national and regional level, media managers similarly used contests (festivals and contests) which featured folk collectives from various republics in competition for the votes of the Soviet audience. In general, folklorism and neo-folk revivalist tendencies were omnipresent around Europe at this time, especially in socialist countries.

The relations between the media and folk culture in socialist countries were ambivalent. On the one hand, practitioners believed that the peasant culture (or ancient ancestors), which was transferred to the city in the form of media-reality (through amateur collectives, television or radio channels), harmed real folklore and made it into post-folklore. On the other hand, officials assumed that the continued broadcasting of folk content on television would help to preserve national culture by promoting it among the wider population. Thus, television had an ambivalent position. As the Slovakian folklorist Milan Lešák claimed, it could kill and develop at the same time: it had the power to destroy and preserve national culture.⁸²⁸

In Socialist Poland, for instance, folk-oriented aesthetics [ludowo orientowana estetyka] held a crucial part of the national imagination between two wars and for many years after 1945.⁸²⁹ In the 1930s, it was appreciated but also criticised by modernists who differentiated between national style and folk style in arts and design, which they often considered as an imitation.⁸³⁰ In Poland, such imitative folk art, which was produced for urban markets, followed samples and models promoted and developed by academics and state-sponsored agencies like CEPELIA (Centrala Przemysłu Ludowego i Artystycznego), which continued inter-war interests in folk art and folklore and organisations like the Society for Support of Folk Industry [Towarzystwa Popierania Przemysłu Ludowego]. CEPELIA (or CPLiA), which stood for the Central Organisation of Folk Arts Industries, had developed a network of shops, professional and semi-professional artists, designers and promoters. This institution, like other similar organisations for folk promotion under socialism (for instance, The Institute of Industrial Design [Instytut wzornictwa przemysłowego] in Warsaw), developed a specific taste for folk style, sometimes called “cepelia style” in Poland, indicating its artificial folkishness.⁸³¹

stremleniie k prekrasnomu,” Soviet Television History, <http://www.tvmuseum.ru/> (blog), accessed January 22, 2017, http://www.tvmuseum.ru/catalog.asp?ob_no=7190.

⁸²⁸ Zorkaia, “Khorovod v elektronnom luche,” 36.

⁸²⁹ Piotr Korduba, *Ludowość Na Sprzedaż* (Warszawa: Wyd. Narodowe Centrum Kultury, 2013), 13.

⁸³⁰ Korduba, 23.

⁸³¹ Korduba, 12. On early development of CPLiA in Socialist Poland see: Daniel Stone, “Cepelia and Folk Arts Industries in Poland, 1949-1956,” *The Polish Review* 54, no. 3 (2009): 287–310.

Some Polish scholars define this form of socialist culture as “folk for sale” [ludowość na sprzedaż], which was the socio-cultural phenomenon of adapting (through stylisation) special forms of folk culture or folklore to the needs of contemporary culture.⁸³² Normally these adaptations and stylisations were done differently to traditional forms of arts and were thus detached (de-territorialised) from natural or authentic peasants’ environments. The renowned anthropologist Alexander Jackowski called this form of “folk for sale” culture “folklorism,” referring to Józef Burszta (1914-1987), who defined state sponsored folk culture not only in negative terms but also praised it for having integrative power.⁸³³ He argued in the late 1960s that stylised folk art created a special form of national folk style, which shaped a nationally unified phenomenon of folklorism. Thus, folklorism in the Polish context was understood not as a way of producing authentic folk arts, but as scientific, political and cultural promotion of traditional forms of folk art. In addition, folklorism was about merging traditional folk arts with popular and mass culture.⁸³⁴

Piotr Korduba argues that “folk for sale” or folklorism in socialist Poland also created a special style of urban living, favoured by the new socialist intelligentsia. It also marked public spaces and dominated national exhibitions outside the country, which was noticeable in fashion design and mass public events.⁸³⁵ He even goes further and calls this type of culture “ekskluzywny rustykalizm” [exclusive rusticalism], which combined high culture with rustic and peasant aesthetics. Korduba believes that this type of culture shaped Poles in the twentieth century, who aimed to be global (modern) and local (folk) at the same time. Others have added to this criticism, arguing that the folk development of modern socialist Polish culture was not natural but rather derived from Soviet colonial policies, which used folk style and folklore to manage national differences.⁸³⁶

It is problematic to identify whether Polish folklorism was a typical Soviet colonial endeavour, however, historians are convinced that folk culture was at the heart of Stalinist socialism. Soviet power was defined as folk by its nature [narodnaia] and democratic because it belonged to the people. Therefore, officials in the USSR and its client states promised to

⁸³² Korduba, *Ludowość Na Sprzedaż*, 14.

⁸³³ Jozef Burszta, “Folklorizm w Polsce,” in *Folklor w Życiu Współczesnym*, ed. B. Linette (Ogólnopolska Sesja Naukowa w Poznaniu (1969), Poznań: Wielkopolskie Towarzystwo Kulturalne, 1970), 9–29; Korduba, *Ludowość Na Sprzedaż*, 14.

⁸³⁴ Hermann Bausinger claims that hybridization of folk into folklorism appeared through the means of culture industries: “*Folklorism is the means used to protect the allegedly essential folk culture from actual development, and it is done with the help of all the technology of the culture industry*,” see: Hermann Bausinger, *Folk Culture in a World of Technology*, trans. Elke Dettmer, 1st ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 160. Cited after: Olson, *Performing Russia*, 200. Bausinger in special article dedicated to ‘folklorismus’ in renowned *Encyclopedia of Fairy Tales* (‘Folklorismus.’ In *Enzyklopädie des Märchens IV*: 1405–10. 1984 [1966]) indicates that this is “*The use of material and stylistic elements of folklore in a context which is foreign to the original tradition*’. Similar claims had Polish scholars like Josef Burszta or have currently Piotr Korduba.

⁸³⁵ Korduba, *Ludowość Na Sprzedaż*, 19.

⁸³⁶ Joanna Kordjak, ed., *Polska — Kraj Folkloru?* (Warszawa: Zachęta (Narodowa Galerija Sztuki), 2016), 15.

build an egalitarian society, which brought “real freedom of creativity” and new culture.⁸³⁷ This culture would be organised by the communist party and supported (in financial and organisational matters) in exchange for supervision, which aimed to eliminate ideological controversies through purges.⁸³⁸ Thus, folklorism in the USSR was well structured and highly supervised through various institutions and agents (like scholars or art-professionals), but, in other socialist countries it could develop differently.

Some socialist countries, like Romania, which had special relations with Moscow, used folk arts as instruments for national mobilisation, often producing not a re-contextualised new culture, but rather folklorism. Like the international media festival *Rainbow*, initiated by Soviet Central Television in 1975, the Romanian government created an annual festival of national culture *Cântarea României* [Song of Praise to Romania] in 1976. Being part of Nicolae Ceaușescu’s national socialist policies, this festival featured both professional and amateur artists from across the country who used folk music to foster the national identity of Romanians. Cultural production was centralised and each village or socialist enterprise in Romania had promoters of the festival, who evaluated and approved local creative content. Thus, no ideologically unsound texts or songs could penetrate the programme of this festival of “socialist education and culture,” which had “to enrich and diversify the spiritual life of the country.”⁸³⁹

This semi-folk or folk ethos of the Romanian festival aimed to replace the supposedly decaying artistic (popular) culture and bureaucrats believed that only this kind of art (folklorism or neo-folk Estrada) should be supported by the state. Thousands of folk-costumed peasants sang and danced in beautiful natural surroundings and these picturesque events were broadcast every Sunday (the Soviet television festival *Rainbow* was shown every second Saturday) to the whole nation. Such massive folk events as *Rainbow* and *Cântarea României*, existed in two dimensions: in real practice, mobilising thousands of amateur and folk artists, and in an imaginary world of television, which created a media-spectacle and also a distinctive media(land)scape, where land, people and socialism were merged into one unity.

Alexandra Urdea admits that socialist television in Romania not only fostered neo-folk but promoted new artistic genres, for instance, “muzică populară” [popular music], a certain form of neo-folk music, which developed due to the *Cântarea României* festival.⁸⁴⁰ Moreover, her research confirms that folk festivals, which had both real (organisation on the ground) and virtual (media) dimensions, were an important part of state politics and power metaphysics:

⁸³⁷ Except supervised creativity amateur culture also created third space, where ‘normal’ people could find joy, see: Narskii, *Kak partiia narod tantsevat’ uchila, kak baletmeistery iei pomogali, i chto iz etogo vyshlo*, 25.

⁸³⁸ Narskii, 22.

⁸³⁹ Elena Maria Șorban, *Festivaluri, valuri. Însemnări despre sărbătorile muzicii culte și cronică muzicală din România* (Editura Școala Ardeleană - Eikon, 2016), 72–75.

⁸⁴⁰ Alexandra Urdea, “Folklore Music on Romanian TV. From State Socialist Television to Private Channels,” *VIEW Journal of European Television History and Culture* 3, no. 5 (2014): 48–49.

Television [...] became the medium through which the state ritual is enacted, with folklore at the centre of the national identity discourse [...] TVR emerges, therefore, as central to the state politics, enabling not only its dissemination, but also the bodily engagement with the state apparatus [...].⁸⁴¹

Thus, while Socialist television in Romania, as in the USSR, strove to both educate and entertain its subjects, it developed new genres of popular music.⁸⁴² These genres were hybrid forms, which combined current music trends with folk traditions, and which developed due to media folklorism. Soviet researchers of the 1980s, like their socialist colleagues, largely admitted that they recognised at least two forms of folklore: real folk practice, which was preserved in remote places or in villages, and folklorism, a neo-folk practice sometimes called post-folklore.⁸⁴³ The Soviet scholar Viktor Gusev (1918-2002), who attended a conference in Hungary dedicated to the problems of folklorism in 1981, acknowledged that while neo-folk practices were very artificial they were nonetheless needed to compensate for a feeling of loss, diminishing of something which was considered valuable.⁸⁴⁴

The same arguments were used by western folk revivalists, who believed that the performance and promotion of tradition music was a reaction to threatened cultural forms.⁸⁴⁵ Thus, on both sides of the Iron Curtain activists, officials and artists strove to transfer artistic folk models or musical elements from the past to the present, which presupposed a decontextualisation and a recontextualisation. These processes transformed traditional culture. The media played a crucial role in such processes of decontextualisation and recontextualisation. They created remote spaces of media through which moving images (television) and voices (radio) met “deterritorialised viewers” and in such places “imagination has become a collective, social fact”.⁸⁴⁶

Analysing folk art in relation to Soviet television, Neia Zorkaia claimed that television media created *a space* for the fruitful coexistence of folk and folklorism.⁸⁴⁷ In addition, through folk media events, like the *Rainbow* festival, Soviet television preserved national

⁸⁴¹ Urdea, 49.

⁸⁴² Alexandru Matei, *O Tribună Captivantă. Televiziune, Ideologie, Societate În România Socialistă (1965-1983)* (Curtea Veche, 2013).

⁸⁴³ Zorkaia, “Khorovod v elektronnom luce,” 35.

⁸⁴⁴ On Gusev’s claims see: Zorkaia, 35–36; 44. Socialist Hungary was an important place to study folklore, there existed an *International Center for Folk Culture* and television often dedicated special programmes to promote folklore and to discuss folklorism. One of the programmes was called *Fakelore*, after the known term introduced by Richard M. Dorson in 1950 to discuss kitsch and folk fakes, often fashioned as authentic folk culture, see: Marshall W. Fishwick, “Sons of Paul: Folklore or Fakelore?,” *Western Folklore* 18, no. 4 (1959): 277–86.

⁸⁴⁵ Bithell and Hill, *The Oxford Handbook of Music Revival*, 3–4.

⁸⁴⁶ Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 5.

⁸⁴⁷ Zorkaia, “Khorovod v elektronnom luce,” 46. Bausinger claimed that current folklore can only be possible in the form of folklorism, which, even though mediated by modern technologies, functions as folklore (important interhuman communication), see: Šmidchens, “Folklorism Revisited,” 54. I maintain that this media space was imagined and real, but also connected to land, therefore could be called a media(land)scape.

differences.⁸⁴⁸ Raisa Kirsanova pointed out that Soviet ethnographers indicated a certain “ethnic paradox” created by Soviet folk festivals and television.⁸⁴⁹ She claimed that even if a person did not have a strong national identity, television folk festivals gave him/her the possibility to compare ethnic dresses and songs, therefore helping them to rediscover a sense of national belonging.

She referred in such claims to the works of the Soviet ethnographer Yulian Bromlei (1921-1990), the director of the Institute of Ethnography (Soviet Academy of Sciences), who declared that nationality (ethnicity) was often coded in dress and that a person could perform or reveal identity through their clothing.⁸⁵⁰ On the television screen, this work of visual coding/decoding intensified, since all that a person sees on the screen becomes bigger and intensified through imagination. Similar concerns were expressed by Melihat Yunisov in 1988 when writing about the Soviet creative industry: “In the immediate life that he/she encounters daily, after getting on to the local television screen becomes larger, becomes higher, becomes measurable with the life of the entire country and the planet.”⁸⁵¹

This widely discussed ability of Soviet television to amplify reality would therefore work to magnify ethnic or national differences.⁸⁵² Through their power to create collective experiences of the mass media, socialist and Soviet folk television fostered special “communities of sentiment” or “sodalities of worship and charisma”.⁸⁵³ These communities were likely to shape wider groups of people with certain ideas about nationhood. Socialist states monopolised neo-folk or folklorism through state-owned media, thus, the nation (as a group of people) and the socialist state (as a group of people) became one another’s projects, trying to hold control over the imagination as “social practice.”⁸⁵⁴

5.2. Soviet Ukrainian TV-folklorism as national imagination

Folk revivals of the 1970s manifested differently in various Soviet republics, and they usually received good national media coverage.⁸⁵⁵ As I have shown in Chapter 2, the *consolidation phase* of Soviet television in the 1970s emerged at the federal level as well as

⁸⁴⁸ Media-events characterized by the conjunction of live and remote, interrupted and preplanned broadcasting, see: Elihu Katz and Daniel Dayan, *Media Events: The Live Broadcasting of History* (Harvard University Press, 2009), 7–14.

⁸⁴⁹ Raisa Kirsanova, “Telefestival ‘Raduga’ i Traditsii Narodnogo Kostiuma,” in *Fol’klor i Viktorina: Narodnoie Tvorchestvo v Vek Televideniia* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1988), 69–70.

⁸⁵⁰ Yulian Bromlei, *Etnos i Etnografiia* (Moscow: Nauka, 1973), 7.

⁸⁵¹ Melihat Yunisov, “Samodeiatelnyi Chelovek: Sledy k Televizionnomu Portretu,” in *Fol’klor i Viktorina: Narodnoie Tvorchestvo v Vek Televideniia* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1988), 98.

⁸⁵² Sappak, “Iskusstvo Kotoroie Rozhdaietsia”; Ksenofontov, “Eto ne film, eto po nastoiashchemu.”

⁸⁵³ Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 8.

⁸⁵⁴ Appadurai, 31. It is also important to admit that Appadurai stresses, that collective imagination often involves the fear and the action of ‘the other’ thus, ‘one man’s imagined community is another man’s political prison,’ see: Appadurai, “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy,” 6. See examples of such relation from postcolonial studies: Pārtha Caṭṭopādhyāya and Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse* (Zed Books, 1986); Ashis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism* (Oxford University Press, 1983).

⁸⁵⁵ For instance, singing fields which could fit thousands of folk choir singers were built in Soviet Baltic republics since 1970s while in Soviet Ukraine they developed in the first half of 1980s.

on the national level. As Moscow united its programming in the First Television Channel, making it widely accessible to the whole territory of the USSR, Kyiv wanted to shape its national audience on the Second Channel, gradually marginalising regional studios. So, while Soviet Central Television successfully fostered Soviet people, Ukrainian Television (UT) strove to maintain its national audience as the Ukrainian people.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Ukrainian Television produced 4.6 hours of daily content (on both Soviet television channels, excluding regional broadcasting). At the same time, the radio produced 38.6 hours of broadcasting.⁸⁵⁶ In total, the Ukrainian national media covered approximately fifty million inhabitants, so the television audience was close to the whole population of the republic. During this period, about 9 out of 10 citizens could watch national broadcasting in Soviet Ukraine (the total of 1679 viewing hours per year).⁸⁵⁷ It was a good time to start making new programmes, which would not only cover but unite the national audience.

Indeed, in the early 1980s, many people in Soviet Ukraine could not imagine their lives without television. Bronstein B.M. from the city of Novoavorivsk wrote to the Ukrainian media committee in 1981, saying that television was a window to the world:

Where else you can see the leading theatres, concerts of prominent actors, journalistic reviews, or presentations of our outstanding contemporaries commenting on the problems of current reality. If television does not make this, nobody will do it.⁸⁵⁸

An entire village from the Poltava region wrote a collective letter to Kyiv stating that without a TV set they could not imagine their lifetime because now they knew and saw what was going on in the universe. The Kanobolotskyi family from Dnipropetrovsk even declared that the whole family was captivated by television for twenty years:

For our family, television is a daily holiday in the house, exciting, deep and exceptionally fundamental holiday. How can it be possible to live without such joy? It is simply impossible to imagine it.⁸⁵⁹

Neia Zorkaia, who often produced critical reviews on Soviet television content, cited a viewer from Angarsk: "I work at a school, and there is little free time, so for me the hour spent watching television it is a very great joy and I am waiting for tomorrow's [media] evening."⁸⁶⁰ She also cited the famous film director Ingmar Bergman, who was supposedly a big fan of television. Zorkaia concluded in the mid-1970s that television brought together different people, like the average Soviet teacher and a famous Swedish film director.⁸⁶¹ The power of

⁸⁵⁶ "TsDAVO (1981), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 21."

⁸⁵⁷ "TsDAVO (1981), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 21."

⁸⁵⁸ "Letters" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1981), Arkush 247-248, Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 56, TsDAVO of Ukraine, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

⁸⁵⁹ "TsDAVO (1981), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 56," Arkush 254.

⁸⁶⁰ Neia Zorkaia, "Otmennno Dlinnyi, Dlinnyi Film.," *Sovetskij Ekran*, no. 1 (1975), http://akter.kulichki.net/se/01_1975.htm.

⁸⁶¹ Zorkaia.

television lay in the (mythical) structure of its programming as well as in its serial (repetitive) character.

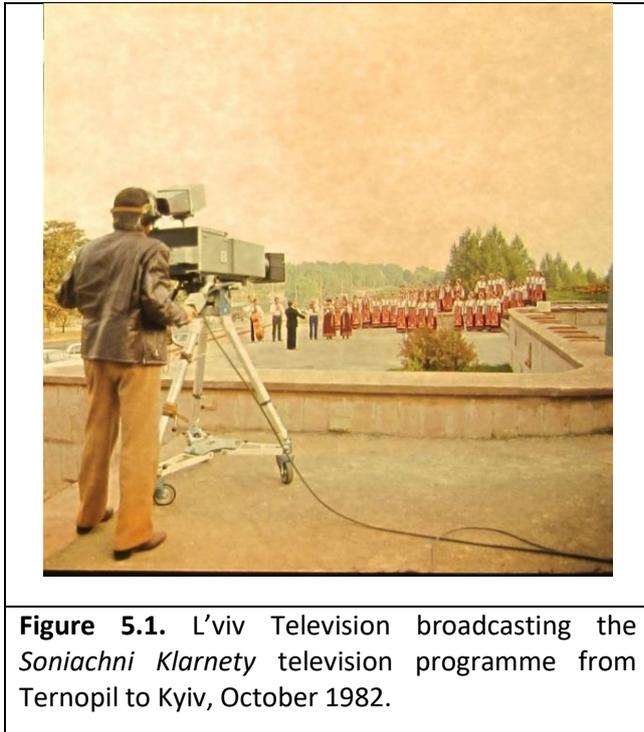


Figure 5.1. L'viv Television broadcasting the *Soniachni Klarnety* television programme from Ternopil to Kyiv, October 1982.

Kyiv closely followed models produced in the centre, therefore, it came as no surprise that the successful *International Television Festival Raduga* influenced national television managers. Three years after it was conceived in Moscow, Kyiv produced its own programme called *Sunny Clarinets* [Soniachni klarnety] in 1978. The name of this programme recalled the first poetic book by Pavlo Tychyna (1891-1967), printed in 1918. Tychyna was inscribed in the canon of Soviet Ukrainian culture and his verses are still taught in schools. He was valued not only for his revolutionary poetry but also for his lyricism and romanticism, especially his romanticisation of folk people and nature. Some Ukrainian critics called Tychyna the peasants' Orpheus, the "clarinettist," who "lived, worked, sensed out of nature and folk culture."⁸⁶² The literary historian Serhii Yefremov described him as a typical romantic:

Thoughtful dreamer with a soft, loud soul, hearken in the excitements of the surrounding nature, in obedience to cosmic appearances, in world harmony; a joyous pantheist, to whom surrounding nature whispers secret melodies and who dreams in full voice with his wonderful, strong, and full of music verse.⁸⁶³

⁸⁶² Vasyl Barka, *Khliborobskiy Orfei Abo Kliarnetyzm* (New York; Munich: Suchasnist, 1961), 9.

⁸⁶³ Serhii Yefremov, *Istoriia Ukrainiskoho Pysmenstva*, ed. M.K. Naienko (Kyiv: Femina, 1995), 477. An emigre to USA Vasyl Barka published in 1961 in New York a book dedicated to Tychyna, with the title *The farmer-Orpheus or Clarinetism* [Khliborobskiy Orfei abo Kliarnetyzm]. He called early Tychyna's artistic oeuvre (1914-1924) *clarinetism*, explaining it as a hybrid combination of lyricism, modernism and Ukrainian Baroque, which was revived in 20th century. Like Shevchenko's romanticism combined poetry with songs in 19th century (collection of verses *Kobzar* by Shevchenko referred to a bard who sang to his own accompaniment, played on

Thus, it came as no surprise that the show was connected to the oeuvre of the peasants' Orpheus. Ten years after Tychyna's death officials distributed various pamphlets, and in 1978 they celebrated the 60th anniversary of the *Sunny Clarinets* publication in 1918. In 1978 media managers in Kyiv came up with the idea to commemorate the people's lyricist by naming the folk music festival after his famous collection of verses. The idea of the festival was to combine poetry and folk songs from various regions of Ukraine (clarinets worked as a metaphor of music and the sun stood for nature, connected to folk culture⁸⁶⁴) in a televisual competition.

Indeed, folk art and folklorism were promoted by various programmes produced by the Ukrainian Media Committee, both on television and radio. Whether dedicated to music, youth and children, literature or theatre, editorials had to produce special series dedicated to folk art, amateur creativity or ethnography. These programmes were easy to recognise by their titles alone, like *Folk Springs* [Narodni Dzherela], *Word-Song* [Slovo Pisnia], *Folk Evenings* [Narodni Vechory], *Song in the Life of Man* [Pisnia v Zhytti Liudyny], *In the Family Circle* [V Krugu Simji]. Often, they were organised as media contests or festivals such as *Sunny Clarinets* [Soniachni Klarnety] (television folk contest), *Ukraine – You Are My Song* [Ukraiino – Pисne Moia] (radio festival), *Golden Keys* [Zoloti Kliuchi] (folk radio festival). Such media festivals were envisaged as television contests, where performances of folk or amateur collectives were judged by a professional jury and the national audience. Each week, two regions of Soviet Ukraine were competing on the television screens,⁸⁶⁵ however, in contrast to recent television programmes such as *America's Got Talent* (NBC television network) or *Britain's Got Talent* (SYCOtv company), the prize was not a vast amount of money but rather mutual appreciation, popularity and love, expressed through letters from viewers.

The media folk festivals were extremely popular. Oleh Vergelis, a Ukrainian journalist, called the national television that initiated such media festivals as the "reservoir of structured happiness."⁸⁶⁶ The music editorials of the time (in Kyiv-based national television) consisted of almost 150 professionals, who worked in three main departments: classic music, Estrada, and folk music. *Sunny Clarinets* was among the most popular programmes on Ukrainian Television, personally supported by Mykola Okhmakevych (1937-2013), the person responsible for media in late Soviet Ukraine. He served as the head of the national media committee between 1979-1991 after replacing Mykola Skachko (1911-1984) who had developed and maintained

a multistringed instruments *bandura* or *kobza*), Tychyna's 20th century romantic modernism combined sounds of clarinets with lyricism. See: Barka, *Khliborobskiy Orfei Abo Kliarnetyzm*, 8–9.

⁸⁶⁴ Folk people or farmers were often compared with nature, which was the 'blessing,' since they were not spoiled by civilization and at the same time, nature was the sign of backwardness.

⁸⁶⁵ This television programme was broadcasted on Saturdays, the same day when the Rainbow festival was broadcasted from Moscow. Thus, people living in Ukraine could enjoy both all-Soviet folklore as well as national folklore, performed at the same day but on different channels.

⁸⁶⁶ Oleh Vergelis, "Ukraiino zhadai pro talant... Legendarna TB programa 'Soniachni klarnety' kolys' vidkryla sotni samorodkiv," *ZN*, December 29, 2010, 829 edition, https://dt.ua/CULTURE/ukrayino,_zgaday_pro_talant__legendarna_tb-programa_sonyachni_klarneti_kolis_vidkrila_sotni_samorodk.html/. He admits that behind Sunny Clarinets festival stood professionals from Ukrainian TV – Tamara Pavlenko, Tamara Stratienko, Natalia Riabchuk and Elina Volokh.

national television network in Soviet Ukraine in the 1960s and 1970s. Television editors worked in close cooperation with officials from the Ministry of Culture and they often visited different regions of Ukraine to select the best folk or amateur collectives. They also relied on the knowledge and professional capacities of regional editors, who knew the music scene and could broadcast the best folk ensembles to the centre (Kyiv). Peasants and villagers admired this programme and even competed in order to be aired on national television.

Some television editors from *Sunny Clarinets* (like Elina Volokh) admitted that they often cried out in happiness during these folk performances and the letters from spectators confirmed that they often felt the same way. Officials followed each programme, however, their major prerequisite for media professionals was an “exceptional and absolute devotion to folk people” [vyniatkova i absolutna narodnist].⁸⁶⁷ When the audience heard a 37 year old woman and mother of eleven children singing beautiful songs on television, the public could imagine that this woman personified the overtly resilient and indomitable national character.⁸⁶⁸ Sometimes the number of people who wanted to participate in regional contests for Ukrainian Television was so high that officials had to call the police to calm the spectators.⁸⁶⁹

Such shows frequently acknowledged the high number of audience letters. Often, these letters were read out during broadcasts and normally viewers received written responses from media managers. In February 1981, the radio folk festival *Golden Keys* had the second highest number of letters on national radio and, in April of the same year, the television festival *Sunny Clarinets* was ranked first among all programmes on Ukrainian Television.⁸⁷⁰ These two Ukrainian media festivals would remain in the top ranks through the 1980s, before and after perestroika. In 1986, eight years after its introduction on national TV, *Sunny Clarinets* was able to attract tens of millions of viewers in Ukraine and its presenters were well known across the country.⁸⁷¹

Tamara Stratienko, who was one of the leading presenters on Ukrainian Television and the recognisable face of *Sunny Clarinets*, admitted in an interview in 1986 that the audience of the programme was, if not 50 million (the total Ukrainian television audience and almost all of the country’s population), then at least 20 million people (the estimated audience of national television in Soviet Ukraine). Entire villages, like one from the industrial Donetsk region, wrote collective letters to Tamara Stratienko. In this letter, farmers wrote that on TV she expressed:

⁸⁶⁷ Vergelis.

⁸⁶⁸ Often such programmes really targeted farmers, who wrote collective letters to Ukrainian TV being thankful for showing ‘nature of the Ukrainian village and its beautiful singing,’ see: “TsDAVO (1981), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 56,” Arkush 31.

⁸⁶⁹ Vergelis, “Ukraiino zhadai pro talant.”

⁸⁷⁰ “TsDAVO (1981), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 56,” Arkush 325.

⁸⁷¹ “Visnyk” (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1986), Arkush 61, Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 2949, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

So much kindness, so much sincerity on her face that, without noticing it, you start to smile [...] the *Sunny Clarinets* programme is good in and of itself, but when it is led by Tamara Nikolaevna, for us it's a holiday.⁸⁷²

Popular neo-folk media programmes in Soviet Ukraine show that in the early 1980s its mediascape combined centralised all-union news and entertainment programmes of Central Television with very popular local television programmes. These programmes were mostly appreciated for their fairy-like character, picturesque folklorism, or “sincere” folklore, which was performed in the form of television contests. Thus, media producers in Soviet Ukraine managed to create a specific media-spectacle, which combined the real and imagined worlds of socialism, often helping to re-imagine Ukraine through televisual space.

Table 5.1. shows that *Sunny Clarinets* was organised as artistic competition shaped around administrative regions and various geographic locations of Soviet Ukraine. Twice a year, when the audience was most active (January and August), *Sunny Clarinets* was aired three times a month, but normally it was broadcast every second Saturday for 75 minutes. The show aired 26 times a year (this corresponds to the number of national media committees and administrative regions), mainly broadcast by 14 major regional television studios and the republican studio in Kyiv.

The competition was organised like a football championship, so normally regions would be aired two times per year competing against each other. For instance, western L'viv region competed against the South Odesa region in January and May 1981, and the central (mostly agricultural) Kirovohrad (current Kropyvnytskyi) region challenged the north eastern (and mostly coal mining) Voroshylovhrad (current Luhansk) region in May and August. Approximately thirty million Ukrainians, who were able to watch national television in the early 1980s, had an opportunity to see *Sunny Clarinets* fifty-two times over the year.

Table 5.1. <i>Sunny Clarinets</i> television show-contest.			
Table shows the yearly schedule of competing Ukrainian regions, represented by folk collectives on national television.			
1981 months & dates	25 administrative regions of Soviet Ukraine & Kyiv as capital		
	Competing regions	Competing regions	Geographic location
January 3, 17, 31	L'viv region Odesa region	Mykolaiv region Kherson region	Kyiv region Kharkiv region
February 7, 21	Donetsk region Crimea region	Chernivtsi region Zakarpattia region	East vs South Inland West
March 7, 21	Ivano-Frankivsk region Ternopil region	Sumy region Khmelnyskyi region	Inland West North East vs Centre
April 11, 25	Dnipropetrovsk region Zaporizhzhia region	Zhytomyr region Poltava region	Inside South E. North W. vs North E.
May 2, 16	L'viv region Odesa region	Voroshylovhrad region Kirovohrad region	West vs South North E. vs Centre
June	Rivne region	Kyiv region	Inside North W.

⁸⁷² “TsDAVO (1982), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 572,” Arkush 254-255.

6, 20	Volyn region	Zhytomyr region	Inland North Centre
July 11, 25	Zaporizhzhia region Dnipropetrovsk region	Khmelnysk region Sumy region	Inland South-East South E. vs North East
August 1, 15, 29	Chernivtsi region Zaporizhzhia region	Kirovohrad region Voroshylvhrad region	Donetsk region Crimea region
September 12, 26	Kyiv region Vinnytsia region	Ternopil region Ivano-Frankivsk region	Inland Centre Inland West
October 10, 24	Vinnytsia region Cherkasy region	Mykolaiv region Kherson region	Inland Centre Inland South
November 7, 21	Chernihiv region Poltava region	Rivne region Volyn region	Inland North-East Inland North-West
December 12, 26	Cherkasy region Chernihiv region	Kyiv region Kharkiv region	North East vs South East

In February 1984, the Ukrainian television folk show/contest *Soniachni Klarnety* dedicated its programme to the All-Union Festival of Amateur Artistic Creativity [Vsesoiuznyi Festival Samodeiatelnogo Khudozhestvennogo Tvorchestva], which aimed to commemorate forty years of the liberation of Ukrainian lands from Nazi forces in 1944. An official narrator reiterated typical Cold War Soviet claims about war and peace:

We live in peace now, but in our memory will always persist the commemoration of the last war [...] this memory passes to children, and now even to grandchildren [...] We hope that the human mind will not allow the destruction of the planet. And songs will always be heard over/in our country, and music will sound. In the name of this, we work and live.⁸⁷³

Obviously, the programme's narrator meant that "we work and live" not just in the name of songs and music that might play all over the country, but in the name of peace on the whole planet. However, the connection of "proper music" and beautiful (in this case folk) songs to the purpose of life (the symbolic meaning) of Soviet people was more than figurative. Officials imagined that amateur culture, folk songs and "proper music" had to fill the entire Soviet life under communism. These forms of culture indicated that the USSR was a progressive state, heading in the right direction of human development. The amateur culture was not only about aesthetic education or the ideological indoctrination of Soviet people, it was also about their happiness. When asked how "normal" people⁸⁷⁴ differed from those practicing various non-professional arts, the amateur artist Vitalii Kobeliatskyi responded that those who

⁸⁷³ "Soniachni Klarnety" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1984), Arkush 36, TsDAVO, Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1910, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

⁸⁷⁴ The idea about 'normal people' was often used by Soviet media. Alexei Yurchak widely used the notion of 'normal people' in his work: Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, until It Was No More*. Sheila Fitzpatrick even used this concept as a title in her critical review of Yurchak's book, see: Sheila Fitzpatrick, "Normal People," *London Review of Books*, May 25, 2006. See how the idea of normal people is incorporated in other works on late Soviet 1980s: Klumbyte and Sharafutdinova, *Soviet Society in the Era of Late Socialism, 1964–1985*, 8; Jarrett Zigon, *"HIV Is God's Blessing": Rehabilitating Morality in Neoliberal Russia* (University of California Press, 2011), 150.

accomplished some arts were always happy.⁸⁷⁵ A life full of art, joy and accomplishment⁸⁷⁶ was seen as the ultimate goal of socialism.

5.3. Interactive folk television: audience reaction

Sunny Clarinets was not the only programme dedicated to folk and amateur arts on national TV. The audience was also exposed to other programmes, like that of *Pearls of the Folk's Soul* [Perlyny dushi narodnoi], *Love and Honour* [Liubov I shana], *Folk Talents* [Narodni talanty], *Concert Hall Friendship* [Kontsertnyi zal Druzhba]. In a single month (for instance in September 1977) Ukrainians could listen to folk content almost every day, and this televised folk music was normally evenly distributed among classic or Soviet academic music and popular (but very moderate) Estrada.⁸⁷⁷ The important element of television folk programming was its localisation and connection to specific regions, thus, Ukrainian television offered picturesque, emotional and imaginary media space, which had a real and physical dimension. This was a specific national media(land)scape, which helped modern/socialist Ukrainians to imagine their ancient “cultural past” or exposed them to “ancient but always actual” national roots. Moreover, Soviet Ukrainian television also shaped a special audience, or rather regionally segmented audiences, which Appadurai called “communities of sentiment.”⁸⁷⁸

These communities expressed themselves through letters sent by the audience to the state-owned media. Insofar as the exchange of correspondence between state institutions and Soviet people was recognised as a working socialist democracy,⁸⁷⁹ the Ukrainian Media Committee created a special department to track and analyse the stream of letters to radio and television. The committee followed regulations established by the “Decree of the Supreme Council of Soviet Ukraine” from 12 April 1968 “On the Procedure for Consideration of Proposals, Applications and Complaints of Citizens”.⁸⁸⁰ They were mostly focused on national broadcasting but also analysed the regional flow of correspondence.⁸⁸¹ Officials

⁸⁷⁵ “TsDAVO (1984), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1910,” Arkush 41.

⁸⁷⁶ American psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi discovered in the 1980s that joy is a crucial aspect of happiness that human being can achieve. He separated pleasure from enjoyment, considering latter as a source of feeling of novelty and accomplishment, see: Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* (Harper Collins, 2009), 46. See more detailed work on joy: Chris Meadows, *A Psychological Perspective on Joy and Emotional Fulfillment* (Routledge, 2013).

⁸⁷⁷ “Scenarios” (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1977), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 8768, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

⁸⁷⁸ Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 8.

⁸⁷⁹ Evans, *Between Truth and Time* (2016), x.

⁸⁸⁰ The regulation of correspondence exchange on Soviet media was addressed in this volume: N.N. Kazakevich et al., *O rabote s pismami trudiashchikhsia: sbornik normatyvnykh aktov* (Moscow: Yuridicheskaiia literatura, 1986). Ukrainian media officials and managers also followed example of Scientific-Methodological Division of Gosteleradio, established much earlier, see: Evans, *Between Truth and Time* (2016), 51.

⁸⁸¹ Except regional correspondence, Ukrainian Media Committee frequently received letters from Russian Federation and Belarus, neighbouring republics, whose citizens often watched and listened Ukrainian media content. Many of them liked folk music and Soviet Estrada and expressed their concerns about the popularity of foreign music in USSR. For instance, M. Boychuk from the Russian city Sverdlovsk after being impressed with Ukrainian broadcasting wrote to Kyiv: ‘Why do we prefer foreign Estrada? Yes, it is good: rhythms, glosses. But

required that media managers devoted critical attention to the letters of viewers since these were “voices of the people” and the media had to serve the Soviet people. Very often, television or radio programmes were produced based on correspondence, which was repeatedly required from top executives since the late 1950s. Between 1979 (the launch of a new wave of the folk revival in Ukraine) and 1982 (the death of Brezhnev), the number of letters to Ukrainian television increased almost twofold (see Table 5.2.), which shows the large interest of the national audience in local media production.

During the first six months of 1981, *Sunny Clarinets* received 589 letters, which was the ninth highest number received by TV programmes on Ukrainian Television. Over the spring of 1981, this programme was in the top five television music programmes on Ukrainian Television, earning the highest number of letters in April. In the following half of the year this dynamic continued and, by November, *Sunny Clarinets* again grossed the top attention of the Ukrainian audience. To compare, the children’s television programme *Katrusyn Cinema Hall* received 35852 letters during six months of 1981, being the most popular programme on Soviet Ukrainian Television. In 1982, this programme received more than 59,000 letters, which comprised 1 percent of all correspondence on national television.⁸⁸²

Table 5.2. The correspondence of Soviet Ukrainian Television.			
Many letters were sent to programmes dedicated to folk or neo-folk art. <i>Sunny Clarinets</i> often received one quarter of all letters sent to the music editorials of Ukrainian Television.			
1979	1980	1981	1982
281112 letters received by Ukrainian Media Committee	330749 letters received by Ukrainian Media Committee	3575 letters received by Music Editorial of Ukrainian TV	572027 letters received by Ukrainian Media Committee
<i>Soniachni Klarnety</i> (SK) became an established programme on UA TV		SK received 870 letters (24.3% of music editorial correspondence)	SK received 774 letters (25.4% of music editorial correspondence)

The audience of these programmes preferred the neo-romantic attitudes of the new wave of the folk revival. Many people, like Nastenka from the Ternopil region, appreciated television programmes that aimed to recover national traditions: “We have seen and listened to the native word of our parents and ancestors as they celebrated the tradition of our nation [narod].”⁸⁸³ After *Sunny Clarinets*, N. Sokil from the industrial Dnipropetrovsk region wrote that due to such television content:

in our songs we understand the meaning of melodies... we recognize ourselves, the world around,’ see:

“TsDAVO (1981), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 56,” Arkush 27.

⁸⁸² This children television programme, which featured contests, cartoons and other forms of entertainment, would remain the most popular programme on national Ukrainian Television even in the early 1990s.

⁸⁸³ “TsDAVO (1981), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 56,” Arkush 9.

A person connects his soul to the national headspring and a cradle of folk art, it's as if the wings grow the most, so it enriches the person and cleanses from the routine, greyness or sorrows of everyday life.⁸⁸⁴

The native world of one's ancestors, seen through the poetic metaphor of a cradle or a spring/water well,⁸⁸⁵ obviously had the magical power to reconnect a person with the past. But this imaginary past also possessed the power to evoke the meaning of life, to get away from "greyness or sorrows of everyday life". The magnifying eye of television worked as a magic mirror with which Soviet people could travel to a different reality, a media fairy-tale reality.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s Soviet television viewers experienced a new reality – a mediated national landscape which hybridised the existing landscape with the imagined mediascape. Therefore, the spaces formed by the Soviet media combined the physical and the imaginary, the real and the virtual in a distinctive way. The Ukrainian media(land)scape in the form of television contest *Sunny Clarinets* was represented by various regions and respective local folk/popular arts, where "sexual cosmology"⁸⁸⁶ was combined with ethnic geography.

Soviet Television's claims of truth made people believe in what they had seen on the TV screen. For instance, I.M. Kocherovskiy from L'viv trusted the way in which folk programmes connected him with the past: "Everything was shown as it was once in reality [...] We were brought to the depths of the soul by all that is wonderful and pleases the hearts – songs, chants, folk carols."⁸⁸⁷ This comrade took a TV show, a media performance as if it was showing real folk culture. Besides perceiving a TV show as reality, television had the power to reestablish among the audience specific feelings of belonging. Some people, who lived in other Soviet republics and could watch Ukrainian Television, re-discovered their lost sense of national belonging through such folk media, like Ivashchenko L. from Chisinau (Moldova).⁸⁸⁸ A. Shpak from the Murmansk region in the Russian Federation said that when he listened to Ukrainian folk songs, he imagined himself travelling back to Ukraine. His mediated imaginary brought him to the banks of the Dnipro River and his father's house.⁸⁸⁹ Indeed, media flows, described by Appadurai,⁸⁹⁰ enforced de-territorialisation (supranational, Soviet) and at the same time re-territorialisation (local, national) of identities, and he considered these phenomena to represent the constitutive feature of modern subjectivity.⁸⁹¹

⁸⁸⁴ "TsDAVO (1981), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 56," Arkush 10.

⁸⁸⁵ See the metaphor of water well in Iurii Illienko's film *Well for the Thirsty* (1965), which was banned by officials for the anti-Soviet depiction of reality.

⁸⁸⁶ On this concept see: Olwig, *Sexual Cosmology*.

⁸⁸⁷ "TsDAVO (1981), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 56," Arkush 9.

⁸⁸⁸ "TsDAVO (1981), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 56," Arkush 217.

⁸⁸⁹ "TsDAVO (1981), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 56," Arkush 217.

⁸⁹⁰ Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy."

⁸⁹¹ Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 3.

Multiple folk programmes inspired people to believe that folk and national culture possessed some “ever-flowing springs,” from which emanated truth and wisdom. This metaphor combines physical earth with some mediated folk qualities, turning the landscape into a media(land)scape. In 1981, Sheremeta P. from Zhmerynka (central Ukraine), who adored the neo-folk programming of Soviet media, wrote to the Ukrainian Media Committee that: “Folk songs cannot get old, because they flow as living water from the golden source of folk wisdom and truth, the folk song is immortal!”⁸⁹² Such claims were extensively collected by officials to prove that folklorism was the only way to contradict the “rotten and false” foreign popular culture. Often, Soviet people (like M. Polyakov from the city of Kremenchuk) believed that ancient and therefore authentic Ukrainian culture and arts can tackle “outward laxity, personal indiscipline, the paucity of the mind and education,” they can help to defeat “a rotten, corrupted soul, devoid of any sense of patriotism.”⁸⁹³

Such statements are similar to those made by the Romantics, and opposed the views of Lenin, Stalin and their followers. At the same time, such romanticism had a healing effect and helped people to reconnect with real life. Romantic views on the deep and eternal connection between people and the earth/land, folk songs and national soul were continuously uttered by officials and widely published by cultural workers close to officials. Then, these axioms were sent back in letters to Soviet institutions, like the Ukrainian Media Committee, as internalised and commonly shared wisdom. Therefore, we often encounter various repetitive formulaic phrases, as in N. Kravchenko’s letter from the central Ukrainian Cherkasy region:

The folk song is primarily the history of the earth/soil and indicates the immortality of the spirit of the people [...] This is the deep world of real life and struggle, the world of hopes and anticipations that do not leave a person in the most difficult hours.⁸⁹⁴

Holentiuk, from the city of Lutsk, admitted that when listening to the folk radio festival *Golden Keys* he could see “the glorious past of our people,” but that the programme also helped him to enjoy the happiness of the beautiful present.⁸⁹⁵ Folk media festivals thus helped many Ukrainians to reconnect with national traditions or even history. In January 1982, Petrenko N. from Kyiv wrote that, for her, folk songs embodied:

The precious gems of the poetic genius of working-people and the never-fading colour of national holy culture. Over millennia folk singers and poets endowed the song with inspiration, tenderness, flight of thoughts and affection [...] Folk songs have always been a companion of warriors and rebels; they fought for the liberation of the people.⁸⁹⁶

Ten years earlier such statements would have led to accusations of nationalism. L’viv Television editors were stigmatised in 1973 for exactly the same views – their programmes

⁸⁹² “TsDAVO (1981), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 56,” Arkshuh 217-218.

⁸⁹³ “TsDAVO (1981), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 56,” Arkush 9.

⁸⁹⁴ “TsDAVO (1981), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 56,” Arkush 18.

⁸⁹⁵ “TsDAVO (1981), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 56,” Arkush 19.

⁸⁹⁶ “TsDAVO (1982), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 572,” Arkush 22.

combined folk culture and references to the military past (see Chapter 4). However, as we have seen, already by the end of the 1970s and early 1980s such programmes and messages were no longer seen as threatening the ideological foundations of Soviet Ukrainian culture.

Television and radio folk festivals became an important part of the Soviet mediascape and even shaped a media-spectacle. The Centre for Scientific Programming⁸⁹⁷ at Gosteleradio surveyed that almost 40 percent of the audience were happy with folklore and folklorism on the Soviet screen and almost 50 percent responded that they had watched such television programmes.⁸⁹⁸ This was an important quantitative claim and television editors could openly claim that they produced programmes not only for the minor group of amateurs and folk artists (around 11 million active participants in the USSR)⁸⁹⁹ but for all Soviet people, or at least half of them (here the estimation might be more than 50 million citizens).⁹⁰⁰

5.4. Visualising electric-folk, 1979-1985

The new neo-folk trend in Soviet Ukrainian Estrada intensified in the period after 1979 and became especially notable between 1981-1985. As in socialist Romania and Poland, television and radio folk festivals fostered the development of new popular music genres. Similarly, the Soviet Ukrainian folk revival created a fresh attitude to authentic cultures and stimulated the creation of new hybrid music genres. This type of music was ideologically correct and at the same time admired by the masses. While supporting amateur and folk arts officials strove to diminish the role of “non-socialist” entertainment and to fight corruption in Soviet cultural industries. During this period the aging party leadership feared that capitalism had already penetrated the USSR in some forms and argued that needed to be urgently countered.

⁸⁹⁷ This centre was reorganized in 1970 from the Scientific-Methodological Division, structural part of the Soviet Media Committee (Gosteleradio SSR), see: Evans, *Between Truth and Time* (2016), 51–52.

⁸⁹⁸ Kozlovskii, “Narodnoie tvorchestvo - stremleniie k prekrasnomu.”

⁸⁹⁹ Shekhtman, *Iskusstvo Millionov*, 7.

⁹⁰⁰ On Soviet television audience see: Evans, *Between Truth and Time* (2016), 49–81. Russian pop-journalist Fedor Razzakov cites number of 130 millions of daily Soviet viewers in 1986, see: Fedor Razzakov, *Gibel Sovetskogo TV: tainy televideniia ot Stalina do Gorbacheva, 1930-1991* (Moscow: EKSMO, 2009), 264. Even though there are no evidences in Razzakov’s claims, this number is more likely to be close to reality.

Indeed, western culture was highly admired in the late USSR⁹⁰¹ and officials saw in this “westernisation”⁹⁰² the subversive work of foreign secret agencies.⁹⁰³ Young people were recognised as the most vulnerable part of the Soviet population, especially if exposed to western “insidious charms.” Thus, in the late 1970s, and especially in the early 1980s, officials launched a cultural war against corruption in the music scene,⁹⁰⁴ harshly reacting to the sex-appeal of particular artists,⁹⁰⁵ and striving to remove other recognizable features of western pop culture from the Soviet art scene. This anti-pop campaign, called a “crusade against pop” by some western scholars, encouraged neo-folk trends in popular music.

In the late 1960s, the amateur composer Volodymyr Ivasiuk, the songwriter and non-professional music producer Levko Dutkovskiy, and the founder of Smerichka, were among the few persons in Soviet Ukraine whose work had sprung from the new national popular music. This music combined beat rhythms (borrowed from The Beatles) and electric guitars with folk or semi-folk verses and sounds. Dutkovskiy’s wife Alla, who styled the scenic costumes for Smerichka and the new Soviet pop-icon Sofia Rotaru, influenced neo-folk fashion, which was copied by many Ukrainian Estrada bands.⁹⁰⁶ Thus, in the early 1970s some Ukrainian music collectives, officially defined as vocal and instrumental ensembles,⁹⁰⁷ created modern-pop or neo-folk music aesthetics, which could be defined as folk-rock. However, such distinctions were never clear.

⁹⁰¹ Yurchak positions this admiration of the west in the sphere of Soviet imaginary, though it had vast material dimension, see his chapter: *Imaginary West: The Elsewhere of Late Socialism*, part of: Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, until It Was No More*. On music see: E.Ye. Alekseiev, P.F. Andrukovich, and H.L. Holovinskiy, “Molodezh i Muzyka Sehodnia,” in *Sotsialnyie Funkcii Iskusstva i Eho Vidy* (Moscow, 1980); P.F. Andrukovich and H.L. Holovinskiy, “Zvukozapisi i Molodoi Slushatel’ Muzyki,” in *Rozhdenie Zvukovoho Obraza: (Khudozhestvennyie Problemy Zvukozapisi v Ekrannykh Iskusstvakh i Na Radio)*, ed. E.B. Averbakh (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1985).

⁹⁰² Sergei Zhuk claims that westernisation of Soviet culture, besides other factors, also happened within political détente [razriadka], which caused extensive cultural imports from the west to USSR. Important part of these imports were popular entertainment, he affirms that ‘two thirds of the US movies bought by the Sovetskoyfilm between 1968 and 1988 were for ‘pure entertainment,’ see: Zhuk, “Hollywood’s Insidious Charms,” 603.

⁹⁰³ Nezdolia claims that foreign agencies were indeed active in late USSR, trying ‘to spoil’ Soviet youth by foreign cultural products, see: Nezdolia, *Dve epokhi generala gosbezopasnosti*, 138–84.

⁹⁰⁴ Terry Bright, “Soviet Crusade against Pop,” *Popular Music* 5, no. Continuity and Change (1985): 123–48.

⁹⁰⁵ For ‘extreme’ sexuality some female artists were criticized, like ‘folk-princess’ Sophia Rotaru, while even very moderate Nazarii Yaremchuk from *Smerichka* had been warned by officials. Rotaru featured in the famous musical *Dusha* [Soul], which attracted in 1981 more than 30 million Soviet viewers, where semi-official rock band *Mashyna vremeni* [Time Machine] appeared among recognized Soviet stars, see: MacFadyen, *Red Stars: Personality and the Soviet Popular Song, 1955-1991*, 142. In few years, bands like *Mashyna vremeni* and even Rotaru would be criticized and their official performances have been restricted till Perestroika. Between 1983 and 1987 Rotaru was banned from foreign concert tours thus mainly performing in Crimea, Ukraine, Russian Federation and other republics of USSR.

⁹⁰⁶ See photos of this fashion, shared publicly by the founder of *Smerichka*, Lev Dutkovskiy: Alla Dutkovksa, “Costumes, designed for ensemble Smerichka,” Blog, *Facebook.com* (blog), March 6, 2011, <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=188856767796976&set=pb.100000179610747.-2207520000.1446107484.&type=3&theater>.

⁹⁰⁷ Normally such ensembles were called through the acronym VIA.

Such popular music, as a form of popular variety in the Ukrainian language, often featured semi-folk inspirations, which socialist ethnographers called folklorism (see Chapter 5.1.).⁹⁰⁸ Folklorism was seen as an imitation of real folk culture which simulated a supposed national style. From the 1960s Soviet theoreticians disputed the very need to adapt folk art to contemporary styles, which became a common practice in the late 1950s. In the early 1960s, some Soviet ethnographers and cultural workers called for the rejection of imitations in favour of authenticity and invited officials or, more importantly, cultural workers, to abstain from folklorism.⁹⁰⁹ Some Soviet critics called the new modern music “pseudo-national,” for its imitation of folk traditions. They believed that such “national performativity” had a negative effect on the masses (see Chapter 8.4., which discusses issues of authenticity and imitation in national popular culture).⁹¹⁰ However, in the 1970s the majority of Soviet citizens seemed to enjoy folklorism, especially performed by new neo-folk Estrada bands. Thousands of Soviet people, including performers, considered this type of music to be truly national and not pseudo-national.⁹¹¹

Such national folk-pop or modern-pop often combined local music with transnational genres or trends. Viktor Morozov, a renowned Ukrainian composer and pop-musician of the 1970-1980s, who performed in Smerichka and Vatra, indicates that in his list besides The Beatles and The Troggs, were American bands like Chicago and Blood, Sweat and Tears. In the late 1970s, he listened to the jazz of Herbie Hancock or John McLaughlin which he interpreted in his music along with other famous western bands.⁹¹² Another member of Vatra (violin and keyboard player) and the director the band, Roman Lozynskyi, disclosed to me in a personal conversation in 2013 that the stylised national dress of musicians had to indicate their origin and style (national modern-pop), but in musical form, they often followed American bands like Chicago.⁹¹³ These popular performers wanted to make high-quality music and therefore combined folk melodies with well-known western styles or genres (soul music, gospel music, rhythm and blues, jazz).⁹¹⁴

⁹⁰⁸ Viktor Gusev, “Folklor i khudozhestvennaia samodeiatelnost,” in *Folklor i khudozhestvennaia samodeiatelnost*, ed. Nikolai Novikov (Leningrad: Nauka, 1968), 232.

⁹⁰⁹ Gusev, 55–56. In early 1960s Aleksei Koposov argued that popular focus on entertainment and artificial theatricality harmed real folk culture, see: Aleksei Koposov, “O Russkikh Narodnykh Khorakh,” *Sovetskaia Muzyka*, no. 4 (1962): 21–26.

⁹¹⁰ Gusev, “Folklor i khudozhestvennaia samodeiatelnost,” 61.

⁹¹¹ Officials and many Ukrainian scholars considered combination of modern and folk as normal and positive, see: S.D. Zubkov, “Poiednannia Profesionalnoii Ta Narodnoii Tvorchosti v Radianskykh Obriadakh,” *Narodna Tvorchist Ta Etnographia*, no. 1 (1983): 3–9.

⁹¹² See interviews with Morozov: Morozov, The story of Arnika (interview, 2015); Victor Morozov, Pislia ‘Wild Thing’ my vidrazu staly uspishnymi, interview by Oliia Vyshnia, Transcribed interview, 4 June 2014, <https://varianty.lviv.ua/20022-viktor-morozov-pislia-wild-thing-my-vidrazu-staly-uspishnymi>.

⁹¹³ *Chicago* itself performed very hybrid style of rock, the combination of classical, jazz, R&B, and pop influences, bearing references to *Beatles* as well as Jimi Hendrix.

⁹¹⁴ See interview of Lozynskyi: Roman Lozynskyi, On contemporary pop-music, interview by Bohdan Shumylovych, video recording, April 2013, <http://www.varianty.net>, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YLIJoCEwA3k>.

In the 1970s Soviet Ukrainian Estrada was often hybrid and strove to combine Ukrainian folk or semi-folk music, and the aesthetics of Soviet Estrada with American soul music, jazz, or funk. For instance, Chervona Ruta, which was created in 1971 at the Chernivtsi Philharmonic, was known as a collective with a strong neo-folk appearance.⁹¹⁵ However, even though musicians often dressed in stylised neo-folk costumes, in the mid-1970s they played folk-rock, jazz and folk-funk, which was a combination of American soul music, R&B and Ukrainian neo-folk.

The mid-1970s marked the golden age of Chervona Ruta band and its leader Rotaru. In 1975 Sofia Rotaru recorded her most popular record (at the Kyiv branch of the Soviet Melodia recording company), which solely contained the songs of Volodymyr Ivasiuk. This 40-minute record was released in 1977 with the title *Sofia Rotaru Sings Songs of Volodymyr Ivasiuk*. The music was played by the Estrada Orchestra of Ukrainian Television and Radio (director R. Babich) and the Estrada Orchestra was under the direction of F. Glushchenko. The vinyl was popular and ideologically correct, featuring large photos of Ivasiuk and Rotaru and officials acknowledged this work with a special Komsomol prize. However, when the songs were performed on television or during concerts, the music was less official and instrumentalists added a certain level of improvisation.

For instance, in 1975 the Ukrtefilm studio produced the exceptionally popular musical *The Song Will Be Between Us* [Pisnia bude pomizh nas], purely dedicated to the voice of Sofia Rotaru.⁹¹⁶ As in other Carpathian musical films like *Zalytsialnyky* (1968), *Siisia*, *Rodysia* (1969) or *Chervona Ruta* (1971), the film was named after the title of the song “The Song Will Be Between Us” by Volodymyr Ivasiuk. Similarly, Rotaru sang various popular songs surrounded by the picturesque Carpathian landscape. She and her band dressed in various stylised costumes, acting as though they were highland peasants and singing songs about love and happiness. Performers looked deliberately stylised, as though they were following the methodological recommendations of *Socialist Culture*, the official magazine of the Ministry of Culture of Soviet Ukraine. This magazine frequently featured instructions for professional or amateur bands on how to style “traditional” clothes according to various Ukrainian ethnographic regions.⁹¹⁷ So, if the music band originated from the Ukrainian Bukovina or

⁹¹⁵ This folklorism or national form of the band did not comply with the background of its performers, who by majority were Ukrainians, Jews and Russians. All these people performed as if they were ‘sincere’ Ukrainians, but in reality, they were mostly Russian speaking Soviet urban dwellers. This performativity motivates me to stress that such music had a form of ‘performing nationality,’ promoted by officials and admired by the audience. See interview with the founder of Smerichka band: Dutkovskyyi, Creation of Smerichka (interview, 2015).

⁹¹⁶ This musical was made by Urktefilm studio, directed by Viktor Storozhenko and referred to a song with the same title (*The Song Will Be Between Us*), written by Volodymyr Ivasiuk, who also was a composer of the film. This music film was produced in Carpathians and featured 14 songs, complemented with semi-professional dance collectives from Bukovina and Kyiv.

⁹¹⁷ “Kultura Scenichnoho Obrazu,” *Sotsialistychna Kultura*, 1969, 24–25. This particular magazine featured the whole section printed in colour, which gave vivid examples on how to stylize national and regional costumes for amateur and popular music bands.

Podillia regions, officials recommended using various forms of stylisation. In so doing, they could be considered both local and universal.

The Carpathian musical *The Song Will Be Between Us* included various types of dresses: in **Figure 5.2. A-B**, one can see a typical Hutsul ethnographic outfit in the background and the newly designed stage costumes of musicians from the Chervona Ruta band. This combination of old and new, authentic and stylised, which symbolically amalgamated folk traditions and contemporary Ukrainian Estrada, was endorsed by the party, and the professional and amateur art scenes in Ukraine.

Figure 5.2.A-B. The television musical *The Song Will Be Between Us*. The example of folk/folklorism and the Carpathian landscape in the musical film by Ukrtelevfilm (1975).



A. Chervona Ruta band members, dressed in stylised folk costumes, sing stylised folk songs. Stills from film.



B. Provocatively dressed young women dance with the Carpathians in the background. Stills from film.

In *The Song Will Be Between Us* (1975), performers and musicians, some of whom have haircuts in the style Angela Davis (see **Figure 5.3.A-B**), dress in semi-folk costumes and play diverse instruments, such as modern drums, electric guitars and traditional violins and flutes. To perform the old-style Ukrainian song “Oi Marichko Chicheri” they start from the rhythmic section played with drums, electric guitars and keyboard, which closely resembles the intro to “Papa Was a Rolling Stone” (1972) by the American soul-band The Temptations. If in the late 1960s, Ivasiuk was inspired by Italian pop music and other European songs, by the mid-1970s Chervona Ruta had new tastes. Their arrangement of the Ukrainian folk song “Oi Marichko Chicheri” revealed that they had listened to American rock, soul music and funk and had tried to imitate The Temptations.

Figure 5.3.A-B The Soviet band L’vivians [L’viviany] from the city of L’viv and mediatised Afro-American haircut.



This photograph on the left, distributed by Yurii Matiichyn, who was a band member of L'viviany [L'vivians] in 1975, features Alik Levinson (on the right-hand side). Levinson's haircut often attracted L'viv police attention, who considered him provocatively "unofficial". The normal excuse for this haircut was that it followed Angela Davis, who features in the photograph on the right.⁹¹⁸ In this image we see a Soviet female cosmonaut and the head of the Committee of Soviet Women, Valentina Tereshkova giving a present to Angela Davis, the member of Central Committee of CPUSA (www.cpusa.org). Davis visited the USSR in 1972 and this event was widely broadcast by the Soviet media,⁹¹⁹ inspiring Soviet pop-musicians to follow her fashion.⁹²⁰

When Chervona Ruta plays the intro to "Oi Marichko Chicheri", they are accompanied by a group of beautiful women – professional dancers from Kyiv's State music-hall – dressed in neo-folk miniskirts, who dance and smile, expressing joy and happiness (see **Figure 5.2.B**). These women also act as if though they are performing national or folk dances, though it is actually contemporary choreography. Thus, the musical looks both artificial and authentic at the same time, combining the picturesque natural landscape with new Ukrainian Estrada, which by its character also mixes the aesthetics of folk, American soul, funk and funk-jazz. Due to such features, this performance was very emotional. Even now, people enjoy this musical, such as an unknown observer (aka DustyLovesOregon) who left the following comment on a YouTube video of the musical in 2017:

⁹¹⁸ D. Chernov, *Valentina Tereshkova and Angela Davis*, August 29, 1972, Digitized photograph, August 29, 1972, Image #717718 (original A72-11933), RIA Novosti archive (visualrian.ru), <http://visualrian.ru/search/222/717718.html?query=%D0%A7%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B2%20%D0%94.&area=author&types%5B%5D=photo&types%5B%5D=video&types%5B%5D=infographics&types%5B%5D=caricature&types%5B%5D=russia>.

⁹¹⁹ Davis became widely known in USSR since Soviet media organized an international campaign to free her from jail in USA. The slogan 'Freedom to Angela Davis' would become a mem among Soviet people, especially cultural intelligentsia, who liked Davis for her style and behaviour.

⁹²⁰ I recall this story about 'associative haircut' after various talks with people (like Markian Ivashchyshyn, Liubko Petrenko and others) who personally knew Levinson. On borrowings from American culture in USSR see: Zhuk, "Hollywood's Insidious Charms."

This is hilarious. I love the song – and this treatment is beyond awesome – In a funny way... I mean, look at the sopilka [flute] player... everyone's pretty much faking it except the dancers. LOVE THIS. Ukrainian 70s kitsch at its best.⁹²¹

Indeed, Soviet Ukrainian culture of the 1970s and early 1980s often turned to excessive and kitsch neo-folk performativity. Ensembles like Chervona Ruta (Crimean Philharmonics⁹²²), Smerichka (Chernivtsi Philharmonics), Vodograi (Dnipropetrovsk Philharmonics), Medobory (Ternopil Philharmonics) or Vatra (L'viv Philharmonics), despite wanting to remain within the neo-folk or folk-rock tradition, at the same time strove to combine American soul and jazz, with the new rhythms of funk.

Normally, each Soviet republic had a representative band, like that of Pesniary (Belarus), Ariel (Russia), Orera (Georgia) or Yalla (Uzbekistan), which played national Soviet Estrada in different languages. In Soviet Ukraine, the most representative and technically supported neo-folk band was Kobza,⁹²³ a part of the state-run concert agency Ukrkontsert.⁹²⁴ It had a repertoire in the national language and performers often used kitschy ethnic costumes and psychedelic or pop-art style posters.⁹²⁵ In the early 1980s, at the height of its fame, Kobza went as far as to create a hybrid combination of an ancient Ukrainian folk instrument called the kobza with modern electric technology. The "Electric kobza" was the Soviet Ukrainian equivalent of the electric guitar, a strange technical combination of local (kobza) and global traditions (electric guitar).

Kitsch in my argument is used not as a denunciation or evaluation, but rather as a technical term, which defines the excessive aesthetics of folklorism, when artists imitated folk aesthetics, but strayed from traditional folk rhythms and tunes. This notion is closer to a French cliché, which, as Svetlana Boym states is, "a modern word par excellence, which moves from technology to aesthetics."⁹²⁶ In the second half of the 1970s these clichéd/hybrid forms

⁹²¹ See the online-comment by DustyLovesOregon, "VIA Chervona Ruta 'Oi Marichko Chicheri,'" Video channel, *Youtube.Com* (blog), August 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ueap5-clDKc&lc=UghoWKjSOHv5IngCoAEC>.

⁹²² This band moved from Chernivtsi to Crimea at the same year when an ideological conflict happened with Sofia Rotaru's father and communist officials. He was accused of practicing banned religious rituals and fired from Communist Party. This scandal made carrier of Rotaru in Bukovina a bit problematic, but since she was invited at the same time to 'settle' at Crimean Philharmonics the whole band shifted to the South.

⁹²³ *Kobza* was officially established in Kyiv in 1971, when new Ukrainian Estrada was gaining popularity on the whole USSR mediascape. This new music was represented by ensemble *Smerichka*, singer Sofia Rotaru and composer Volodymyr Ivasiuk, who gained all-Soviet popularity. Kobza had to represent symbolically not just regional Ukrainian culture, but official Soviet Ukrainian culture.

⁹²⁴ This agency was directly subordinated to the Ministry of Culture of Soviet Ukraine and aimed to select best cultural collectives of the republic. In 1982 *Kobza* was the first Ukrainian popular music band to tour Canada and this concert tour was recorded on special vinyl, see reviews: "Kiev's Kobza Live in Ottawa," *The Ukrainian Weekly*, September 26, 1982.

⁹²⁵ Art historian Vasyl Kosiv claims that Soviet Ukrainian music posters were very hybrid and combined western art styles, which normally were banned from high culture, see: Vasyl Kosiv, "Forbidden - Legally! Western Modernism in the Posters of Soviet Ukraine of the 1970s and 1980s." (Research presentation, Public lecture, The Shevchenko Scientific Society in the US, October 24, 2015), http://shevchenko.org/past_event/108-7/.

⁹²⁶ Boym, *Common Places*, 14. She also claimed: "We live nowadays in a "clichegenic society"; it is our inescapable cultural predicament" while "kitsch has produced the "universal culture" of the twentieth

of Soviet Ukrainian Estrada would become dominant in popular music scenes, representing the combination of seemingly authentic and modernised national music. Juliana Osinchuk from Canada, when reviewing a Kobza concert, described their style as:

The expert fusion of tradition with electronics, rock, jazz, honky-tonk and blues. The ensemble has incorporated folk instruments – such as the sopilka, drymba, bandura, kobza and buhay – into its electronic style [...] Kobza’s concert was a big success and the ensemble was rewarded with a standing ovation.⁹²⁷

Even though Kobza received this public endorsement from Canada in 1982, for most diaspora nationalists such music was seen as fake (kitsch). The same magazine indicated that the “real Ukrainian culture” was concerned with its quest for freedom and the Soviet Kobza therefore did not and could not reflect this national spirit of resistance. For Canadian Ukrainian nationalists Kyiv’s Kobza was as authentic as the Soviet Ukrainian government, thus being “ornate and false façade, masking the reality of oppression and russification.”⁹²⁸

Indeed, the Soviet Ukrainian Estrada of the late 1970s and early 1980s was not about “fighting” or reviving the spirit of national resistance, as imagined by Canadian Ukrainians. On the contrary, it aimed to create a spectacle: to shape a “national form” of popular music (though leaning towards transnational genres), based on presumed “socialist” content, though in reality this was blurred. In order to be seen as national, pop-music employed not only verses in the Ukrainian language but also (highly visible) stylised costumes and national landscape. Musicals like *The Song Will Be Between Us* identified that the Soviet Ukrainian media-spectacle was shaped in the mid-1970s, turning more and more people to this imaginary world. An important argument here is that this fantasy combination of “national nature” and “national music” was created and maintained by Soviet Ukrainian television between 1965-1970.

Thus, the Soviet media could produce vivid and appealing fantasies. Karen Dill states that we usually make two errors when thinking about media: first, we tend to believe that media fantasies do not shape our reality and second, that popular content only entertains and is not intended “to move us and make a difference to us”:⁹²⁹

A great film, play, game, or song is a work of art and can have a profound influence on our lives. True, some entertainment media experiences may be shallow and without lasting value. But some entertainment experiences are so profound that they change us and stay with us.⁹³⁰

century.” Milan Kundera used a definition ‘totalitarian kitsch’, though his reference is more related to fine art and fiction, see: Milan Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, ed. Michael Henry Heim and Richmond Hoxie (Faber & Faber London, 1984).

⁹²⁷ “Kiev’s Kobza Live in Ottawa,” 5.

⁹²⁸ “Kiev’s Kobza Live in Ottawa,” 6.

⁹²⁹ Karen E. Dill-Shackleford, *How Fantasy Becomes Reality: Information and Entertainment Media in Everyday Life* (Oxford University Press, 2016), 7. Similarly, Soviet officials claimed that rituals (like winter holidays of music performances) moved people and made strong impressions not only on viewers but also on participants, see: *Sotsialisticheskaia obriadnost* (Kiev: Vyshcha shkola, 1986), 167.

⁹³⁰ Dill-Shackleford, *How Fantasy Becomes Reality*, 11.

Similarly, Ukrainian musicians like Morozov or Lozynskyi claimed that they were interested in making high quality popular culture.⁹³¹ To make popular shows that would have a profound influence on peoples' lives and music, and which would move the audience, they frequently combined western examples with local traditions. Letters sent to the Ukrainian Media Committee in the 1970s and 1980s, prove that people were often moved by the neo-folk programming of the Soviet Ukrainian media.⁹³² Neo-folk forms of popular media had the power to inspire powerful though mixed emotions.

5.5. Real or imagined folk

However, although the audience of Soviet folk programming was vast and active, media managers did not have a common view on the character of this programming: what should be shown: real or imagined folk? Attitudes also varied within the audience since some preferred authenticity, while others enjoyed the artistry. One observer from Kyiv (Kovalchuk S.) wrote to Soviet media managers in 1982 that:

If someone handles the folk and ancient song, frames it up for the needs of today's performers, then this exercise kills in the song both it's folk nature [narodnost] and it's antique character [starina].⁹³³

This argument resembles similar disputes among Soviet and socialist folklorists of the late 1960s, who could not find common ground on the matter of the difference between amateur and folk art.⁹³⁴ Viktor Gusev, the active opponent of folklorism and any other forms of folk imitations, claimed that amateur art practice, promoted in Soviet villages by officials, was often considered by natives as a sign of urban culture, and was somewhat different from the local and authentic practice.⁹³⁵ In the early stage of Soviet amateur art development,⁹³⁶ the real culture of the peasants was often replaced by professional imitations produced in cities, and only in the 1960s did the Soviets revive the attitude that local and rustic art is valuable and good.⁹³⁷ Critics of folk imitations (folklorism), like Gusev, often experienced that:

⁹³¹ Morozov, The story of Arnika (interview, 2015); Lozynskyi, On contemporary pop-music (interview, 2013).

⁹³² See for instance responses from the audience in 1981: "TsDAVO (1981), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 56."

⁹³³ "TsDAVO (1982), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 572," Arkush 39. Some viewers wrote to Ukrainian media committee negative responses claiming that many collectives that are showed by folk television programmes as authentic are not real, but rather imitate folk culture, see: "TsDAVO (1981), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 56," Arkush 76.

⁹³⁴ Nikolai Novikov, ed., *Folklor i khudozhestvennaia samodeiatel'nost* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1968).

⁹³⁵ Gusev, "Folklor i khudozhestvennaia samodeiatel'nost," 50. On the Soviet discussion of folklorism see: Šmidchens, "Folklorism Revisited," 55–56.

⁹³⁶ Soviet amateur arts (samodeiatel'noie iskusstvo) were closely connected with folklorism, though considered as a separate from folk cultural practice. Often 'amateur' in official discourse was coupled with other concepts, such as 'creativity' and 'folk', turning into cultural practices of 'amateur and folk creativity'. Russian and Soviet folklorists often favored the terms 'folk creativity' (narodnoe tvorchestvo) or 'contemporary folklore' (sovremennyi folklor) over folklorism, see: Šmidchens, "Folklorism Revisited," 52.

⁹³⁷ Gusev, "Folklor i khudozhestvennaia samodeiatel'nost," 55. The notion of 'folklorism' was developed in USSR in 1930s by scholars like Mark Azadovsky (1888-1954), later by Izaly Zemtsovsky or Viktor Gusev. This concept, which supposedly was borrowed from French folklorist Paul Sebillot, also used scholars in Eastern Europe. In western tradition, especially in Germany, ethnographers of the early 1960s used notion of 'folklorismus', developed by scholars like Hans Moser and Hermann Bausinger. See: Venetia J. Newall, "The

The pseudo-national was often seen as a “new” in folk art, but it had a disastrous impact on the state of the spiritual culture of the masses and on the aesthetic education of the working people.⁹³⁸

Vitalii Kozlovskii, who worked in Moscow’s editorials, which produced folk television programmes for the whole Soviet audience, often claimed that there were tensions among top television managers regarding whether to promote professional art and folklorism (professional imitation of folk) or to support real non-professional folk or amateur art. He admits that professionals did not like how amateurs were making jokes – “we are not folk artists [ne narodnyie artisty], but rather artists from the folk [artisty iz naroda]” – ⁹³⁹ which aimed to distance professionals from non-professionals. Television managers in Moscow strove to prove that Soviet amateur arts, even though imitating folk art, were of the utmost importance for the culture for the masses. For them, artistic amateur performances, frequently broadcast on TV, was a way of involving the masses in art, and this indicated the development of real socialism:

This [amateur] is simultaneously a phenomenon of art and a cultural and educational movement. Even if a person is convinced that the scale of his or her talent does not promise him or her any further success in the future, he or she does not depart from the amateur art. Among the stimuli that motivate a person, in the first place is the aesthetic satisfaction, the joy of creativity. But not only. There are other reasons: the desire to show one’s abilities, comradely communication and relaxation from the everyday boredom. It is very important that the personal satisfaction of amateur artist has found PUBLIC RECOGNITION by means of television.⁹⁴⁰

Indeed, television did not aim to propagate the authenticity or artistry of folk or amateur art, but was instead interested in empowering Soviet folk creativity which helped to shape the neo-folk revival in the 1980s. Because of its transformative powers, namely its capacity to urge the common Soviet people to not only appreciate but also to join folk and amateur collectives (thus transforming them into better human beings), some scholars of the time believed that television has already gained the characteristics of socialist realism.⁹⁴¹ Thus, as “traditional cultural” content was appreciated both by the Soviet audience and by officials, the best media programmes, produced at Moscow’s Desk of Folk Creativity [redaktsiia

Adaptation of *Folklore and Tradition (Folklorismus)*,” *Folklore* 98, no. 2 (January 1987): 131–32; Šmidchens, “Folklorism Revisited,” 52; Regina Bendix, “Folklorism: The Challenge of a Concept,” *International Folklore Review*. 6 (1988): 5–15.

⁹³⁸ Gusev, “Folklor i khudozhestvennaia samodeiatelnost,” 61.

⁹³⁹ This joke appeared at the Stalinist musical comedy *Kuban Cossacks*, when the manager [zavkhoz] Anton Mudretsov (performed by Vladimir Volodin) sang a song by Isaak Dunaievskii, Mikhail Volpin and Mikhail Isakovskii (1949). The verses have following lines: “*Horse breeders [konevody], tractor drivers [traktoristy], So to speak, nature itself [tak skazat', sama priroda] - Not folk artists, but artists from the people [ne narodnyie artisty, a artisty iz naroda].*” Next strokes admit that anybody in the Soviet Union could transform from the folk artist into the acknowledged professional artist, those who were officially called the ‘people’s artist’ [narodnyi artist]. The song ends up with comic lines: “*All the ways are open for us [vse puti u nas otkryty], Everybody has a wide path [vsem otkryt shirokii trakt], So be famous, Goodbye, and Entracte [tak chto budte znamenity, do svidaniia, antrakt].*”

⁹⁴⁰ Kozlovskii, “Narodnoie tvorchestvo - stremleniie k prekrasnomu.” Capitalized by the author.

⁹⁴¹ Egorov, *Televideniye i Zritel'*, 2.

narodnogo tvorchestva],⁹⁴² were broadcast by the First Channel in the prime time hours from 18.00-22.00.⁹⁴³

Soviet television as art was appreciated by officials for its main principles: devotion to the Communist Party, scientific approach, openness, orientation towards people and connection with life, adherence to theory and practice, commitment to developing/changing reality, for showing responsiveness and emotionally charged information, broadly and constantly depicting life by the means of words and audio-visual methods.⁹⁴⁴ It followed and embodied Lenin's arguments about socialist art, propagandised by many Soviet newspapers and magazines:

[Art has] to remain in the deepest roots, in the very form of the all-encompassing masses of the working people. It must be clearly understood by the masses and loved by them. It must unite the feeling, the thought and the will of these masses, to empower and highlight them. It is to induce artists in the masses and develop them.⁹⁴⁵

Soviet television of the 1980s was, as Lenin imagined, the most popular art form, loved by the masses.⁹⁴⁶ This art form empowered and highlighted people and had the biggest audience among the socialist arts. Neia Zorkaia revealed that in the mid-1970s Soviet television had a vast audience: during one season all the theatres in the USSR could appeal to 90 million visitors; a single popular film attracted around 60-70 million; and the average television film could attract 80 million viewers.⁹⁴⁷ The general daily audience of Soviet TV in the 1980s exceeded 100 million people, which was one third of the total population of the USSR.

Zorkaia also claimed that the basic structures and plots of programmes on Soviet Central Television were mainly borrowed from Russian folk and domestic traditions.⁹⁴⁸ At the same time, Soviet television heavily promoted folk arts and folklorism through its programming. Thus, we can claim that although television was perceived as a modern media, which was the case when it comes to technology, its cultural form and programming depended on folk culture: programmes relied on fairy-tale like basic structures borrowed from folk traditions and at the same time promoted various forms of folk arts. As was

⁹⁴² The most important television programme of this editorial was Our Address – Soviet Union [Nash adres – Sovetskii Soiuz], broadcasted once per month for an hour on the First Channel of Soviet Television.

⁹⁴³ On prime time spots on Soviet TV see: Evans, "From Truth to Time (2010)," 52–85.

⁹⁴⁴ Egorov, *Televideniye i Zritel'*, 3.

⁹⁴⁵ See this quote in the Clara Zetkin's recollections: Clara Zetkin, *O Lenine: sbornik statei i vospominanii* (Moscow: Directmedia, 2013), 34. These Lenin's arguments were continuously repeated by officials and absorbed by common people. By the 1970, the Minister of Culture of USSR called the whole Soviet nation – a 'nation-artist' or 'folk-artist', see: Ekaterina Furtseva, "Narod Khudozhnik," *Ogoniok*, March 28, 1970, 2–3.

⁹⁴⁶ The main Ukrainian television cameraman [golovnyi operator] in the 1980s confessed me during the interview, that even though there existed common understanding that television belongs to arts, very rarely television editors or other professionals were praised as artists by officials. Most probably the problem was in the mere ephemeral nature of television, while normally artists were acknowledged and praised for their works, which had material substance. See: Yurii Fedorov, On Ukrainian TV, interview by Bohdan Shumylovych, Recorded audio interview, 20 January 2017, Urban Media Archive, Center for Urban History of East-Central Europe (L'viv, Ukraine).

⁹⁴⁷ Zorkaia, *Na Rubezhe Stoletij*, 298.

⁹⁴⁸ Zorkaia, 300.

mentioned earlier, Soviet television as practice and art was a hybrid phenomenon since it combined sincere folk and (imitating) folklorism that often turned into kitsch and fakelore; it created a space which was vivid and extremely imaginary, real and utopian at the same time.⁹⁴⁹

The discussion about authentic folk culture and political folklorism, which intensified in Europe in the 1970s, did not end in the 1980s. Writing in 1987 about the adaptation of folklore and tradition, Venetia Newall claimed that we must accept that folklorism was a complex phenomenon with an important psychological function not only for performers and their audience, but also for those who initiated and organised events.⁹⁵⁰ In the late 1980s, scholars such as Newall widely accepted that there is no authenticity or genuine features in folklore, so something defined as folklorism for one generation could turn to folklore of the other's generation.

In Ukraine, Soviet television functioned as a major instrument of national imagination. Depicting national life and culture by means of audio-visual methods, showing emotionally charged folk programmes, being responsive and available, Ukrainian Television shaped the feeling of a family, or as Appadurai frames it, sodalities of worship and charisma. Soviet Ukrainian media festivals strove to shape a common folk-nation for people living in scattered regions and lands of the vast country, connected only through media.⁹⁵¹ The imaginary connection between media, land/earth and folk culture came to Ukrainian viewers in the form of media rituals (as media folk festivals), which strove to convey respected information through meaningful symbols.⁹⁵²

Researchers of ritualised cultural forms, such as festivals, admit that, historically, these short-term events were intended to celebrate various bonds (ethnic, national or religious). Festivals, carnivals and fairs:

Have been important forms of social and cultural participation, used to articulate and communicate shared values, ideologies and mythologies central to the world-view of relatively localized communities.⁹⁵³

⁹⁴⁹ Zorkaia, "Khorovod v elektronnom luce," 46.

⁹⁵⁰ Newall, "The Adaptation of Folklore and Tradition (Folklorismus)," 146.

⁹⁵¹ Ukraine is a vast country and till our days has troubles in road infrastructure, thus many regions of the country are not connected with each other. The major instrument of imagining a nation and Ukrainian territory was Soviet media, therefore a television festival which brought various ethnographic regions on the TV screen functioned as 'print capitalism' in the 19th century Europe, though being more emotionally charged.

⁹⁵² Elena Petrushanskaia claims that television shaped basic daily and yearly rituals of common people, which often reflected ancient mythical/poetic traditions, see: Vartanov, *Televideniie Mezhdru Iskusstvom I Massmedia*, 274–75. In this respect Soviet television could be seen similar to a ritual, described by Victor Turner, see: Victor Turner, *The Drums of Affliction: A Study of Religious Processes among the Ndembu of Zambia* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 1–2. The structure of Turner's ritual is analysed here: Mathieu Deflem, "Ritual, Anti-Structure, and Religion: A Discussion of Victor Turner's Processual Symbolic Analysis," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 30, no. 1 (1991): 5.

⁹⁵³ Ian Woodward, Jodie Taylor, and Andy Bennett, eds., *The Festivalization of Culture* (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2014), 1.

Soviet media festivals possessed the power to represent various “localised communities” and to shape them into certain groups of solidarities. At the same time, however, Soviet media festivals represented and encountered various aspects of cultural and national differences. Such festivals could easily adjust cultural performance for media consumption, imitate authenticity, and awaken real feelings at the same time.

Thus, romantic folk media festivals, like *Sunny Clarinets* or *Golden Keys*, which had vast audiences, could merge the local landscape and Soviet mediascape into a national media(land)scape. In addition, Ukrainian television and radio were supposed to maintain and propagate national culture, thus it is not surprising that many letters sent to Kyiv demanded increased broadcasting in the national language. Besides creating a national media(land)scape, Soviet Ukrainian radio and television folk festivals maintained a certain modality among the audience, which shared concerns about the disappearance of authentic folklore. The promotion of folklorism by the media and the quick russification of the urban population generated feelings of national resentment among intellectuals. As is shown in Miroslav Groch’s scheme of nationalism development (A-B-C of nationalism), the new folk revival of the late 1970s and 1980s was quickly gaining the form of cultural nationalism and changing into political nationalism already in the late 1980s (see Introduction).

Conclusions

1. This chapter shows that television in Soviet Ukraine created its own socialist imaginary⁹⁵⁴ that reacted to the emotional feeling of gain and loss.⁹⁵⁵ This feeling was caused by rapid modernisation and urbanisation and was mixed with the Soviet glorification of ordinary workers and peasants. Already in the 1960s, many Soviet people felt the need to return to their rural roots, or to revive or preserve vanishing folk or peasant cultures. In the early 1970s such desires and revivalist practices could be deciphered as nationalism, thus being condemned by communist officials, but in other cases they were supported and financed. In the 1960s and 1970s Soviet Ukraine experienced extensive cultural folklorism.
2. Even though such a reinterpretation of folk culture in Soviet amateur and professional arts was often kitschy or sentimental, it was a conscious, sincere and often serious practice. According to Linda Degh, those who were taking part in what we define as folklorism (imitation, secondary folk) did not see this as imitation.⁹⁵⁶ Similarly, the people who participated in *Sunny Clarinets* or those who formed the band Vatra, sincerely believed that they were performing something real and authentic. As this chapter has demonstrated, the Soviet audience also often perceived mediatised folk or neo-folk Estrada as authentic and genuine. So, in folk culture or folklorism we may identify a

⁹⁵⁴ Here I use imaginary in understanding of critical thinkers, who indicate, that Romanticism offers an imaginary social place instead of the ‘real one’, see: Judith Williamson, *Decoding Advertisements: Ideology and Meaning in Advertising*. (London: Marion Boyars, 1978), 13.

⁹⁵⁵ Katerina Clark declared that in USSR “the village has become a symbolic panacea for the evils of modern life, and especially for that greatest evil of all: alienation” and intelligentsia approached this situation with a “renewed sense of loss,” see: Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 245.

⁹⁵⁶ Newall, “The Adaptation of Folklore and Tradition (Folklorismus),” 147.

deliberate and continuous awakening, which is marked by cultural disjunctures⁹⁵⁷ combined with cultural regenerations.

3. This chapter argues that the folk revival intensified in Soviet Ukraine in the late 1970s and early 1980s and media (like television and radio) played a crucial role in this process. Ukrainian folklorism was both shaped and practiced by the Soviet media. Thus, the Soviet Ukrainian media functioned as sub-folklore, producing a specific form of visualised folklorism, which had the power to maintain ethnic and national attachments by creating media rituals. These media rituals had the power to transform the landscape into a media(land)scape and to nationalise folk culture.
4. Since the second half of the twentieth century, the speed and the extent of folklore media transmission has grown exponentially in various countries.⁹⁵⁸ In Soviet Ukraine, it caused the hybridisation of Soviet media-content, western pop, socialist Estrada, and folklore, which became both imaginary and real. In addition, in the late 1970s and 1980s, the Soviet Ukrainian media guided the wide scale nationalisation of folk culture and the tangible distribution of culture on the national level.⁹⁵⁹ This nationalisation of folk culture by the Soviet Ukrainian media created an imagined community, the old-new folk nation of Ukrainians.

⁹⁵⁷ I use this term similarly to Appadurai, see: Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy."

⁹⁵⁸ Bausinger, *Folk Culture in a World of Technology*.

⁹⁵⁹ See similar development in Europe, Orvar Lofgren, "The Nationalization of Culture," *Ethnologia Europaea* 19, no. 1 (1989): 5–24.

Chapter 6. The folklorism of the music ensemble Vatra, 1969-1984

Introduction

1969 marked the thirtieth anniversary of the Soviet annexation (formally reunification) of L'viv and Soviet Ukraine. For this purpose, the L'viv Obkom of the Communist Party had a plan to order a short film (20 minutes long), that would show the glorious changes that the city of L'viv went through in the thirty years of socialist development. The film was supposed to give an overview of the industrial development of the city and to depict what this development brought to its dwellers. The film director Volodymyr Shevchenko (from the Kyiv-based Ukrkinokhronika Film Studios) proposed to show two days in the life of the city: its labour and leisure time, which were important themes for the socialist 1960s. The producers invited the local composer and esteemed jazz musician Mykhailo Manuliak (born 1940), to write a music score for this film, which was given the title *Dobryi Den Lvova* [Good Day of L'viv].

The idea of this musical-documentary was to show how from the bourgeois and underdeveloped Polish city of Lwów became the beautiful, young and industrial Soviet Ukrainian socialist city of L'viv. The authors combined lyrics by Roman Lubkivskyi (1941-2016), and the swing and jazz sound of Manuliak with colourful images of the labour and leisure life of the Soviet Ukrainian city. The film was widely successful and experts endorsed the jazz music of Manuliak. The L'viv Philharmonic consequently invited Manuliak to create an Estrada ensemble, like Myroslav Skoryk's *Cheerful Violins* (L'viv) or Levko Dutkovskyi's *Smerichka* (Chernivtsi). In early 1971, he created the band Vatra [The Bonfire], which sang songs composed by Volodymyr Ivasiuk, Anatolii Kos-Anatolskyi, Mykhailo Manuliak, Bogdan Yanivskyi, and other Ukrainian songwriters.

One of the former members the band remembers that many artists were impressed by the vivid Carpathian imagery presented in the film *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* [Tini zabutykh predkiv] that hit Soviet screens in 1965 (see Chapter 1.5., 3.5.).⁹⁶⁰ The rituals and ancient traditions (some invented by the film director Parajanov) of the Carpathian Hutsuls shown in the movie, evoked strong feelings among the audience. For musicians, the pagan customs and the appeal of the Carpathian dwellers reminded them of "soul music" with its references to human individuality or transcendence. Ukrainian composers often dreamt about merging contemporary American and European music styles with Hutsul melodic intonations (see Chapter 5.4.).⁹⁶¹ This chapter considers the case of folk revival in Soviet popular media culture of the early 1970s and 1980s through the example of the music ensemble Vatra from L'viv. This example aims to show how officials, on the one hand, supported folklore driven culture in Soviet Ukraine and, on the other hand, politicised or even restricted its representatives.

⁹⁶⁰ Roman Brevko, *L'vivskyyi Vokalno-Instrumentalnyy Ansambl 'Vatra'. Spohady, Dokumenty, Statti* (L'viv: Drukarski kunshty, 2015), 18–19.

⁹⁶¹ Brevko, 19.

6.1. Speaking non-Bolshevik: Mykhailo Manuliak and the ensemble Vatra

In 1969, two years prior to the establishment of the ensemble Vatra in L'viv and at the peak of the reappropriation of Hutsul culture by Ukrainian artists, Mykhailo Manuliak, who was part of this dreaming “commune of creators”, produced a song called “Vatrovyi Dym” [Bonfire Smoke] based on the verses of the young L'viv poet, Ihor Kalynets (see Chapter 4.4.). This romantic song, which described the pagan rituals performed around the ritual fire (vatra), provided the name for the official Estrada band of the socialist L'viv Philharmonic. In 1971, Vatra became the exemplary music ensemble from Soviet L'viv.

Rumours that the L'viv Philharmonic was going to have an Estrada ensemble, like Chernivtsi's Smerichka, quickly spread all over the city. People knew that this would be a contemporary ensemble performing Ukrainian songs, therefore all tickets for the first concert were purchased much in advance.⁹⁶² The first concert of Vatra in the L'viv Philharmonic was attended by known artists, writers, poets, and the press – all those who cared about Ukrainian popular music. It also included Rostyslav Bratun, the renowned Soviet Ukrainian poet, and Volodymyr Ivasiuk, a young amateur composer, already famous in Ukraine as the winner of the first Soviet music contest *Pesnia Goda* on Soviet Central Television. The audience gave long applause after each song, thus confirming the success of their premiere.⁹⁶³ The next concert of Vatra took place in the Palace of Culture Named After Gagarin and it was recorded by L'viv Television, which was a sign of media attention and success. Thus, after positive premieres in L'viv and an encouraging reception from the public in the spring of 1971, Vatra went on its first music tour around the republic.

In western Ukraine, Vatra was among the first and few official vocal and Instrumental ensembles (VIA) that performed in the Ukrainian language. Chernivtsi's Smerichka was not a professional collective (it was considered amateur) thus officials at Chernivtsi Philharmonics had created another band, Chervona Ruta, in 1971.⁹⁶⁴ Vatra as an official L'viv music band with a Ukrainian repertoire, was highly anticipated by the local intelligentsia and its interpretation of Carpathian folk sounds, combined with contemporary poetry, jazz and beat sound causes a furore. It was the fulfilment of the promise of contemporary and, at the same time, national Ukrainian music. It produced an Estrada show that was incomparable to existing art forms,⁹⁶⁵ thus for many young people in the Ukrainian west, Vatra symbolised a revival of traditions but in a new form.⁹⁶⁶ This revival had a hybrid form: performers wore stylised folk costumes,

⁹⁶² Brevko, 33.

⁹⁶³ Brevko, 33–34.

⁹⁶⁴ The soloist of this band Sofia Rotaru dominated in the collective, thus it rarely was perceived as purely music band, rather as supportive group for the singer. *Smerichka* joined Chernivtsi Philharmonics next year and this made it one of the most competitive and current cultural institution on the music market in Soviet Ukraine.

⁹⁶⁵ In the 1960s in the west of Ukraine, songs in national language were normally performed by collectives of folk songs or by amateur bands, thus giving a feeling that songs in Ukrainian are reserved only for peasants or non-professional scene. *Smerichka* was the first to demonstrate that amateur songs in native language can become hits of beat music while *Vatra* successfully combined jazz, swing and soul music in its repertoire.

⁹⁶⁶ Brevko, *Lvivskyyi Vokalno-Instrumentalnyi Ansambl "Vatra". Spohady, Dokumenty, Statti*, 122.

and merged folk and contemporary sounds, Soviet and pre-Soviet songs, Russian and Ukrainian Estrada all in one show. The newspaper *Literaturna Ukraïna* [Literary Ukraine] admitted in June 1971 that:

Young people, who dominated in the audience, were attracted by stylised costumes, specially produced by professionals from the L'viv Museum of Ethnography and Folk Crafts... Interesting treatment of folk songs, forgotten works of western Ukrainian composers and new songs of L'viv composers... exemplified the creative force of a new collective.⁹⁶⁷

However, this symbolic folk masquerade was not an imitation, but rather an emotionally and aesthetically driven desire to create a national form for socialist (and often national as well) content. To be distinguished from other professional collectives, which normally sang in Russian and dressed like western pop performers of the time, Vatra employed the Carpathians as part of a “natural”, and at the same time national, media(land)scape. For instance, in the Altai Region, a remote areas in the Russian Federation, Ukrainian performers would explain their art through the landscape, claiming that Vatra represents the Carpathians: “The song – is a treasure of a Hutsul region, music – is a cradle of Verkhovyna, tsymbaly⁹⁶⁸ – this is the Carpathians.”⁹⁶⁹ This Carpathian and, at the same time, national performance by Vatra was recognised in other Soviet republics, and local artists could use existing Soviet clichés to express their home-grown desires. In multiple places where Vatra performed, people would ask, what does that mean, *Vatra*? The performers had different explanations: it could mean (for the nationally minded person) a bonfire made by remote national ancestors in the mountains, around which ancient (and singing) rituals evoked collective feelings that helped to unite people. Or it could mean (for a Soviet person) a ritual bonfire to commemorate all those who did not return from the battlefield (such a metaphor was appreciated by all those experiencing the Soviet commemoration of the Second World War).⁹⁷⁰

While folkloric/ethnographic/natural and at the same time national symbolism worked safely outside Soviet Ukraine, within the country it caused trouble (see Chapter 4.5. and 4.6.). During their first tour, there were several instances that influenced Manuliak's future career and life. In the city of Zaporizhzhia, which was named after the famous Cossacks settlement, the ensemble was invited to visit various historic sites. The tour guide told the story about the Ukrainian Cossacks fighting the Poles in the seventeenth century, and she got so excited that her story started to sound anti-Polish.⁹⁷¹ Manuliak (as he himself observes) coming from the former Polish region, could not endure such a tone and spoke up to say that the Cossacks were not only fighting Poles but also other adversaries. The guide took this remark as a sign of nationalist feeling, since there was a common belief among dissidents that

⁹⁶⁷ “Narodzhennia Vatry,” *Literaturna Ukraïna*, June 18, 1971, 48 (2848) edition.

⁹⁶⁸ The professional Ukrainian instrument derived from folk model.

⁹⁶⁹ “Serdse Karpat - ‘Vatra,’” *Barnaulskaia Pravda*, June 1974.

⁹⁷⁰ “Serdse Karpat - ‘Vatra.’”

⁹⁷¹ For the Ukrainian Cossacks mythology that was also widely used in Soviet Ukraine see: Serhii Plokyh, *The Cossack Myth: History and Nationhood in the Age of Empires* (Cambridge University Press, 2014).

the Cossacks also fought the Russians. Manuliak recalls that the party representative started to blame him for the anti-Russian attitude even though, an artist did not point out in his remark to specific nationalities.⁹⁷² To defend himself, Manuliak stated that there is a long-lasting cultural exchange between Poles and Ukrainians in L'viv and while "we are socialist friends now it is not good to attack our neighbouring friends in such a hostile way."⁹⁷³

A second incident happened in Crimea. The head of the local municipal party organisation approached Manuliak before the concert and told him the following: "We know that you are coming from L'viv and singing Ukrainian songs, but you are in Crimea, therefore, I kindly ask you to perform more songs in the Russian language."⁹⁷⁴ Manuliak did not like the tone, which reminded him of how one might request a song from a restaurant musician.⁹⁷⁵ He replied that he could not do this because the artistic council at the L'viv Philharmonic had approved the artistic programme and furthermore asserted: "We are the Ukrainian ensemble, which has the goal of popularising Ukrainian music, even in Crimea."⁹⁷⁶ A Crimean communist reported Manuliak to the L'viv Regional Communist Party Committee (L'viv Obkom) accusing him of nationalism. Upon his return home in April 1971, the police launched a case and KGB officers discovered that his ensemble used the lyrics of Ihor Kalynets,⁹⁷⁷ who had been arrested for anti-Soviet propaganda and would be sentenced the following year (see Chapter 4.4. and 4.6.).

Thus, after his first and successful tour, Manuliak was expelled from the L'viv Philharmonic (he had worked there for 8 months) without any further explanation. He had to regularly visit KGB interrogators who that tried to prove that his art and attitudes were nationalist,⁹⁷⁸ even though Vatra performed the Russian songs "Ya Liubliu Tebia Rossiia" [I Love You Russia] or "Ballada o Gitare I Trube" [A Ballad About a Guitar and a Trumpet].⁹⁷⁹ The former KGB general Alexandr Nezdolia, responsible for the creative milieu in L'viv in the early 1970s, recalled in his memoirs that it was the party organisation and not the Komitet (KGB) that initiated the case against Manuliak.⁹⁸⁰ He blamed communists for constant ideological over-exaggeration in the 1970s in treating cultural workers. KGB interrogators had to examine the "close circle" of Manuliak and conducted long and repetitive discussions but could not

⁹⁷² Manuliak, *Creating Vatra* (interview, 2015).

⁹⁷³ Manuliak. (On touring).

⁹⁷⁴ Manuliak.

⁹⁷⁵ Before coming to L'viv Philharmonic Manuliak was a self-didact musician and usually performed at the L'viv restaurants, thus being exposed to certain behavior of Soviet customers.

⁹⁷⁶ Manuliak, *Creating Vatra* (interview, 2015). See also: Alexandr Nezdolia, *Dosie Generala Gosbezopastnosti Alexandra Nezdoli* (Bila Tserkva: Chervona Ruta-Turs, 2003), 108.

⁹⁷⁷ The main song in the *Vatra's* repertoire was based on Kalynets' lyrics, *Bonfire Smoke* [Vatrovyi Dym] that was published in Kyiv in 1966.

⁹⁷⁸ Major accusations were about the repertoire, namely the lyrics of poets who went under investigation by Soviet prosecutors, Ihor Kalynets (song *Vatrovyi Dym*) and Hryhorii Chubai (song *Osinnie Nebo*). The former received prison sentence for anti-Soviet propaganda in 1972, the latter was never imprisoned since he gave 'needed' evidences for Soviet prosecutors and received a painful blame from the Ukrainian dissidents.

⁹⁷⁹ O. Pilat, "'Vatra' Polonyt Hlyadachiv," *Krymskaya Pravda*, April 14, 1971.

⁹⁸⁰ Nezdolia, *Dosie Generala Gosbezopastnosti Alexandra Nezdoli*, 108–9.

find enough materials to accuse him (at least legally) of nationalism.⁹⁸¹ Thus, they transferred the case back to the L'viv Regional Party Committee, which decided to just remove him from the L'viv Philharmonic.⁹⁸²

Vatra continued without Manuliak, but even though it frequently went on national and international tours, the atmosphere changed. Some people perceived the composer and artistic director of Vatra as a sort of shaman, a person who had a connection with national spirits and who could evoke the image of the Carpathian Mountains.⁹⁸³ Without him, the band lost its appeal and turned to mere folklorism and neo-folk performances, constantly losing popularity. Several attempts to revive the spirit of Vatra were unsuccessful during the 1970s, and it was only possible to re-make the ensemble after the anti-nationalist campaign was over, at the end of the decade. New Vatra, now led by Ihor Bilozir would become a popular phenomenon of the Soviet 1980s.

6.2. Regulating folk revival

Among the agents who actively promoted the folk revival and folklorism at the top political level in Soviet Ukraine was Petro Tronko, one of the highest officials in the government. In the 1960s he curated and managed great festivals of folk/amateur arts and supervised the publishing of Ukrainian scholarly encyclopaedias.⁹⁸⁴ In 1972, after the removal of Shelest, he remained at the top political level and continued supporting national science and folk culture. For instance, after successful establishment between 1969-1971 of several museums of folk architecture in Ukraine (L'viv, Uzhhorod, Khmelnytskyi) he continued to work on the largest museum of folk architecture and arts, situated near Kyiv. The museum followed Soviet ethnographic maps made during the 1920s and 1930s, which divided the territory of Soviet Ukraine into different ethnographic/folk regions. The most representative architectural objects from these lands were brought to the village of Pyrohovo to recreate, at least symbolically, the "national body" of Ukraine.

This museum in Pyrohovo (a suburban village near Kyiv) differed from other similar regional institutions in its clear national agenda. The main purpose was to recreate an imagined community of Ukrainians through folk architecture and decorative arts. Officials gathered folk arts and wooden architecture from the most representative historical regions of Soviet Ukraine, and these remarkable historical objects aimed at representing various

⁹⁸¹ Usually prosecutors accused dissidents according to the two articles of Soviet Criminal Code: art. 62 - "The anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda" and art. 187 - "The dissemination of false fabrications defaming the Soviet political and social system."

⁹⁸² Nezdolia, *Dosie Generala Gosbezopastnosti Alexandra Nezdoli*, 109.

⁹⁸³ This metaphor was used by Ihor Kalynets, the author of lyrics *Vatrovyi Dym*, who described Manuliak in his novel *Molimosia Zoriam Dalnim* [Let Us Prey to Remote Stars], see also cited in: Brevko, *Lvivskyyi Vokalno-Instrumentalnyi Ansambl "Vatra". Spohady, Dokumenty, Statti*, 111.

⁹⁸⁴ For the great achievements in science, especially for managing the project *The History of Cities and Villages of the Ukrainian SSR* (26 volumes published between 1967 and 1975), that took twelve years of his life, Tronko was awarded by the State Prize in the field of science, a Soviet equivalent to Noble Prize.

ethnographic lands in one place near the national capital.⁹⁸⁵ The museum project commenced in 1969 after the party's initiative to preserve national folk art and architecture, and was officially opened in 1976 during the ascendancy of the anti-nationalist ideology secretary Valentyn Malanchuk. Attracted by the anti-nationalist discourse of the 1970s, some Ukrainian communist officials reacted badly to this project, claiming that such enterprises could fuel a new wave of nationalism in Soviet Ukraine. Tronko himself confessed that Ivan Sokolov, the second secretary of the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party and later member of Politburo, complained to Volodymyr Shcherbytskyi, the chief Ukrainian communist of the time, that state money had been wasted on "unnecessary rubbish," collected by Tronko.⁹⁸⁶

In 1976, during the official opening of the museum, Shcherbytsky personally acknowledged that this endeavour was not a waste of state funds but rather an important Soviet and Ukrainian endeavour.⁹⁸⁷ The same year, Tronko was awarded the Soviet State Prize in the field of science. His case exemplifies that the "longing for the past" or "excessive love for motherland" had different implications for state managers and cultural intelligentsia in Soviet Ukraine in the 1970s. While some received accolades (like Petro Tronko) others received prison sentences (like Ihor Kalynets) for similar cultural activities and initiatives intended to preserve national and folk culture for posterity.⁹⁸⁸ The important differentiation between "us" and "them" was the emphasis on the social group being promoted: if the project highlighted folk and peasant culture (like the Pyrohovo museum) it was safer than projects which related to the military or intellectual history of Ukraine (like the Cossack memorial supported by Shelest). In addition, it was important who was looking to the past: a person with official credentials or a mere intellectual.

The Ukrainian state managers (Fedorchuk—Shcherbytskyi—Malanchuk) created a protective model, which aimed to repress any signs of "treacherous nationalism," which was believed to constitute the major threat to the communist project in Soviet Ukraine. We can trace how this protective model functioned in the republic through the case of the neo-folk opera, commissioned by the Ukrainian government (and some French impresarios) in the late 1970s. In 1977, the Ukrainian composer Ievhen Stankovych (born 1942) produced music for the Romantic stage performance of *When Fern Flower Blossoms*,⁹⁸⁹ based on Nikolai Gogol's

⁹⁸⁵ Currently museum owns an oldest wooden house in Ukraine, a peasant hut from the 16th century and many other valuable works of folk wooden architecture.

⁹⁸⁶ Petro Tronko, "Kak-to pozvonil mne rasserzhennyi Shcherbitskii: "Ty chto tam rukhliad vozish? Tebe chto - delat nechego?!"," interview by Iryna Lisnichenko, Newspaper interview (Fakty), August 4, 2000, <http://fakty.ua/107229-akademik-petr-tronko-quot-kak-to-pozvonil-mne-rasserzhennyj-csherbickij-quot-ty-chto-tam-ruhlyad-vozish-tebe-chto----delat-nechego-quot>.

⁹⁸⁷ Tronko.

⁹⁸⁸ Kutsevol, "TsDAHO (1972), Fond 1, Opys 25, Sprava 652," Arkush 9.

⁹⁸⁹ The title *Fern Flower Blossoms* was a Ukrainian adaptation of a story from the Gogol's series *Evenings on a Farm Near Dikanka* (*St. John's Eve*), first published in 1830. Soviet producers selected for the title the mere mythical plot of a story based on the magic flower. Compare the romantic plot of the popular *Red Rue* [Chervona Ruta] song (1967-68) and television musical (1971) with that of *St. John's Eve* of Nikolai Gogol (1831). In the first case the magic flower, which blossoms rarely can bring love and happiness to the one who

novel *St. John's Eve*⁹⁹⁰ and arranged into a libretto by Olexandr Stelmashchenko. This spectacle was imagined as a “syncretic event” performed by the distinguished Hryhorii Veriovka State National Ukrainian Choir, specialized in national and neo-folk singing.⁹⁹¹

Figure 6.1.A-B. *When Fern Flower Blooms* experimental opera.



A. *When Fern Flower Blooms*, First rehearsal 1978.



B. *When Fern Flower Blooms*, First premier in L'viv, 2017.

Stankovych, known for his integration of experimental and classical music, strove to combine current music trends of the 1970s with the folk songs performed by the national choir. The intelligentsia anticipated that this work would become, like the film *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* by Parajanov (1964-65), a masterpiece which merged modernism and

has found it, while in the second fern flower, which blooms only with the help of evil gives the person the ultimate abilities, but in exchange for happiness. According to Ukrainian popular myths, fern flower blooms for a very short time on the eve of the Summer Solstice, (Ivan Kupala's Day or St. John's Eve). This blossoming was believed a magic event, it could reveal secret forces and make someone who finds the flower a rich and a powerful man, but in exchange for human soul.

⁹⁹⁰ Nikolai Gogol made the myth about fern flower as part of popular culture after publishing his *Evenings on a Farm Near Dikanka* (published in Russian in 1830-1831, in English in 1886). Gogol made from this popular Ukrainian myth a horror, which became very popular and probably could influence an adaptation of popular 'witch stories' to music in 1867 by Modest Mussorgsky. By making his *Night on Bald Mountain* [Noch' na lysoy gore] Musorgskiy claimed his desire to get out of Germanism, replacing it with Slavic popular mythology, see: Modest Musorgskiy, *Pisma [Letters]*, ed. E. Gordeeva, 2nd ed. (Moscow: Muzyka, 1984), 73–75. In German romantic tradition similar plot about magician became popular after *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* [Der Zauberlehrling] (1797) of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. This German romantic story also became part of American and worldwide popular culture, being adapted by Walt Disney Productions in 1940 in the form of cartoon *Fantasia*, that was made in cooperation with music composer Leopold Stokowski.

⁹⁹¹ This choir was created on 11 September 1943 by a decree of the Ukrainian Council of Peoples Commissars #246. First concert was performed on 6 September 1944 and in 20 years, in 1964, the title was changed and this choir received the name after famous folklorist Hryhorii Veriovka, who has organised this collective. Currently state choir, which received multiple awards and distinctions, consists of 150 participants who perform more than 1000 national songs.

folklorism. The director of the L'viv Opera House Vasyl Vovkun admitted that the opera was an example of the new folk wave of the 1970s, combining old folk melodies, intonations, and traditional paces with modern principles of classical music composition.⁹⁹² This was a difficult endeavour since the composer combined choral singing with symphonic orchestra.⁹⁹³ However, this work of art was far from real folk, and instead qualified as folklorism or neo-folk high art.

The theatre managers involved the best cultural forces in Soviet Ukraine for the spectacle's implementation,⁹⁹⁴ hoping for a great production. In the autumn of 1978, the opera was finished. The first rehearsal for the Ukrainian Ministry of Culture and French impresarios took place on 27 October 1978. The French colleagues were fascinated but the Ukrainian cultural managers were less enthusiastic, stating that the performance lacked class conflict and that the trope of the friendship of Soviet people (mainly Russians and Ukrainians) was missing in the opera's plot.⁹⁹⁵ Officials recommended changing the whole plot, to avoid modernism, and to replace the main female singer Nina Matviienko.⁹⁹⁶ Basically, they proposed to make a non-experimental choir singing folk songs mixed with songs of the love for the Soviet motherland and to replace the talented Matviienko who was admired by the nationally minded intelligentsia. Stankovych and other artists involved in the production ignored these recommendations.⁹⁹⁷

The public premiere was set for 19 December 1978 and the performance was planned for a full production in early 1979. However, it was eventually cancelled. Prior to the first official public performance, various commissions started reviewing artistic components of the opera, followed by multiple phone calls, preventive talks, and recommendations.⁹⁹⁸ After the first rehearsals on 14 December 1978, attended by impresarios, Ukrainian cultural workers as

⁹⁹² Vasyl Vovkun, 'Ievhen Stankovych "Tsvit Paporoti" (Feieria, Opera, Balet)', Official web page of L'viv Opera House, <https://opera.lviv.ua>, 20 October 2017, <https://opera.lviv.ua/tsvit-paporoti/>.

⁹⁹³ Neo-folklorism of Stankovich and its appearance in Ukrainian professional music is discussed in the following PhD thesis: Rada Stankovych-Spol'ska, "'Tsvit paporoti' Ievhena Stankovycha: problema zhanru" (PhD Thesis, Kyiv, Ukraine, National Music Academy of Ukraine named after P.I. Tchaikovsky, 2005).

⁹⁹⁴ Producers involved Ievhen Lysyk, an acknowledged theatre artist from L'viv, Anatolii Shekera, a chief ballet master from the Kyiv and great music conductor Fedir Hlushchenko. The vocal female part was reserved for Nina Matviienko, acknowledged as having great voice for performing folk songs.

⁹⁹⁵ Stanislav Tsalyk, "1978 Rik. Iak Zaboronialy Vystavu 'Koly Tsvite Paporot,'" BBC blog, *Bbc.Com/Ukrainian* (blog), December 15, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/blog-history-42353684>.

⁹⁹⁶ In such criticism 'modernism' was used as a pejorative definition and aimed to claim that the author is excessively leaning to western tropes or models. In Soviet Ukraine of the 1970s accusations in 'modernism' were technical, similarly to accusations in nationalism, mainly directed to harm and less to criticize the author.

⁹⁹⁷ This was a frequent practice during late USSR when an artist agreed formally with various accusations of critics, however remained within his/her arguments and aesthetics, see: Prokhorov, *Unasledovannyyi Diskurs*, 224. Alf Lüdtke labels such behaviour *Eigensinn* [wilfulness], which defines the situation when authority breeds resistance among those subordinated to it, see: Alf Lüdtke, "Organizational Order or Eigensinn? Workers' Privacy and Workers' Politics in Imperial Germany," in *Rites of Power: Symbolism, Ritual, and Politics since the Middle Ages*, ed. Sean Wilentz (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 304.

⁹⁹⁸ Vovkun, "Tsvit Paporoti"; Tsalyk, "1978 Rik. Iak Zaboronialy Vystavu 'Koly Tsvite Paporot.'"

well as KGB agents,⁹⁹⁹ officials reported that nothing had been changed in the opera since the earlier recommendations. KGB security agents discovered that this cultural enterprise attracted the attention of nationally minded intelligentsia, and therefore the whole event was stopped by the police. The Ukrainian KGB superior Fedorchuk claimed that “there were attempts” by nationalists to buy tickets for the 14 December, so executives took special measures to prevent “suspicious” people from buying tickets to this performance.¹⁰⁰⁰

The Collegium of the Ukrainian Ministry of Culture, which was a commissioner of the opera,¹⁰⁰¹ recommended shortening the whole performance and refraining from experimentation. However, the producers did not follow recommendations and left the opera unchanged, which was evident during the December rehearsal. Officials did not like that they had ignored all their suggestions regarding the glorification of the historical union between Russia and Ukraine. In addition, the main vocalist was still Nina Matviienko, known by the communists for her “nationalist” attitudes. As a result, the Ministry of Culture negatively reviewed the work and Fedorchuk reported to Shcherbytskyi that the performance was still full of ideological mistakes and should be cancelled since it attracted the attention of nationalists.¹⁰⁰² Shcherbytskyi redirected the letter of Fedorchuk to Malanchuk with the request of his personal involvement in this case.¹⁰⁰³ In the end, the public premiere was cancelled, cultural workers were harassed, and the whole enterprise was shut down.

In the anti-nationalist “protective model” developed in the UkrSSR in the 1970s, one can notice the continuous exchange of references between cultural managers (from the Ministry of Culture or relevant institutions), security agents (and KGB), and party officials. It is not clear who had the most decisive agency among them: some believed that Shcherbytskyi was under the continued supervision of the KGB, however, it is too simple to suppose that the security services in the late USSR could surveil party leaders.¹⁰⁰⁴ It is more correct to claim that Shcherbytskyi was both Ukrainian and a communist. He supported national culture but strove to defeat nationalism. The KGB was supposed to fulfil party tasks to fight with foreign and internal enemies, therefore officers who had the task of supervising the cultural

⁹⁹⁹ In Soviet Ukraine each public cultural enterprise (like stage of music performance) had reserved seats for security agents, see: Nezdolia, *Dosie Generala Gosbezopastnosti Alexandra Nezdoli*.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Vitaly Fedorchuk, “Informatsionnoie soobshcheniie” (KDB [Komitet Derzhavnoi Bezpeky], December 16, 1978), Arkush 404, HDASBU, Fond 16, Opys 1, Sprava 1149, HDASBU [Special State Archive of Security Service of Ukraine].

¹⁰⁰¹ Ukrainian Ministry of Culture assigned for the choir commission for this performance in the amount of 150 thousand Soviet roubles, see: Tsalyk, “1978 Rik. Iak Zaboronialy Vystavu ‘Koly Tsvite Paporot.’”

¹⁰⁰² Fedorchuk, “HDASBU, Fond 16, Opys 1, Sprava 1149,” Arkush 403.

¹⁰⁰³ Formally it meant that Malanchuk had to settle the problematic issue personally.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Shcherbytskyi was on the top of Soviet hierarchy in USSR and Brezhnev, supposedly, saw him as his successor in Kremlin. Even though he was very influential, he did not develop certain national localism, characteristic to late Soviet political figures, and rather strived to build certain regional power clan within Ukraine. He had never questioned policies developed in the centre, even if they contradicted national interests, remaining to be a high level but still only executive party manager.

intelligentsia in the 1970s claimed that repressive initiatives against cultural workers originated from the party office and not from the KGB.¹⁰⁰⁵

Shcherbytskyi had avoided cultural matters. When confronted by his party colleagues with the existence of blackmailing or the presence of the blacklists in the cultural industries (introduced by Malanchuk), he ignored such claims.¹⁰⁰⁶ Finally, he removed Malanchuk from office in 1979 and stopped anti-nationalist politics in Soviet Ukraine. The active phase of the anti-nationalist campaign terminated in the late 1970s when, in April 1979, the first secretary of ideology was dismissed from the main Ukrainian Communist Party's office.¹⁰⁰⁷ Malanchuk, who perhaps sensed that the anti-nationalist campaign in Ukraine was over in the late 1970s, tried to act as he had done with his former boss Petro Shelest in the early 1970s. In 1978, he prepared a book (not under his own name), which he tried to publish in Moscow, in which he supposedly claimed that the highest Ukrainian communist leadership was still unable to fight nationalism. The reaction of Shcherbytskyi was like his predecessor: he confronted Malanchuk with accusations of incompetence and fired him from his position.¹⁰⁰⁸

The anti-nationalist campaign became more proactive in the second half of the 1970s when it became obvious that the highest officials in the Ukrainian Communist Party were not willing to fight nationalism.¹⁰⁰⁹ Shcherbytskyi acted as a typical Soviet leader, being accurate with Moscow's central powers and trying not to push too much with local intellectuals, especially on national questions. He avoided cultural politics and tried to focus on the economic development of Soviet Ukraine. He most probably tolerated the behaviour and policies of Malanchuk on national questions because he needed such a fearful opponent of nationalism.¹⁰¹⁰ However, later Shcherbytskyi would blame such ideological excesses on Malanchuk, arguing that the unnecessary censorship in Soviet Ukraine was a personal initiative of the first secretary in ideology.¹⁰¹¹

Malanchuk was replaced by Olexandr Kapto, a traditionalist official loyal to the party and who had good relations with creative workers.¹⁰¹² The communists needed fruitful

¹⁰⁰⁵ Nezdolia, *Dosie Generala Gosbezopastnosti Alexandra Nezdoli*, 108–9.

¹⁰⁰⁶ "Party meeting" (Ukrainian Communist Party, 1974), Arkush 160-161, Found 1, Opys 2, Sprava 103, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Though, this does not mean that nationalism was allowed or tolerated, the fight against nationalism in 1980s received rather soft form. Last documents, that related to the case of 'Blok' and anti-nationalist campaign, that was initiated by KGB in 1971 are dated by 1986, see: Bazhan, "Spetsoperatsia KDB URSR Blok," 35.

¹⁰⁰⁸ "Malanchuk Dismissal" (Ukrainian Communist Party, April 26, 1979), Arkush 10, Fond 1, Opys 2, Sprava 456, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Olexandr Yakubets, who wrote PhD thesis on Shcherbytskyi's political biography, admits that he lost his interest in ideological war already in 1974, see: Yakubets, "V.Shcherbyts'kyi and Ideology: on the question of causes of 'Malanchukivshchyna,'" 122.

¹⁰¹⁰ Yakubets, 118.

¹⁰¹¹ This shift in perception of Valentyn Malanchuk by Volodymyr Shcherbytskyi was described by the latter's assistant Vrublevskii, who has published recollections in 1993, see: Vitalii Vrublevskii, *Vladimir Shcherbitskyi, pravda i vymysly: zapiski pomoshchnika. Vospominaniia, dokumenty, slukhi, legendy, fakty* (Kyiv: Dovira, 1993), 120–21.

¹⁰¹² Vrublevskii, 124.

cooperation with cultural workers in order to prepare for the 325th anniversary of Russian-Ukrainian unity (1979) and to have a glorious celebration of the 110th anniversary of the birth of Lenin in 1980. Indeed, the situation of constant blackmailing, persistent fear or overtly practiced control did not foster creativity in Soviet Ukraine. Since April 1979, cultural politics in Soviet Ukraine took a new turn: it became milder on national questions but still promoted cultural russification, which proliferated during the 1970s.¹⁰¹³ In this period many Ukrainians protested against cultural russification and some even committed suicide, like Oleksa Hirnyk (1912-1978) who burned himself condemning the national policies of Soviet Ukraine.¹⁰¹⁴

Even though Kyiv “softened the tone” and posed milder regulations on the cultural sphere, the Ukrainian cultural intelligentsia was often in disbelief of the actions of party officials. In addition, cultural production in Soviet Ukraine, which was restricted due to Malanchuk’s doctrinism, recovered only very slowly. Active cultural opposition (embodied by dissidents) was suppressed during the 1970s and most of the cultural workers in Soviet Ukraine continued to show loyalty and obedience rather than questioning the existing order. The Ukrainian culture of the 1970s entered the phase of stability and performativity, as vividly described by Alexei Yurchak.¹⁰¹⁵

The overtly protective attitudes of officials in supervising Soviet Ukrainian culture had generated a situation in which any combination of modern and national was considered dangerous. But the same officials did not support de-nationalisation and highly promoted folklorism and cultural russification. The Ukrainian Communist Party supported cultural national forms but only with socialist content, and even though not so many cultural workers understood this dialectic, they sensed that “pretending” nationality and performing Soviet identity would be the safest form of conduct.¹⁰¹⁶ Thus, the believing and reviving, performing and pretending, adapting and mocking, stylising, and adjusting of national culture became a benchmark of late Soviet Ukraine, shared by both the establishment and the cultural opposition.

6.3. Electric-folk of the music ensemble Vatra

The dismissal of Valentyn Malanchuk in April 1979 signalled that higher officials in Kyiv did not want to continue the ardent fight with the supposed nationalism in the country. The cultural intelligentsia had responded to this move with relief. The situation in Ukraine looked “normalised”: dissidents were imprisoned or placed in psychiatric hospitals, KGB officers from

¹⁰¹³ The vulnerable for Russification ethnic groups were those in USSR having old religious or cultural connections, like Byelorussians or Ukrainians, see: Anderson and Silver, “Some Factors in the Linguistic and Ethnic Russification of Soviet Nationalities,” 96. See also the outcome of Russification: Gorenburg, “Soviet Nationalities Policy and Assimilation.”

¹⁰¹⁴ “Hirnyk Oleksa Mykolaiovych,” Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group Initiative, Virtual museum of Ukrainian dissidents, July 13, 2007, <http://archive.khpg.org.ua/index.php?id=1184355561>; Mykola Som, “Liudyna-Smoloskyp,” *Literaturna Ukrainina*, March 20, 2003; Mykhailo Ishchenko, *Spalyvsia Za Ukrainu: Khudozhnio-Biografichna Povist* (Prosvita, 2004).

¹⁰¹⁵ Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, until It Was No More*, 151, 200.

¹⁰¹⁶ Symbolic relations between the Soviet state and its citizens was the characteristic feature of the Stalinist USSR, see: Yekelchuk, *Stalin’s Citizens*, 47–49.

the Fifth Department [piatoie upravleniie] were constantly on alert searching for ideological diversions, and cultural managers strictly supervised cultural production. The Russian language became the lingua franca in almost all regions of Soviet Ukraine. Cultural production in the republic depicted not only the all-Soviet friendship of peoples (proletarian internationalism), but more specifically the Russian-Ukrainian “eternal brotherhood.” The safe and controlled promotion of folk culture, often in the form of folklorism, was admired by the masses. Apparently, it did not produce nationalist resentments, or at least various dissident intellectuals chose to self-censor. However, the situation of national culture in the UkrSSR was not stable.

In the late 1970s, regional institutions of culture in Soviet Ukraine strove to mobilise and reform not only amateur or folk collectives, but also existing (mainly within Philharmonics) popular Estrada bands. In the Chernivtsi Philharmonic, managers wanted to relaunch the renowned ensemble Smerichka, which lost its earlier impetus after 1975 (see Chapter 4). In 1979, Levko Dutkovskyyi was asked to return to the band and he, together with Nazarii Yaremchuk, decided to make a new show, which would combine elements of disco, scenic light performance and to reintroduce artistic repertoire.¹⁰¹⁷ Musicians and cultural managers needed to prepare for the Summer Olympics in the USSR, where each Soviet republic was expected to present its best culture. For this purpose, managers invited best musicians from different places to Chernivtsi, and many members from Vatra joined Smerichka.¹⁰¹⁸ Thus, in 1979, the managers of L’viv Philharmonics were searching for new musicians to replace those who left for Smerichka.

Ihor Bilozir (1955-2000), the young and promising organiser of the amateur neo-folk music band Rytmy Karpat [Rhythms of the Carpathians]¹⁰¹⁹ at the L’viv Bus Factory, decided to try his chances at the Philharmonic. Bilozir had to convince the officials that his artistic programme might be successful and ideologically correct, and he was required to make an internal performance for the artistic council. This concert was appointed for 25 June 1979, a month after Volodymyr Ivasiuk’s infamous burial in L’viv. Symbolically, the death of one of the founder’s of the new Ukrainian pop in L’viv coincided with the birth of a new electric-folk music myth (see Chapter 7.2.). Bilozir was appointed as artistic director of Vatra and quickly the band was noticed not only locally but also on the national level.¹⁰²⁰

¹⁰¹⁷ See interview of artistic director of *Vatra*: Alexander Sokolov, “Smerichka”, muzyka i morski prostory v zhytti Sashi Sokolova, interview by Vira Sereda, Interview published online, November 12, 2013, <http://pilipyurik.com>, http://pilipyurik.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=590:lr-&catid=1:latest-news.

¹⁰¹⁸ On Manuliak’s *Vatra* see: Brevko, *L’vivskyyi Vokalno-Instrumentalniy Ansambl ‘Vatra’. Spohady, Dokumenty, Statti*.

¹⁰¹⁹ Bilozir was invited to *Rhythms of Carpathians* by its founder Roman Lozynskyyi, while he became a real ensemble’s leader since August 1977. In *Vatra* he was appointed as its artistic director by officials of L’viv Philharmonics.

¹⁰²⁰ The co-founder of new *Vatra* in 1979 Roman Lozynskyyi, maintained that young musicians were united by their love to folk music and strived to revive it through their work at this professional collective, see interview:

Convinced by neo-folk aesthetics, which he had tried to perform with Rytmy Karpat, Bilozir proposed a concept for the band: from now on Vatra was a band which would aim to revive regional folk traditions and make a new neo-folk sound.¹⁰²¹ This revival of ancient songs and sounds required the extensive use of electronic instruments, mainly keyboards, like the Hammond piano or Yamaha.¹⁰²² In early 1980, Vatra purchased three brand-new and extremely expensive keyboards making them “unbeatable” among competitors.¹⁰²³ Zenovii Levkovskyi, who played some of these instruments, admits that the possession of expensive foreign technology was a mark of high quality. When local television cameramen (operators) were filming Vatra, they usually were asked by editors to focus (even to make a close-up) not only on the faces of artists but also on brand names of their instruments, in order to emphasise the modern quality of this folk ensemble.¹⁰²⁴

Studying the western electric folk revival, scholars define six essential elements in such movements: 1) a core group of revivalists, who use 2) the original sources and at the same time 3) develop their own discourse of “authenticity”; they usually have 4) followers, 5) organise festivals or special events, and 6) produce recordings.¹⁰²⁵ We have all these elements in the case of Vatra: the ensemble had a core group of believers, who publicly expressed their revivalist ideology and followed folk verses and songs; they also had many followers and produced music recordings. Moreover, they made their own neo-folk shows, highly attended by a local audiences in the early 1980s. Being recognised as both a neo-folk and professional ensemble, Vatra could participate in the national and all-Soviet festivals of amateur or folk art. However, the band went even further. It created its own music show at the L’viv Philharmonic, which was closely followed by local television (see Chapter 6.4.).

For the newly improved identity of Vatra, Bilozir wanted new costumes.¹⁰²⁶ He did not want to have costumes produced by machines and searched for an artist who would be willing to make handmade embroidered garments (see **Figure 6.2. A-B**). He turned to the L’viv artist

Julia Ovsianyk, “Khranytel ‘Vatry,’” Information web portal, <http://zbruc.eu> (blog), March 24, 2015, <https://zbruc.eu/node/34164>.

¹⁰²¹ The official newspaper *Radianska Ukraiina* [Soviet Ukraine] (18 November 1979) informed its readers that Vatra became new L’viv Philharmonics collective from September 1979 and actively participated in official celebration of the 40th anniversary of Ukrainian unity in 1939.

¹⁰²² Bohdan Stefura, On music recording and concerts, Recorded audio interview, 30 April 2015, Urban Media Archive, Center for Urban History of East-Central Europe (L’viv, Ukraine). In the first version of renewed Vatra there were no electronic instruments, they would appear in a new group from spring 1980.

¹⁰²³ These instruments were bought in early 1980 on private money and musicians still avoid naming their investors, since this was an illegal practice, see: Zenovii Levkovskyi, On Vatra and electric instruments, interview by Bohdan Shumylovych, Recorded oral interview with notes, 28 November 2017, Urban Media Archive, Center for Urban History of East-Central Europe (L’viv, Ukraine).

¹⁰²⁴ Levkovskyi. Compare Vatra’s attitude to music instruments with Swedish folk revival, which was similarly motivated by mass media, but attracted by authentic music instruments, like that of keyed fiddle. See: Jan Ling, “Folk Music Revival in Sweden: The Lilla Edet Fiddle Club,” *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 18 (1986): 7–8.

¹⁰²⁵ Sweers, *Electric Folk*, 10.

¹⁰²⁶ On importance of costumes in neo-folk revival see: Newall, “The Adaptation of Folklore and Tradition (Folklorismus),” 138. O historic identity building through dressing see: Regina Bendix, “Moral Integrity in Costumed Identity: Negotiating ‘National Costume’ in 19th-Century Bavaria,” *The Journal of American Folklore* 111, no. 440 (1998): 133; Tamara Hundorova, *Kitsch i Literatura: Travestii* (Kyiv, Ukraine: Fakt, 2008).

Oles Dzyndra, who had trained as an architect but was active in crafts (applied arts). Dzyndra was also driven by folk revival and he hired embroidery artists to produce “authentic” costumes for Vatra.¹⁰²⁷ These costumes were made out of old-fashioned linen textiles, normally used by peasants in the past and handmade embroidered according to the local Boiko folk style.¹⁰²⁸ In contrast to stylised costumes of Chervona Ruta, they looked like genuine folk pieces.¹⁰²⁹ This turn to authenticity¹⁰³⁰ was combined with a love for new music technology,¹⁰³¹ and this hybrid attitude marked the beginning of the new wave of folklorism, promoted by Soviet Ukrainian television and Estrada. Vatra also had two sets of costumes, one more authentic and another more stylised. Both sets of costumes were used alternatingly (see **Figure 6.2.**). For the local audience Vatra often used handmade scenic dresses, but in Moscow, for instance, participating in Soviet Central Television’s show *Wider Circle* [Shyre krug], band used stylised costumes, not very different from bands like Smerichka or Chervona Ruta.

Figure 6.2. A-B. The transformation of folk costumes of Vatra: from semi-authentic to stylised.



A. The dresses were produced by Oles Dzyndra and the embroidery artist Iryna Melnyk. The first scenic dresses were made



B. Vatra performs in 1979 on the Moscow Central Television show *Shyre Krug* [Wider circle] (programme was launched in 1976).¹⁰³² The male and female costumes were already stylised.

¹⁰²⁷ Oles Dzyndra, On making scenic dresses, Recorded audio interview, 28 April 2015, Urban Media Archive, Center for Urban History of East-Central Europe (L’viv, Ukraine).

¹⁰²⁸ Dzyndra. Due to certain obstacles Bilozir could not pay for these dresses, so formally we may claim that in early 1980, he borrowed expensive instruments, hired designers (while not having money to pay them) and convinced musicians to take part in new *Vatra*. He improvised, took financial and reputational risk, worked hard, but finally succeeded.

¹⁰²⁹ Zenovii Levkivskyi admits that after concerts in Soviet Central Asia many people approached musicians in order to touch their costumes and beautiful embroiders. Similar reaction was after Vatra’s concerts in Moscow. See: Levkovskyi, On Vatra and electric instruments (interview, 2017).

¹⁰³⁰ Authenticity in folk studies is a problematic notion, for instance Hermann Strobach indicated that ‘primary tradition’ never existed and therefore identification of secondary traditions is flawed, see: Šmidchens, “Folklorism Revisited,” 53; Regina Bendix, *In Search of Authenticity: The Formation of Folklore Studies* (The University of Wisconsin Press, 1997).

¹⁰³¹ Stefura, On music recording and concerts (interview, 2015).

¹⁰³² In this period ensemble was a male collective with three female back vocalists, Oksana Bilozir, Marta Lozynska and Svitlana Solianyuk. Later band turned to become a supplemented ensemble for Oksana Bilozir,

from “peasant” linen to fit the neo-folk attitude of ensemble (1979).	
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From 1979-1980 Vatra’s neo-folk music performances gained popularity in L’viv and regionally. They went on tour to Moscow and to the republics of the USSR, from Uzbekistan in Central Asia to Estonia in the Soviet Baltics.¹⁰³³ The ensemble was sent to Moscow to represent L’viv popular music (as the Philharmonics’ band) at the Summer Olympics of 1980. Here the musicians deliberately presented themselves as though they were from the Carpathians, singing the songs of ancient shepherds who had gathered near the bonfire (Vatra).¹⁰³⁴ Everything appeared as the communists had imagined: young people, who had not been spoiled by foreign mass culture, had adapted the music and words of peasants for their contemporaries in a modern manner. They were children of those workers and peasants who had been liberated by socialism, and their art conveyed gratitude to both the party and their parents.

In April 1981, the ensemble won the republican (national) song competition organised by Komsomol. They were considered as “discovery” and the best music collective at the fourth Republican Festival of Komsomol Song Molodi Holosy [Young Voices], held in Ternopil.¹⁰³⁵ Because of this success, the television producers from Kyiv who had filmed the festival in Ternopil, acknowledged the remarkable collective. Thus, from 1981, shortly after it was relaunched as an electric-folk collective, the ensemble was frequently aired on radio, invited onto television programmes and recorded its songs. Their combination of electronic music, Ukrainian folk songs, vivid costumes and overall romantic appeal had caught the imagination of the Ukrainian audience. Bands like Vatra were the result of Soviet cultural national politics and, at the same time, they embodied the global folk revival that had unfolded in various countries.

West Ukrainian music ensembles, such as Vatra (L’viv) and Medobory (Ternopil),¹⁰³⁶ explicitly stated that their aim was to revive folk music and peasant culture, but through new

who in 1990 left the collective and moved to Kyiv. This started the final decline of a band, which existed in L’viv from 1971.

¹⁰³³ Normally such tours were planned by republican philharmonics and various republics had quotas for transnational cultural entertainment of Soviet people in various remote places. Thus, *Vatra* could play to full house in Tashkent or to twenty people in a remote settlement in Uzbekistan and even though it was financially not profitable, Soviet powers considered such tours as important instruments to foster Soviet friendship. These tours were very exhaustive for performers since they usually had to play 2-3 concerts per day and up to 30 per month, and such tension caused many to be dependent on alcohol or other drugs. See: Levkovskyy, *On Vatra and electric instruments* (interview, 2017); Stefura, *On music recording and concerts* (interview, 2015).

¹⁰³⁴ Lozynskyy, *On contemporary pop-music* (interview, 2013).

¹⁰³⁵ “Vse Shcho Maiu Ia, Rozdiliu z Bratamy Chesno,” *Leninska Molod*, August 25, 1981. See also: Ivan Lepsha, *100 Oblych Ukrainiskoi Estrady* (Chernivtsi: Molodyi Bukovynets, 2010), 112.

¹⁰³⁶ The title *Medobory* followed a natural reservoir in Podillia region, thus the founder (1980) of this ensemble Oleh Martsynkivskyy strived to make a symbolic link between the authentic music and protected Ukrainian

means. These means were electronic instruments, drum machines and synthesizers.¹⁰³⁷ Saxophones and trumpets were replaced by synth keyboards, and the guitars that remained were given simplified lines and rhythms. Vatra's founders claimed that it strove to create unstylised and authentic costumes and "old fathers" songs.¹⁰³⁸ The show they proposed was a vivid combination of visual images, electronic music, and verbal expressions.¹⁰³⁹ If we follow current definitions, Vatra's style would fit folk-rock or electric folk. This electric folk in the British traditions is often considered as the last step in long revivalist practices started in the nineteenth century.

Ihor Bilozir was well prepared for Soviet journalists, who frequently asked: "Why do you have such a name, Vatra?" or "What do you strive to achieve with your music?" During the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow, Bilozir explained that Vatra meant an ancient and ritualised bonfire, produced by peasants in the Carpathians in past decades.¹⁰⁴⁰ This traditional folk bonfire united people in the high mountains while they were singing folk songs. Ostap Stakhiv, another musician from Vatra, similarly observed in an interview with Nadezhda Azhghina that the Carpathian shepherds made bonfires and sung ritual songs around them.¹⁰⁴¹ Surely, such clarification was at the same time national and Soviet, since it promised friendship (singing together near the ritual flame) and "narodnost", the ultimate attention to the people, embodied by the peasants. The band members claimed that their ancient songs were not published or promoted by Soviet media; supposedly they were inherently local and ancient, made known through the family traditions.

Indeed, Vatra did mean bonfire, but this name had been used much earlier by the Soviet Ukrainian folk revivalists of the late 1950s and 1960s, who strove to recover forgotten national words and practices. Only in western Ukraine did officials give the name "vatra" to TV sets, motor scooters, cigarettes, hotels, restaurants and cafeterias, furniture sets, an

nature. This music band did not have resources to buy expensive electronic instruments therefore their repertoire was more authentic than *Vatra's*, employing real folk instruments and melodies.

¹⁰³⁷ This shift to electronic sound happened not in 1979, when Bilozir presented his neo-folk programme, but in Spring of 1980. Since this time *Vatra* used fender piano, synths, strings and guitars as major music instruments. At the same time musicians used flutes and violins, which coupled with semi-folk dresses had to remind that ensemble is playing neo-folk music. See: Levkovskiy, On Vatra and electric instruments (interview, 2017); Stefura, On music recording and concerts (interview, 2015). This combination of electric and acoustic was also confirmed in private conversation in 2013 with Roman Lozynskiy, *Vatra's* violinist.

¹⁰³⁸ In an interview, which was called *Songs From Carpathian Mountains*, with young Moscow journalist Nadezhda Azhghina (now known media person), Ihor Bilozir affirmed that the aim of *Vatra* was not just popularisation of Ukrainian folk music but the revival of folk singing, dances and theatrical interludes. The interview I cite here was cut off from a magazine, without credentials. The cut-off copy of the interview owns Zenovii Levkovskii, *Vatra's* former musician, whom I interviewed in 2017.

¹⁰³⁹ Bilozir stated (in an interview with Nadezhda Azhghina) that electronic music instruments created a background for folk melodies and rhythmic sections (by drums or guitars) helped to comprehend national tradition more deeply. Thus, for him, electric folk was a way to revive ancient traditional music but in a modern way.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Levkovskiy, On Vatra and electric instruments (interview, 2017).

¹⁰⁴¹ Levkovskiy. Later, Stakhiv would become a sincere Christian believer and for some time lived in a monastery, which shows that *Vatra's* ideology had influenced not only lives of the audience but also band's members.

electric lamp company in Ternopil (established in 1957) or a music band at L'viv Philharmonics (established in 1971).¹⁰⁴² Bilozir's explanation that Vatra embodied the neo-folk music of the ensemble was both sincere and technical. He added new value to the old name, and it was appreciated by both officials and the audience. However, soon the balance between folk singing, Bilozir's own songs and the cheerful or patriotic repertoire required by the Philharmonic changed. Vatra increasingly shifted towards the already established format of Soviet Ukrainian Estrada. Between 1981, when the first mini vinyl was recorded by Vatra, and 1985, when the second vinyl recording was made, the ensemble went through a transformation, gained all-Ukrainian fame, and faced their first decline.

6.4. Neo-folk show: from music programme to television musical

Vatra was urged by officials to sing more about the new reality and to promote new socialist rituals, so soon Bilozir came up with an idea of how to merge neo-folk Estrada and Soviet ideology.¹⁰⁴³ The musicians set up an artistic programme which would celebrate the New Year at the L'viv Philharmonic, thus combining the neo-folk revivalist ideology with Soviet rituals, such as New Year's Eve. Bilozir often stated that Vatra aimed to revive folk interludes, traditional theatrical performances and rituals which had seasonal character. Therefore, he proposed to enrich the traditional winter Soviet concerts at the Philharmonic with a new neo-folk programme called New Year's Evenings [Novorichni Vechory].

This proposal to combine folk and non-folk did not contradict the official position since the so-called system of socialist ritualism included some traditional holidays and celebrations.¹⁰⁴⁴ In 1986, specially printed recommendations regarding Soviet rituals claimed that this division between "traditional" and "non-traditional" was rather conventional than real. "All Soviet rituals and holidays gradually become traditional," claimed officials, and many old feasts were connected to the seasons and were still celebrated in the 1980s.¹⁰⁴⁵ The New Year's celebration was considered to be among such Soviet festivities, but with a special

¹⁰⁴² The title was brought by Mykhailo Manuliak in 1971, who used verses of Ihor Kalynets 'Vatrovyi dym' [bonfire smoke] for his introduction song. Obviously, this song of a dissident author gave a name to ensemble *Vatra* and also troubles to its founder.

¹⁰⁴³ This urge to celebrate new rituals is recalled in: Levkovskyi, On Vatra and electric instruments (interview, 2017). In Soviet Ukraine socialist powers were serious about new rituals and within state government existed special Commission on Soviet Traditions, Holidays and Rituals [Komisiia z pytan radianskykh tradytsii, sviat i obriadiv], which often published recommendations and instructions. This commission was regulated by special decree, issued by Soviet Ukrainian Parliament [Verkhovna Rada] on the 1st of September 1978, see: "Polozhennia pro Komisii Po Radianskym Tradytsiiam, Sviatam i Obriadam Ukraininskoi RSR," *Vidomosti Verkhovnoi Rady Ukrainiskoi RSR*, September 12, 1978. In 1979 another important document regulated Soviet rituals: Central Committee of Communist Part of USSR, *O dalneishem uluchshenii ideologicheskoi, politiko-vospitatelnoi raboty* (Moscow: Izdatelstvo politicheskoi literatury "Politizdat," 1979).

¹⁰⁴⁴ On relationship between new Soviet media rituals and older life cycle rituals see: Christine Evans, "The 'soviet way of life' as a way of feeling: emotion and Influence on Soviet Central Television in the Brezhnev Era," *Cahiers du Monde Russe, Communiquer en URSS et en Europe socialiste: techniques, politiques, cultures et pratiques sociales*, 56/2-3 (2015): 562. On Soviet rituals see: Christel Lane, *The Rites of Rulers: Ritual in Industrial Society - the Soviet Case* (CUP Archive, 1981); Nina Tumarkin, *The Living & the Dead: The Rise and Fall of the Cult of World War II in Russia* (BasicBooks, 1994).

¹⁰⁴⁵ *Sotsialisticheskaia obriadnost*, 50–51.

status. Soviet people would receive special rewards, honours, or acknowledgments, in special cases even keys to their new socialist apartments. Millions would listen to the speeches of high officials, who congratulated the common people and dictated the official conclusions about the past year. An important part of this Soviet ritual was popular (in both meanings) music:

In some regions, New Year's shchedrivky [carols] are very popular, and by singing them authors and performers of amateur collectives endorse human achievements, proclaim the high moral qualities of a Soviet person, express good wishes for the future.¹⁰⁴⁶

To make the new winter programme, Vatra stylised old ritual songs. However, they also needed new songs. Bolozir was looking for a poet with whom he would be able to produce a new artistic programme. In the winter of 1980, Ihor Bilozir became friends with Bohdan Stelmakh,¹⁰⁴⁷ who subsequently produced verses for the most popular songs of Vatra.¹⁰⁴⁸ The artistic programme, which combined neo-folk traditions, contemporary Estrada and romantic songs of Bilozir and Stelmakh was soon finished, and in January 1981 Vatra performed it to the audience. The *New Year's Evenings* at L'viv Philharmonic normally started after 1 January, around Orthodox Christmas, and ended on 20 January, when locals celebrated St. John's feast.¹⁰⁴⁹ Thus, even though the programme recalled the Soviet New Year celebration it was often perceived by locals as an old Christmas celebration.

This winter music programme was a great success.¹⁰⁵⁰ Performers dressed in their neo-folk costumes and sang "official" carols (without religious references) from the stage, which was later followed by the singing of old Christian carols in coffee houses or at their homes. This imitation of being Soviet was recognised, however, officials did not react.¹⁰⁵¹ Andrii Bereza, a former member of Vatra recalled that officials often accused the ensemble of being too national, religious and conservative.¹⁰⁵² Yet besides formal accusations and internal

¹⁰⁴⁶ *Sotsialisticheskaia obriadnost*, 51.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Stelmakh was known in the city poet and often worked with musicians, composers (like Ivasiuk or Ianivskiy) or state theatres. Yurii Brylynskyi, an actor from Zankovetska Theatre was the link to introduce Bilozir to the famous author in 1980. Some of the verses that Stelmakh prepared for Ivasiuk were arranged for music already by Bilozir.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Bohdan Stelmakh, On music and poetry, interview by Bohdan Shumylovych, Recorded audio interview, 2 March 2018, Urban Media Archive, Center for Urban History of East-Central Europe (L'viv, Ukraine). Together they produced 25 popular songs.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Lozynskyi, On contemporary pop-music (interview, 2013).

¹⁰⁵⁰ Lozynskyi; Stefura, On music recording and concerts (interview, 2015); Stelmakh, On music and poetry (interview, 2018).

¹⁰⁵¹ L'viv Philharmonics management often criticized *Vatra* for overtly national content or misbehaviour, however Bilozir or other members only received warnings or reprimands (there were nine of them, recall former band members Andrii Bereza or Iurii Kedrynskii), thus besides these soft measures no strict prosecutions were ever applied to *Vatra*, see: Valentyna Shuryin, "Lehendarna 'Vatra': spohady uchasnykiv pro te iak za Soiuzu vdalalosia propaguvaty ukraiinske," *Lvivska Hazeta*, May 15, 2017, sec. Liudy Lvova.

¹⁰⁵² Valentina Shurina, "Za to, cho v Afganistane 'Vatra' ispolniala pesni na ukraïnskom iazyke, ansambl otpravili tuda ieshche raz," *Fakty*, May 25, 2017.

reprimands, the Philharmonic managers did not take any serious initiatives against the band.¹⁰⁵³

The L'viv Television managers tasked with popularising the new Soviet Ukrainian Estrada were so excited about the winter neo-folk music programme that they produced a musical based on Vatra's show. In December of 1981, the Music Editorial of L'viv Television produced a film-concert, recorded at the Museum of Folk Architecture in L'viv, publicly known as "Shevchenko's Grove". The museum had opened in 1971 and in 1981 it became a scenic background for a musical dedicated to Vatra. This imitation of a peasant village, erected in the socialist city of L'viv, met with another socialist imitation, that of the electric-folk music revival.

The Museum of Folk Architecture in L'viv, which was modelled on the Swedish Skansen open air museum, was the best place *to emulate* folk life and pre-modern living. Stephen Daniels calls such museums "theme parks," and claims that they represent "the model heritage landscapes."¹⁰⁵⁴ To have a "real" peasant look, television editors borrowed old authentic garments from the Museum of Ethnography, which had only recently renovated its exhibition of Carpathian ethnic groups. Thus, the story was set up in the imaginary highland village, where "real" peasants gather around the bonfire to sing ancient songs. The musical was called *Vatra Invites you to a Celebration* [Vatra klyche na sviato] and it premiered in January 1982. A television musical meant that bonfire (and music band Vatra) called Soviet people to celebrate friendship and traditions (see **Figure 6.3**). This film was seen by millions of television viewers in western Ukraine and later by the national audience, changing the ensemble's status from local celebrity to national star.¹⁰⁵⁵

Behind the musical was the same person who had initiated folk-Estrada audio-visual production in the late 1960s, Myroslav Skochylias.¹⁰⁵⁶ In the late 1970s, he initiated a special television show on L'viv Television called *Vechornytsi* [Folk Evenings], which popularised the regional folk and amateur music collectives. As with *Zalytsialnyky* (1968), *Siisia Rodysia* (1969) and *Chervona Ruta* (1971), *Vatra Invites you to a Celebration* was envisaged as a combination of the national landscape and semi-folk music. While the previous musicals had been recorded in the mountains, by 1981 producers had fewer funds for such luxurious surroundings.

¹⁰⁵³ Soviet rituals were supposed to have double nature: to be affirmative and critical. So, on the one side, they had to promote new spiritual and emotional life under communism, but on the other side – to have critical stance in relation to religion and its ritualism. Obviously, *Vatra's* winter rituals fulfilled the first function – to make life happier, but completely neglected the second – to condemn religion and its old rituals. See on Soviet rituals' functions: *Sotsialisticheskaia obriadnost*, 164.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Daniels, *Fields of Vision*, 3.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Newspaper *Leninska Molod* [Lenin's Youth] on 12 January 1982 admitted that *Vatra* was one of the best popular music ensembles in Soviet Ukraine and that music film only confirms their status, see: Lepsha, *100 Oblych Ukrainskoi Estrady*, 112.

¹⁰⁵⁶ He was involved in different manner in production of most popular music films, produced by L'viv Television between 1968 and 1971.

Figure 6.3. The television neo-folk musical *Vatra Invites you to a Celebration* (L'viv Television, 1981).



Myroslav Skochyliias did not have a story behind this show. The script, produced by a young television editor (Maxym Mishchenko), was based on eleven songs by Vatra, four of which were written by Stelmakh and Bilozir, three which were folk melodies arranged by Bilozir, two which belonged to Oleksii Serdiuk, the band's instrumentalist and composer, and another four which Bilozir composed on the verses of P. Zapotichnyi, M.Mishchenko, and M.Vonio. Thus, the whole programme was missing the important aspects of Soviet friendship, namely songs in other languages.¹⁰⁵⁷ It would be strange for the musicians to sing in the Russian language since they were dressed in peasants' garments and performed as Ukrainian villagers.¹⁰⁵⁸

The musical repeated the New Year's musical show held at the L'viv Philharmonic. As in the case of *Sunny Clarinets* and other television folk programmes, the camera amplified not the real situation but "imagined reality". Everything looked as though it was real and authentic: the show started with the close-up of a bonfire with Vatra's members dancing around the flames. The L'viv museum of folk architecture transformed into the Carpathians, the place where ancient shepherds (like Arcadia's shepherds) gathered around their ritual vatras. Over this image a narrator stated:

Burning bonfire, rustling snow-covered and eternal spruces, everlasting hornbeams; and you with people, you are now a guest of the Carpathians; and a song from the mountains brings you joy, the lights are wrapped in a bright, vivid *Vatra* of friendship; and horns already make New Year's roars, and hear from everywhere ringing songs; it sounds like a friendship of our

¹⁰⁵⁷ The soloist of *Vatra* Oksana Bilozir in her multiple interviews expressed her proud that during her Soviet carrier she had never sung a Russian song or a song in Russian language, see interview: Oksana Bilozir, "Meni hovoryly: spivai rosiiskoju, budesh zirkoiu," <https://glavcom.ua> (blog), December 5, 2015, <https://glavcom.ua/interviews/132923-oksana-bilozir-meni-govorili-spivaj-rosijskoju---budesh-zirkoju.html>.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Similar example presents Evans, when speaking Belorussian language on Central Soviet TV was allowed since the actor was 'playing the role of a folk hero', see: Evans, "The 'soviet way of life' as a way of feeling," 568.

great people, and this friendship nobody can overcome; we burn this *Vatra* for the people and invite all people for a holiday.¹⁰⁵⁹

This fantasy is followed by electric funk produced by Ihor Bilozir and Petro Zapotichnyi. The song “*Vatra, an Everlasting Bonfire*”, was an intro song for the band’s concerts, but it also conveyed the major neo-folk ideology of the band: friendship, Carpathian rituals, fire/nature, and authenticity. Both, the narrator’s introduction and the music were intended to create a special setting, inviting the viewer into the imaginary world of folklorism. In this imaginary space, the real area of the museum transformed into the Carpathians, and the landscape turned into a symbolic media(land)scape.

Folk songs were interspersed with popular songs produced by Bilozir in a neo-folk fashion. Thus, the imaginary world of the Carpathian shepherds was visually mixed with electric rhythms, neo-folk tunes, and authentic songs. This way the neo-folk fairy tale reached the private homes of millions of ordinary Soviet people.¹⁰⁶⁰ As Evans affirms, Soviet television was able to contribute to the system of state holidays and “to bridge the growing division between public and private domestic spaces, providing a tangible connection between intimate festivities in the home and public celebrations.”¹⁰⁶¹ However, the musical not only connected the Soviet public and private spheres (see Introduction and Chapter 1.) but linked the private with the neo-folk romantic imaginary, as created by socialist popular culture.

This imaginary world of Ukrainian electric-folk fulfilled the late Soviet officials’ recommendations of not attacking old rituals (for instance religious singing), since people usually negatively reacted to cultural suppressions, but rather creating new stereotypes (like the New Year celebration), which would replace these older traditions.¹⁰⁶² In addition, the musical confirmed the old imperial and Soviet stereotype about Ukrainians as “peaceful peasant people,” continuously dancing and singing.¹⁰⁶³ Television editors reproduced previously established cultural and ethnic stereotypes, as though enacting as Karen Dill-Shackelford called “imaginal confirmation” (confusion of real or seen phenomenon with imagined), and transforming fantasy into the new reality.¹⁰⁶⁴

The musical exemplified how Soviet regional television could easily turn from a mode of communication into a ritual mode, which aimed not just to communicate with the audience but to maintain social and ethnic bonds. It conveyed ideas about family, friendship and love, mixed with the stereotyped imagination of ethnicity. Writing about media-rituals, Nick

¹⁰⁵⁹ Tetiana Mahar, *Vatra Invites for a Celebration*, Video recording of television film (L’viv: L’viv Television Studio, 1981), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_nF1JOVZ8dw.

¹⁰⁶⁰ On the concept of fairy-tale reality see: Bratich, “Programming Reality,” 19–20.

¹⁰⁶¹ Evans, “The ‘soviet way of life’ as a way of feeling,” 560.

¹⁰⁶² *Sotsialisticheskaia obriadnost*, 164.

¹⁰⁶³ Most of these ethnic stereotypes were re-produced in Soviet kolkhoz film musicals of the 1930s (for instance in *Tractor Drivers* by Ivan Pyryev, 1939) and in later cultural forms. See also about ethnic Ukrainian stereotype or colonial kitsch in: Tamara Hundorova, “Mykola Gogol i Kolonialnyi Kitsch,” *Gogoleznavchi Studiyi*, no. 1 (18) (2009).

¹⁰⁶⁴ On ‘imaginal confirmation’ produced by media see: Dill-Shackelford, *How Fantasy Becomes Reality*, 122.

Couldry re-shaped Durkheim's notion of society as individuals "acting in common" into individuals "acting in common through media forms."¹⁰⁶⁵ As a social act of common acting through media, this musical was not made to report reality, but rather had to reflect and support the cultural mythology of the hegemonic Soviet and Ukrainian culture. Therefore, as with previous regionally produced (1968, 1969, 1971, 1975) musicals, they had more in common with cultural mythology and fairy tales,¹⁰⁶⁶ than with socialist reality. The myth of Vatra was produced locally as an outcome of a Ukrainian neo-folk revivalist attitude, but at the same time complied with Soviet mythology (the meta-narrative of peasants and friendship).

The myth of Vatra was continuously repeated in popular texts about the band and Bilozir,¹⁰⁶⁷ which shows that the story of the shepherds and the bonfire, love and friendship, ancient and authentic culture was successfully appropriated by people. Ten years after Bilozir's tragic death in 2000, his sister still recalled this myth: "Vatra stays for life, eternal burning [...] it was made by highland shepherds [...] it attracts people by its heat, it makes a place for communication, symbol of life, unity and prosperity [...] songs were about nature, the beauty of the country and love."¹⁰⁶⁸ The ensemble Vatra and its neo-folk myth, which relied heavily on the romanticised image of the Carpathians, helped to establish the stereotypical image of western Ukraine as a locale of folk authenticity and, at the same time, kitschy folklorism.¹⁰⁶⁹ Not surprisingly, in 2012 officials from the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine called Bilozir the last Romantic in Ukrainian Estrada.¹⁰⁷⁰ As with Ivasiuk, Bilozir and his ensemble Vatra were both producing a new romantic myth and were themselves produced by Soviet Ukrainian Romanticism.

Vatra Invites you to a Celebration visualised a new Soviet and very much Ukrainian media ritual: the neo-folk New Year celebration. It contributed to the establishment of Vatra's identity as a Carpathian and neo-folk music collective.¹⁰⁷¹ From 1983-1985 L'viv Television managers created additional television musicals which established Vatra's popularity on the regional and also national level. In 1983, L'viv Television produced two music concerts: *Vatra in the Carpathians* (6 songs, 26 minutes) and *Vatra in L'viv* (6 songs, 30 minutes). This urban-

¹⁰⁶⁵ Nick Couldry, *Media Rituals: A Critical Approach* (Routledge, 2003), 20.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Zorkaia, *Folklor, Lubok, Ekran*.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Zoriana Ilenko, *Ihor Bilozir: Nedospivana Pisnia* (L'viv: Ukraiinski tekhnologii, 2004); Lepsha, *100 Oblych Ukraïnskoi Estrady*.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Ruslana Bilozir, 'Nezgasyma Vatra Ihoria Bilozira', Official web page of L'viv branch of national Association of Estrada Art Workers, *Www.Ademulov.io.Ua* (blog), 2011.

¹⁰⁶⁹ Kyiv based and Russian speaking writer Volodymyr Nesterenko (aka Adolfych), who ardently opposes the spread of Ukrainian language in the capital of Ukraine, recognises that only rock music from the late 1980s changed the image of western Ukraine as a reservoir of folklorism and ethnographism, created by Soviet television and radio. See: Volodymyr Nesterenko, "Kuzia Hadiukin, a slacker," Personal blog of Adolfych, <http://www.cumart.org> (blog), 2005, <http://www.cumart.org/kuzya.htm>.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Mykhailo Shved, "Ihor Bilozir: Ostannii Romantyk Ukraïnskoi Estrady," *Muzyka (Naukovo-Populiarnyi Zhurnal z Pytan Muzychnoi Kultury)*, 2012.

¹⁰⁷¹ To compare, see *Siisia, Rodysia* (1969) music film, which was made by L'viv Television, also dedicated to New Years' celebration.

rural dichotomy exemplified the major L'vivian cultural identity, the city divided between nature (the Carpathians) and urban socialism. Excerpts from these musicals were continuously featured on holiday concerts on radio and L'viv Television concerts, designed on the basis of audience correspondence (*Kontsert vitan'*).¹⁰⁷² They became a part of an important imaginary supplying people's everyday life with meaning. The popularity of Vatra was mirrored that of Smerichka and Chervona Ruta.

Figure 6.4. Covers of music recordings of Vatra from 1983 and 1985.

Title cover of Vatra's mini album released by Melodia in 1983



Title cover of Vatra's mini album released by Melodia in 1985



Both album covers feature the musicians in folk fashion. The first image shows the band at the L'viv Museum of Folk Architecture during the production of the winter music film in 1982. They dress in authentic garments borrowed from the L'viv Museum of Ethnography. The second image shows that band's identity shifted: the soloist Oksana Bilozir is in the foreground, while musicians wear stylised costumes. In 1983 Vatra changed from a neo-folk collective into a typical Estrada band performing folklorism.

In a few years, sometime between 1982-1984, Vatra shifted from folk songs to lyrics and love songs written by Ihor Bilozir (music) and Bohdan Stelmakh (verses). These two songwriters created twenty-four songs, which are still well known and popular. These songs told family stories, emotional tales of love,¹⁰⁷³ songs about mothers,¹⁰⁷⁴ and fathers.¹⁰⁷⁵ Markian Shunevych¹⁰⁷⁶ from Vatra claims that these songs explicitly followed the folk way of

¹⁰⁷² Kozak, Interview on history of L'viv TV.

¹⁰⁷³ *Pershyi Snih* [First snow], *Kvity u Rosi* [Flowers in dew], *Krynytsia Liubovi* [Love's well], *Ne Syp, Myla, Skla* [Do not throw glass, darling] and many others.

¹⁰⁷⁴ *Mamo, Vashi Dity iak Ptytsii* [Mom, your children as birds], *Niby Vchora Moia Mamo Vy mene Budyly Rano* [As if yesterday, my mom, you woke me up in the morning], *Mamyna Svitlytsia* [Mom's house].

¹⁰⁷⁵ *Bat'kivske Zhyto* [Father's rye], *Nad Rikoiu* [Over the river], *Rannioiu Vesnoiu Bat'ko Lan Zasivav* [In the early spring farther sawed his land].

¹⁰⁷⁶ He was the only communist in the collective, therefore often had to speak up for the band at different gatherings, but at the same time was sent abroad in cultural tours.

making melodies through the tonic, dominant, and subdominant. They were simple and easily remembered.¹⁰⁷⁷

Already in 1985, the newly released regional musical *Melodies of Vatra* [Melodii Vetry] marked a decline for the neo-folk ensemble. The twenty-minute concert *Melodies of Vatra* was recorded inside an interior reminiscent of a medieval space. It was the house of Soviet architects, situated inside the L'viv's medieval powder tower, which visually conveyed the idea of the ancient. However, such visuals conveyed artificiality not authenticity, which was the founding principal of the early Vatra. The film indicated the lost neo-folk identity of the band, which had ended up as a typical Ukrainian Estrada band performing folklorism.

6.5. Politicisation and decline

Even though popular performers and producers still had certain freedom between 1982-1986, in Soviet Ukraine it was much safer to perform folk, neo-folk, or folklorism than other forms of Soviet Estrada, or semi-legal rock. In addition, in the early 1980s this type of neo-folk music was highly promoted by the Soviet media, and was favoured both by officials and by the Soviet masses. Yet, even if a band performed in a neo-folk fashion, it was not completely free from criticism. Folklorism sowed the seeds of cultural nationalism through its emotional appeal and communist officials were on constant alert. So, state-subsidised popular culture met with two opposing criticisms: it either leaned too much towards western pop or too much towards national culture. Both extremes were objectionable, however, some imperial practices in the USSR allowed a negotiation of what was permitted and restricted.¹⁰⁷⁸

Vatra, which was re-established as a neo-folk collective in 1979 and gained immense popularity in Soviet Ukraine with its winter music programme in 1980 and 1981, was a typical example of such cultural policies. For officials, Vatra promoted a state supported folklorism, but also awakened strong national feelings. Bohdan Stelmakh recalled that an editor from Ukrainian radio told him that from 1983-1984, there was an unofficial instruction not to air their songs too often on the radio. Similarly, the weekly concert programme, which was based on the letters of the audience, ignored massive written requests for airing and broadcasting Vatra.¹⁰⁷⁹ Officials were troubled that the immense popularity of Vatra could turn it into a pop-cult, as had already happened with Volodymyr Ivasiuk.

L'viv party members even refused to sanction the television musical *Vatra Invites you to a Celebration* which was produced in L'viv in 1982. Even though the Artistic Council of Philharmonics approved the neo-folk programme and the L'viv state committee that supervised media financed the television film-concert recorded at the Museum of Folk Architecture and Rural Life, the regional communist headquarters halted the film release. Liubov Kozak, who worked at the Music Editorial of L'viv Television, said that officials did not

¹⁰⁷⁷ Vasyl Khudytskyi, "Fatalna Pisnia Ihoria Bilozira," *Dzerkalo Tyzhnia*, September 6, 2013, 958 edition, https://dt.ua/CULTURE/fatalna-pisnya-igorya-bilozira-_.html.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Yekelchuk, *Stalin's Empire of Memory*, 2004, 5.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Stelmakh, On music and poetry (interview, 2018).

explain the ban, but were afraid that the film might cause excessive national feelings.¹⁰⁸⁰ As with the first highly criticised Ukrainian songs by Smerichka in the late 1960s, the situation was resolved from Moscow. Halyna Hreshylova, who worked at the Film Editorial of L'viv Television and was a close friend of Myroslav Skochylias, the chief editor at the Music Editorial, brought the musical to Moscow's Central Television (see Chapter 1.1.).¹⁰⁸¹ In contrast to Ukrainian party officials, media professionals in Moscow warmly welcomed such a production, since it had important regional qualities, like the Carpathian imaginary and neo-folk aesthetics, suitable to the ideas of the socialist friendship of peoples, new Soviet rituals, and media folklorism.

When the musical was aired on Central Television's First Channel, local communists had to lift their informal ban. After the Moscow broadcasting, Vatra's musical became a hit not only on regional television but also on a national scale. This situation clearly shows the so-called Soviet imperial practices, mentioned by Serhy Yekelchik: the USSR sanctioned folklorism or neo-folk aesthetics and at the same restricted nationalism, but for local officials, it was not always clear where folk ended and nationalism began.¹⁰⁸² Regional managers would often ban "excessively national" cultural productions, but in the centre of the Soviet empire these same products often seemed exotic and very Soviet. weiner.¹⁰⁸³ National and supranational identities intertwined and coexisted not only in the minds of writers but also in practices of communist managers.¹⁰⁸⁴

Moscow could empower regional practices, which clearly contradicted dominant policies in the peripheries. The same year (1982) that Vatra's musical was approved in Moscow, Ukrainian officials celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of the creation of the USSR. Executives from the philharmonic required its music collective to celebrate this anniversary not with neo-folk repertoire but with a special programme, which would consist of Ukrainian and Russian patriotic songs about the fatherland. Bilozir refused to change his artistic repertoire, claiming that this would damage the band's identity as a Soviet neo-folk ensemble. Even though officials threatened to fire Bilozir from the L'viv Philharmonic, he managed to convince the artistic council not to change the repertoire and officials had to agree on a romantic neo-folk performance instead of a patriotic show.¹⁰⁸⁵ Bilozir was dismissed from the

¹⁰⁸⁰ Liubov Kozak, On Vatra and Skochylias, interview by Bohdan Shumylovych, Recorded interview with notes, 22 March 2018, Urban Media Archive, Center for Urban History of East-Central Europe (L'viv, Ukraine).

¹⁰⁸¹ Kozak; Brykailo, On film production at Lviv television (2019).

¹⁰⁸² Serhy Yekelchik, *Stalin's Empire of Memory: Russian-Ukrainian Relations in the Soviet Historical Imagination* (University of Toronto Press, 2004), 5–6.

¹⁰⁸³ Mayhill C. Fowler, *Beau Monde on Empire's Edge: State and Stage in Soviet Ukraine* (University of Toronto Press, 2017), 17, 206.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Yekelchik, *Stalin's Empire of Memory*, 2004, 53–54.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Shuryn, "Lehendarna 'Vatra': spohady uchasnykiv pro te iak za Soiuzu vdaivalosia propaguvaty ukraiinske (2017)." Band members recall that when being asked to change a programme for this important Soviet celebration Bilozir refused, because he believed that this might change Vatra's identity as 'folk Estrada' ensemble. His behaviour and stubbornness reminded that of *Eigensinn* of German workers, widely discussed by Alf Lütke, see: Alf Lütke, "From Ties That Bind to Ties That Relieve: Eigensinn and Bindung among

L'viv Philharmonic; his position and stubbornness were acknowledged by musicians and the audience.¹⁰⁸⁶ The former Vatra musician Andrii Kucherepa recalls that Bilozir received multiple reprimands and was dismissed several times but ultimately appointed again as the artistic director of the band.¹⁰⁸⁷ Vatra's popularity was high and it normally brought good revenues to the L'viv Philharmonic, so officials did not want to lose an effective artistic manager.

The decline of Vatra was caused by the poet Bohdan Stelmakh. In July 1984 the Ukrainian Union of Writers in L'viv held an event to officially commemorate the Russian poet Alexander Pushkin. Bohdan Stelmakh, among other local poets, was invited to recite some of his poems about friendship, but he decided to reveal "an oppositional act" (similar to *Eigensinn* of Bilozir) during the evening.¹⁰⁸⁸ He produced a poem called *Duel*, which described a deadly gunfight between Alexander Pushkin and his opponent Georges-Charles Dantes, and at the end of this poem, the author compared Dantes to the omnipresent Soviet censorship, which was killing honest and truthful poetry. The poem had a dramatic setting:

Over the black river in white shade, there wouldn't be an obstacle for a bullet/Dantes' body is trembling from his head hair to heels/The killer gets darker and worsened, the poet droves the trigger/ But unnecessary—he sees that there is nothing to shoot at, the enemy does not have a heart [...] the drop of blood on the floor [...] Dantes is happily laughing, professionally mumbles Salieri [...].¹⁰⁸⁹

The poem ends with a statement that the poetic aura eternally shines, but grey "Danteses" are still jealous. Even though we have sputniks, we go into space and believe in progress, we still have a Dantes around the corner, who is waiting to shoot a poet. The censor throws a stone into the transparent rhythm of a poem, claimed Stelmakh, and he finished his poem with a metaphor: there is a whole sea of Danteses and the poet stands above the sea. Not surprisingly, communists reacted harshly and immediately. Stelmakh was invited to a gathering at the Union of Writers and was heavily criticised: all his friends had to condemn the guilty artist. As he recalled, poets and writers were "throwing rocks, stones or pebbles at him," depending on the mood and the level of friendship.¹⁰⁹⁰

Some of the "enthusiastic" poets recalled that Stelmakh's father was imprisoned by the Soviet powers. In 1983, Stelmakh published a book called *Batkovi Slova* [Father's words] therefore officials could claim that he promoted anti-Sovietism, if not in his poetry then in the title's symbolism. Because of this, Stelmakh was invited to the prosecutor's office and

Industrial Workers in 20th Century Germany," in *Unraveling Ties: From Social Cohesion to New Practices of Connectedness*, ed. Yehuda Elkana et al. (St. Martin's Press and Campus Verlag, 2002), 179–98.

¹⁰⁸⁶ See interview with former Vatra's drummer Yurii Kedrynskyi and guitarist Andrii Bereza: Valentyna Shuryin, 'Za Ukrainku Pisniu - Biut, Za Neii Zh - Ubyvaiut (Interview)', *Vysokyi Zamok*, 29 May 2017, sec. Interview, <https://wz.l'viv.ua/interview/200415-za-ukrainku-pisniu-biut-za-nei-zh-ubyvaiut>.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Khudytskyi, "Fatalna Pisnia Ihoria Bilozira (2013)."

¹⁰⁸⁸ There were no special reasons for Stelmakh to act as he did, he explains this move as spontaneous anti-system attitude, see: Stelmakh, *On music and poetry* (interview, 2018).

¹⁰⁸⁹ I cite a verse, which was recalled by the author during an interview, see: Stelmakh.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Stelmakh.

received an official warning for the “systematic disparagement” of Soviet powers.¹⁰⁹¹ As a consequence, Stelmakh’s poems were banned from Ukrainian institutions of culture, including libraries, philharmonics and amateur collectives.¹⁰⁹² A Komsomol official was sent in the same summer of 1984 to Crimea, where Vatra was on tour in order to prevent the ensemble from singing Stelmakh’s songs.¹⁰⁹³

This was a heavy hit since Bilozir and Stelmakh produced twenty-five songs together and almost all their artistic repertoire had verses by the now disgraced poet. This story echoed the previous experience of the early Vatra, whose artistic director, Mykhailo Manuliak, was accused of using the verses of Ihor Kalynets, imprisoned in the early 1970s for anti-Sovietism (see Chapter 6.1.). From 1984 onwards, officials followed every song looking for hidden messages and nationalism. Officially, the musicians could not indicate that certain songs were written by Stelmakh, so they announced them in artistic program during concerts as folk [narodni]. Primarily, this ban was directed against Stelmakh, who was not employed by some organization and lived out of his artistic honoraria. If his name was removed from programmes and the repertoires of ensembles, he would not receive his fees. Because of unceasing ideological control, Vatra even considered moving from L’viv to another city, as Chervona Ruta with Sofia Rotaru had done, moving from Chernivtsi to Crimea (Yalta Philharmonic).¹⁰⁹⁴

This situation was not easy for Vatra and even though the ensemble worked with other renowned poets (like Roman Kudlyk or Mykola Petrenko), it was impossible to regain the same popularity as they reached with Stelmakh. The band declined as had done before in the early 1970s with Mykhailo Manuliak, again due to overly restrictive Soviet censorship and the politicisation of culture. Some songs that were based on the verses of Stelmakh were so popular that Vatra tried to keep the same title but replaced the text. Stelmakh remembered that in 1986, when Soviet Ukrainian Television showed a concert in Kyiv, traditionally dedicated to the party congress, the television narrator announced that *Vatra* would sing the iconic song “Pshenychne Pereveslo” (made by Bilozir and Stelmakh). The poet was shocked and pleased at the same time since he thought that this meant the end of the ban on his art. Apparently, even though the song had the same title, the musicians had produced new lyrics.¹⁰⁹⁵

The prohibition of Stelmakh’s works lasted until 1987 when political perestroika in USSR released constraints of regional powers. So between 1984 and 1987 Vatra had to improvise with another authors of lyrics, often being locked in performative folklorism. This period led to creative stagnation and even though the band was popular, it could not create

¹⁰⁹¹ Stelmakh asked what did the ‘systematic’ mean, and prosecutor Dorosh replied that it was one time and more, see: Stelmakh.

¹⁰⁹² Khudytskyi, “Fatalna Pisnia Ihoria Bilozira (2013).”

¹⁰⁹³ Stelmakh claims that this was a public official from the L’viv Regional Department of Culture, but was reluctant to name him. See: Stelmakh, On music and poetry (interview, 2018).

¹⁰⁹⁴ Shuryin, “Za Ukraiinsku Pisniu - Biut, Za Neii Zh - Ubyvaiut (Interview).”

¹⁰⁹⁵ This story is recalled after Stelmakh, see: Stelmakh, On music and poetry (interview, 2018).

anything new or interesting. Ihor Bilozir restrained from experiments and strove to turn Vatra into a normal Estrada collective with an attractive female soloist (his wife) Oksana Bilozir, similar to Chervona Ruta with Sofia Rotaru. Indeed, Vatra remained fairly successful and popular even without Stelmakh, but this conflict marked the beginning of the decline of its neo-folk experiment. For its tenth anniversary in 1989, Vatra gathered an immense crowd of fans and followers at the L'viv Opera House. Although they were able to return to Stelmakh's songs, this type of music was already out of fashion among the urban youth. With the collapse of the USSR in 1991, the neo-folk music of Vatra was no longer competitive. New Russian or foreign popular music filled the radio waves. Soviet Ukrainian neo-folk or electric folk revival never regained the impetus and popularity it had between 1981-1984.

Conclusion

1. An important argument of legitimacy, which was used by both communist officials and their nationalist opponents in the late 1960s, was shaped around native language, songs, and national territories/land. State managers in Soviet Ukraine supported forms of popular culture that used national references but without any national claims, being mostly ethnographically oriented and overtly cheerful. Thus, state-sponsored popular culture in Ukraine had to fulfil certain demands, namely to fit a stylised folkloric appearance and to connect with the "holy" culture of peasants. At a certain point, such an approach caused the proliferation of folklorist and neo-folkish aesthetics in the republic.
2. New genres of light music in Soviet Ukraine emerged in the late 1960s which strove to combine traditional Soviet Estrada with the popular tunes of The Beatles, jazz music and funk from the 1970s. The musical ensemble Vatra intended to combine new music trends and fresh poetry in the national language with regional folk traditions. This hybrid proved to be effective, but very quickly the ensemble and its artistic director were criticised and accused of nationalism, especially since its lyrics had been written by Ihor Kalynets, imprisoned in the early 1970s alongside many other Ukrainian intellectuals. The major accusation against these people was their supposed anti-Sovietism (see Chapter 4).
3. Vatra's new life started after official anti-nationalism was over and its ardent proponent, Valentyn Malanchuk, was fired from the highest ideological position in 1979. Ihor Bilozir, who consciously absorbed the neo-folk aesthetics, created a new programme for Vatra, which was reminiscent of the style and attitude of contemporary European electric folk or folk revival. Bilozir believed that his band revived ancient folk songs, which were supported by new electronic instruments. Together with the poet Bohdan Stelmakh, Bilozir created a popular music show, which gained immense popularity in L'viv and around the region. This show specifically had revivalist aesthetics and combined both the party demands, folk traditions, and popular tastes.
4. This chapter shows how the hybrid neo-folk winter ritual held by Vatra, which aimed to celebrate the Soviet New Year, turned into a media ritual through L'viv Television. Thus, the Soviet universalistic ritual of New Year's Eve, which aimed to replace the religious

celebration of Christmas, by means of Vatra's folklorism and media musical was turned into an ethnically embodied performance. Current scholars claim that rituals do not exist like "texts or institutions as structures of signification or dispositions of power and control" but instead, they exist as "embodied performances, as events produced and experienced bodily by actors in a shared situation and in a local site."¹⁰⁹⁶ Similarly, Vatra's television musical produced in 1982 (L'viv Television) can be interpreted as a media event and embodied local performance, which transcended locality through its romantic neo-folk imaginary.

5. Regional officials, even though they criticised Vatra for national extremes, did not have the intention of dismantling the band. The ensemble went into crisis after 1984, when Bohdan Stelmakh, the author of more than twenty songs of their songs, was punished by the Soviets for criticising Soviet censorship. Stelmakh was banned from public life and his art was removed from Vatra's repertoire.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Jeffrey C. Alexander, Bernhard Giesen, and Jason L. Mast, *Social Performance: Symbolic Action, Cultural Pragmatics, and Ritual* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), 342.

Chapter 7. Ideological war, audience research and cultural mobilisation in the 1980s

Introduction

Several historical moments influenced Soviet Ukrainian culture in the late 1970s and early 1980s: the military intervention in Afghanistan and the later oppositional movement in socialist Poland.¹⁰⁹⁷ In western Ukraine communist officials worried about youth participation in social and political events in neighboring Poland.¹⁰⁹⁸ The only logical explanation of why young people opposed the policies of the socialist state, which was considered to embody the ultimate form of social co-existence, was their false consciousness. The conscious young person who lived under socialism understood that temporary problems derived from the cultural and ideological war with the capitalist west. For many people the socialist system was not basically questioned, it was rather seen as “sick”, corrupted by the enemies who strove to hijack the hearts of the youth. Hence, in the 1970s, communist officials in the USSR believed that disobedience could only be the result of foreign influences. These external ideological influences, as had supposedly occurred in socialist Poland, targeted the youth, the generation which did not participate in a real struggle for socialism and was strongly attached to western media. Thus, socialist consumerism and mass entertainment, which were used to normalise citizens after 1968, came to be seen in the early 1980s as dangerous channels for ideological diversion. Officials reminded citizens that the ideological war with the west was not over, and that everybody should be on constant alert, as in the 1930s.

This chapter traces how Soviet Ukrainian officials in the early 1980s conducted an anti-pop campaign and overly regulated cultural production which generated a feeling of “regulative abnormality” and resentment among the intelligentsia. They also strove to understand the tastes of young people, whose participation in communist development was considered as part of a crucial battle (with capitalism), oriented towards the future. In the early 1980s, Soviet managers tried to use old methods of ideological propaganda and to ban forms of culture that they considered dangerous or infected with capitalist ideology. However, they also realised that it was impossible to win an ideological war with capitalism without understanding the hearts and minds of the generation that would supposedly build the future of the USSR.

The Ukrainian Media Committee played an important role in researching the tastes and preferences of young people during this period. The sociological surveys conducted by the committee had to inform officials of the sources of information for young Soviet dwellers, how they shaped the taste for new music, and what the possible solutions were for solving youth issues. The research produced between 1982-1984 in Soviet Ukraine serves as a “mirror”, which depicts the role that the media played to produce Soviet principles and shows

¹⁰⁹⁷ Wojnowski, *The Near Abroad*, 174–206.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Wojnowski, “Staging Patriotism,” 827–29.

how people anticipated the surrounding reality of the time. It also shows the background of the new youth culture, which developed in the mid-1980s and continued evolving until the end of the USSR in 1991.

7.1. Cultural resentment and politicising pop

Ukrainian communist officials in the western regions of the UkrSSR were surprised in May 1979, when thousands of Soviet people expressed public noncompliance in the city of L'viv couased by Volodymyr Ivasiuk's death. On April 21 1979, Ivasiuk, a person admired in Soviet Ukraine for shaping new Ukrainian popular music (see Chapter 1.6.), left his apartment in L'viv and disappeared. The search for the composer brought no information. On 18 May 1979, he was found to have been hanged in the forest.¹⁰⁹⁹ Even though officials claimed that the popular author and composer had depression and had committed suicide,¹¹⁰⁰ the common people and intelligentsia did not buy this story. The immense popularity of the Ukrainian pop-idol¹¹⁰¹ and the massive resentment towards his death, felt by ordinary people, caused them to disbelieve official information. This feeling of resentment was coupled with the fear, caused by the anti-nationalist campaign, which targeted certain groups of the intelligentsia, especially in western Ukraine, in the 1970s.

The death of Ivasiuk caused a feeling of loss. People were shocked and did not follow party instructions.¹¹⁰² Bureaucrats recommended that many artists and public intellectuals should not attend the funeral.¹¹⁰³ Party officials did not know how to appropriately react to the death of a famous and loved personality. The media kept silent and this vacuum of information was filled with gossip, reinforced by the anti-nationalist (often observed as anti-Ukrainian) attitudes of the officials. It was easy to believe that Ivasiuk was killed, but since he

¹⁰⁹⁹ I have interviewed Grigorii Chliants, a supervisor of regional radio amateurs in the 1970s-80s, who has found during radio-training the dead body of Ivasiuk. He confirmed that the corpse was discovered completely by chance in the forest, with no signs of violence or robbery (oral interview with notes, September 2017).

¹¹⁰⁰ In June 1979, a bit delayed article was published in the main communist newspaper of L'viv asserting that composer had depressions and committed suicide, therefore any other explanations of his death were considered false.

¹¹⁰¹ Normally Ukrainian pop-music composers did not have such immense popularity as Ivasiuk, since they were 'invisible', known mainly by names and not by sight. People used to know artists who performed songs and not their authors. Most probably Ivasiuk's status of pop-idol was shaped because of his close alliance with television and frequent appearance on the Soviet screen. Olexandr Riznyk deliberately calls Ivasiuk a 'pop-idol' marking his popularity as comparable to singing popular icons, see: Riznyk, "Nerealizovanyi pop-idol chy spivets muchenyk (1999)."

¹¹⁰² L'vivians often recalled the they felt as if Ivasiuk was stolen from them, Risch indicates that his death exposed a resentment connected to the feelings of cultural discrimination, see: Risch, "Mass Culture and Counterculture," 247.

¹¹⁰³ Rostyslav Bratun, who was the head of local branch of the Soviet Ukrainian Writers' Union of and at the same time co-authored with Ivasiuk many popular songs, was asked by the upper party officials not to go to the funeral. He went to the burial and even delivered a speech, where openly stated that this death was obscure and should be investigated. For this disobedience and seemingly for spreading unneeded rumours, he was dismissed from the leading position at the Union. Many other artists, like Victor Morozov, Nazarii Yaremchuk or Levko Dutkovskyyi have been warned that their participation at the funeral might lead to undesirable consequences. Sofia Rotaru, who became very popular in USSR singing Ivasiuk's songs did not come to the funeral. On Bratun and his life in L'viv see: Risch, *The Ukrainian West (2011)*, 120, 130–38, 146. Morozov and Dutkovskyyi confirmed party warning in personal conversation with me in 2015.

was not involved in any political activities, people tended to think that he was murdered for what he was famous for – his popular Ukrainian songs. To stop the spread of rumours, KGB officers started “friendly” talks with the intelligentsia, though this only fuelled the gossip.¹¹⁰⁴

The resulting Ivasiuk myth painted the composer as a martyr, who had to suffer for his art and ability to produce modern and Ukrainian popular culture.¹¹⁰⁵ William Risch claims that Ivasiuk’s songs united generations of Ukrainians.¹¹⁰⁶ After his tragic death, he stood (especially for nationalists) in the same ranks of recent Ukrainian victims of the Soviets, such as the artist Alla Horska (1929-1970),¹¹⁰⁷ and the poet Vasyl Symonenko (1935-1962).¹¹⁰⁸ Ivasiuk’s burial in L’viv brought together communist officials, KGB officers and nationally minded intellectuals, who symbolically fraternised around the tomb of this popular composer.¹¹⁰⁹

Current-day Ukrainian state institutions (and people) often share the myth promoted by nationalists. One may often find popular beliefs that the Soviet system was somehow jealous of Ivasiuk’s popularity. The web page of the Ukrainian State Agency of Copyright, for instance, commemorated Ivasiuk with the following text in 2017, describing him as a romantic and tragic hero:

The regime of those days couldn’t tolerate the fact that Volodymyr Ivasiuk, an ordinary Bukovinian village lad, the son of a rural teacher, became an idol for millions of his talent admirers, creating songs that praised neither social workplace competitions top performers nor proletarian leaders, but his beautiful homeland—Ukraine and its people.¹¹¹⁰

In fact, Mykhailo Ivasiuk, the composer’s father, was a member of the Writer’s Union and, by Soviet standards, had made a rather comfortable living. He could afford to have a domestic service and had some other social privileges. Volodymyr Ivasiuk, except for a short period in Chernivtsi, did not work at any socialist factory either in the village. He was meant to become a doctor but strove to become a professional composer and lived comfortably from his music

¹¹⁰⁴ Alexandr Khokhulin, “Pokhorony Ivasiuka, memoirs,” Samlib.ru, Personal blog, *My mankurty (1977-1983)* (blog), 2005, http://samlib.ru/h/hohulin_aleksandr_wasilxewich/chastxtretxja1977-1983.shtml.

¹¹⁰⁵ Indeed, Ivasiuk became a cult figure in Ukrainian 1980s, there are multiple fictional or semi-fictional books written about him in recent years, though there is scarcity of academic historical research on his heritage, see MA thesis from Canada: Stefan Sokolowski, “The Myth of Volodymyr Ivasiuk During the Perestroika Era” (MA Thesis, Edmonton, Alberta, University of Alberta, 2008). Ivasiuk’s funeral and its cultural perception was described in: Risch, *The Ukrainian West (2011)*, 246–50.

¹¹⁰⁶ Risch, *The Ukrainian West (2011)*, 232.

¹¹⁰⁷ Alla Horska was known Soviet Ukrainian artist and activist-dissident, who was involved in discussing issues of Soviet crimes against citizens of USSR. She was found murdered in November 1970, see: V. Ovsiyenko, “HORSKA, Alla Oleksandrivna,” Virtual museum, *Dissident Movement in Ukraine* (blog), April 19, 2005, <http://museum.khpg.org/en/index.php?id=1113894485>.

¹¹⁰⁸ Yevhen Sverstyuk, “SYMONENKO, Vasyl Andriyovych,” Virtual museum, *Dissident Movement in Ukraine* (blog), April 20, 2005, <http://museum.khpg.org/en/index.php?id=1113996183>.

¹¹⁰⁹ Alexandr Khokhulin was part of local communists’ team and party officials asked him to be on alert during funeral. He describes that nationalists and security officers stood mixed in the first row around the tomb of Ivasiuk, see: Khokhulin, “Pokhorony Ivasiuka, memoirs.”

¹¹¹⁰ The text was accessed on the official web page of the Centre in January 2017, see: http://www.uacrr.org/en/sogodn_den_pam_yat_osnovopolozhnika_ukra_nsko_estravno_muziki_volodimira_vasyuka/.

and verses. Ivasiuk's family was typical of the Soviet Ukrainian intelligentsia. The frequent emphasis that his father was a teacher and that they originated from the village was intended to show, according to Soviet tradition, that he came from the world of working people.

His burial on 22 May 1979 in L'viv turned into a big public performance, where people sang patriotic songs and publicly expressed their resentment/grief.¹¹¹¹ Indeed, this event also attracted "conscious nationalists," who challenged the Soviet order.¹¹¹² There were cases where unknown people burnt flowers on the tomb of Ivasiuk and vandalised it, which was supposedly meant to promote further anti-Soviet feeling.¹¹¹³ Many people in L'viv had been visited by security officers and Ivasiuk's artistic heritage was partially banned by the officials. After 1979 it was not recommended to promote his songs in Soviet media,¹¹¹⁴ though formally these restrictions were never too far-reaching. After a quick special investigation, the case of Ivasiuk's death was closed and remains unsolved even today.¹¹¹⁵ His music and verses were officially published and his name was not banned (as it habitually happened with "guilty" Soviet artists), but it was wise to abstain, if possible, from airing and broadcasting his works. Even though the authorities discouraged Ivasiuk's commemoration, people regularly visited his tomb at the main cemetery in L'viv.¹¹¹⁶

¹¹¹¹ Officials looked scared and discouraged even Ivasiuk's close friends to go to a funeral, see: Dutkovskiy, *Creation of Smerichka* (interview, 2015). The story about the funeral that turned to mass manifestation became cultural memory in western Ukraine and it is often repeated in media, see for instance: Irina Rybinskaia, "'Delo Ivasiuka': sudmedekspertiza ustanovila chto na moment povesheniia kompozitor byl uzhe mertv," *Fakty*, July 19, 2014, <http://fakty.ua/185008-vladimir-ivasyuk-ne-pisal-pesni-o-lenine-ne-voepeval-traktora-i-kolhozy-on-tvoril-nastoyacshuyu-muzyku-i-stihi>.

¹¹¹² After the funeral people spread rumours about the murder, and in June 1979, Vasyl and Petro Sichko during private commemorative event at the cemetery openly accused Soviet powers in killing Ivasiuk. For this 'public anti-Soviet outrage' they were arrested and sent to prison, see: Sokolowski, "The Myth of Volodymyr Ivasiuk," 32; Risch, *The Ukrainian West (2011)*, 249.

¹¹¹³ Alexandr Nezdolia, the former KGB high official states that he and his colleagues had to stay over nights at the cemetery, since there were cases of burning flowers on the tomb and this vandalization fuelled the anti-Soviet myth of Ivasiuk's death, see: Nezdolia, *Dve epokhi generala gosbezopasnosti*, 161–66.

¹¹¹⁴ There are no official statements of this kind, mainly I refer here to oral accounts of contemporaries. The vivid example is that when in 1989, ten years after Ivasiuk's death, Liubov Kozak from music programming desk at L'viv Television prepared a programme about famous composer, KGB officers came to the TV editorials and discussed the programme's script with editors, see: Kozak, Interview on history of L'viv TV.

¹¹¹⁵ Only thirty years after the obscure murder, in 2009, the criminal case on Ivasiuk's death was initiated and in 2012, it was closed down due to the lack of evidences. However, in 2014 after political calamities and mass murders in Kyiv, which brought the change of country's political orientation, the case was re-initiated. A police investigator Mykola Holomsha, who visited burial in 1979 and led the investigation in 2009–2012, admitted in 2014 that Ivasiuk was followed by KGB agents (who reported to upper officials that he could be suspected in nationalism) and available evidences support the claim that he was murdered. In 2015, official prosecutors in L'viv claimed in the regional media that executives have confirmations that Soviet special police murdered Ivasiuk, see: 'L'vivska prokuratura vstanovyla novi pidrobytsi vbyvstva Volodymyra Ivasiuka', Information web portal, <http://tsn.ua>, 5 March 2015, <http://tsn.ua/ukrayina/do-smerti-vidomogo-ukrayinskogo-poeta-volodimira-ivasyuka-prichetne-kdb-prokuratura-413500.html>. However, the formal resolution of his murder by KGB agents has not been published or legally announced yet, therefore Ivasiuk's death still bring controversies in Ukraine.

¹¹¹⁶ Sokolowski, "The Myth of Volodymyr Ivasiuk," 17.

By coincidence, another famous composer living in L'viv died in 1979: the hundred year old Stanislav Liudkevych. This time public officials prepared in advance for his funeral and the party sent many of its functionaries to participate in the funeral. The event was fairly controlled and when some older women started singing old Ukrainian immigrant songs near the tomb, they were soon surrounded by the various party and KGB personnel.¹¹¹⁷ Alexandr Khokhulin, who was a party member at that time and worked with L'viv artists, remembered that Anatolii Shevchuk from L'viv Obkom asked these people why they sang on the tomb and sarcastically suggested that the women join an amateur music ensemble. The officials laughed nervously at this comment and the singers left the cemetery.¹¹¹⁸

Obviously, the natural death of an old and famous music composer (like Liudkevych), who was involved in classical music, was not fit for the romantic and national myth-making of the martyred hero (like Ivasiuk). Since 1979, the persona and oeuvre of Volodymyr Ivasiuk evolved from an image of the most successful Ukrainian popular composer to an image of the martyr of the regime. His name was recalled during perestroika in the 1980s and his most famous song "Chervona Ruta" was given to the name of a Ukrainian popular music festival, which took place in September 1989. Because of his popular romantic music and tragic death, Ivasiuk became a symbol of the subjugated national revival, the revival that took place in popular music and was fostered by Soviet Ukrainian Television.

7.2. The Soviet campaign against pop-music

In the spring of 1979, when the ardent anti-nationalist Valentyn Malanchuk was fired and Volodymyr Ivasiuk was buried, the Central Committee of the Communist Party in Moscow called its regional leadership to follow up new and at the same time old cultural turn. In April 1979, communist officials in Moscow called on other party members to focus more on the promotion of new Soviet rituals and leisure, and on fostering a new Soviet identity grounded in Marxism-Leninism.¹¹¹⁹ The party decree issued in April 1979 recommended Soviet state managers to use all available cultural infrastructure in order to further develop a new Soviet person through political and educational work.¹¹²⁰ According to this party decree, Soviet institutions had to shape "a sense of pride in the socialist homeland" in the working people

¹¹¹⁷ Alexandr Khokhulin, "Pokhorony Stanislava Liudkevicha, memoirs," Samlib.ru, Personal blog, *My mankurty (1977-1983)* (blog), 2005, http://samlib.ru/h/hohulin_aleksandr_wasilxewich/chastxtretxja1977-1983.shtml.

¹¹¹⁸ Khokhulin.

¹¹¹⁹ See late Soviet regulative document on how to foster new person: Central Committee of Communist Part of USSR, *O dalneishem uluchshenii ideologicheskoi, politiko-vospitatelnoi raboty (1979)*, 3. On Soviet person and personality see: Yinghong Cheng, *Creating the New Man: From Enlightenment Ideals to Socialist Realities* (University of Hawaii Press, 2009), 33–47.

¹¹²⁰ About Soviet personality see: Lynne Attwood, *The New Soviet Man and Woman: Sex-Role Socialization in the USSR* (Springer, 1990), 32–67. On how leisure should foster Soviet personality (the case of city Armavir in Russian Federation) see: Stanislav Pasenko, *Problema i spetsifika realizatsii sovetskoi kontseptsii dosuga na primere kulturno-dosugovoi sfery goroda Armavira (1943–1991 gg.): Monografiia* (Scientific magazine "Kontsept," 2014), 85.

and “respect for their national dignity and national culture,” but at the same time to express “a rejection of any manifestations of nationalism.”¹¹²¹

In June 1979, Ukrainian communists organised their own plenum (that followed the April Plenum in Moscow) in order to discuss further political and educational work in the republic and to express their commitments to the respect of national dignity or national culture and at the same time to show stubbornness to any manifestations of nationalism. Shcherbytskyi performed in the style of the era: he spoke using multiple verbs, which promised *to explain, to educate, to add, to strengthen, to increase, to raise*, etc.; for instance, to spread Soviet patriotism and to reinforce proletarian internationalism.¹¹²² It is commonly designated in current day Ukraine, that Shcherbytskyi did not use the notion of the “Ukrainian people” since 1979 but rather preferred to use “the people of Ukraine”.

The next ten years he did not have to repeat all these ideological formulas, being busy with economic growth in Soviet Ukraine. He preferred Ukrainian folk or neo-folk music, official Estrada, and highly supported Soviet cultural rituals. Among the various forms of culture, he was most interested in the development of football in the republic, which was booming in the 1980s. Shcherbytskyi considered people of Ukraine not as localized ethnic/national community but as Soviet society. This society was not ignorant about national culture but developed new supranational culture, based on Russian language and Marxism-Leninism. This Soviet Ukrainian culture was truly national in a form (and nationally performative), while socialist in content, produced by a classless and allegedly ideologically correct civilisation.

The case of Ivasiuk’s death exemplified how state-sponsored popular culture, even though it worked for the regime, could also become dangerous. Between November 1982, when Leonid Brezhnev died, and February 1984, when his successor, Yurii Andropov also died, Soviet popular culture and Estrada were closely controlled and criticised for various excesses.¹¹²³ Obviously, the party criticised Soviet popular culture during the late Brezhnev era, long before 1983. For instance, in 1980 officials issued decrees and strove to regulate dance halls and even published special regulations for discotheques.¹¹²⁴ They were dissatisfied with the lack of control over cultural consumption in Soviet Ukraine and feared that bad tastes (usually communicated through western music) would penetrate the minds of the Soviet

¹¹²¹ Central Committee of Communist Part of USSR, *O dalneishem uluchshenii ideologicheskoi, politiko-vospitatelnoi raboty (1979)*, 7–8.

¹¹²² “June Plenum in Kyiv” (Ukrainian Communist Party, June 8, 1979), Arkush 2-7, TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 2, Sprava 463, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine. Shcherbytskyi’s speech almost repeated previous statements of the Communist Party (from 1972) on local nationalism or national nihilism, see: Communist Party of USSR, “O podgotovke k 50-letiiu obrazovaniia Soiuzu Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik. Postanovleniie Tsentralnogo Komiteta KPSS 21 fevralia 1972 goda.,” 348.

¹¹²³ This control depended on the tastes of the high leaders, for instance Andropov admired jazz, therefore during his rule jazz in USSR was booming. Under Chernenko, who functioned as General Secretary between February 1984 and March 1985, almost half of official music bands in Soviet Ukraine were dismantled. See popular Russian accounts about anti-western initiatives during this period in: Fedor Razzakov, *Sofia Rotaru. Belyi tanets khutorianki* (Moscow: Litres, 2017), 156.

¹¹²⁴ Zhuk, *Rock and Roll in the Rocket City*, 233; Zhuk, “Hollywood’s Insidious Charms.”

youth. Hence, local Komsomol leaders and KGB officers in Ukraine demanded that popular discotheques played Soviet patriotic songs or at least the neo-folk music of Ukrainian Estrada.¹¹²⁵

A few years later, officials also found problems with this popular Soviet music. In July 1983, after the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, where Andropov and Chernenko called popular music bands “ideologically and aesthetically harmful,”¹¹²⁶ the Ministries of Culture in various Soviet republics started issuing new instructions for pop-bands and state-run cultural agencies.¹¹²⁷ Officials mainly strove to sanction or at least restrict Soviet rock bands (like *Mashina Vremeni*)¹¹²⁸ or popular discotheques, however, various types of official Estrada also suffered under censorship.¹¹²⁹ The crusade against popular music had reached a new height in the early 1980s in Soviet Ukraine.

In the early 1980s, some popular and neo-folk Ukrainian music bands were regularly criticised for the wrong ideological messages or for the absence of socialist ideology in their repertoires. Artists could receive negative reviews in regional or national Ukrainian newspapers or magazines, but it was uncommon that these criticisms would lead to further problems for the performers. Officials introduced different forms of censorship, like artistic councils and repertoire commissions, unions, ministerial recommendations, and intermediary organisations, which were responsible for the repertoire of ideologically appropriate songs. So, to avoid any negative criticism or even the possibility of such criticism, many musicians or managers of ensembles and midway organisations (like artistic councils) often selected already approved or neutral songs.

When not about socialism or love, these songs were entertaining and performative, stripped from any uncertain meanings of lyrics and relied heavily on rhythms and melodies. Thus, the subjects of such songs could vary from the sun to trees, flowers and smile, and mainly focused on emotions or interpreting folk tropes. However, officials could find negative, hidden agendas in even the most innocent of songs. The harmless butterfly could become an ideological insect. The Ukrainian poet Mykhailo Sachenko (born 1950) went on a retreat to nature and wrote a very simple verse about a butterfly:

A butterfly landed on top of my head,
He sat there and continues to sit,
The butterfly is sitting there and thinking,
How nice it is to sit on top of my head.

¹¹²⁵ Zhuk, *Rock and Roll in the Rocket City*, 236.

¹¹²⁶ See documents of the Plenum: *Aktualnyie Voprosy Ideologicheskoi, Massovo-Politicheskoi Raboty Partii (Postanovleniie Plenuma TsK KPSS Ot 14-15.06.1983)* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1984).

¹¹²⁷ Bright, “Soviet Crusade against Pop,” 123.

¹¹²⁸ See the account on how Soviet rock music was restricted in: Timothy W. Ryback, *Rock Around the Bloc: A History of Rock Music in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, 1954-1988*, First edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 218–22.

¹¹²⁹ Even Sofia Rotaru, considered by some authors a ‘rustic’ singer, wrote an angry letter to the magazine *Sovetskaya Kultura*, claiming that this anti-pop campaign in USSR had no real ground, see: Bright, “Soviet Crusade against Pop,” 144.

And there is nothing more between us,
Both independent - he and I.
The butterfly with his delicate feet
Embraces my neck.
I don't feel bad, I don't feel happy,
So complicated is this land.
The butterfly simply got me mixed up
With a blue flower.¹¹³⁰

Voktor Morozov, a famous musician and composer in L'viv, composed music for this short verse, producing the song "Metelyk" [Butterfly] which was produced and performed by various ensembles in western Ukraine.¹¹³¹ In their performance of the song, Smerichka used an inflatable toy in the shape of a butterfly to recreate the scene from the song, in order to show the funny interactions between an insect and a human being.¹¹³² For musicians, this was part of a show, and was not inspired by ideology or folklore. However, officials found this song problematic, prosecuting not the authors but rather the cultural managers who had sanctioned such "empty art".¹¹³³

Motivated by their Moscow colleagues who had called Soviet Estrada ideologically and aesthetically harmful, Kyiv officials needed to show some examples of "empty" and non-ideological (therefore immoral) works of Soviet Ukrainian Estrada, which needed to be defeated. Shcherbytskyi stated in his report at the party Plenum (June 1983) that the Soviet Ukrainian educational system could not reverse the apolitical attitudes of the youth and change their consumerist attitudes towards life.¹¹³⁴ He claimed that films and art in Soviet Ukraine avoided great subjects (like that of socialist *Bildungs* plots) and did not depict a romantic hero, fighting for the future Soviet person. Preparing a speech for Shcherbytskyi in June 1983, which he recited at the Plenum in Kyiv, someone from the party executives put the case of the "Metelyk" song into the report.¹¹³⁵ "In what way can this work of our Estrada, practiced by L'viv Union of Music Ensembles,¹¹³⁶ uplift a Soviet person?" – asked Shcherbytskyi

¹¹³⁰ Butterfly song, verses by Mykhailo Sachenko and music by Viktor Morozov (translated into English by Motria Onyshchuk-Morozov).

¹¹³¹ If the song was officially allowed for public performance by some artistic council, it could be performed by regional philharmonics, amateur bands or music collectives, supervised by music unions or different societies. If an author (a composer or a poet) had troubles with officials, his/her name was crossed out or replaced by another name, thus this way a delinquent person did not receive royalties. In the case of more serious ideological faults, the whole song could be banned and officials who 'made it through' were dismissed.

¹¹³² Musicians did not perceive verses as having special message, they found it just fun, see: Morozov, The story of Arnika (interview, 2015).

¹¹³³ On censoring Ukrainian popular music and the case of *Metelyk* see: Volodymyr Okarynskyi, "Narys Istorii Zahidnoukraiinskoi (Halyskoi) Rok-Muzyky (1960-Ti – Pochatok 1980-h Rokiv)," in *Ukraina-Europa-Svit: Mizhnarodnyi Zbirnyk Naukovykh Prats*, vol. 4, Istorii, Mizhnarodni Vidnosyny (Ternopil: Ternopil National Pedagogical University Press, 2010), 257.

¹¹³⁴ "Party Plenum Documents" (Ukrainian Communist Party, June 28, 1983), Arkush 24, TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 2, Sprava 723, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

¹¹³⁵ "TsDAHO (1983), Fond 1, Opys 2, Sprava 723," Arkush 25.

¹¹³⁶ This was an organization, which regulated the work of music bands in the city and region. Normally artistic repertoires were approved by the Union and semi-professional bands received necessary permissions from

and narrated verses from the song to his communist colleagues. Party members laughed, but it was obvious that restrictive reactions should follow after Shcherbytskyi's criticism.

Responding to party criticism, the Ukrainian satire and humour magazine *Perets* [Pepper], which often attacked the Soviet youth who followed western cultural trends, made a joke about this song.¹¹³⁷ The magazine reported that local performers sang about the butterfly sitting on a female breast, therefore, they assumed that the song had implicit sexual connotations.¹¹³⁸ Finally, the party managers dismissed the head of the L'viv Union of Music Ensembles [Lvivske Obiednannia Muzychnykh Ansambliiv], who was responsible for the repertoire policies in local clubs, restaurants and music bands.¹¹³⁹ Indeed, the simple butterfly could have become a weapon in ideological warfare. If in the poetic metaphor "*how to plough with butterflies*" (see Chapter 4.4.)¹¹⁴⁰ expressed by a poet-dissident Ihor Kalynets, officials could decipher anti-Soviet attitudes, hidden behind a butterfly, Mykhailo Sachenko's butterfly was suspected in amorality. The highest Ukrainian communist official condemned a song about a butterfly during the party plenum and entitled Ukrainian officials to put a ban on such "haltura" (cultural trash). He urged communists to strictly control popular entertainment in Soviet Ukraine.¹¹⁴¹

Places of cultural consumption, like restaurants and discotheques, had already been under the strict control of officials and secret services. Their repertoire was discussed continuously during Komsomol monthly meetings and the KGB sent agents to report on cultural consumption. Sergei Zhuk portrays a KGB officer, who after "visiting" a discotheque in L'viv in the spring of 1979, claimed that the music was western and did not cover Soviet or Ukrainian themes.¹¹⁴² This agent was amazed that in L'viv, the city where the Ukrainian language was much more common than in Dnipropetrovsk (current Dnipro), disc jockeys completely ignored neo-folk and the "national" light music of Smerichka. In his report, the officer confirmed that such cosmopolitan attitudes and idealisation of American pop was harmful to the Ukrainian youth.¹¹⁴³ However, the case of the "Metelyk" song in 1983, indicates that, for communist executives, Ukrainian pop could be as harmful as western light music.

In addition to their lyrics and tunes, popular Soviet artists were also criticised for their public persona and attitudes. Even highly praised performers could be censured or restricted.

this organization to perform at restaurants and clubs. Since this organization regulated the work of 'commercial' performers it was also often suspected of corruption.

¹¹³⁷ Zhuk, *Rock and Roll in the Rocket City*, 215–20.

¹¹³⁸ See interview with the author: Morozov, Pisia "Wild Thing" my vidrazu staly uspishnymy (2014).

¹¹³⁹ Morozov, The story of Arnika (interview, 2015).

¹¹⁴⁰ Kalynets made a block of poems, named 'Ploughing by butterflies', which worked as a metaphor of suppressed poetry, of imprisoned imaginary. He writes about a poet: 'This is the one, who forgot the sober language of people, and went to plough with butterflies, among zillia-zhurillia [sad grasses], which even bullocks cannot make,' see: Ihor Kalynets, *Slovo tryvaiuche: poezii* (Kharkiv: Folio, 1997), 422. On metaphor of ploughing see: Husar-Struk, "Nevol'nycha Muza, Abo Jak 'Oraty Metelykamy' (Igor Kalynets)," 26–27.

¹¹⁴¹ "TsDAHO (1983), Fond 1, Opys 2, Sprava 723," Arkush 25.

¹¹⁴² Zhuk, *Rock and Roll in the Rocket City*, 236.

¹¹⁴³ Zhuk, 236–37.

For instance, Sofia Rotaru was banned from an international tour after her participation in the Soviet section of international exhibition *Man and His World* in Montreal, Canada in 1983. Being part of the Soviet cultural diplomacy she gave around 40 concerts for local, mainly Ukrainian audiences and a Canadian agency produced a vinyl recording (LP) that mostly consisted of Volodymyr Ivasiuk's songs.¹¹⁴⁴ Ukrainian nationalists in Canada protested against her concerts, as they did in 1972 during the tour of a "great son of Bukovina" Dmytro Hnatiuk, considering Soviet cultural diplomacy as immoral.¹¹⁴⁵ Rotaru gave interviews upon her return home to the USSR and vividly described how Canadian Ukrainians missed the Soviet homeland, but communist officials suspected her of being "infected by capitalism."

In 1983, Rotaru was questioned not for her nationalism or the "emptiness" of her art but for her excessive financial income. She received a high salary by Soviet standards and Russian popular literature often discussed the "millions of Rotaru", which were derived from unofficial sources. Her family was involved in a financial scandal in 1983, in the period when the KGB closely followed the financial flows of Soviet Estrada stars. Some popular authors claim that that she was rescued due to the personal involvement of Vitalii Fedorchuk, the former KGB leader in Soviet Ukraine and the Minister of Internal Affairs in Moscow between 1982-1986.¹¹⁴⁶ Since there is no evidence in the archives and official sources, the story about Rotaru's millions is rather part of the popular myths about Soviet pop-stars.

Officials strictly surveilled the incomes and well-being of popular artists. Muslim Magomaeu (1942-2008), an iconic Soviet singer, recalled in his interview with Leonid Parfenov in 1993 that he could do many different things without any restrictions in the USSR, however, the only thing that was forbidden for him was an excessive income.¹¹⁴⁷ Soviet officials normally did not allow people from the high art or pop scenes to earn much, and Rotaru was no exception. Uncertainties around her "disproportionate incomes" as well as excessively sexual appeal¹¹⁴⁸ could cause Soviet state agency, responsible for international touring of Soviet music stars, to prohibit her from foreign concerts.¹¹⁴⁹ Even though she was banned from international touring, she, together with Alla Pugacheva, remained at the top of the popularity ratings in the USSR.

¹¹⁴⁴ This LP recorded in Ukraine and published in Canada by Cansov Exchange Inc. (label Hartley Records) features 12 songs, mainly works of Soviet Ukrainian Estrada from 1980s.

¹¹⁴⁵ Diaspora Ukrainians strived to attract international attention to the facts of cultural prosecutions in Soviet Ukraine and multiple arrests of cultural intelligentsia in the 1970s, therefore they disliked optimistic vision of Soviet Ukrainian culture promoted by communist officials.

¹¹⁴⁶ This story was recalled in various interviews by the brother of Rotaru's husband, who was party member and public official in Kyiv. See also popular accounts: Razzakov, *Sofia Rotaru. Belyi tanets khutorianki*, 154.

¹¹⁴⁷ *Muslim Magomaeu*, Television Programme, Portret na Fone (Moscow: First Channel Ostankino (1991-1995), 1993), Between 14.10 and 14.20 minutes of broadcast.

¹¹⁴⁸ Rotaru was highly admired by her beauty, not only for her songs, and in the early 1980s she strived to change her image from a rustic girl into an urban sexy star.

¹¹⁴⁹ McFayden claims that she was restricted from international touring due to Konstantin Chernenko's initiative to tam Soviet pop-culture, but such statements are too general, see: MacFadyen, *Red Stars: Personality and the Soviet Popular Song, 1955-1991*, 142.

The campaign against popular culture under Andropov and Chernenko strove to restore high quality Soviet light music and to control places of cultural consumption. This claim was mainly oriented towards amateur artists and the Estrada scene, which, though praised by Soviet powers in general, did not match the high ideological standards of Soviet culture. The republican ministries of culture had the task of developing local cultural initiatives of young people, which often ran out of control. Komsomol representatives supervised discotheques and habitually participated in the illegal trade of western music;¹¹⁵⁰ the KGB had to fight corruption in the music scene and stop illegal concerts, however, this task was very difficult to achieve.¹¹⁵¹

7.3. Ideological war and Ukrainian audience research in the 1980s

One reason why Soviet officials implemented the anti-pop campaign and became so preoccupied with young people's values were the events in Socialist Poland, which destabilised the country in the early 1980s. Many communists believed that foreign secret services influenced the minds of young Poles and that they were spoiled by a "corrupted capitalist worldview" and were ready to abstain from socialism. Soviet Ukraine, which neighboured Poland, was considered to be threatened by similar western influences and officials were keen to learn what kind of "real" and common beliefs were shared by young Ukrainians. This knowledge would supposedly allow them to use scientific methods to work with young people and to help them withstand the charms of capitalism.

In September 1984, the secretary of Ukrainian Communist Party Olexandr Kapto delivered a report during the party plenum in which he claimed that there were 600 foreign media centres broadcasting to the Ukrainian territory. He asserted that these channels tested various forms of political anti-Sovietism, promoting ideas of cultural russification, the colonial status of the republic within the USSR, the state-organised famine of the 1930s, and anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union.¹¹⁵² After the Second World War there were only two foreign radio stations broadcasting in the Ukrainian language for 1.5 hours per week. Come the early 1980s, claimed Kapto, this number had increased to 22 stations,¹¹⁵³ airing 28 hours of programming per week. The special target of the "capitalist media war" were young people. Party leaders called for effective counterpropaganda, especially for the Soviet youth.¹¹⁵⁴ For this reason, officials were required to know their own audience.

¹¹⁵⁰ Zhuk, *Rock and Roll in the Rocket City*, 238.

¹¹⁵¹ There are multiple articles in Russian popular newspapers and magazines or pop-fiction books and television programmes, that describe relations between Soviet criminal world and popular culture. Sofia Rotaru, apparently, had strong backing from the 'vor v zakone' (known but not imprisoned criminal) Alimzhan Tokhtahunov (born 1949), who also supported other Soviet music stars. See example of the popular narrative about his cultural 'philanthropy' here: "Znamenityi Metsenat Alimzhan Tohtahunov Po Prozvishchu Taivanchik," *Bulvar Gordona*, September 2011, 36 (332) edition, sec. Male discussion, http://bulvar.com.ua/gazeta/archive/s36_64894/7056.html.

¹¹⁵² Olexandr Semenovych Kapto, "Reports" (Ukrainian Communist Party, 1984), Arkush 4, TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 2, Sprava 771, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

¹¹⁵³ Out of these number, 17 stations were religious.

¹¹⁵⁴ Ryback, *Rock Around the Bloc*, 218.

Party leaders prepared a decree which aimed to regulate the way young people spent their free time and to re-evaluate (as in 1980) the role of clubs and discotheques within the republic. Like the founders of the socialist empire of the 1930s, communists of the 1980s wanted the Soviet youth to be critical of “bad tastes” and react to “empty entertainment,” which brought (apparently through foreign channels) bourgeois mass culture into the youth milieu (see Chapter 1.3.).¹¹⁵⁵ Following a decree from June 1984, party officials required regular checks of spaces of cultural entertainment and cultural consumption in Soviet Ukraine. Young people had to be ready to fulfil their duties and to express selfless love [bezzavetnaia liubov] to the Soviet motherland and not devote themselves to rock music or western popular trends.¹¹⁵⁶ However, the same September decree showed that officials had a deficiency of well-trained personnel to conduct good-quality ideological trainings and often felt the scarcity of cultural infrastructure to promote Soviet art.¹¹⁵⁷

Internal party discussions about popular culture and the Soviet youth, which started in Ukraine in July 1983, continued into late winter and the summer of 1984, reaching its peak in September 1984. The decree “On the Further Improvement of Party Leadership in Komsomol and Rising its Role in Communist Education of Youth” stated that the Communist Party is the party of the future and therefore it should belong to young people.¹¹⁵⁸ This was said (and written) half a year prior to the death of the aging First Secretary Konstantin Chernenko, who was among those agents initiating the “youth and anti-pop campaign” in the USSR.

The political and cultural leadership in Soviet Ukraine was also far from young. The head of L’viv Obkom Viktor Dobryk reported that the out-dated party style and bureaucratic routine prevented officials from “kindling the youth”.¹¹⁵⁹ Like many of his communist predecessors, Dobryk proposed to fight inertness among young people by engaging them in industrial production and in various forms of voluntary labour. In December 1984, during internal hearings on the fulfilment of the September decree, officials intensified their claims for openness: they asserted that party representatives should “fight with ideological imitations” [paradnost], with any forms of *varnishing the reality*¹¹⁶⁰ and to be more critical. Moreover, they clearly stated that the party needs to know what happens among young people and, if possible, to take the lead in the on-going transformation of youth.¹¹⁶¹

¹¹⁵⁵ “Proekt Postanovy” (Ukrainian Communist Party, 1984), Arkush 17-18, TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 2, Sprava 772, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

¹¹⁵⁶ Ryback, *Rock Around the Bloc*, 220.

¹¹⁵⁷ “TsDAHO (1984), Fond 1, Opys 2, Sprava 772,” Arkush 24.

¹¹⁵⁸ “Protocols” (Ukrainian Communist Party, n.d.), Arkush 7, TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 2, Sprava 767, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

¹¹⁵⁹ “TsDAHO (1984), Fond 1, Opys 2, Sprava 767,” Arkush 41.

¹¹⁶⁰ This was borrowed from the famous Khrushchev’s proclamation at the Party Congress in February 1956.

¹¹⁶¹ “On Youth” (Ukrainian Communist Party, 1984), Arkush 96, TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 2, Sprava 824, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

How was it possible to know and understand the Soviet youth of the early 1980s? Marxism and Leninism offered prospects for the future, but they were unable to analyse current reality in the early 1980s. Since communists believed in a scientific approach, the answers had to come from Soviet scholarship.¹¹⁶² However, in the early 1980s there was no regional knowledge of young people or in the national media audience in Soviet Ukraine. Already in June 1983, when Shcherbytskyi informed his Kyiv party colleagues about the important changes in Central Committee policies in Moscow, some officials claimed that Ukrainian social sciences did not help the party to work with young people. During the June Plenum, the highest party leadership implied that there was an urgent need for a unified sociological service, which would monitor Ukrainian society and open a window into the life of young people in the republic.¹¹⁶³

The Ukrainian media committee was the first among state institutions to react to party requests to understand the young audience. From 1984 onwards, it initiated various forms of analysis of the Soviet Ukrainian audience, such as questionnaires. Some questionnaires were specifically directed towards a young audience already in 1984. For instance, researchers found out that there was a correlation between reading Soviet newspapers and listening to foreign radio stations and between radio and television usage.¹¹⁶⁴ 65 percent of young people who read the newspaper *Komsomolskaia Pravda* also listened to *Radio Liberty* [Svoboda], and 78.7 percent of those who listened to the radio station *Molodaia Gvardiia* were more likely to watch Soviet Central Television.¹¹⁶⁵ The research reported that young people in Ukraine were mostly interested in light music and Estrada, and they often searched for the topics of love, sport, international life and the ways young people lived abroad.

Ivan Lepsha's claims in 1986 that Ukrainian light music was stagnating were confirmed in 1984. Research exposed that Russian music or Soviet music in the Russian language dominated the hearts and minds of young Ukrainians. Even though the Ukrainian-Moldovan vocalist Sofia Rotaru received the second rating after Russian Alla Pugacheva (24.8%:33.2%),¹¹⁶⁶ from the young audience, her repertoire was mainly in the Russian language in 1984. At this time, the youth could barely name even a few contemporary Ukrainian poets, singers or writers and among the whole list of Soviet pop-musicians, they only recognised Nazarii Yaremchuk from the ensemble Smerichka.¹¹⁶⁷ The neo-folk ensemble

¹¹⁶² "TsDAHO (1983), Fond 1, Opys 2, Sprava 723," Arkush 8.

¹¹⁶³ "TsDAHO (1983), Fond 1, Opys 2, Sprava 723," Arkush 19.

¹¹⁶⁴ "Audience Research" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1984), Arkush 5, TsDAVO, Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1725, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

¹¹⁶⁵ "TsDAVO (1984), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1725," Arkush 7-8.

¹¹⁶⁶ Research confirmed the stereotype of Rotaru being more 'rural' and Pugacheva more 'urban', because the latter was mostly admired by peasants and the former by urban intelligentsia, see: "TsDAVO (1984), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1725," Arkush 17. This situation remained almost intact through all 1980s, and in 1987 research confirmed that Pugacheva and Rotaru were the most popular singers among Ukrainians, while Rotaru slightly more admired by villagers, see: "On critical media" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1987), Arkush 6, TsDAVO, Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3465, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

¹¹⁶⁷ "TsDAVO (1984), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1725," Arkush 16.

Vatra from L'viv, which was at the peak of its Soviet fame in 1984, was known only to 3.9 percent of the young people surveyed.¹¹⁶⁸

A KGB officer claimed in 1979 that L'viv's disc-jockeys ignored Ukrainian music and that the dancehalls were dominated by western rock and disco music.¹¹⁶⁹ This situation had not changed much in 1984. Shows like *Soniachni Klarnety* and bands like Vatra were not on the minds of young people in Soviet Ukraine. Out of fifteen music performers listed by the surveyed group, only five were from Ukraine, and they were mostly placed at the end of the list.¹¹⁷⁰ Young people preferred universal "urban" Soviet Estrada, like the Russian Zemliane or Belorussian Verasy, or turned their attention to foreign popular music, especially Italian.¹¹⁷¹ Pop singers like Adriano Celentano and Toto Cutugno, the French electronic band Space or the Swedish ABBA were the most popular among young Ukrainians.¹¹⁷²

The research commissioned by the Ukrainian Media Committee in 1984 generated anxiety about the national culture. It exposed that some claims regarding the ideological propaganda broadcast by foreign radio stations were partially true, especially their accusations that the Ukrainian language was disappearing and that hundreds of thousands of people living in the republic had rapidly assimilated into the Russian language and culture. The affiliations with national popular culture in the UkrSSR provided vivid examples of this: older and middle-aged generations of Ukrainians used their native language and loved folk music and neo-folk Estrada, actively broadcast by Soviet Ukrainian television and radio, while young people preferred the Russian language and foreign popular culture.

The Ukrainian journalist Ivan Lepsha, who initiated the "revival" of the oeuvre of Volodymyr Ivasiuk during perestroika, wrote in 1986 that there were only a few really popular music bands in Soviet Ukraine, like Kobza, Smerichka, Kraiany, Chervona Ruta (and Sofia Rotaru) and L'viv's Vatra.¹¹⁷³ These bands sang in Ukrainian language but at the end of 1970s and early 1980s popular music in Ukrainian was seen as overtly folk oriented or even ethnographic. For the Ukrainian youth, popular culture in Russian language signified a more progressive outlook, different from the local electric folk or state-sponsored popular culture. Dmitry Gorenburg claims that it was not unlikely that: "In few generations, a large percentage of minority group members [in USSR] would have declared Russian as their native language or switched their ethnic identity to Russian."¹¹⁷⁴ Television, radio and popular culture played a crucial role in cultural russification and the understanding of what it meant to be a Ukrainian in Soviet Ukraine.

¹¹⁶⁸ "TsDAVO (1984), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1725," Arkush 17.

¹¹⁶⁹ Zhuk, *Rock and Roll in the Rocket City*, 236–37.

¹¹⁷⁰ "TsDAVO (1984), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1725," Arkush 18.

¹¹⁷¹ Out of sixteen enlisted foreign performers, young people selected six Italian names, see: "TsDAVO (1984), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1725," Arkush 19.

¹¹⁷² "TsDAVO (1984), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1725," Arkush 17-18.

¹¹⁷³ Lepsha, *100 Oblych Ukraiinskoi Estrady*, 103.

¹¹⁷⁴ Gorenburg, "Soviet Nationalities Policy and Assimilation," 27.

It is important to indicate that the majority of young people in Soviet Ukraine at this time were bilingual and did not experience a “language problem”. However, research revealed a category of “young people who spoke only Russian”.¹¹⁷⁵ While the Ukrainian language was native to a major part of the population of the UkrSSR, it was not indispensable. The Ukrainian journalist Volodymyr Pavliv (born 1963), who grew up in the small town of Rudky in western Ukraine, recalled that his generation (he was 21 years old when the media committee conducted research in 1984) clearly understood that the Ukrainian language was needed only if a person decided to remain locally.¹¹⁷⁶ In the case that someone decided to pursue a career in the military or in a bigger Soviet town he/she would need to switch to the Russian language.¹¹⁷⁷

This meant that the Ukrainian language and music in Ukrainian were associated with the peripheries and those who strove to become modern and urban left their native language behind. L’viv was the only big city in the UkrSSR where Ukrainian was widely spoken in public spaces, but this situation was rather “paradoxical” than “natural”.¹¹⁷⁸ The film director Oleh Chornyi, who was born in Kyiv in 1963 and grew up near the famous Dovzhenko Film Studios, remembered that in the early 1980s people always paid attention to him when he was speaking Ukrainian in public spaces. Some would consider this a sign of nationalism, others as a sign of provincialism, but more importantly it was not considered as a normal everyday practice.¹¹⁷⁹ Yurii Fedorov (born in Moscow in 1930), who had worked at Ukrainian Television for his entire life, claimed that the Ukrainian language at the television headquarters was mainly used by professionals who came to Kyiv from western Ukraine.¹¹⁸⁰ This was not surprising since ethnic Russians could constitute a quarter to more than half the staff at some Ukrainian television studios. Again, the peripheral L’viv Television studio was “the most Ukrainian in Ukraine” judging by the number of programmes produced in the national language and by the number of workers whose ethnic background was marked as Ukrainian.

The research conducted by the Ukrainian Media Committee in 1984 exposed remarkable information about young Ukrainians. Questionnaires disclosed that the majority of young people (75%) preferred Soviet music, almost double the number of those who favoured foreign Estrada (33%).¹¹⁸¹ However, there was also a worrying (for officials) component of the results as the interviewed persons also listed non-official Soviet music bands, like Zoopark, Primus and Alfa, which had never been featured in the Soviet media. In addition, there was a substantial number of those who liked foreign “fascist” rock bands, like

¹¹⁷⁵ “TsDAVO (1984), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1725,” Arkush 32.

¹¹⁷⁶ Ukrainian language in UkrSSR was optional in Russian language schools since late 1950s, so those who went to these schools in the 1960s were those young people who could not speak Ukrainian in 1984.

¹¹⁷⁷ Volodymyr Pavliv, Soviet life in western Ukraine, interview by Bohdan Shumylovych, Recorded audio interview, 6 April 2017, Urban Media Archive, Center for Urban History of East-Central Europe (L’viv, Ukraine). See also: Chornyi, Soviet life in Kyiv.

¹¹⁷⁸ Amar, *The Paradox of Ukrainian L’viv*.

¹¹⁷⁹ Chornyi, Soviet life in Kyiv.

¹¹⁸⁰ Fedorov, On Ukrainian TV (interview, 2017).

¹¹⁸¹ “TsDAVO (1984), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1725,” Arkush 19.

the Australian AC/DC or American Kiss, which were heavily criticised in the Soviet media. Obviously, almost half of young urban dwellers in Ukraine listened to foreign radio stations (42.5%)¹¹⁸² and a substantial number of this audience (48.6%), searched for western music.¹¹⁸³

Soviet Ukrainian state media managers became aware that television and radio broadcasting strategies needed to be changed: 28 percent of those reviewed reported that when they turned to Soviet media, they could not find what they were looking for.¹¹⁸⁴ Almost half of young Ukrainians, especially those well-educated readers of newspapers and magazines, frequently listened to foreign voices. Out of 18 foreign radio commentators, young people named four reporters from radio station *Voice of America*, including Valentyn Moroz, the dissident who had been expelled from the USSR.¹¹⁸⁵ For the urban youth the knowledge of Soviet Ukrainian media reporters and foreign Ukrainian media reporters (considered as enemies by the Soviets) was almost equal, which indicated that there was a lack of recognisable media faces/names/voices in the national media. The report unveiled that Ukrainian Television, radio and state-sponsored popular culture was stagnating (at least for young people) in the Soviet Union in the early 1980s.

In 1984 the Ukrainian Media Committee commissioned further research,¹¹⁸⁶ which covered nine regions of the republic and aimed to analyse the Ukrainian media. It showed that the most accessible¹¹⁸⁷ and most popular media in Soviet Ukraine was Central Television from Moscow. The First Channel had a committed audience of 66.2 percent (of the 90 percent of the population who had the ability to watch it).¹¹⁸⁸ Ukrainian national television was accessible to more than 80 percent of the republic's population but had a stable audience of 38,1 percent and almost 4 percent of interviewed persons had never watched it. Regional television in Ukraine attracted the attention of slightly more than 10 percent of the audience, however, more than 16 percent of interviewed people did not watch it at all. These numbers disclosed that Central Television in Soviet Ukraine had the most stable audience while national and regional television had fluctuating viewers, who frequently switched channels and rarely followed serial programmes.¹¹⁸⁹

¹¹⁸² "TsDAVO (1984), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1725," Arkush 33.

¹¹⁸³ "TsDAVO (1984), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1725," Arkush 21-22.

¹¹⁸⁴ In the majority of cases they were looking for music (55%), stories about love (46%), friendship and searched for new information (42%), see: "TsDAVO (1984), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1725," Arkush 22.

¹¹⁸⁵ "TsDAVO (1984), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1725," Arkush 35.

¹¹⁸⁶ This research was normally supervised by the Institute of Philosophy at the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, which had the Section of Social Sciences.

¹¹⁸⁷ In 1983, 93% of Ukrainian population could access the First Channel of Soviet Central Television, 74% had two Soviet television programmes and 24% – three programmes, see: "TsDAHO (1983), Fond 1, Opys 2, Sprava 723," Arkush 19.

¹¹⁸⁸ "Media research" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1984), Arkush 3-4, TsDAVO, Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1724, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

¹¹⁸⁹ "TsDAVO (1984), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1724," Arkush 4.

The audience of Ukrainian and regional television was divided between children below 16 years old, young people (up to 30 years old),¹¹⁹⁰ adults (up to 50 years old)¹¹⁹¹ and the elderly (60+). The most stable groups of viewers were children, public officials, urban proletarians, and cultural workers. The majority of people who watched television in Soviet Ukraine in 1984, watch 1 or 2 hours of the First Channel of Soviet television and less than an hour of national television.¹¹⁹² The audience was most attracted by the news, cultural programming and films, which comprised the biggest share of content on Central Television.¹¹⁹³ The research indicated that in 1984 the principal audience in Soviet Ukraine watched films (83.6%), international news (62.1%)¹¹⁹⁴, Estrada concerts (61.6%), sports (56.3%), educational programming (45.5%), and internal Soviet news (4.,5%). Matters of the “inner life” of the Ukrainian republic interested less than half of the of active audience (38.8%).¹¹⁹⁵

According to the research, Ukrainian Television, which had developed from 1965-1970, had its own committed audience in the early 1980s, though it was difficult to estimate how many “fluctuating” spectators watched national programming.¹¹⁹⁶ Out of the almost forty million people who could watch national Ukrainian television in 1984, around fifteen million individuals made up its stable audience. The stability of the audience was a crucial element of capitalist media, but in the USSR many programmes were produced for “switched off TV sets” because producers cared more about ideologically correct messages than the number of people who received these messages.

The moderately small audience who watched national television could be explained by the character of republican or regional television in the USSR, which was supposed to be more informative and less entertaining. For the majority of people in the UkrSSR, television was about entertainment (films, music, and sport) and news. To a lesser extent, it was also a window to the internal life of the nation. Thus, people were more attracted to Central

¹¹⁹⁰ In 1984 the most popular programme among young people was *5 Minutes to Think* [5 khvylyn na rozhdumy], which was watched by 57,3% of Ukrainian audience see: “TsDAVO (1984), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1724,” Arkush 9.

¹¹⁹¹ These people mostly watched programmes, like *Satyrychnyi Obiektiv* [Satirical Lenses] (47,7% of audience), *Estetychni Dialohy* [Atheistic Dialogues], *Slovo za Vamy* [Now is Your Word], *Spytai Sebe* [Ask Yourself], *Komunisty 80kh* [Communists of the 1980s], etc., see: “TsDAVO (1984), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1724,” Arkush 9.

¹¹⁹² “TsDAVO (1984), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1724,” Arkush 8-9.

¹¹⁹³ This combination remained till the end of USSR, see: Mickiewicz, *Split Signals* (1988).

¹¹⁹⁴ In four years, in 1988, when Perestroika was marching around USSR, the head of Soviet Media Committee Alexander Aksenov stated in the magazine *Televideniie i Radioveshchanie* [Television and Radiobroadcasting], that some years ago people switched on news programme *Vremia* not on 21.00 when it started, but on 21.15, when reporters already narrated international news. Obviously, the research indicated correct situation, at least Soviet Ukrainians preferred to watch on television films and international news, being less interested in reports from within USSR. See: Alexander Aksenov, “Tvorcheski i talantlivo otobrazhat vremena velikikh peremen,” *Televidenie i radioveshchanie*, no. 1 (1988): 1.

¹¹⁹⁵ “TsDAVO (1984), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1724,” Arkush 26.

¹¹⁹⁶ Research indicated that one third of interviewed people were constantly stitching channels, see: “TsDAVO (1984), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1724,” Arksuh 26.

Television from Moscow, which was mostly about culture, news and original films. In addition, many people were dependent on television programming and could not watch all programmes as they conflicted with their work schedule. This situation also explains why the local audience for national radio was much higher and more stable, as radio could be accessed in a much larger variety of places.¹¹⁹⁷

The first research results on Ukrainian youth and media made it clear to officials that further examinations were necessary. In late 1984 and January 1985 the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party organised a working group, which comprised specialists from the Academy of Sciences (social sciences), the Institute of the Communist Party History and the Highest Party School. Specialists and scholars from these institutions were required to develop a working model to research and effectively influence the Soviet youth.¹¹⁹⁸ Their findings revealed that, in most cases, subgroups or subcultures created their own spaces in Soviet cities. If officials wanted to control these groups they would need to take them out of their apartments, dachas, or other semi-private spaces, where subgroups fell under the influence of foreign voices. To do this, scholars proposed investing more funds in Soviet cultural infrastructure and the creation of more clubs and spaces of culture.¹¹⁹⁹

The only effective model for socialist education was to engage a young person in the right collective. However, developed socialism also created people who lived as parasites who “used the humanism of socialism” for their own private purposes.¹²⁰⁰ These non-socialist subjects of socialist society were trapped by the foreign media and western popular culture.¹²⁰¹ Thus, the research paper proposed diminishing the flow of hostile information into the USSR (which was almost impossible to fulfil), making education more effective, and consolidating efforts to fight pseudo-culture through real culture.¹²⁰² Evidently, many suggestions were difficult to realise, but proposals like gaining a better knowledge of the foreign channels, the creation of sociological services, and the monitoring of information and groups seemed feasible.¹²⁰³ Ukrainian party leadership created services, ideally comprised of communists, sociologists, and psychologists, who would monitor, educate and create various groups and propose further developments for ideological work.

In 1987, several years after the first audience research and the launch of political perestroika in 1986, the Ukrainian Media Committee attempted to find out how people learned about current trends in popular music. They wanted to know what percentage of the Ukrainian audience was dedicated to certain art forms and how popular tastes were formed in the late 1980s. The survey from 1987 showed that 75 percent of the republic’s audience

¹¹⁹⁷ “TsDAVO (1984), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 1724,” Arkush 26.

¹¹⁹⁸ “Working Group” (Ukrainian Communist Party, 1984), Arkush 2, TsDAHO, Fond 1, Opys 32, Sprava 2129, TsDAHO, Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

¹¹⁹⁹ “TsDAHO (1984), Fond 1, Opys 32, Sprava 2129,” Arkush 8.

¹²⁰⁰ “TsDAHO (1984), Fond 1, Opys 32, Sprava 2129,” Arkush 13.

¹²⁰¹ “TsDAHO (1984), Fond 1, Opys 32, Sprava 2129,” Arkush 15.

¹²⁰² “TsDAHO (1984), Fond 1, Opys 32, Sprava 2129,” Arkush 17.

¹²⁰³ “TsDAHO (1984), Fond 1, Opys 32, Sprava 2129,” Arkush 25.

preferred light music (Estrada), while folk music was appreciated by 53.1 percent and only between 13.5 percent and 6.8 percent of the Soviet public favoured classical music.¹²⁰⁴ People in Soviet Ukraine enjoyed music shows: 66.6 percent of Ukrainians regularly visited amateur performances and more than 59 percent went to Estrada concerts.¹²⁰⁵ The study revealed that the Soviet media produced two social and generational groups that were clearly opposed: young urban Ukrainians (15-21 years old) who liked rock music and Soviet Estrada in the Russian language, and elderly citizens or villagers who preferred folk songs and modern folklorism.

More importantly, this inquiry discovered important information regarding how the media shaped cultural tastes. Television, not radio (including foreign broadcasting) or private recordings from home music libraries, was the main source of music information in Soviet Ukraine. The leading channels that formed the tastes of Ukrainians in 1987 were Soviet Central Television (85.5%), Ukrainian television (78.9%), Soviet radio (first programme 74.5% and Maiak 70.9%), and Ukrainian radio (first programme 68.2% and Promin 56.6%).¹²⁰⁶ In addition, music tastes were also shaped by regional television (57.3%) and private recordings, usually heard on magnetic tapes and vinyl (66.5%). For young people aged 15-21 years old, Ukrainian television was obviously not an interesting source of information about music (they favoured radio), but young workers paid attention to national audio-visual media in such matters. Most of the people who liked the television folk music show *Soniachni Klarnety* (63.7% of all questioned) were pensioners or adult citizens, and people aged 17-30 years old constituted less than 10 percent of the audience of this show.¹²⁰⁷

Another interesting finding proved that there was a strong discrepancy between what Soviet media officials produced and what the audience anticipated. Editors, programme producers, and their supervisors considered the Soviet media as a more educational source of information, while consumers – the “normal” Soviet people – anticipated more entertainment (see Chapter 1.3.).¹²⁰⁸ It was true if one considered Central Television, which was entertaining and educational at the same time, but Ukrainian or regional television was appreciated mainly by elderly people or pensioners. Many individuals considered Ukrainian television programmes as dull and out-dated.¹²⁰⁹ Soviet Ukrainian television was not competitive enough to promote interesting light entertainment in the Ukrainian language and there was not enough content or professionals who could prepare and narrate such

¹²⁰⁴ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3465,” Arkush 2.

¹²⁰⁵ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3465,” Arkush 3.

¹²⁰⁶ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3465,” Arkush 3.

¹²⁰⁷ 22,2% of people interrogated by this research confirmed that they liked *Soniachni Klarnety* without any reservations, which was the highest number of responses. 27,6% (mainly 40-60 years old) watched this programme on the regular basis, 36,1% from time to time, therefore making this programme the most popular music show on national TV in 1987. “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3465.”

¹²⁰⁸ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3465,” Arkush 3-4.

¹²⁰⁹ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3465,” Arkush 4-5.

programmes about popular music. Thus, regional and national television could not substantially influence the tastes of young people in the republic.

In 1987, as in the early 1980s, the most popular singers in Soviet Ukraine were the Russian Alla Pugacheva (33-37% of dedicated fans) and the Ukrainian Sofia Rotaru (22-36%), who mainly performed in the Russian language (compare to Chapter 7.4. and 7.5.).¹²¹⁰ They were followed by Russian bands like Zemliane and performers like Valentina Tolkunova, Valerii Leontiev and Yurii Antonov. Ukrainian performers in their own country were not much valued, and the most famous were Mykola Hnatiuk, followed by Nazarii Yaremchuk, Vasyl Zinkevych, Alla Kudlai, and Oksana Bilozir.¹²¹¹ Young Ukrainians mainly ignored this officially supported Ukrainian light music and favoured, besides the Russian language Soviet Estrada, the Italian Andreano Celentano, the Czech performer Karel Gott, and popular bands like the German Modern Talking or Swedish Europe.

Sociological research, conducted by the media committee in 1987, confirmed the statements of Soviet officials that the tastes of the Soviet audience in the 1980s were mainly on the side of light entertainment and popular music.¹²¹² Indeed, almost 60 percent (58.3%) of the Ukrainian audience demanded light Estrada on television and believed that it brought liveliness and cheerful mood (37.7%) being an important part of contemporary living (34.5%).¹²¹³ Only 13.6 percent of participants considered popular music as overly entertaining and contrary to the goals of socialist development, and only 5 percent demanded more classical music. Some people were not very enthusiastic about new trends in Soviet culture, such as comrade V.Ivanov from Kharkiv, who complained to the Ukrainian Media Committee that: "Television and radio impose on us this so-called contemporary music, forgetting that Soviet art should be class oriented and led by the party." He connected modern music styles like rock or even pop with such group troubles such as drug addiction, social parasitism, or alcoholism.¹²¹⁴

We can assume that in 1987, Ukrainian television looked like a space for folk arts and folklorism for young people searching for information about light music. It did not have appealing light pop songs and presented an out-dated Ukrainian culture. This situation of representing Ukrainian culture as "frozen culture" (folk or ethnographic) lasted since high Stalinism of the 1930s.¹²¹⁵ Half a century after the cultural and imperial practice of depicting non-Russian Soviet ethnic groups as frozen in time, folklorism was still omnipresent in the Ukrainian media. Not surprisingly, even those who worked at Ukrainian television in the 1980s, like the writer Volodymyr Yavorivskyi, acknowledged the peripheral status of

¹²¹⁰ "TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3465," Arkush 6.

¹²¹¹ "TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3465," Arkush 6-7.

¹²¹² Lepsha, *100 Oblych Ukraiinskoi Estrady*, 11.

¹²¹³ "TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3465," Arkush 27.

¹²¹⁴ "Letters" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1987), Arkush 62, TsDAVO, Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3464, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

¹²¹⁵ Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism*, 93.

republican television, which was sometimes called “khutorianske telebachennia” [village television].¹²¹⁶

This *village television* coupled with Soviet Central Television formed a specific mediascape that shaped not only the music tastes of Ukrainians but also their worldviews. More than 80 percent of Ukrainian villagers favoured folk or folklorism and 41.7 percent of general respondents desired more such programmes.¹²¹⁷ There was a generational and social split in the 1980s, especially in regard to music tastes: elderly people or villagers favoured folklorism, while young people or middle aged urbanites followed universal styles and modern trends in music, often unavailable in the Ukrainian language.

7.4. Mobilisation of the audience and festivalisation in the 1980s

To fight the foreign influences on Soviet culture and to change the passivity of social parasites, Ukrainian officials promoted folk and amateur arts, patriotic songs and classical music. These arts would help to educate the masses and to mobilise them for further socialist achievements. However, the power of popular art and culture to mobilise people was also used by various nationalist circles, especially in the late 1980s. Such national and often anti-Soviet mobilisations were frequently aided by music and singing. For instance, in the former Soviet Baltic republics, anti-Soviet mass resistance would be named *singing revolutions* and studied as an example of non-violent resistance.¹²¹⁸

Since 1987, people in Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania gathered in crowds and sang songs that were either strictly forbidden under communism or not supported by officials (like punk and rock music). In Estonia, the Tartu Pop Music Festival (May 1988) or the Rock Summer Festival (August 1988) helped to recover national hymns and patriotic songs. In Latvia, the Song and Dance Festival since the mid-1980s featured banned songs and promoted national culture. In Lithuania, popular gatherings were usually supplemented by the singing of patriotic and national songs, and between 1987-1989 Roko Maršas [March of the Rock Music Festival] helped to shake Soviet cultural domination in the region. In the second half of the 1980s, for many Soviet people popular, national or folk songs created a battlefield where the “national destiny” confronted the Soviet project.

¹²¹⁶ “Televisnyk” (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1990), Arkush 80, TsDAVO, Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 4663, TsDAVO of Ukraine, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

¹²¹⁷ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3465,” Arkush 27.

¹²¹⁸ Guntis Šmidchens, *The Power of Song: Nonviolent National Culture in the Baltic Singing Revolution*, New Directions in Scandinavian Studies (University of Washington Press, 2014); Priit Vesilind, James Tusty, and Maureen Tusty, *The Singing Revolution: How Culture Saved a Nation* (Varrak, 2008); Clare Thomson, *The Singing Revolution: A Political Journey through the Baltic States* (Michael Joseph, 1992); Warren Waren, “Theories of the Singing Revolution: An Historical Analysis of the Role of Music in the Estonian Independence Movement,” *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 43, no. 2 (December 1, 2012): 439–51; Karsten Brüggemann and Andres Kasekamp, “‘Singing Oneself into a Nation’? Estonian Song Festivals as Rituals of Political Mobilisation,” *Nations and Nationalism* 20, no. 2 (April 1, 2014): 259–76; John Ginkel, “Identity Construction in Latvia’s ‘Singing Revolution’: Why Inter-Ethnic Conflict Failed to Occur,” *Nationalities Papers* 30, no. 3 (September 2002): 403–33.

As in the Soviet Baltic republics, the audience in Soviet Ukraine was steadily mobilised by means of popular culture or national media and this mobilisation peaked in 1989-1990. In Ukrainian historiography, the political dimension of the collapse of the USSR often overshadows the role of popular culture, which mobilised the national audience and in certain cases even created models for cultural decolonisation. I maintain that in the mid-1980s, especially during perestroika, the Soviet Ukrainian powers strove to reshape their own media-culture. Structural and ideological transformations, implemented by Kyiv, influenced national mobilisation through festivals and mass events. Even if there was no so-called singing revolution (as in the Baltic cases) in Soviet Ukraine, the number of cultural events, music festivals and amateur activities that mobilised national feelings or culturally challenged communist powers revealed that the republic was heading towards its more national and less Soviet future.

The mobilisation of the national audience through festivals developed within existing discursive (the believe in the political power of culture) as well as infrastructural (existing cultural institutions) frames. The 1980s commenced with the Olympic Games, which took place in various towns, including Kyiv, where a huge stadium was built. In 1982, this stadium hosted a great celebration of the supposed 1500th anniversary of the Ukrainian capital. Such large-scale events continued in Soviet Ukraine in the mid-1980s and even intensified after Gorbachev gained power in Moscow. While fighting the excesses in popular arts (pop music and rock culture) in the first half of the 1980s, Soviet powers supported correct forms of socialist entertainment. Among these forms, folk revival and folklorism had a prominent place, and multiple festivals of folk arts and amateur culture took place almost every year. Folk revival peaked in 1986, the year of the Chernobyl disaster and perestroika. In 1986, Soviet Ukrainian officials built a huge “singing field” [spivoche pole],¹²¹⁹ which could host folk collectives from various regions of the country, and the stage was able to fit the great united choir.

As often happened in the USSR, mass mobilisations of amateur and folk creativity often marked various anniversaries. To commemorate the socialist revolution in 1987, Ukrainian officials organised festivities that lasted over a few years, starting their planning in 1985 and organising major competitions in 1986. The revolution of 1917 was always honoured with great festivals, as in 1957, 1967, and in 1977. The Soviet folk teleology developed during high Stalinism declared that revolution brought the common people freedom from class restraints. This freedom brought spare time, which was spent by Soviet people on creativity, and folk and amateur arts. Thus, the goal of socialism was to make new, creative people, the builders of a new social life. Therefore, the celebration of the socialist revolution was the celebration of Soviet amateur creativity and folk cultures.

¹²¹⁹ “Singing field” is a special open-air venue, an outdoor concert arena which holds a regular festival of folk songs. In Tallinn (Estonia), similar “field” is called Song Festival Grounds [lauluväljak] and can bring together up to 200,000 spectators and more than 30,000 participants.

Officials planned to organise the Second All-Union Festival of Folk Creativity for 1987. This year, the festival was organised within the new cultural and political frame of perestroika. As previously, competitions were conducted between village folk collectives or amateur bands from regional (often urban) houses of culture. Regional juries selected the winners – normally already famous ensembles and choirs – and the winners would perform in the various Soviet capitals during national gala-concerts. The all-union festival also comprised different minor local cultural initiatives, which would join the great marathon of folk creativity. Some infrastructural projects were finished especially for the All-Union Festival of Folk Creativity, while others were built just to host celebrations.

Ukrainian artists and intellectuals effectively connected the idea of folk art, and therefore a historic past, with the idea of a socialist future. “S/he who does not know the past is not worth the future,” said a Ukrainian official in Chernivtsi at the 1986 opening of a local museum of folk architecture, rephrasing the famous quote on European history.¹²²⁰ The museum had been established in 1977 as an embodiment of Bukovina’s folk past, however, it was only finished and opened in 1986. Mykhailo Ivasiuk, a recognised writer and the father of the renowned pop-cultural figure Volodymyr Ivasiuk, made a speech at the opening, expressing an authoritative vision of Ukrainian officials about folk culture. He declared that new socialist achievements should rest on love of the (folk) past, which shines as eternal beauty and inspiration. Ivasiuk stated:

We create history, build a new society and that is why we value the precious achievements of past generations. After all, history, like nature, brings up the human soul, awakens the human in man. Let the everlasting spring of the culture of the past grow, because without it we fail to understand the greatness of our present achievements. Let people come here – to pure sources of eternal beauty and inspiration.¹²²¹

In this late socialist teleology articulated by Ivasiuk, the goal of life was not only to develop new skills and human features through creativity, just as socialist textbooks promised, but also to praise national history.

1980	Olympic games in the USSR
1982	May: mass celebration of 1500 th anniversary of Kyiv
1983	October: All-Union Review [Smotr] of Amateur and Folk Artistic Creativity
1984	February: Mass celebrations of 40 years of liberation from Nazi Germany
1985	Launch of the <i>Republican Festival of Folk Creativity in the UkrSSR</i> Preparation and participation in 12th World Festival of Youth and Students (Moscow)
1986	April: Chernobyl nuclear power plant collapsed

¹²²⁰ In his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790) Edmund Burke wrote: ‘People will not look forward to posterity, who never looks backward to their ancestors.’ This quote also reminds another one, made famous by George Santayana’s book *The Life of Reason: The Phases of Human Progress* (1905-1906): ‘Those who do not know history’s mistakes are doomed to repeat them.’

¹²²¹ “Narodna Tvorchist” (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1986), Arkush 87, Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3039, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

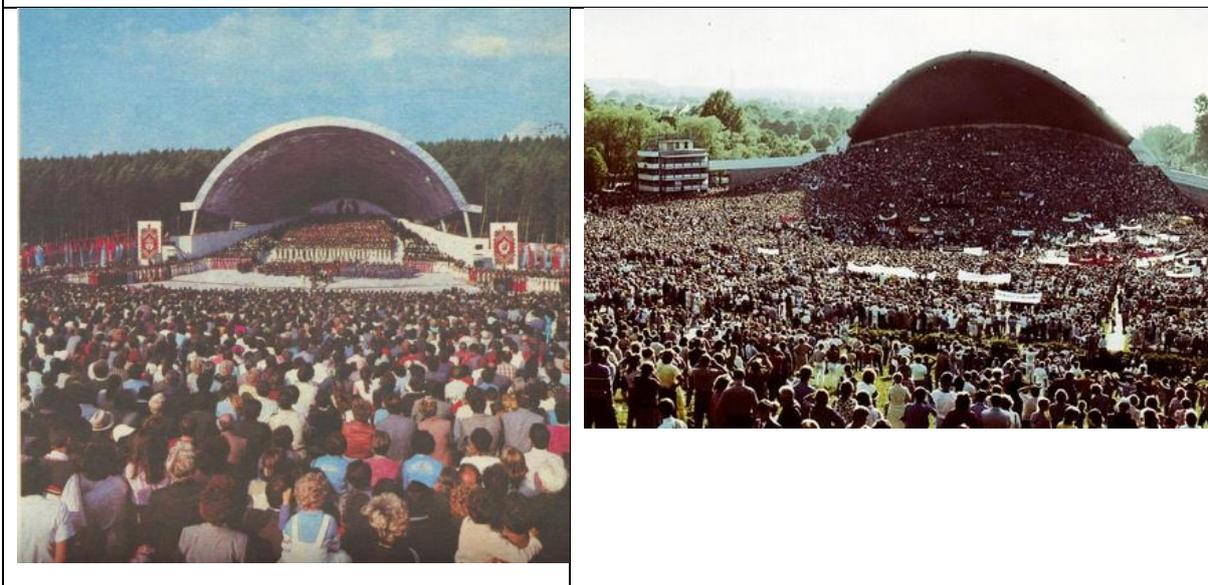
	<p>June: The Republican Festivity of Folk Creativity (Ternopil), and the opening of the first singing field in Ukraine Mass celebrations of city days all over the USSR (first city day in L'viv)</p>
1987	<p>February: exhibition of young artists at the Republican House of Artists (Kyiv) Summer: Second All-Union Festival of Folk Creativity (Kyiv, Moscow) June-July: Second Republican Festival of Folk Creativity (Poltava) September: First unofficial demonstration for peace during the second celebration of the city day in L'viv</p>
1988	<p>May: The All-Union Festival of Soviet Song (Kyiv) June-July: Third Republican Festival of Folk Creativity (Khmelnyskyi)</p>
1989	<p>February: Republican Festival of Folk Creativity (Chernivtsi), <i>Bukovina Wedding</i> March: first democratic elections in UkrSSR April: National Competition of Choirs named after Leontovych, Kyiv singing field 8-10 September: First Congress of Narodnyi Rukh of Ukraine 10 September: Second Republican Festival of Folk Creativity of National Groups of Soviet Ukraine (Odesa) 17-24 September: Chervona Ruta in Chernivtsi October: Republican Festival of Soviet Songs (Kharkiv); "Oberih-89", The National Competition of Bard Songs (Lutsk) November: Second Festival of Opera Singing named after Krushelnytska (Kyiv)</p>
1990	<p>22 January: National zluky [union] event in Ukraine, following Baltic Way demonstration April: Festival of Young Composers (Kharkiv) May: 1st Vvykh, Festival of Alternative Culture and Unofficial Forms of Art (L'viv) 24 May: Second International Folklore Festival (Kyiv) 3 July: "Oberih-90", The National Competition of Bard Songs (Lutsk) 6-8 July: The Sobor [gathering] of the Ukrainian Spiritual Republic (Kolomyia, Voskresinetska Mountain) 16 July: Ukraine declared sovereignty 5 August: celebrating 500 years of Ukrainian Cossacks in Zaporizhzhia October: Revolution on Granite (from 2 Oct. hunger strike)</p>
1991	<p>June: First International Festival of Ukrainian Folklore Berehynia (Lutsk) 8-18 June: Chervona Ruta in Zaporizhzhia 19-21 August: August Coup (Putsch) in Moscow September: First International Hutsul Festival (Verkhovyna) 1 December: Ukrainian referendum for independence 26 December: USSR ceased to exist</p>
1992	<p>October: 2nd Vvykh, Festival of Alternative Culture and Unofficial Forms of Art (L'viv)</p>
1993	<p>Chervona Ruta in Donetsk</p>

There was a need to build cultural venues for the masses to enjoy folk art and to share their intangible heritage through folk songs or dances. For many years Ukrainian cultural workers and regional officials were jealous of the developed infrastructure of folk singing and dancing (so-called singing fields) in the Baltic republics (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) and

strove to build their own singing fields suitable of hosting thousands of folk and amateur artists.¹²²² This dream came true in June 1986 when the first singing field in Soviet Ukraine was opened in the city of Ternopil. It was specially designed as a national venue for the Republican Festivity of Folk Creativity [Respublikanske sviato narodnoii tvorhosti] and its winners were supposed to represent national culture in Moscow in 1987 at the All-Union Festival of Folk Creativity. The Moscow festival aimed to celebrate 70 years since the socialist revolution of 1917, and to bring all the Soviet creative forces together for the festivity. In Soviet Ukraine, however, this celebration also gave the possibility thousands of artists and their dedicated audience to gather in one place.

To merge urban amateurs and rural folk artists together as the people [narod], the festival was called The Republican Festivity of Folk Creativity. It gathered the best Ukrainian amateur and folk performers, selected in various events and in different regions of the country. The festival was broadcast on radio, regional and national television. The festival started in early 1986 and in June the Ukrainian Ministry of Culture organised a great festivity in Ternopil, which mobilised more than ten thousand folk and amateur artists and a huge media audience. Ukrainian officials declared that this festival, which was finally held in 1987, mobilised every tenth person in the republic, which was more than five million people.¹²²³ More than forty million people could listen to radio programmes from the festival and more than twenty million watched television broadcasts. This celebration marked that the socialist Ukrainian nation had, by the late 1980s, become a media-nation, celebrating folk and amateur artists.

Figure 8.1.A-B. Singing fields in Estonia and Ukraine.



¹²²² These claims of Ukrainian officials were often uttered through media, see: Mykola Makhinchuk, "Na Spivochomu Poli," *Sotsialistychna Kultura*, no. 9 (September 1986): 20, 21; "Scenarios" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1986), Arkush 72, 74, Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3042, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

¹²²³ "TsDAVO (1986), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3042," Arkush 70.

A. Singing field [Spivoche pole] in Ternopil (Ukraine), June 1986 (photo by S. Khoroshko).

B. Song Festival Grounds [Lauluväljak] in Tallinn (Estonia), June 1988 (photo by Leo Männik).

The host of the festival in Ternopil (1986), was the popular and well-known female face of Ukrainian Television and one of the leaders of the *Soniachni Klarnety* television festival, Tamara Stratienco. She conveyed the main messages of the event, namely that this was a festival of national songs. She happily announced the start of the national song festival, directing her speech to millions of television and radio consumers and the thousands of people who came to Ternopil:

In different ways people arrive at the sources of water springs [dzherela], which we call fatherland. For us, such healing springs are songs – a hundred years old magnitude of wisdom and poetry, the important display of spiritual advancement of our people [...] Each generation brings its own understanding of songs and contributes them with the reflection of its particular time. Our generation will righteously become known as the one whose broad harmony of life was infiltrated with songs, which sound widely and openly. These songs bring supreme happiness – the joy to inspire millions of people.¹²²⁴

Such a foreword from Tamara Stratienco conveyed the important messages of cultural nationalism: folk songs were compared to nature (water springs) and the fatherland; they were old and therefore had historic wisdom and righteousness; they united generations and inspired work. This work, encouraged by national songs, was directed towards a bright socialist future. Sometimes, mediated and popularised folk and national songs did have the power to inspire and mobilise millions of people. In June 1988, this power was demonstrated in Estonia, where people, inspired by the mass singing of folk and patriotic songs at the Tallinn Song Festival and Old Town Festival in Tartu, remained on the streets in a political demonstration of national unity. The inspiration of such folk songs could lead to intensified national feelings.¹²²⁵

The celebration in Ternopil opened with the song “My Ukraine” [Moia Ukraïno] by Ihor Poklad, performed by the renowned Ukrainian singer, Dmytro Hnatiuk. The line-up included not only folk collectives but also neo-folk performers, including Ihor Bilozir from Vatra and Nazarii Yaremchuk from Smerichka. Anatolii Avdiievskii (1933-2016), who was the artistic director and main conductor of the state national folk choir named after Hryhorii

¹²²⁴ “TsDAVO (1986), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3042,” Arkush 69.

¹²²⁵ Šmidchens, *The Power of Song*, 317–19.

Verioivka,¹²²⁶ conducted the great united choir,¹²²⁷ which performed the songs of the national romantic poet Taras Shevchenko (for instance, “Reve ta Stohne Dnibr Shyrokyi” [The Wide Dnipro Roars and Moans]). The singing field was designed to host such a splendid huge choir, as a journalist from the Ukrainian magazine *Socialist Culture* reported:

Its finally happened! The singing field of the eternally chanting Ukraine [odvichno pisennoi Ukrainy] – a gigantic folk scene, which our republic dreamed of, enviously looking at the Baltic states, embraced the first combined choir of the best academic and amateur singers, from the spacious Carpathians to the Siverskyi Donets, from the Chernihiv banks of Desna river to the Black Sea.¹²²⁸

As the quote stresses, the huge stage in Ternopil combined folk choirs of all ethnographic regions of Soviet Ukraine into one entity. For a short period of time, it turned into a metaphor for a nation: a singing nation. While the television show *Soniachni Klarnety* strove to show the variety of folk and neo-folk singing over a year, the Ternopil singing field combined these “singing regions” on one stage in a single event. The communal singing of folk songs, many of which were considered national songs, made many participants cry with happiness.¹²²⁹ Thrilled by the festival, both artists and members of the audience proposed making the celebration into a yearly event held in different regions of Ukraine.¹²³⁰ Avdiievskii called the event “the holiday of the immortality of national songs” and it turning into a national tradition, as in Estonia.¹²³¹ Dmytro Hnatiuk, who also admired the festival, recalled Avdiievskii ambitions:

Ukraine sings, and it is necessary that this continues [...] a song that celebrates our homeland, our people, our man [...] because such a mighty land has the power to give birth to such powerful, great singers and voices [...] this is [songs] such an inexhaustible spring for Ukrainian people and it is pure.¹²³²

Here again, the folk/national discourse favoured by Soviets and communicated by Hnatiuk at the festival, compared folk songs to the crops that naturally grow in the “mighty” soil of Ukraine. Singing was not just an art, it was what made Ukraine a nation and unified human entity. A single song could celebrate the land and connect the individual [liudyna] to the people [narod]. Moreover, for Hnatiuk, folk songs and common singing constituted the national character, as if songs were pure and unpolluted springs which give life to the land (the metaphor for a nation). These metaphors show that in the mid-1980s Soviet Ukrainian

¹²²⁶ Zasluzhenyi Akademichnyi Ukrainiyskyi Narodnyi Khor imeni Hryhoriia Verioivky [Emeritus Academic Ukrainian Folk Choir] was founded in Kharkiv during second world war, in 1943. Stalinist officials strived to mobilize Ukrainians to fight Nazism by promoting national culture and popularizing Cossack myth. After the war this choir was the exemplar Soviet collective, which performed correct and utmost national songs, professionally arranged and far beyond real folk singing.

¹²²⁷ Such practice to make great choirs, which consisted of thousands of singers, was borrowed from Baltic singing festivals. This show of many voices singing often together with the audience lifted people and made them extremely happy.

¹²²⁸ Makhinchuk, “Na Spivochomu Poli,” 21.

¹²²⁹ “TsDAVO (1986), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3042,” Arkush 74.

¹²³⁰ Makhinchuk, “Na Spivochomu Poli,” 20–21.

¹²³¹ “TsDAVO (1986), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3042,” Arkush 75.

¹²³² “TsDAVO (1986), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3042,” Arkush 77-78.

artists and supervising them socialist officials were still captivated by the imagination that originated within Romanticism and was revived in the USSR after 1957.

The festival also featured the famous female singer Nina Matviienko, who had been suspected of nationalism in the late 1970s but became a renowned and authoritative Ukrainian artist in the mid-1980s. She recited a poem by the communist poet Borys Oliinyk to the music by Olexandr Bilash: "Our singing field, sends us good nights, sends the peaceful mornings for children and grandchildren, and nobody is tight when consent and song are around."¹²³³ The host recalled Anatoly Lunacharsky's famous quote about Ukrainian culture. He once said, that: "Ukrainian music and poetry constitute the most beautiful and charming branch on the tree of the Slavic folk art."¹²³⁴

The Festivity of Folk Creativity was not much different from the festivity held in the USSR in 1967.¹²³⁵ There were millions of folk and amateur artists involved in the festival in 1967 and millions of Soviet viewers fascinated by the festivity. Some artistic collectives, which were "discovered" in 1967, still performed almost the same repertoire in 1987. The difference was the scope of the event: for the first time, Ukrainian amateur collectives experienced mass gatherings where thousands of people sang folk songs together in the national language. In addition, this event was broadcast to the mass national audience, which did not exist in such form in 1967. Indeed, in 1987 Ukrainian radio and television had already established its national audience, which could range from 25-30 million people.

The festivalisation of Ukrainian culture, which intensified after 1986, not only promoted various forms of arts (like folk, folklorism, pop-music and rock), but also helped to unite different groups of people. After the large folk and amateur arts festivals held in Ternopil (1986), Poltava (1987) and Khmelnytskyi (1989), various actors initiated a national festival of choir singing in 1989.¹²³⁶ The organisers felt that:

The competition has united us and we all see that something nationally meaningful is happening, something great is happening in front of our eyes! At least something very big has been started, and we all, like five fingers on one hand, are united by that high purpose, which a Leontovich choir contest gives us.¹²³⁷

The people who stood behind the Leontovych Choir Festival dreamt about a singing field in Kyiv, similar to the one in Tallinn where the "singing revolution" had taken place in July

¹²³³ "Pole nashe spivoche, shly nam dobrii nochi, shly pohidne dosvittia onuchatam i dityam, i nikomu ne tismo, koly zhoda i pisnya," see: "TsDAVO (1986), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3042," Arkush 82-84.

¹²³⁴ "TsDAVO (1986), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3042," Arkush 84.

¹²³⁵ Known organizer of artistic events in Soviet Ukraine, Borys Sharvarko (1929-2002), stated in 1986 festivity that in his youth years in Mohyliv-Podilskyi such folk celebrations took place in each district of the region. He obviously referred to the restrictions of national culture in 1970s, when mass folk festivals were less common, and was happy that such mass celebrations returned. See: "TsDAVO (1986), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3042," Arkush 72.

¹²³⁶ It has a long title – the All-Ukrainian Festival of Choir Arts named after Mykola Leontovych.

¹²³⁷ "Scenarios" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1989), Arkush 40, TsDAVO, Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4558, TsDAVO of Ukraine, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

1988.¹²³⁸ A singing field was an ideal space for mass singing and performances of huge united choirs. However, in 1990, when the international folk festival took place in Kyiv, they still had to use rather small spaces in the park or cultural institutions.

The important point highlighted by mediatised folk festivals was the extinction of the national language in the republic. TV viewers often asked media managers why Ukrainian television frequently discussed issues (in educational linguistic programming) regarding the Russian language and ignored Ukrainian.¹²³⁹ There was one programme dedicated to the Ukrainian literary language called *Living Word* [Zhyve slovo], and many Ukrainians did not know that it covered issues regarding the national language. The Ukrainian communist party reacted to growing demands of the audience to increase the number of programmes and films in the Ukrainian language. In September 1987, the vice-head of the national media committee, Anatolii Dykalo, reported to the party headquarters that the Ukrainian media produced 70 percent of its content in national language and were working to increase this number.¹²⁴⁰ According to the high official, one of the objective reasons for small number of interesting television programmes in national language in Soviet Ukraine, was the inability of media professionals and those whom they interviewed to speak in good Ukrainian.

In 1987, Ukrainian media managers started a discussion about the vanishing national language and the media. Some of them were puzzled as to why broadcasting in the Soviet republics in the Caucasus mainly comprised national languages, while in Soviet Central Asia there was formal regulation to have an equal proportion of Russian and national language broadcasting. In Soviet Ukraine, there was only a regulation regarding minority languages in the western and south western part of the republic, and not for the Ukrainian and Russian languages. Some regional committees preferred Russian (Odesa and Donetsk), others mainly broadcast in Ukrainian, like L'viv. Even though Kyiv officials reacted to public complaints and emphasised in professional seminars that Ukrainian television was Ukrainian, not only due to its geographical location but also due to its language, there were minor changes to improve regional media policies.¹²⁴¹

Major Ukrainian festivals had intensive media coverage. Thus, they united not only organisers and participants but also the whole imagined community of Ukrainians shaped by Soviet culture and media.¹²⁴² My argument here is that the mass festivals that developed in

¹²³⁸ In general, there were three music festivals in 1988 that constituted the heart of Estonia's Singing Revolution, see: Waren, "Theories of the Singing Revolution," 445.

¹²³⁹ "Teleradiovisnyk" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1987), Arkush 29, TsDAVO, Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3460, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

¹²⁴⁰ "Letters to central committee" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1987), Arkush 55-57, TsDAVO, Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3425, TsDAVO of Ukraine, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

¹²⁴¹ "TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3460," Arkush 43.

¹²⁴² Leontovych festival was initiated by music conductor and known Ukrainian composer Mykhailo Krechko (1925-1996), who involved Anatolii Avdiievskii (1933-2016) the head of National Distinguished Choir named after Hryhorii Veriovka, Yevhen Savchuk (born 1947), the leader of National Distinguished Academic Ukrainian

the 1980s intensified certain social movements (especially revivalists), which were complex phenomena “encompassing organisations, informal groups, crowds, consciousness, and the interactions among all these elements.”¹²⁴³ Festivals strengthened not only the desire to revive certain forms of culture (normally expressed by specific activists) and the joy of common performance (felt by participants), but also the mere sense of being together in one place and the intense feeling of community.

Benedict Anderson states that “nothing connects us effectively to the dead more than language” and that “nothing connects us all but imagined sound.”¹²⁴⁴ When many people sing together, the imagined community becomes embodied in the actions and expressions of the participants.¹²⁴⁵ This performance was also an important feature of the singing revolutions in the Baltic republics.¹²⁴⁶ Similarly, in Soviet Ukraine mass festivals were visible not only on the television screen, heard on the radio or watched by visitors, they often involved urban dwellers. On 26 May 1990, during the Second International Folklore Festival held in Kyiv, a large colourful crowd of participants marched on the streets of the Ukrainian capital in what looked like a preparation for a mass political demonstration. Andrii Panchyshyn (1959-2015), an active participant of the L’viv music cabaret Ne Zhurys’ [Do not worry] and participant of the Chervona Ruta festival (1989),¹²⁴⁷ admitted to Ukrainian journalists that festivals helped to create a dedicated audience. After participating in the first festival of bard songs in September 1989, he admitted that:

The fact that we stood shoulder to shoulder and we did not have enough of stage space – It’s a lot. That feeling of unity, then the feeling of a large group of people - this is almost the most important thing that made this festival successful.¹²⁴⁸

Conclusion

1. This chapter exposes some initiatives that took place in Soviet Ukraine after 1979, the year when the police discovered the dead body of the famous Ukrainian composer Volodymyr Ivasiuk and when the ideological secretary Valentyn Malanchuk, who was responsible for the cultural purges of the 1970s, was fired from his party position. Both persons, despite not being born in L’viv, had close connections with this city. Malanchuk developed his anti-nationalism here, which led to cultural repressions in the 1970s, and Ivasiuk produced his most famous popular Ukrainian songs, which fostered new national

Capella Dumka, Oleh Tsyhylyk (born 1939) the head of State Distinguished Choir Capella of Ukraine Trembita, and many other highly established actors in choir arts.

¹²⁴³ On the role of crowds and diffuse collectives in social movements see the article of Pamela Oliver, written in the time of Soviet mass festivals: Pamela E. Oliver, “Bringing the Crowd Back in: The Nonorganizational Elements of Social Movements,” *Research in Social Movements, Conflict and Change* 11, no. 1989 (1989): 1–30.

¹²⁴⁴ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 145.

¹²⁴⁵ Šmidchens, *The Power of Song*, 322.

¹²⁴⁶ Waren, “Theories of the Singing Revolution,” 442.

¹²⁴⁷ This cabaret was acknowledged at the festival, especially known was another soloist of this collective Viktor Morozov, former singer and musician in popular ensembles *Vatra* and *Smerichka*.

¹²⁴⁸ “TsDAVO (1989), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4558,” Arkush 77.

sentiments. This was a paradoxical situation since, on the one hand, cultural restrictions and often absurd anti-nationalism stimulated russification in the republic, but at the same time, innovative and popular forms of Ukrainian culture were born and developed. This chapter reveals that both processes had different results: anti-nationalism produced many young people in Soviet Ukraine who were ignorant of national culture. At the same time, the continuous politicisation of Ukrainian neo-folk and popular culture halted many initiatives and locked Ukrainian music and media in repetitive cycles of performative clichéd nationalism.

2. By restricting contemporary popular culture and framing the republican media around a few national/folk themes, officials stimulated the migration of young people to foreign media and official Russian and alternative culture. Young Ukrainians were searching in for new music, information about life abroad and for discussions on love, responsibility, and friendship. In most cases they were dissatisfied with national programming (radio and television) and often turned to foreign radio and television waves. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that in 1984 young people erroneously named among known Ukrainian radio presenters those persons who were formerly imprisoned in the USSR for anti-Sovietism and worked for the *Voice of America*. For young Ukrainians these foreign “voices” were associated less with politics and more with the progressive music broadcast by this anti-Soviet radio station.
3. During the June party gathering in 1984, the highest Ukrainian leadership implied that there was an urgent need for a unified sociological service, which would monitor Ukrainian society and help to understand the life and values of young people in the republic. The Ukrainian Media Committee, which managed television and radio, was the major state institution responsible for learning about young people and it initiated various forms of analysis, such as questionnaires and monitoring. Thus, while the Soviet audience was studied by special departments of Central Television already in the late 1950s and 1960s, the Soviet Ukrainian audience was only actively turned into the subject of research in the early 1980s.
4. The first sociological research conducted by the Ukrainian Media Committee in 1984 sent a strong message that television and radio broadcasting strategies needed to change. Apparently, many young people were completely ignoring national broadcasting or could not find what they were searching for. The almost two million roubles spent on national broadcasting (content development) every month could not effectively target the Soviet Ukrainian youth. Seemingly, many programmes on Ukrainian Television were produced for “switched off” TV sets. Considering that in the context of 1979-1980, communists blamed young people for the social calamities in neighbouring Poland, the ineffective targeting of young people was ideologically wrong.
5. Soviet Ukrainian officials understood the importance of audience research. In the following years they involved a section of the social sciences at the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, specialists from the Institute of Communist Party History and experts from the Highest Party School. Various forms of surveys and different methodologies revealed

many interesting aspects of the Soviet Ukrainian audience. These results were published continuously every four months in special “Visnyky” (newsletters) and spread among Ukrainian media professionals. However, they could not give answers to the substantial question: What should be done to effectively attract young people to the national and regional media? These answers would come with experiments that took place in the Soviet media only during perestroika.

Chapter 8. Rearticulating national popular media culture in the late 1980s

Introduction

The new Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, who became the party's first secretary in the spring of 1985, made an important statement about the Soviet people at the very start of his rise to supreme power. He stated that the collective experience of seventy years of the USSR produced a people who did not accept dishonesty. Gorbachev claimed that socialism needed transparency and openness to the truth [glasnost] and the Soviet nation, "strongly senses the falsehoods produced by an inability or fear to reveal the real contradictions of socialist development."¹²⁴⁹ Soviet administrators were obliged to speak only the truth to the people. In practice, this new truth mainly came from radio and television.

The Soviet media-spectacle was supposed to become the foremost source of social and economic transformation in the USSR. Officials reported that the 27th Congress of Communist Party of the USSR (February 1986), where Mikhail Gorbachev proclaimed perestroika,¹²⁵⁰ was transmitted by Soviet TV to more than two billion people worldwide.¹²⁵¹ The media were supposed to help Soviet powers to transform the stagnating economy, politics and culture.¹²⁵² In this transformation, the focus was on the person of the Soviet citizen: "The human factor is becoming an increasingly warm subject of journalistic research... it is he/she who becomes the cornerstone in the programmes."¹²⁵³ Soviet leaders believed that the creative potential of the masses would fuel the new wave of socialism, and therefore the media had to play a crucial role in such a transformation.¹²⁵⁴

This chapter discusses how the republican and peripheral media tackled political perestroika in Soviet Ukraine and how officials strove to add interactivity to their broadcasting to address the widely debated "human factor". At the same time, the Ukrainian media participated in the promotion of Soviet festivals, which were numerous in the 1980s. The mobilisation of the national audience through media and mass festivals became a common goal for the activists who attempted to challenge Soviet power in the late 1980s. Following examples from the Baltic republics, some activists in Soviet Ukraine mobilised crowds of people through popular music in a "singing revolution." The models of peaceful unrest had been tested in 1989-90 in Soviet Ukraine, like the students' revolution on Maidan in 1990. These models moulded examples of public strife, which are still practiced in post-Soviet Ukraine.

¹²⁴⁹ Brian McNair, *Glasnost, Perestroika and the Soviet Media* (Routledge, 2006), 43.

¹²⁵⁰ Most important formulas of Perestroika, like 'uskoreniye', 'human factor', 'glasnost', and 'khozraschiot' were uttered by Gorbachev at the Congress.

¹²⁵¹ Grigorii Oganov, "Realism, Sozidanie, Mir," *Televidenie i Radioveshchanie*, no. 4 (1986): 1-2, 4-7.

¹²⁵² "Tribuna obshchestvennoho mneniia," *Televidenie i radioveshchanie*, no. 2 (February 1986): 4.

¹²⁵³ "Tribuna obshchestvennoho mneniia," 7.

¹²⁵⁴ "Plany Partii - Plany Naroda," *Televidenie i Radioveshchanie*, no. 3 (March 1986): 5-7.

8.1. Perestroika and non-central Soviet media

The early spring of 1986 was marked by two important events: the Chernobyl disaster,¹²⁵⁵ and the launch of perestroika in Moscow. The heightened attention to national and regional broadcasting in Soviet Ukraine occurred when the nuclear power plant in Chernobyl collapsed. The high official in the Ukrainian Media Committee reported that in one month, Ukrainian Television received its yearly quota of letters even though the audience's attention later returned to "normal".¹²⁵⁶ This tragic disaster caused the audience to follow more republican and regional media and the devotion to local news and programming after 1986 remained high. Chernobyl accident, coupled with the liberalisation of the Soviet media, changed attitudes towards the local and national media from ignorance to active involvement. One year after the collapse, in January 1987, the Ukrainian state media officials received requests to grant permissions for video recordings in Chernobyl from American, Finnish, Japanese and British media companies. The requests continued into the spring and autumn.¹²⁵⁷ Ukraine attracted international attention and its media followed this development.

One of instruments to increase internal and external communication was television. Before 1986 Soviet engineers and media professionals established television links with other countries. Officials reported that in 1986 the Soviet media prepared twenty so-called TV-bridges [telemosty] from different countries.¹²⁵⁸ These "television bridges" also known as "space bridges", were international telecasts between Soviet and foreign viewers. They had a form of public videoconferences, interactive television links between several geographically separate locations. There were internal television bridges within the Ukrainian republic,¹²⁵⁹ and international, but in general, they became a normal part of everyday broadcasting.¹²⁶⁰

However, the changes within republican media were limited. The Soviet media in the first half of the 1980s, especially in Ukraine, was still trapped in ritualistic formulas, repetitions and continues economic reports.¹²⁶¹ While Soviet Central Television was capable of attracting the best workforce and produced plenty of interesting programmes, the regional and national television in the USSR had neither good personnel nor necessary equipment (see Chapter 2). Ukrainian reviewers frequently acknowledged that radio and television programmes for young people did not "speak as though for young people."¹²⁶² Information was delivered in

¹²⁵⁵ Serhii Plokhyy, *Chernobyl: The History of a Nuclear Catastrophe* (New York: Basic Books, 2018).

¹²⁵⁶ "Visnyk #2" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1986), Arkush 56, Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 2949, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

¹²⁵⁷ "TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3425," Arkush 10, 13, 19, 28, 55.

¹²⁵⁸ "TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3460," Arkush 8.

¹²⁵⁹ Officials reported that media bridges in some regions, like Donetsk, were useful instruments to foster socialist democracy, see: "TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3460," Arkush 54.

¹²⁶⁰ "TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3430," Arkush 13.

¹²⁶¹ For these performative repetitions see: Evans, *Between Truth and Time* (2016), 143–44; Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, until It Was No More*.

¹²⁶² "Media Reviews" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1986), Arkush 80, Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 2950, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

standard and well-known formulations, journalists did not report on location, and there was nothing critical or problematic in broadcasting. One reviewer even asked media specialists: “Do you think that everything is well-organised at collective farms, at the industrial venues, is socialist competition still problematic, or not?”¹²⁶³

For media professionals, it was problematic to reconfigure their broadcasting models, which had been followed for decades. Since early 1986, they were often criticised for being caught in the past and that “the syndrome of yesterday remained in each programme.”¹²⁶⁴ In 1987, officials reported that reforms had been initiated, however, local employees “were imprisoned by yesterday” [v poloni vchorashnosti].¹²⁶⁵ Ukrainian media programming was full of “empty formulas”, the enumeration of facts, and careless attitudes towards words and statements. Critics claimed that annual media plans in Soviet Ukraine were usually prepared by “copy-pasting” plans from previous years. Some descriptive terms had been changed in television and radio programmes and a critical voice sometimes surfaced, however, for many media editors and journalists it was not clear what needed changing. The revisions to regional radio programming in 1986 implemented by the Communist Party, were reported by one professional as: “The morose rut of the stereotype, which was stubbornly ignoring all that lively and unique that appeared in our life, renewed by the fresh wind of changes.”¹²⁶⁶ Another reviewer stated that:

Talks, infinite talks about anything [...] the editorial boards just make the appearance of the efforts [...] In fact, they produce nothing more than a concussion of air [...] How much do we pay for such empty talking in media ether?¹²⁶⁷

“Empty talking” was expensive, it cost more than 200 roubles for one minute of television broadcasting, while the average monthly salary was little more than one hundred roubles. The only noticeable changes in 1986-1987 happened in television and radio programmes dedicated to information. As in Moscow, where officials commenced perestroika by reforming the informational programme *Vremia* [Time], Kyiv media administrators implemented changes to *Aktualna Kamera* [Actual camera]. From January 1987 this major Ukrainian information programme received a new, mainly critical format. However, even in this field it was difficult to implement transformations as local media were intertwined with party cells and local industrial producers. They used to congratulate achievements, to report success stories and criticism (if present at all) was normally opaque and not specific. Thus, in the mid-1980s when senior officials demanded that critical programmes be broadcast, many journalists or editors were puzzled. They had to “attack” friends and old acquaintances, and

¹²⁶³ “TsDAVO (1986), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 2950,” Arkush 80.

¹²⁶⁴ “TsDAVO (1986), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 2950,” Arkush 134.

¹²⁶⁵ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3460,” Arkush 3.

¹²⁶⁶ “TsDAVO (1986), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 2950,” Arkush 145.

¹²⁶⁷ “TsDAVO (1986), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 2950,” Arkush 65.

some media professionals openly claimed that they could not condemn the institutions upon which they depended.¹²⁶⁸

Soviet media managers no longer needed the style of media-spectacles produced in the early 1980s. They talked more frequently about the organisational power of television and were not satisfied with the media-transmission of important events or folk and Estrada concerts. Even the programme *Soniachni Klarnety*, which had a stable and dedicated audience and had been on Ukrainian Television for almost a decade, was criticised for being frozen in its aesthetics.¹²⁶⁹ The music editorial in Ukrainian Television replaced the entertainment programme *Invitation for Appointment* [Zaproshuiemo Na Pobachennia] with a new programme, called *Improvisation*. Media managers appointed younger personnel as commentators and introduced telephones at the studio, so now the audience could have a direct connection to national media. Obviously, Ukrainian media editors and executives suggested listening to jazz and light music improvisation, though young people already talked about punk, rock and electronic music.

Disputes, discussions and dialogues were welcomed, and party officials and media producers believed that a discursive transformation may lead to substantial changes in social practices.¹²⁷⁰ Some new words, like “glasnost”, were borrowed from the previous party discourse discussing Soviet media in the 1960s. The Ukrainian Media Committee recommended launching new radio and television programmes. For instance, a new programme, commenced at the literature editorial of Ukrainian Television, received the title *Writers’ Dialogues: Candidness*, which marked a turn to new aesthetics.¹²⁷¹ The dialogical character of artistic television unfolded through concert-discussions and concert-meetings, in which musicians, poets, writers and officials discussed current issues of Soviet light entertainment and high art. To a certain extent, this approach was reminiscent of similar practices in the 1960s, though now with a renewed ethos of party reforms.

Dialogue was seen as an instrument to change human beings, or, as party documents indicated, to activate the *human factor* [chelovecheskii faktor] of Soviet workers.¹²⁷² Changing a human being into a Soviet human being was crucial for Soviet ideology and practice, and was highly discussed in the 1920s, 1930s, 1950s and 1960s. Continuing Khrushchev’s fight for socialist souls (described in the “Moral Code of the Builder of Communism”), Brezhnev stated

¹²⁶⁸ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3460,” Arkush 41.

¹²⁶⁹ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3460,” Arkush 42.

¹²⁷⁰ See Chapter 1 in: Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, until It Was No More*. On the importance of language during Soviet transformation see: Patrick Seriot, “Officialese and Straight Talk in Socialist Europe of the 1980s,” in *Ideology and System Change in the USSR and East Europe: Selected Papers from the Fourth World Congress for Soviet and East European Studies*, Harrogate, 1990, ed. Michael E. Urban (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1992), 202–12.

¹²⁷¹ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3460,” Arkush 10.

¹²⁷² Interestingly, new Soviet policies in the mid-1980s reminded some arguments, expressed by Andrei Sakharov in the late 1960s, see: Andrei Sakharov, “Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom (Materials of International Conference ‘Sakharov’s Ideas Today,’” Online museum, www.sakharov-center.ru, June 1968, <http://www.sakharov-center.ru/asfconf2009/english/node/20>.

in 1971 that communism was only possible through high human morality.¹²⁷³ However, in the mid-1980s the language of the “moral code”¹²⁷⁴ changed into a new quasi-economic language of “the human factor”. For instance, in 1987 the Ukrainian media committee acknowledged the holiday programme *Saturday Meetings* [Subotni Zustrichi] not for its high number of viewers or ideologically correct content, but for its “activation of the human factor.”¹²⁷⁵ A document helps explain what it meant to activate the human factor, explains: to produce informative, critical and entertaining media content broadcast live on television.¹²⁷⁶ This explanation clearly indicates that Soviet media was turning to the public in the second half of the 1980s, trying to attract people with critical information mixed with lively light entertainment.

Opening up to the audience revealed another problem of Soviet media: it was not prepared to talk to young people in a non-patriarchal, non-patronising language.¹²⁷⁷ Television and radio youth programmes, which were supported by Komsomol officials, were in the language of senior officials and not the language of the Soviet street or factory. Trying to make programmes related to “problematic” youth issues like drug abuse, alcoholism, or subcultures, journalists often made Soviet-style uncritical “media portraits of social troubles”. For instance, they would describe in detail how people made opium or heroin or showed rock or punk collectives without contextualisation. The audience even objected to such portrayals, claiming that these programmes did not discuss problematic issues, but rather gave merely descriptions of drug recipes or accidentally promoted alternative culture. For many professionals and audience members, the renewed Soviet drive for truth was complicated subject to broadcast. Some Ukrainian media producers claimed during meetings with top officials in 1987 that rebuilding old habits and models was more difficult than building new from scratch. Only now, in the late 1980s, did they realise how difficult it was to implement reforms and to implement perestroika in the USSR.¹²⁷⁸

The transformations within media institutions, although only partially effective and fragmented, substantially influenced the audience and many people believed that Soviet regional media had been reborn.¹²⁷⁹ The Director of Ukrainian television Ivan Mashchenko, leading a special seminar for media workers in Donetsk in June 1987, asserted that, since 1986, television had attracted the attention of Soviet people as never before in its history. “On Ukrainian TV screens, maybe not in the fullest brightness, as we would wish, pulsed life with all its achievements and contradictions,” said Mashchenko and he invited media workers

¹²⁷³ 24 Siezd KPSS. 30 Marta - 9 Aprelia 1971 Goda. *Stenograficheskii Otchet.*, vol. 1 (Moscow: Politizdat, 1971), 109.

¹²⁷⁴ G. Vodovatov, “Edinstvo Stimulov,” *Pravda*, July 28, 1970, 209 edition, 2; “Moralnyi oblik kommunista,” *Pravda*, July 10, 1973, 191 edition, 1.

¹²⁷⁵ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3460,” Arkush 42.

¹²⁷⁶ “TsDAVO of Ukraine, Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3460,” Arkush 43.

¹²⁷⁷ While officials demanded that Soviet media attracted attention of younger generation, see: Evans, *Between Truth and Time* (2016), 239.

¹²⁷⁸ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3460,” Arkush 51.

¹²⁷⁹ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3460,” Arkush 29-30.

to look into the future, supporting everything new and neutralising negative phenomena.¹²⁸⁰ However, this invitation was difficult to achieve since the technical and artistic quality of Ukrainian TV often remained at the same level as the 1970s, not to mention the “ideological consciousness” (conservatism) of its creative workers.¹²⁸¹

8.2. “The letters have already become one of the protagonists of our broadcasting”

The Soviet Ukrainian audience reacted to changes in the political and cultural media discourse with enthusiasm. For instance, officials from the Ukrainian media committee reported that in 1982 they received 208,440 letters, which grew to 247,440 in 1985, and 258,440 in 1986.¹²⁸² Compared to the one million letters sent to Soviet Central Television in 1985,¹²⁸³ the almost a quarter of a million letters to Ukrainian television and radio made it the second most written-to media outlet after Central Television in Moscow. Higher communists demanded more openness and honesty from the media, highly welcoming critical remarks and audience participation.¹²⁸⁴

People enthusiastically wrote to Soviet media institutions, which were supposed to report pitfalls and to help implement changes in problematic services or socialist organisations. Ukrainian officials conveyed that from 1985-1986, the number of critical letters increased from 70 to 561, which marked the turn to democratic media reporting in the USSR. In 1987 almost 10 percent of correspondence was critical and touched upon the issues of perestroika.¹²⁸⁵ Letters actively reported the pitfalls in the socialist economy.¹²⁸⁶ They were also actively used by media managers to produce new programmes and by 1986 almost 60 percent of programmes on Ukrainian television incorporated audience letters.¹²⁸⁷ To normalise the influx of letters related to matters of perestroika, on 4 June 1987, the Council of Ministers of the UkrSSR even issued a special regulative document.¹²⁸⁸

On 24 July 1987, the Ukrainian media officials proudly announced that “letters became one of the major heroes of our broadcasting.”¹²⁸⁹ The Ukrainian media committee reported that in four months in 1987 it received almost 140,000 letters. This correspondence was also extensively used to produce entertainment programmes, widely needed on national media

¹²⁸⁰ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3460,” Arkush 37.

¹²⁸¹ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3460,” Arkush 40.

¹²⁸² In 1986 Soviet Ukrainian citizens sent 145010 letters to television and 113430 to radio, see: “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3460,” Arkush 28.

¹²⁸³ K. Annenkova, “Radi Obshego Lada,” *Televidenie i Radioveshchanie*, no. 4 (1986): 19.

¹²⁸⁴ Evans, *Between Truth and Time* (2016), 245.

¹²⁸⁵ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3430,” Arkush 31.

¹²⁸⁶ The highest number of complaints from Ukrainian audience regarded insufficient number of apartments, troubles in Soviet trade and the other pitfalls of socialist services, see: “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3430,” Arkush 31.

¹²⁸⁷ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3430,” Arkush 12.

¹²⁸⁸ The lengthy title was as follows – ‘On the Plan to Organize Work to Fulfil a Decree of CCCPSU about the Letters of Workers on the Matters of Perestorika.’ The highest number of complaints from Soviet people regarded insufficient number of apartments, Soviet trade and other services, see: “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3430,” Arkush 31.

¹²⁸⁹ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3430,” Arkush 27.

channels. To attract the audience, Ukrainian Television strove to increase cultural production: in one year it showed 200 films, 70 theatrical performances, 170 music concerts. But it was still not enough.¹²⁹⁰ Ukrainian radio produced thirty hours of artistic broadcasting daily, and increased the amount of light music in its programming. The Ukrainian Media Committee turned into an important cultural enterprise in the mid-1980s: it preserved 120,000 phonorecords of national music, 20,000 films and 7,000 rolls of video recordings.¹²⁹¹ This entire cultural media heritage was now released from the overtly ideological restrictions of previous decades and professionals could use recordings without overt censoring.

Even though the programming was changed and some programmes became more analytical, Ukrainian officials were not ready to propose special programming for different segments of the audience. In the early 1980s, the most interesting and entertaining programmes on Soviet television were broadcast by the First Channel from Moscow and most of students, service people, proletarians and intelligentsia, seniors and home workers watched these programmes. However, from 1984-1986, an important change took place, which indicated that the national television audience was growing. While only 10 percent of young Ukrainians watched national television in 1984, by 1986 this number rose to almost 14 percent, and those who ignored television dropped from 16 percent to 10 percent.¹²⁹²

An inquiry commissioned by the media committee in 1987 proved that different social groups needed different programming. For instance, almost 42 percent of Ukrainian school children watched Central Television (CT) in contrast to about 14 percent who preferred Ukrainian Television (UT). The Ukrainian rural audience watched both the all-Soviet and national TV channels equally.¹²⁹³ The life rhythms of school pupils and villagers differed substantially, but the Soviet regional media could only offer rather limited segmentation of its existing programming.

The inquiry revealed that Soviet Ukrainian television attracted college students with its educational programming; peasants and cultural workers with its national (often folkloric) colour; children with cartons and evening fairy tales; and industrial workers and pensioners with regional news. Twenty percent of those who watched Ukrainian television were also interested in regional broadcasting.¹²⁹⁴ Even though the programming on Ukrainian TV was full of formalities and clichés, industrial reporting, agricultural statistics, and local information (40-45 percent of national and regional broadcasting), the audience began to grow. People not only watched TV but also wrote letters to local media producers, not just to Moscow or

¹²⁹⁰ "TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3430," Arkush 21-22.

¹²⁹¹ Media officials even proposed to create special television and radio archive, which could be used for further media needs: "TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3430," Arkush 23.

¹²⁹² "Media Research" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1986), Arkush 4, Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 2955, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

¹²⁹³ "TsDAVO (1986), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 2955," Arkush 4.

¹²⁹⁴ "TsDAVO (1986), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 2955," Arkush 4-8.

Kyiv. For instance, in 1985 L'viv Television received 22,206 letters – almost 43 letters per broadcasting hour.¹²⁹⁵

The increase in devotion to national television and the growing number of letters from the Ukrainian audience was sometimes due to extraordinary programming. The audience was especially attracted by Anatoly Kashpirovsky, a Ukrainian physician who claimed to have healing powers that could be transmitted through TV. Kashpirovsky appeared on Soviet Central Television for the first time in March 1988, on the popular and youth oriented evening show *Vzgliad* [Scope].¹²⁹⁶ Being shocked by healing powers of a TV set, comrade Skoropud V. from Kyiv, admitted that:

It was impossible to think that something like this could have happened: standing still in the apartment TV set rapidly came to life and looked at me, and it looked in a way that had broken all stereotypes that developed over the years.¹²⁹⁷

Soon after the first broadcast in Moscow, Ukrainian television anticipated broadcasting a surgery where Kashpirovsky was supposed to heal patients via television cable.¹²⁹⁸ After this show, Ukrainian media professionals analysed 2200 letters to discover that 55 percent of viewers reported that they had experienced positive changes in their health, and 25 percent of viewers reported general improvement (including their mood). Each new TV medical session led to an increase in correspondence: the first programme received 1958 letters; the second, 8052; the third, 8100; the fourth, 19506; and the fifth, 15008.¹²⁹⁹ The sports journalist Valentyn Shcherbachov, who brought the controversial doctor to the Kyiv television studio, received more letters per month than the whole music editorial.¹³⁰⁰ People, who were used to trusting Soviet television, took Kashpirovsky's words "I suggest only goodness" for granted and believed in his healing powers. The newspaper *Komsomolskoie Znamia* (17 February 1989) made a report about Kashpirovsky and claimed that healing television programmes started a new era in the history of television, an era was partially started by Ukrainian television.

¹²⁹⁵ "TsDAVO (1986), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 2949," 1986, Arkush 19.

¹²⁹⁶ Stephen Hutchings argues that policies of *glasnost*, namely voicedness, depended upon "television's topical urgency and universal reach" and were "distinctly visual." Because of this titles of famous Soviet television programs referred to "the notion of penetrating visual insights into Soviet societysee", see: Hutchings, *Russian Literary Culture in the Camera Age*, 153.

¹²⁹⁷ "Visnyk" (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1989), Arkush 167, TsDAVO, Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4290, TsDAVO of Ukraine, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

¹²⁹⁸ "TsDAVO (1989), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4290," Arkush 165.

¹²⁹⁹ "TsDAVO (1989), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4290," Arkush 165-167.

¹³⁰⁰ In December 1989 Music Editorial of Ukrainian television received 619 letters, while in March journalist Shcherbachov alone had 573 letters from the audience, see: "TsDAVO (1989), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4290," Arkush 165.

However, even though Ukrainian television had advanced, it could not find the way to the hearts of young Ukrainians, children¹³⁰¹ and school children excepted. Years after the first audience research conducted by the Ukrainian Media Committee (see Chapter 7.3.), which showed that Ukrainian youth was not very interested in national broadcasting and culture, professionals still complained that they did not understand the youth demographic.¹³⁰² Even though youth programming after 1986 included programmes about rock music and breakdancing, official discourse still supported the idea of television as an ideological instrument, which should educate and not simply entertain viewers.¹³⁰³ The ideal young Soviet person was supposed to have strong knowledge of political philosophy and based on this knowledge socialist convictions, to be a sincere, romantic person who knew how to handle various life situations. Not surprisingly, programmes for the Soviet Ukrainian youth were often written in adult language and could not connect to the values “shared on the streets” by average people and not promoted on the screens by officials.¹³⁰⁴

Soviet officials, just as they had done in the late 1970s and early 1980s, continued to blame the foreign media for the youth’s “love” of capitalist culture,¹³⁰⁵ However, after the launch of perestroika, media professionals understood that young people did not blindly accept ideological messages and were strongly sceptical of simplified interpretation of life depicted by Soviet Ukrainian media. Komsomol executives, who were supposed to work with young people, often could not speak up sincerely and persuasively; they used to read their speeches on TV from a slip of paper following established ideological phraseology. Therefore, those young people who strongly opposed the spuriousness of the media, avoided watching regional or republican television.¹³⁰⁶ To remedy this situation, senior media executives demanded that their subordinates freely to young people, conducting dialogues instead of constantly teaching them the truth of life.¹³⁰⁷

8.3. Chervona Ruta and the rearticulation of Ukrainian popular music

In addition to the honest and dialogical communication with the masses, the second half of the 1980s was also characterised by large outdoor festivals (Chapter 7.4.). Coupled

¹³⁰¹ In 1986 children programme *Katrusyn Kinozal* received 64443 letters, thus having the biggest audience on UATV. In comparison, *Soniachni Klarnety*, which usually had high audience in Soviet Ukraine received in the same 1986 only 448 letters, see: “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3430,” Arkush 15-16.

¹³⁰² Audience research on Soviet Central Television was implemented already in the late 1950s, activated since 1965 and slowed in the 1970s, see: Evans, *Between Truth and Time* (2016), 58–59.

¹³⁰³ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3460,” Arkush 39.

¹³⁰⁴ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3460,” Arkush 42. Reviewing Ukrainian programmes from Dnipropetrovsk, critics admitted they youth programmes are narrated by people who, by the most, remind public officials and could not speak the language of young people, who therefore did not believe to their messages. See: “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3460,” Arkush 51.

¹³⁰⁵ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3460,” Arkush 55. Soviet officials in the 1970s were aware that their programming had to compete with foreign broadcasting, see: Evans, *Between Truth and Time* (2016), 80.

¹³⁰⁶ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3460,” Arkush 47.

¹³⁰⁷ “TsDAVO (1987), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 3460,” Arkush 55. Central Committee of Communist Party in the second half of 1970s issued several important decrees on propaganda, stimulating producers to make ‘state messages more lively and audience oriented, see: Evans, *Between Truth and Time* (2016), 80.

with glasnost and perestroika, festivals caused the emergence of new experimental and often unexpected genres and forms of culture. Officials, being urged to support democratic processes all over the country, abandoned excessive censoring and those cultural workers who had been banned were able to return. For instance, Bohdan Stelmakh,¹³⁰⁸ the author of poems for the songs performed by Vatra, penalised for criticising Soviet power in 1984, returned to make a theatrical performance in L'viv (see Chapter 6.4.). His poetic masterwork about the youth of Taras Shevchenko was adapted for a stage performance in 1988 by Serhii Proskurnia (born 1957), a promising young theatrical director. Proskurnia combined the poetry and music of Bohdan Yanivskii (the composer behind many television musicals produced in L'viv, see Chapter 3.) with contemporary stage design thus producing an appealing and successful performance.

People like Proskurnia (the young Soviet generation in their 30s) sought to create new forms of Ukrainian culture and were concerned with what they saw as its peripheral status in the USSR. They were looking for new forms of culture, like popular music, new theatre, or hybrid forms, and attempted to renew the national culture in general. Proskurnia, together with the young writer and poet Olexandr Irvanets (born 1961) and composer Kyrylo Stetsenko (born 1953), made a play for the first festival of Ukrainian popular music, Chervona Ruta, in 1989, which took place in Chernivtsi in September of the same year. This was the festival organised by the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine in cooperation with Komsomol, during which not only resentments about the status of the national language and culture were uttered openly, but where, for the first time, the nationalist Ukrainian anthem was publicly performed. As Romana Bahry admits, writing a chapter on Ukrainian rock music a few years after 1989, this festival was “one of the major manifestations of Ukrainian national feeling.”¹³⁰⁹

The Chervona Ruta festival in 1989, which became a turning point in national popular culture, had started as an initiative only two years earlier. On 27 December 1987, the Ukrainian newspaper *Molod' Ukrainy* [The Youth of Ukraine] published an article by the journalist Ivan Lepsha who focused mainly on culture. His idea was to challenge in this article an official notion of an amateur artist and to bring back “from the oblivion” the artistic heritage of Volodymyr Ivasiuk. He started his story in 1870, when an amateur composer, Hordii Hladkyi, put the lyrics of the famous *Testament* of Taras Shevchenko to music. Even though Hladkyi was known as a composer and music activist, until the late 1970s he was classified in scholarly texts as an “amateur composer.” Lepsha expressed in the article the

¹³⁰⁸ Upon his return to public life Stelmakh initiated a campaign to build in L'viv a monument to Taras Shevchenko. Soon the place chosen for the monument near the central flowerbed [klumba] turned to become the major site for political manifestations in the city.

¹³⁰⁹ Romana Bahry, “Rock Culture and Rock Music in Ukraine,” in *Rocking the State: Rock Music and Politics in Eastern Europe and Russia* (Oxford: Westview Press, 1994), 254.

common Soviet attitude of the late 1980s, where amateur artists or composers were considered as somewhat of bad quality.¹³¹⁰

It was apparent for Lepsha that important works in Ukrainian culture were produced by so-called amateurs and the quality of their work was high. He questioned in the article the role of Soviet official unions, which were supposedly responsible for the development of popular culture in the Ukrainian republic. Lepsha's attention to Ivasiuk reflected the shared attitude among Ukrainian intellectuals that it was high time to commemorate important cultural figures who had been "forgotten". He recalled Stanislav Telniuk, a Ukrainian writer, who indicated in the newspaper *Literaturna Ukraina* [Literary Ukraine] that as Russians now commemorate Vladimir Vysotskii with the highest Soviet awards, we, Ukrainians, should follow them [berimo z nykh pryklad] and commemorate our cultural heroes.¹³¹¹

Indeed, Ukrainian music activists followed examples from Moscow. Within the Union of Soviet Music Composers, David Tukhmanov led a new commission which aimed to manage work of music instrumental ensembles and invited to the Union non-members, who produced music exclusively for light entertainment. In addition, managers of the Union of Soviet Music Composers created a special section for rock music, headed by the renowned jazz musician Alexei Kozlov. Obviously, those who practiced "non-official" music and not high art in Soviet Ukraine were resentful of these Russian structural innovations and appealed to the Kyiv officials to follow their Moscow colleagues.¹³¹² In 1987, the unions of Soviet Ukrainian Writers and Composers, organised a common plenum to explore why Ukrainian popular music was stagnating. Due to this meeting, the figure of another "amateur composer," Volodymyr Ivasiuk, who died in 1979 in unknown circumstances, was often recalled and highly discussed (see Chapter 7.1.).

Lepsha, like many other cultural workers in Soviet Ukraine, admitted that the amateur composer Volodymyr Ivasiuk made national light songs that were popular not only in the USSR but also worldwide. His song "Chervona Ruta" became famous in Soviet Ukraine and many vocal and instrumental ensembles performed this song in the USSR and abroad. At the same time, Soviet Ukrainian officials did not praise Ivasiuk's creative oeuvre. Ivasiuk, like many other popular musicians and poets, was not a member of an official creative union, claimed

¹³¹⁰ In late 1960s situation was quite the opposite – 'amateur' was considered an important quality feature of Soviet artist, and scholars counted 11 million practicing amateur artists in USSR. See for instance: Shekhtman, *Iskusstvo Millionov*.

¹³¹¹ Lepsha, *100 Oblych Ukrainiskoi Estrady*, 7.

¹³¹² The Ukrainian branch of the Union of Soviet Composers had a rigid structure and did not change it since 1948, when the first gathering took place. This congress was mainly about the introduction of Zhdanov's doctrinism in music scene and discussed Muradeli's opera *Great Friendship*, which served as an example of 'wrong music'. During this congress of 1948 delegates decided that to avoid ideological mistakes within union, for each two composers there should be one critic, while amateurs were not allowed to enter this 'circle of chosen'. The average age of the union members in the late 1980s was around sixty and this was one of the claims of Lepsha, why they did not work for the young audience, see: Lepsha, 10. Members of music union were also protected by quotas, so Soviet popular performers were requested to perform only 10-20% of repertoire made by amateurs, while professionals had to take lead.

the author and, because of this, the state managers of culture took a less serious approach to his artistic heritage.¹³¹³ However, such amateurs shaped the major innovations in national popular music in the 1970s, unlike the members of official unions. Lepsha argued that if members of state-sponsored creative unions would compose at least one song a year for the republican vocal and instrumental ensembles, the fifty ensembles that existed in the UkrSSR in the 1980s (officially registered within philharmonics or houses of culture) would not feel a “repertoire hunger”.¹³¹⁴

Lepsha agreed with the Russian composer Vladimir Dashkevich, who stated on *Moskovskii Novosti* [Moscow News] that in the 1980s popular tastes in the USSR were leaning towards light music, amateur, rock music and the so-called author [avtorskaia] or bard songs.¹³¹⁵ This was an on-going process and officials could neither stop this shift towards popular culture nor could they ignore popular entertainment. Dashkevich confirmed that restrictions or confrontations did not work in this field,¹³¹⁶ therefore Soviet artistic institutions should learn how to speak the language of the youth.

If we consider the state of Ukrainian light entertainment and popular music in the late 1980s, it becomes evident that television and radio created an image of Ukrainian national Estrada as being folk or neo-folk. Most of the names on Ukrainian pop scene arrived in the late 1960s, and only a few became popular in the late 1970s (like the trio Marenychi) and early 1980s (the new Vatra and Mykola Hnatiuk).¹³¹⁷ Ukrainian light music clearly did not develop for 20 years. Thus, for many critics, especially the young, this “non-existence” of music hits in the Ukrainian language indicated a crisis. To overcome this crisis, Ivan Lepsha proposed opening up the music scene to amateurs at the state organised unions, and creating an annual festival of popular music, which would promote new styles and modern tastes among young Ukrainians (see Chapter 8.3. and 8.4.).

He proposed to naming this festival in commemoration of the most known modern Ukrainian song “Chervona Ruta,” written by the amateur Volodymyr Ivasiuk in the late 1960s and which had made Ukrainian light music popular not only in the USSR but also abroad (see Chapter 1.6.). Lepsha argued that the right path of development for national light entertainment would be the creation of a national festival with special attention to transition zones between the professional and amateur arts. He envisaged that this national festival would function as a competition and the best songs would go to the all-Union television contest *Pesnia Goda*, or socialist song contests like those organised in Sopot (Poland), Jurmala (USSR), Dresden (GDR), and Bratislava (Czechoslovakia). Such a festival, Lepsha believed,

¹³¹³ Lepsha, 9. Lepsha did not mention Ivasiuk’s burial in L’viv in 1979, which made local communist authorities worrying about the power of Ukrainian popular culture.

¹³¹⁴ He was mostly critical about the Union of Soviet Composers.

¹³¹⁵ Lepsha, *100 Oblych Ukrainiskoi Estrady*, 11.

¹³¹⁶ He was obviously referring to anti-pop crusade of the early 1980s.

¹³¹⁷ In 1980 he won the first prize at the Polish festival of popular songs Sopot (‘The Song on Drums’) and in 1981 his song ‘A Bird of Happiness’ was among the most popular Soviet songs. But both songs were performed in Russian language, thus almost no songs in Ukrainian were especially popular at this time.

would venerate the famous amateur Volodymyr Ivasiuk and possibly function as a space of creative cooperation between professionals and amateurs.

Lepsha was not the only person to promote of Ivasiuk. His father, Mykhailo Ivasiuk, a member of the Union of Soviet Writers and a prominent figure in Bukovina, attempted to “recover” his son’s heritage by publishing articles and a memoir.¹³¹⁸ He started writing a book about Volodymyr as early as 1979, but the first article appeared only during perestroika, in 1987, when Lepsha was calling for the festival to commemorate the amateur composer.¹³¹⁹ Lepsha’s declarations about the need to have a festival of national songs were noticed by officials and music activists. In 1988, Volodymyr Ivasiuk was posthumously awarded the Mykola Ostrovskiy Republican Komsomol Prize and the idea of the music festival was launched. In 1988, the campaign achieved its aim as two students from the Kyiv Conservatory of Music, Taras Melnyk (born 1954) and Anatolii Kalenychenko (born 1955), managed to convince officials to hold a music festival named after the famous song “Chervona Ruta” [Red Rue]. They invited other young cultural activists, like Proskurnia, Irvanets, and Stetsenko, to prepare scripts and artistic parts of the event.

It was not approved to hold this festival in Kyiv, and officials also refused to let the festival take place in Soviet L’viv. Therefore, organisers turned to Chernivtsi and finally, after permission was granted, the festival was held in Bukovina, the region from which popular Soviet Ukrainian culture had sprung in the 1960s and through the 1970s and 1980s. Thus, in September 1989, Chernivtsi, the central city of Ukrainian Bukovina, hosted the first Soviet festival of national popular music, Chervona Ruta. This festival, like other mass cultural events of the late Soviet Union, was implemented by the officials and intelligentsia. The Ukrainian political opposition strove to mobilise “national feelings” through popular and traditional music and such events were excellent opportunities for such mobilisation.¹³²⁰ However, in 1989 Chervona Ruta was organised not by opposition, but by young musicians-activists with extensive support from socialist state officials. The festival proved to be a successful enterprise aimed at recovering Ukrainian popular music from stagnation.¹³²¹

¹³¹⁸ Sokolowski, “The Myth of Volodymyr Ivasiuk,” 38–40.

¹³¹⁹ He published first excerpt from the book *Monoloh Pered Oblychchiam Syna* [Monologue in Front of Son’s Face] in 1987 in regional newspaper *Molodyi Bukovynets* [Young Bukovinian]. Later bigger text was published in the literary magazine *Zhovten* [October] in 1988 and the book was published in 1991 under the title ‘Elehii Dlia Syna’ [Elegies for son]. Only in 2001 Mykhailo finally published a book *Monoloh Pered Oblychchiam Syna* which he started after the son’s death in 1979.

¹³²⁰ The oppositional political movement Rukh clearly gained popularity at such mass events, see: Catherine Wanner, “Nationalism on Stage: Music and Change in Soviet Ukraine,” in *Retuning Culture: Musical Changes in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Mark Slobin (Duke University Press, 1996), 137. See also other works of Wanner where Chervona Ruta festival is discussed: Catherine Wanner, “Nationalism on Stage: Music and Change in Soviet Ukraine,” *Popular Music: Music and Identity* 4 (2004): 249; Catherine Wanner, “Burden of Dreams: History, Memory, and the Making of National Identity in Post-Soviet Ukraine” (PhD Thesis, New York, Columbia University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, 1996).

¹³²¹ Many of the festival’s participants, like rock bands *Braty Hadiukiny* or *Komu Vnyz* became popular and influential really changing the ‘face’ of Ukrainian popular music. But they were not recovering but rather creating new forms of popular culture, see: Sokolowski, “The Myth of Volodymyr Ivasiuk,” 67.

The festival organisers considered Ukrainian music of the late 1980s to be in a bad state since it was usually linked by Soviet officials and managers to folklorism and ethnographism. National pop music did not connect with the values and fashions of urban young people, who mostly preferred Russian (both authorised and unofficial) and western music and pop-culture.¹³²² To remedy this cultural stagnation, they called for a new Ukrainian popular culture and hoped “to create a genuinely contemporary, deeply national style in pop music.”¹³²³ For this to occur, Ukrainian culture needed:

To clean the old-fashioned pseudo-national layers from the national, revealing its true face, and, on the other hand, to free itself from the burden of the canons of western pop music, and to join the national with the contemporary.¹³²⁴

Thus, the organisers believed that national “substance” (some internal and eternal quality) existed, but, in contrast to officials who connected national culture with folk or neo-folk music, they envisaged national popular music as being buried out by folk imitations. The national substance had to be rediscovered over again.

The above-mentioned statement was not revolutionary. It echoed a typical narrative, which one could often hear on Ukrainian radio and television, especially during perestroika. For instance, the famous singers Larysa Ostapenko (1935-2010) and Mykola Kondratiuk (1931-2006), who presented a radio programme dedicated to music and songs in 1988, when talking about the new song “Yablunevi zlyvy” [Apple tree showers] (by Irina Kyrulina and Olexandr Smyk) admitted that: “And again we have this characteristic synthesis of modern and national.”¹³²⁵ Indeed, the call to combine modern and traditional culture was omnipresent through most of Soviet Ukrainian history. In 1988, radio reporters invited another young composer to Kyiv, Yurii Shevchenko, who compared national and folk music traditions to the land (soil), and new modern arrangements in music to a car which runs on this eternal land. In such metaphor folk culture was considered almost everlasting: the basis or root for other forms of culture, especially those which were technologically driven (like electronic music).¹³²⁶

Talking about the Chervona Ruta festival in 1989, official radio presenters made similar claims that that “contemporary songs derived from folk songs”¹³²⁷ and that “the main criteria by which the jury evaluates the skill of the singers was the proximity to the folk song, to the folk melody.”¹³²⁸ In contrast to such statements, the young festival organisers were not looking for continuity in music culture, they dreamed of revitalising Ukrainian popular culture.

¹³²² One study of music preferences in Moscow discovered that home ‘phonotecas’ (record libraries) were dominated by rock music already in the mid-1970s, see: Andrukovich and Holovinskiy, “Zvukozapis’ i Molodoi Slushatel’ Muzyki.”

¹³²³ Sokolowski, “The Myth of Volodymyr Ivasiuk,” 66.

¹³²⁴ Sokolowski, 66.

¹³²⁵ “Radio programmes” (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1988), Arkush 48, TsDAVO, Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4135, TsDAVO of Ukraine, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

¹³²⁶ “TsDAVO (1988), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4135.”

¹³²⁷ “TsDAVO (1989), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4558,” Arkush 60.

¹³²⁸ “TsDAVO (1989), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4558,” Arkush 61.

They hoped that a national competition would reveal the “true substance” of Ukrainian pop-music, which was overshadowed by Soviet cultural politics. However, the irony behind this “recovery” of national “substance” from the western and eastern influences reveals that the nature and history of Ukrainian national character and culture were already mixed and transnational.¹³²⁹ Ivasiuk, who made the most appealing Ukrainian Estrada songs in the 1970s, also mixed Ukrainian folk melodies with Italian or English music of the time.

The Chervona Ruta festival exposed three discursive/ideological groups that strove to articulate what the national popular culture was supposed to be: the organisers, who were looking for “real” contemporary culture; the officials, who continued old Soviet views on the folk/modern dichotomy; and nationalists, who strove to mobilise the people for their own needs. In practice, these groups borrowed arguments and statements from one another, especially the festival organisers who needed to prove that their endeavour was part of Soviet policies. Kyrylo Stetsenko, for instance, used the tactics of Ivan Dziuba, who in the mid-1960s sought to criticise Soviet national policies on the basis of Lenin and Marx’s writings.¹³³⁰ To support claims that the festival was actual and highly needed, he used *Pravda’s* article from 17 August 1989, in which communists stressed that internationalism means “attention to national interests of people” and that the free development of the spiritual life of nations must manifest themselves “without regimentation and without controls.”¹³³¹ Organisers also used fresh texts by Dziuba in their festival notes, who claimed that the totality of national culture was impossible without developing national popular culture and other light music genres.¹³³²

Ukrainian party officials endlessly emphasised that the national element of popular culture was rooted in folk tradition and cannot be found in rock or westernised pop, therefore, they tried to hold control over the media coverage of the festival and to convey correct messages. The Chervona Ruta festival was opened by regional elites and party administrators, who considered this event to be similar to other Soviet cultural festivals. The radio presenter, who reported from the event, informed the Ukrainian audience that Estrada performers will (in typical Soviet manner) *report* from the stage, and that they would sing songs that made us (the people) happy and which had entertained us over the last years. Anatolii Matviienko, who served as the first secretary of the Central Committee of Komsomol, admitted that: “This event already became an important affair in the spiritual life of our people.”¹³³³ In his speech, which was broadcast on national radio to the whole Ukrainian audience, he mixed ethnic, national and Soviet values (like that of the friendship of people):

¹³²⁹ It is evident in tunes and melodies from the 1970s, which often combined western sounds and local peculiarities, therefore it comes as no surprise that Ukrainian band *Smerichka* often was referred as Bukovina’s *The Beatles*.

¹³³⁰ Dziuba, *Internatsionalizm Chy Rusyfikatsiia?*

¹³³¹ Cited in: Bahry, “Rock Culture and Rock Music in Ukraine,” 257.

¹³³² Ivan Dziuba, “Chy Usvidomliuiemo Natsionalnu Kulturu Iak Tsilisnist?,” *Kultura i Zhyttia*, no. 4 (January 24, 1988).

¹³³³ “TsDAVO (1989), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4558,” Arkush 58.

There is no nation without song, without a native word, memory, without belief and anticipation, without being proud of its hope, and without the feeling of a common family with other nations. So, let the beautiful Ukrainian song, which unites us in friendship, gives us strength for further accomplishments, new victories, and let it float over the land.¹³³⁴

Thus, Matvienko almost repeated the article from *Pravda*, which was cited by the festival's organisers and confirmed that internationalism was not a denial of nationalism, but rather a growing attention towards national interests. Media reports in the typical socialist and romantic style informed Ukrainians that: "All those people, whom amassed in Chernivtsi magic [flaming] flower [chervona ruta], witnessed the triumph of national songs."¹³³⁵ This national song, officials stated, "existed, it was heard, it trembled [tremitaye], it sounded with young voices and was transmitted from lips to lips."¹³³⁶ The singers and performers had very romantic and happy feelings about the "new" national revival. Ukrainian radio, which interviewed the soloist of Smerichka, Nazarii Yaremchuk, who sang "Chervona Ruta" in 1971 at the television contest *Pesnia Goda* in Moscow, broadcast his impressions of the festival to the whole of Ukraine. The soloist was overwhelmed by the audience, who had been mobilised through singing:

The whole stadium was singing this song, sixteen thousand visitors, who were standing and singing as if it was a national anthem, a hymn to a beautiful Ukrainian song, and what could be more beautiful than this?¹³³⁷

Yaremchuk continuously referred to the song's metaphysics to remind national identity, to have the power to remind people's origins (ethnicity) and to which tribe [rid] they belong. He compared songs to children and birds that fly from the nest and spread the message all over the globe. However, the censors did not approve all his comments. Yaremchuk insisted that Ivasiuk's song from the 1970s marked a national revival in Soviet Ukraine, but radio managers deleted this from his account: "'Chervona Ruta' was an epoch-making song, a special phenomenon, it served as a symbol of national self-consciousness, national revival [...] and now it made people spiritually uplifted."¹³³⁸

Although attentive to statements about national revival, the censors normally allowed statements regarding the problematic situation with the national language in the UkrSSR.¹³³⁹ For instance, after broadcasting the song "Ridna Mova" [Native language] by Pavlo Dvorskyi,

¹³³⁴ "TsDAVO (1989), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4558," Arkush 59.

¹³³⁵ "TsDAVO (1989), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4558," Arkush 64.

¹³³⁶ "TsDAVO (1989), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4558," Arkush 64.

¹³³⁷ "TsDAVO (1989), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4558," Arkush 59.

¹³³⁸ "TsDAVO (1989), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4558," Arkush 59.

¹³³⁹ Viktor Morozov, who performed at the festival as a member of L'viv cabaret *Ne Zhurys'* [Do not worry], also declared a revival, but his narrative was not censored since he meant music revival and not national revival, see: "TsDAVO (1989), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4558," Arkush 68. Similarly, Lesia Dychko, who in 1989 lived in Moscow and visited *The Festival of Soviet Songs* [festival radianskoii pisni], which was held in October 1989 in Kharkiv, admitted: 'People [narod] have certain revival currently, I would even say some sort of 'ars nova' of our nation... it starts now from culture', see: "TsDAVO (1989), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4558," Arkush 93. Most probably this reportage was allowed on radio since it uttered ars nova of culture and did not mention national self-consciousness, like the text of Yaremchuk did.

radio presenter proclaimed (in the Russian language) that: “A person can communicate with a close friend, an acquaintance or a college in various languages. But for each person, the base of his existence forms a native language [ridna mova].”¹³⁴⁰ Zbigniew Wojnowski states that Chervona Ruta:

Came to epitomise the hopes associated with promoting Ukrainian language in public culture. A look back at the history of this festival reveals that attempts to boost the status of Ukrainian did not threaten Ukraine’s multicultural character. Rather, they reflected an ambition to promote new forms of cultural expression, to escape the confines of Soviet-made identities, and ultimately to diversify the notions of what it meant to be Ukrainian.¹³⁴¹

The media broadcast a story about a Ukrainian musician (a bandura player) from the USA, Yulian Kutastyi, who sang a folk song (a ballad) outside of the festival main venue, which told a story about an old mother, cast out of her home by her own children. The narrators explained to the audience that, even though the text of this folk ballad was ancient, it was pertinent because it functioned as a metaphor for generational conflict and the national language, which was cast out by young Ukrainians. Or, as Kutastyi stated, the mother could symbolise a deteriorated nature, destroyed by socialist industrial enterprises, or could represent neglected cultural heritage.¹³⁴² In all these readings one can easily recognise romantic tropes, which were typical of the concerns of the Thaw culture and which were revived under perestroika, especially after the Chernobyl disaster.

Even though officials strove to control such mass music events and how they were represented, the festival quickly, as in the Baltic republics, turned to the political stage. Performers, such as Taras Petrynenko from Kyiv, sang patriotic songs about Ukraine or even songs dedicated to the new political organisation Narodnyi Rukh [People’s Movement], which was officially founded in September 1989.¹³⁴³ People were smuggling blue and yellow national flags into the concerts and waving them even though police tried to prevent nationalist behaviour. At the final concert, Vasyl Zhdankin, Viktor Morozov and Eduard Drach performed the publicly banned national anthem *Shche ne Vmerla Ukrainina* for the first time. Thus, although it commenced as Soviet Ukrainian music festival supported by officials, and aimed to rearticulate what was national popular music, Chervona Ruta quickly became a political event dominated by the nationalist agenda.¹³⁴⁴

¹³⁴⁰ “TsDAVO (1989), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4558,” Arkush 101.

¹³⁴¹ Zbigniew Wojnowski, “The Market Decides? A Short History of Ukrainian Pop Music,” an independent global media platform, open Democracy, April 9, 2019, https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/odr/market-decides-short-history-ukrainian-pop-music/?fbclid=IwARON6uvH0CKKI4A80nPA8xlewnBNrjUjxN4_w0TSC5oUbfzrfgiuQ8A3tUxw.

¹³⁴² “TsDAVO (1989), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4558,” Arkush 67-68.

¹³⁴³ Officials refused to let Petrenenko sing these songs, however other participants claimed boycott because of censoring, thus at the final concert these songs were heard by thousands of visitors. As Yevtushenko admits, this festival was the best event for such music premiers, see: Oleksandr Yevtushenko, *Lehendy khymerno ho kraiiu* (Kyiv: Avtohrاف, 2004), 256.

¹³⁴⁴ Obviously, communists did not have special reasons to support this festival, however it was founded and financed by state institutions, subordinated to Ukrainian Communist Party, such as Ministry of Culture, Media Committee (Derzhteleradio), Ukrainian Fund of Culture, The Union of Composers and The Union of Writers of

To balance the national and Soviet song contests, Kyiv officials piloted the first Ukrainian Festival of Soviet Songs [festival *radianskoi pisni*] in October 1989, one month after Chervona Ruta. This festival was held in Kharkiv, the first Soviet Ukrainian capital, and heavily Russified city. This festival did not attract as much public attention as Chervona Ruta, most probably due to the typical Soviet repertoire performed there. Even more, some of the participants uttered a national agenda, which became almost a fashion. For instance, the Ukrainian singer Lesia Dychko, who lived in Moscow and visited The Festival of Soviet Songs in Kharkiv, admitted on the radio that: "People [narod] have certain revival currently, I would even say some sort of "ars nova" of our nation [...] it starts from culture now."¹³⁴⁵ But what kind of culture was leading this supposedly national revival?

If we look at multiple festivals of folk arts and amateur creativity held during the 1980s, one can hardly find any forms of disobedience or oppositional behaviour during these events. The first Festivity of Folk Creativity, which was held in Ternopil in 1986 and continued in Poltava in 1987 and Khmelnytskyi in 1988, was followed by the Second International Folklore Festival, held in Kyiv in 1990, and they all combined huge audiences and celebrated national/folk songs. Although organisers and participants often communicated a national agenda, they did not turn to the national platforms with political demands, as in the Baltic's folk festivals. In Estonia, for instance, singing fields and mass folk festivals (especially choir competitions) had a long history before the USSR came to power in the republic. Therefore, the singing of patriotic songs in Tallinn in 1988 "switched on" cultural memory, which triggered not only national but also nationalist feelings. In Soviet Ukraine, singing fields did not fuel or activate cultural memories. On the contrary, this was a new tradition and Ukrainian officials even established a national choir festival (named after Mykola Leontovych (1877-1921) in 1989 to develop further this genre of singing.

Cultural memories only stimulated nationalism in certain regions of the USSR (like the Baltic republics or western Ukraine), where national songs were linked to local history. In general, it was not folk or neo-folk singing, but rather new forms of culture, like rock music, that activated anti-Soviet feelings in Soviet Ukraine. Official Ukrainian Estrada was repetitive and overtly folk-oriented. Since the late 1960s, at least for L'viv's hippies and rockers, vocal and instrumental ensembles like Smerichka and Vatra signified Sovietness, though masked by folklorism and neo-folk aesthetics. In contrast to official folklorism and neo-folk culture, rock music, which became legal in Ukraine during perestroika, represented "something that was true" for young people.¹³⁴⁶ Rock culture was clearly opposed to the formulaic clichés of Soviet

UkrSSR, Ukraine Society and others, which gave political and financial support (including Soviet Fund for Peace). Romana Bahry reproduced in her text national agenda of the festival, which according to some notes from organizers was not supported by communist party, see: Bahry, "Rock Culture and Rock Music in Ukraine," 256.

¹³⁴⁵ "TsDAVO (1989), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4558," Arkush 101.

¹³⁴⁶ Risch, *The Ukrainian West* (2011), 232.

media. It also mocked and opposed the overtly romantic attitudes and often kitsch forms of official Ukrainian Estrada.

8.4. Soviet cultural carnivals and youth mobilisation

The Ukrainian rockers and punks Braty Hadiukiny described the interest in folk and national culture in their song “Chervona Fira” [Red Wagon], on their second album recorded in 1991. This song ironically compared Soviet rule to a red wagon, which was heading to a bright future with a coachman who believed in communism. However, this wagon became stuck in the swamps, its leaders could not pray (since they were communists) and devil whispers to its leads: “let the party save you.” The people on the wagon decide to repaint it. Since red led them to the swamps, they decided upon blue and yellow (the new national flag), which would take them to a new world.¹³⁴⁷ The enthusiastic people proceed to sing a Cossack song (“Za Svit Staly Kozachenky”) to the melody of a Soviet song (“Nash Parovoz Vpered Letit”):

Then they elected deputies,¹³⁴⁸ Then they studied the songs of grandparents,¹³⁴⁹ Then they began to eat horses from starvation, And who did not pull the slice - cursed the Muscovites; As they ate, they took a drink, And then they sang “Souls and bodies we'll lay down, all for our freedom...”¹³⁵⁰

This linear evolving set of events in the song of Hadiukiny, like changing flags, singing folk songs was combined with Soviet cultural attitudes, the elections and the abundance of folk festivals. These events ended up by national independence in 1991, ironically described by L’viv punks in the citation of new anthem: “Souls and bodies we'll lay down, all for our freedom.” Indeed, the sequence of “national” actions that brought independence occurred from 1986-1991, but, as this thesis argues, the wheels were in motion much earlier, in the late 1970s with the launch of folk revival by the Soviet Ukrainian media and popular music.

Chervona Ruta was the festival where folk and modern art finally met, where rock music was loudly heard and where national flags waved and national anthems sung. Importantly, this festival was not intended as a nationalist endeavour, its main focus was to prompt singers/musicians to develop a popular culture in the national language. Kyrylo Stetsenko, who was a television editor (the writer of music programme *Video Mlyn*) and co-organiser of the event, admits: “Chervona Ruta was a powerful cultural revolution that, in the eyes and ears of those who were there, destroyed the complex of national inferiority.”¹³⁵¹ Organisers consciously used rock music to attack official Soviet Ukrainian institutions of culture, which only promoted neo-folk or politically correct Estrada. The leaflet prepared for

¹³⁴⁷ This metaphor ironically indicated that change that happened in Soviet Ukraine in 1991 was not structural, but rather decorative; its rulers only changed flags but not the ‘identity’.

¹³⁴⁸ This line refers to first democratic elections in USSR in March 1989.

¹³⁴⁹ This line describes the interest in folk revival.

¹³⁵⁰ This line comes from a national anthem *Shche ne Vmerla Ukraiina*.

¹³⁵¹ Oksana Mamchenkova, “Festyvalna istoriia: iak progrymila I chomu stykhla ‘Chervona Ruta,’” pravda.com.ua, *Ukraiinska Pravda: Zhyttia* (blog), May 18, 2017, <http://life.pravda.com.ua/culture/2017/05/18/224232/>.

the festival informed its visitors that now (in the late 1980s) rock music was replacing the official culture:

Rock music was expelled from Soviet houses and palaces of culture, which were saturated with another culture; officials broke the equipment of rock musicians (sometimes hammering performers with their own instruments), they too could easily get imprisoned for fifteen days for misbehaviour. But the rockers did not succumb, either wept or laughed and showed the sign of the horns. And in their defence, voices were heard: "Rock must be defended from the official extremism." Now a feast has arrived on the street of rock musicians. Now they are replacing the same official culture that did not want to let them in into their palaces and houses of culture.¹³⁵²

Chervona Ruta aimed to free popular culture from folk imitations, which as many believed were enforced by officials, and to find its real national culture. Festival directors often emphasised that rock music was not against national culture, but rather against official Soviet folklorism. Debating with officials, they strove to portray the Ukrainian youth as being unthreatened by rock music, which was merely a peaceful combination of folk arts and modernity. The festival leaflet stated:

They say: "We must protect our national culture from these hooligans!" What culture should we protect? Let's recall how at the opening of the festival, boys and girls from L'viv, who just sang wonderful folk songs, listened to the rock music from the stage. They, dressed in ancient folk clothes, began to dance and - think only! - they showed a sign of the horns. And what, did the cultural foundations of national culture fall down?¹³⁵³

In the eyes of organisers, this combination of local and global could not destroy or damage Ukrainian tradition but had the power to decolonise it from Sovietness and folklorism, as had been endlessly promoted by the official media. However, even if this decolonisation was effective, it had limited impact since the festival, as Wojnowski claims, was "a predominantly west Ukrainian affair" and the audience was likewise "dominated by young, well-educated urbanites from the west."¹³⁵⁴

Another important element of the Chervona Ruta festival and its distinction from other official events of the time, was its carnivalesque character and hybridisation. Braty Hadiukiny combined Ukrainian folk culture, the style of Soviet VIAs and American rock, blues aesthetics and reggae in their music, and this hybridisation was noticed by critics.¹³⁵⁵ Others discerned funk, folk-rock-and-roll, ironic blues, punk, acute irony, rural speech, the use of regional dialectics and junkie slang. This was a conscious hybridisation that aimed to create "real" popular (in sense of "populus") Ukrainian music through borrowing from African

¹³⁵² "Krokom rush, chy rokom krush. S'ohodni rozpochynayut'sya konkursni zmahannya rok-muzykantiv," *Chervona Ruta. Visnyk Pershoho respublikans'koho festyvalyu ukrayins'koyi suchasnoyi muzyky i populyarnoyi pisni*, September 21, 1989, 2. Cited after: Yurii Kahanov, "Muzyka Yak Ideolohichni Fenomen: Radyans'kyi Kontekst i Ukrayins'ka Versiya (Druha Polovyna 20 St.)," *Naukovi Pratsi Istorychnoho Fakul'tetu Zaporiz'koho Natsional'noho Universytetu (Zaporizhzhia: ZNU)*, no. 23 (2012): 163.

¹³⁵³ Kahanov, "Muzyka Yak Ideolohichni Fenomen: Radyans'kyi Kontekst i Ukrayins'ka Versiya (Druha Polovyna 20 St.)," 163.

¹³⁵⁴ Wojnowski, "The Market Decides? (2019)."

¹³⁵⁵ Bahry, "Rock Culture and Rock Music in Ukraine," 284.

Americans and Africans, and through speaking in the vernacular languages used by peasants (perceived as local subalterns), workers or excluded groups like Soviet drug addicts. Such opposition through multivocal language were vividly described by the Soviet literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin.

Bakhtin believed that all languages evolve due to unintentional, unconscious hybridisation (creolisation), which, for him, constituted one of the most important aspects in historical life. However, he also used hybridisation to describe the ability of one voice to ironise and unmask the other within the same utterance. He describes this phenomenon as an “intentional hybrid”, because (following Husserl) it always involves directedness, encompassing the intended orientation of the word in any speech-act towards an addressee. So, for Bakhtin this hybrid construction:

Is an utterance that belongs, by its grammatical [syntactic] and compositional markers, to a single speaker, but that actually contains mixed within it two utterances, two speech manners, two styles, two “languages”, two semantic and axiological belief systems.¹³⁵⁶

The music and verses of Braty Hadiukiny¹³⁵⁷ exemplified such intentional hybridisation of different styles, utterances and belief systems, which aimed to unmask the socialist other.¹³⁵⁸ Interestingly, most of the participants of the band were bilingual, while its leader Kuzia was a L’viv-born Russian, mainly speaking the Russian language and possessing a more local than Soviet or national identity.¹³⁵⁹ Contemporaries did not call Hadiukiny’s style hybrid but commonly used the term “stiob”, which meant mocking or rearticulating “the other”.

The well-known Ukrainian dissident Leonid Pliushch explained the Soviet youth’s conscious destruction of the literary language through jargon [stiob] as a form of opposition: an act of resistance not against reality but against dishonest literature (fiction), which had transformed into a language that conveyed lies. So, if the notion of love, for instance, was corrupted by communist spokespersons or official writers, people, when talking about it, preferred mocking and using jargon in order to preserve its real substance, uncorrupted by prescribed meanings.¹³⁶⁰ So, for Plushch, stiob was a linguistic strategy which aimed to normalise language and unmask it from excessive ideologisation. Similarly, Alexei Yurchak identifies stiob as a peculiar form of language – an irony that differed from sarcasm, cynicism, derision, or any of the more familiar genres of absurd humour.

¹³⁵⁶ Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 304. See also: Robert J. C. Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race*, 1 edition (London: Routledge, 1995), 19.

¹³⁵⁷ Including the band’s title which combined real Ovechkin brothers (musicians-terrorists) and fictional spy Hadiukin, imagined socialist fairy character.

¹³⁵⁸ In this case ‘the other’ was Soviet Ukrainian official culture and folklorism, or bourgeois values, commonly spread among folk people.

¹³⁵⁹ Ilko Lemko, a known Lviv hippy, admits that Kuzia easily mocked regional dialects and used stiob because he was not connected to locals by ethnicity, but rather through culture.

¹³⁶⁰ Leonid Pliushch, *U karnavali istorii: Svidchennia* (Kyiv: Fakt, 2002), 75.

An important aspect of Yurchak’s argument about stioib is that it required such a degree of *over identification with* the object, person, or idea at which this stioib was directed that it was often impossible to tell “whether it was a form of sincere support, subtle ridicule, or a peculiar mixture of the two.”¹³⁶¹ He argues that the practitioners of stioib themselves refused to draw a line between these sentiments, producing an incredible combination of sincerity and irony, with no signs of whether it should be interpreted as the former or the latter, and refusing the very distinction between the two.¹³⁶² Thus, the aesthetics of stioib required a grotesque over identification with the form of the authoritative symbol, to the point where it was impossible to tell whether the person supported that symbol or subverted it.¹³⁶³ Similarly, Hadiukiny, while mocking local dialects or the terminology of official Soviet Ukrainian culture, created multiple situations that caused people to identify with the artist’s stioib being unable to differentiate what was irony and what was serious. This type of irony shared some elements with Bakhtin’s notion of carnivalesque parody: it cannot be understood simply as a form of resistance to authoritative symbols, because it also involved a feeling of affinity and warmth toward them.

Without over identification – namely without a deep understanding of Ukrainian folk and folklorism, western rock and the Soviet Estrada of the same time – Hadiukiny would not have been able to create cultural decontextualisation. This aesthetic strategy presupposed the act of placing a certain form in an unintended and unexpected context. Therefore, through changing contexts, utterances or aesthetics by using stioib, Braty Hadiukiny displaced the fixed meanings and, as a result, the normative symbol could suddenly appear baffling or absurd.¹³⁶⁴ This strategy helped to normalise a form by stripping it of Soviet romanticism and realism. It also helped to decontextualise folk and to make it more appealing to young people. It was stolen from *Soniachni Klarnety* and brought to rock-and-roll. Consider, for instance, lyrics from the song which Hadiukiny performed in Moscow in 1989 on *Christmas Evenings* with Pugacheva:

<i>Rok-and-Roll Do Rania</i> [Rock-and-roll till morning], from the album <i>Vsio Chotko</i> , 1989	
Pidu ya na verkhovynu	I will go to Verkhovyna ¹³⁶⁵
Shtayer zaspivayu	And sing there Shtayer ¹³⁶⁶
Duzhe fayno meni zhyty	I am very happy to live
U soviets’kim krayu	In Soviet country...
Cherez hory, cherez lis	Through the mountains, through the forest
Letila zozulya	A cuckoo flew
	I will go to the agitpunkt

¹³⁶¹ Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, until It Was No More*, 225.

¹³⁶² Yurchak, 225.

¹³⁶³ Yurchak, 227.

¹³⁶⁴ Yurchak, 227.

¹³⁶⁵ The ‘symbolic’ village in highlands, where Ukrainian intelligentsia before USSR and after it used to work on national constituent, namely folk culture. Recall here the train in the television musical *Chervona Ruta* (1971), which supposedly connected Verkhovyna in the mountains and Donetsk in the east.

¹³⁶⁶ The form of dance promoted during Austrian period. Following lines refer to typical Soviet agitpop, thus musicians created multiple contrasts making the whole plot absurd.

Pidu ya na ahitpunkt I proholosuyu ... Hey, zabava, rok-n-rol do rana Pyi, hulyay, veselys' Tokar, slyusar, ne zhurys' Dobre popratsyuyem, novyy mir zbuduyem V nashym ridnim SeReSeRu Raz, dva, try – kholera...	And I will vote... ¹³⁶⁷ Hey, let's have fun, rock-and-roll till morning Drink, play, entertain Turner, locksmith, don't worry We will work well, will build a new world In our glorious USSR One, two, three, hell...
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This song has the folk structure of kolomyika (named after the Carpathian town Kolomyia), a Hutsul music genre which combines fast-paced dance and comedic (often vulgar or ironic) verses. Its lyrics normally pose a statement in two lines and confront this statement in the following two lines. Hadiukiny used the same strategy in producing such verses: “Through the mountains, Through the forest, A cuckoo flew, I will go to the agitpunkt, And I will vote.” The combination of a folk description of nature (forest and a bird) with Soviet symbols (voting and agitpunkt), of rural jargon with the socialist promises of a bright future, created a recognisable but yet absurd form of art. This was especially the case as the artists dressed like punks and hybridised folk kolomyika with rock-and-roll. This strategy of merging local and global was similar to the work of Volodymyr Ivasiuk, who combined Ukrainian melodies with new beat sounds or Italian Estrada, and Manuliak, who merged folk tunes with jazz forms in the 1970s. However, in the case of Hadiukiny we do not encounter uplifting messages, aimed to make people happy, but rather stio and mockery, aimed at making people think.

The Stio and decontextualisation used by Hadiukiny often relied on montage techniques, a practice that was commonly used by official and non-official Soviet artists.¹³⁶⁸ We know that cinematic montages present time as a collection of simultaneously occurring movements, which often functions as both a method and a technique. Combining literary aesthetics with jargon, in the 1960s Soviet authors experimented with montage in their works.¹³⁶⁹ They often strove to create a new language to express collective emotions of the new Soviet people.¹³⁷⁰ Similarly, the montage and jargonism of Braty Hadiukiny aimed to create a new language for the collective emotions of Ukrainians of the 1980s. Hadiukiny's montages functioned, as in the song “Pryiid' do Mene u Mostyska” [Come to visit me in

¹³⁶⁷ There are more verses in this song, and they all mock Soviet mode of agitation, like the following: “Baba [a peasant old lady] sits on a wooden fence and stitches her panties, there is less and less difference between the Soviet town and the country.”

¹³⁶⁸ Iliia Kukulin, *Mashini zashumevshego vremeni: kak sovetskii montazh stal metodom neofitsialnoi kultury*, Electronic book (Moscow: NLO, Novoie literaturnoie obozreniie, 2015).

¹³⁶⁹ It can be distinguished in the works of such Soviet authors as Vasili Akse nov, Ievgenii Yevtushenko or Andrei Voznesenskii.

¹³⁷⁰ See such attempts of Yevtushenko in: Petr Vail and Alexandr Genis, *60-e. Mir sovetskoho cheloveka* (Moscow: Litres, 2014), 34–36. Young in the 1960s Ukrainian Leonid Pliushch acknowledged that he learned ‘normal’ language from the works of Segei Yesenin and Vasili Akse nov, see: Pliushch, *U karnavali istorii*, 72–73.

Mostyska] (album *Vsio Chotko*, 1989): “The tractor went to the field to plough, And a policeman fixed his motorcycle, And I want to sing so much, Because in my life I loved for the first time.” Obviously, there is no connection between ploughing, a policeman fixing his motorcycle and love, except that they represent the Soviet quotidian, but for Hadiukiny it was important to combine various events into one hybrid image of Soviet life.¹³⁷¹

Thus, what distinguished Braty Hadiukiny from their Soviet Ukrainian predecessors who had established popular music genres, was not only their rock and punk aesthetics but also their use of language. Experiments and hybridisation in the past normally happened in terms of melodies, rhythms, and music structures, as authors did not dare to challenge the Ukrainian language. By subverting the official language of the UkrSSR, which had been shaped under Stalinism, Hadiukiny normalised various dialects that existed in the country and mocked the language of establishment. This move, which was reminiscent of the carnivalesque parody described by Bakhtin, marked a return to reality. This was not the uplifting, romanticised or socialist language, but a reflection of mere reality: the language as encountered by “normal people.”

8.5. From Chervona Ruta to political protests

The music and lyrics of Braty Hadiukiny were revealing, even releasing for many people. By criticising the official culture of Soviet Ukraine, they normalised national culture. We cannot estimate the popularity of Hadiukiny’s songs and their influence over the masses, but the most famous representatives of current Ukrainian popular music all cite their indisputable influence. As Fozzi (Olexandr Sydorenko, born 1973) from the music band TNMK admitted in 2011: “It was a music that did not smell of national television.”¹³⁷² This argument suggests that Soviet Ukrainian television was a space of folklorism, with folk arts defined as national culture. For many, the “smell of national television” meant the scent of Soviet domination. Even though constantly urged to represent reality, the Ukrainian media had never paid attention to real life in the way that rockers did. Fozzi claims that:

To sing about shirka [drugs] and a dimidrol [medical drugs] and so on [...] such life situations as in the song “Klofelin” [...] for the first time Ukrainian popular music started to speak in a normal language [...] not exquisite, but real [...] it is impossible to overestimate the contribution of the Braty Hadiukiny to the fact that Ukrainian music still exists [...]¹³⁷³

The irony and stioob of Hadiukiny influenced the most successful Ukrainian rock band in recent decades, Okean Elzy. Sviatoslav Vakarchuk (born 1975), the leader of this band admits:

¹³⁷¹ Or another example of montages, that comes from a song *Chomu Moia Mama ne Liubyt Mene* [Why my mom doesn’t love me?] (album *By, by Myla* [Bye, bye, baby] or *Shchaslyvvoi Dorohy* [Have a good trip], 1996): “A teacher of native language loves her dog, I love Rolling Stones, girls, Karpaty [football team] and weed; A regiment fell in love with a soldier, but a soldier prefers his general.” There is a blurred connection between ‘planes’ of the song and the general image derives as a certain montage.

¹³⁷² Fozzi about the cover of TNMK on Hadiukiny, Video interview (Kyiv: GadyTribute2011, 2011), 1 min. 37 sec. of interview, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=elgRuBkUyypg>.

¹³⁷³ Fozzi about the cover of TNMK on Hadiukiny, 1 min 46 sec. of interview.

I heard the album of *Hadiukiny* in 1989, when I was a school boy [...] I listened to this music over and over again [...] this was not typical for me, since I listened mostly to western music [...] When I heard for the first-time music band VV [Vopli Vidopliasova] I have realized that it is possible to make something interesting in Ukrainian language. But when I heard *Hadiukiny* I have realized that serious rock music is possible in Ukrainian [...] I listened to this not serious music very seriously and I liked very much that it was made in our language, which I could hear on the streets.¹³⁷⁴

The language of *Braty Hadiukiny* impressed not only Vakarchuk, who was born in western Ukraine. Myroslav Kuvaldin, the famous Afro-Ukrainian musician and the founder of The Vio band from central Ukraine, recalled that only after listening to *Hadiukiny* did realise the power of the Ukrainian language:

Before them we heard all these Sofia Rotaru and Smerichkas, and they used this official Ukrainian language [...] And rapidly we heard the real, spoken language, the language of the street, and we realized that Ukrainian is fashionable, rich, actual [...] and if before we tried to sing in the Russian language [...] *Hadiukiny* gave us the freedom to create in the Ukrainian language [...] *Kuzia* was real underground!¹³⁷⁵

Another renowned Ukrainian musician and the leader of the music band VV (Vopli Vidopliasova) Oleh Skrypka (born 1964) even compared *Kuzia* from *Hadiukiny* to the founder of the Ukrainian literary language, Kotliarevskyi. He declared:

When we talk about those who historically worked with live Ukrainian word, sharp and interesting [...] this was Kotliarevskyi without any doubts, the first man who started writing in the Ukrainian language [...] later there was Kvitka Osnovianenko, Taras Shevchenko and Lesia Ukraiinka, and many others, who made literary language for secular usage [...] but in the twentieth century *Hadiukiny* continued to work with people's language, with popular wording [...] we understand that this is pop-modern or pop-art in music or in literature, or post-realism, etc. but these things will remain forever.¹³⁷⁶

Andrii Khlyvniuk (born 1979) from the popular Ukrainian band *Bumbox* admits that without *Hadiukiny's* music: "There would not exist new Ukrainian Estrada, in my understanding of this music, and would not exist rock music [...] without this music it is difficult to imagine my own life."¹³⁷⁷ Such revelations about the influence of 1980s' punk culture over current culture are endless. However, I want to stress that *stiob*, language games, and carnivalesque culture during *perestroika* had a strong influence on young people. This culture was both decolonising and therapeutic, because young people could hide their fears and traumas from the past.¹³⁷⁸

¹³⁷⁴ *Vakarchuk on Hadiukiny*, Video interview (Kyiv, Ukraine: GadyTribute2011, 2011), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kGJvoh9MO70>. Vakarchuk is a Lviv born musician and comes from the family of intellectuals, who studied 'proper' Ukrainian language. When he refers to street language it mostly means a special Lviv dialect of the Ukrainian language.

¹³⁷⁵ *Myroslav Kuvaldin on Braty Hadiukiny*, Video interview (Kyiv, Ukraine: GadyTribute2011, 2011), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRzrbJuSqM>.

¹³⁷⁶ *Oleh Skrypka on Braty Hadiukiny*, Video interview (Kyiv, Ukraine: GadyTribute2011, 2011), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OOuGIm2kFUk>.

¹³⁷⁷ *Andriy Khlyvniuk on Braty Hadiukiny*, Video interview (Kyiv, Ukraine: GadyTribute2011, 2011), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4H2X98WQ_6s.

¹³⁷⁸ See how trauma works in Soviet culture: Alexander Etkind, *Warped Mourning: Stories of the Undead in the Land of the Unburied* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2013), 97–101.

Like Bakhtin, as Aleksandr Etkind admits, who “refigured and sublimated his fear and mourning into a panhistorical concept of gothic realism,” many Soviet Ukrainians redirected their fears and uncertainties into the carnival.¹³⁷⁹ There was a clear connection between Stalin’s gulag and Bakhtin’s carnival in Soviet culture, and also in popular culture.¹³⁸⁰

The most entertaining festival in Soviet Ukraine, called Vyvykh [dislocation], was organised in L’viv in May 1990, when folkish crowds and amateur collectives were marching around Kyiv. This festival widely used the stiob, jargon and carnivalesque aesthetics that had been vividly expressed by Braty Hadiukiny in their first album (1989). Among the organisers of this festival, we can find people who were also involved in Chervona Ruta in Chernivtsi. Sergii Proskurnia and Olexandr Irvanets who both contributed to the organisation of Chervona Ruta, became the artistic directors of Vyvykh. Irvanets was one of the founders of the artistic-literary group Bu-Ba-Bu (1985), whose name was an acronym for “burlesque, buffoonery, and balagan”.¹³⁸¹ This group promoted, especially after 1986, Bakhtin’s carnivalesque culture and neo-Baroque thinking, which, they believed, was part of the changes (they referred to this phenomenon as a meta-historical carnival) initiated by perestroika.¹³⁸² Even more importantly, burlesque, buffoonery, and balagan were identifiable aspects of popular culture.

After L’viv’s Vyvykh, the same cultural figures went in July 1990 to another carnivalesque event, called the Ukrainian Spiritual Republic, led by the former Soviet prisoner and science-fiction writer Oles Berdnyk (1927-2003). Berdnyk aimed to protect “the spiritual values of peoples and tribes, acquired in the ages of severe cosmic history, which were irretrievably lost and devalued in the cycle of pseudo-civilization.”¹³⁸³ To realize these purposes and to protect spiritual values, Berdnyk believed in mass gatherings and singing in nature, which he considered a spiritual act and an attempt of national revival. The Ukrainian Spiritual Republic took place in Kolomyia, in the Carpathian Mountains and Proskurnia “staged” their performance there which involved thousands of amateurs and professionals.¹³⁸⁴ This event looked like a combination of a political demonstration, a singing festivity [spivoche sviato] in the style of Soviet outdoor folk festivals, and a carnival.

¹³⁷⁹ Etkind, 98–99.

¹³⁸⁰ Etkind, 160.

¹³⁸¹ Balagan comes from Persian and means improvised theatrical performance, which involved jokes, humor and other forms of ‘low’ entertainment. This term was widespread in Russian and for Ukrainians it had the variety of meanings – from anarchic disorder to circus or street performances.

¹³⁸² See transcribed lecture on the origins of new Ukrainian literature by professor Olena Haleta: *Ukrainian literature 90-kh*, Public lecture recorded on video (L’viv, Center for Urban History: Platfor.ma, 2017), <https://projects.platfor.ma/zvidki-vzylas-literatura/>. On postmodern Ukrainian literature see: Tamara Hundorova, *Tranzhytna kul'tura: symptomy postkolonial'noi travmy*, De profundis (Kyiv: Hrani-T, 2013).

¹³⁸³ See the philosophy of national spirit of Oles Berdnyk on his memorial page: <http://berdnyk.com.ua/mental/1>

¹³⁸⁴ There was no stage on Voskresynetska mountain, people gathered on the tops of natural hills and performance took place in picturesque amphitheater, shaped within hills.

Interestingly, the Soviet Ukrainian Verkhovna Rada (parliament) issued its declaration of sovereignty one week after the Ukrainian Spiritual Republic took place in Kolomyia.

Soon after returning from the mountains to Kyiv, many participants of this “spiritual event” gathered in central square in Kyiv (ironically it was called the Square of Revolution), protesting against the Soviet Ukrainian government. This event would be called later The Revolution on Granite and it was greatly supported by activists who had organised or performed at the festival (see **Figure 8.2. A-B.**). This event also created a model for protests and public unrest in the centre of Kyiv (Maidan Square), and this model was repeated in 2004 and 2014,¹³⁸⁵ through carnivalesque aesthetics and popular music. In post-Soviet Ukraine this notion of *Maidan* has already become a symbol of anti-state protest and other forms of social resistance.

Figure 8.2. A-B. Mass mobilisation through festivals



A. 2-17 October 1990, The Revolution on Granite (Kyiv). Young artists came to support protesting students. This photo shows Marika Burmaka and Eduard Drach, acknowledged by Chervona Ruta festival in Chernivtsi (1989).



B. 6-8 July 1990, the Voskresynetska Mountain gathering (Kolomyia). This event gathered around 20000 people and 1500 amateurs participated in the outdoor performance directed by Sergii Proskurnia.

From 1989, the Chervona Ruta festival became a yearly event that aimed to promote Ukrainianness, especially in the Russified regions of the country. Although the festival still, the last large scale and successful event, according to its co-founder and former vice-director Kyrylo Stetsenko, took place in 1997 in Kharkiv.¹³⁸⁶ The festival, which promoted three important aspects of Ukrainian popular culture – language, youth and style – exhausted its impetus in the late 1990s. Stetsenko admits that:

¹³⁸⁵ Serhy Yekelchuk, *The Conflict in Ukraine: What Everyone Needs to Know* (Oxford University Press, 2015).

¹³⁸⁶ “Chervona ruta’, jiji istoriia ta s’ohodennia,” International broadcaster, *Radio Svoboda [Radio Liberty]* (blog), July 4, 2005, <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/932185.html>.

The festival was just the moment of truth, the moment of the explosion of sincerity and the emotional openness of people, that one can even throw a bridge over the emotional state I experienced during the Orange Revolution [2004], when people suddenly believed in themselves and in that miracle that they could be themselves... and this would be a normal state.¹³⁸⁷

Debates about the identity and nature of Ukrainian popular culture continued in the 1990s, even after Ukraine gained its independence in 1991. A year after the so-called Orange Revolution in Kyiv (2004), people who were involved in the making of Chervona Ruta in 1989 confessed that there was still no solution to how to unite Ukrainianness and modernity: “You know, if it is Ukrainian, then this must necessarily be something past, and the future must be some kind of American.”¹³⁸⁸ Chervona Ruta did not solve the issues of national culture which were common in the 1980s, but it showed examples of how the successful hybridisation of national and transnational could be possible.

This thesis does not claim that Chervona Ruta was responsible for bringing the nationalist agenda into public space in Soviet Ukraine. It argues that it was one of the important events within the tide of nationalism, which was spreading in eastern Europe in the late 1980s. The political scientist Mark Beissinger points out that the USSR’s collapse in the late 1980s must be understood in the context of a tidal wave of nationalism, that is, the transnational influence of one nationalism upon another which brought the socialist empire to an end.¹³⁸⁹ This means that certain processes that happened in eastern Europe in 1989 were inseparable from the Soviet experience and vice versa. This raises the idea that the history of the USSR can not be treated as a departure from European and global tendencies, and the transnational context is crucial to understanding the so-called Soviet failure. Indeed, it is true that Soviet republics mirrored not only eastern European national experiences (mass singing, peaceful demonstrations, human chains) but also “looked” closely at each other. However, in each country, this tidal context of nationalism was different, since various triggers activated cultural memories and some forms of mass mobilisation were more effective than others.

Beissinger affirms that tides of nationalism are not produced by a single, initial shock but “rather by the way in which agents forged connections with a challenging action of others.”¹³⁹⁰ Similarly, in Soviet Ukraine in the late 1980s some of the agents created tidal influences (like republican media) and others (like nationally minded activists) attempted to ride these tides generated by the actions of others, just as surfers ride the waves. This chapter argues that by promoting folklorism and debates about the nature of popular national culture,

¹³⁸⁷ “Chervona ruta’, jiji istoriia ta s’ohodennia.”

¹³⁸⁸ “Chervona ruta’, jiji istoriia ta s’ohodennia.”

¹³⁸⁹ Mark R. Beissinger, “Rethinking Empire in the Wake of the Soviet Collapse,” *Ab Imperio*, no. 3 (2005); Mark R. Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State* (Cambridge University Press, 2002); Mark R. Beissinger, “How Nationalisms Spread: Eastern Europe Adrift the Tides and Cycles of Nationalist Contention,” *Social Research*, 1996, 97–146; Mark R. Beissinger, “Demise of an Empire-State: Identity, Legitimacy, and the Deconstruction of Soviet Politics,” *The Rising Tide of Cultural Pluralism: The Nation-State at Bay*, 1993, 93–115.

¹³⁹⁰ Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State*, 29.

Soviet Ukrainian powers introduced the *tide of nationalism*, which was later used by the political opposition. Mass folk and amateur culture festivals generated “cascading” behaviour, when one group of cultural activists followed another, especially within specific social and cultural fields. The tide of nationalism in Soviet Ukraine emerged out of larger “mobilisational cycle,” which initially aimed to promote socialist development and formed “a powerful stream of substantively related actions among the variety of other streams of mobilisation within a cycle.”¹³⁹¹

Television show *Soniachni Klarnety*, the radio show *Zoloti Kliuchi*, the neo-folk music of ensembles Vatra and Medobory, and mass folk festivals that took place almost every year in the early 1980s reached their peak in 1986 the opening of the first singing field in Ukraine. However, the launch of perestroika and the Chornobyl nuclear disaster produced a decisive and important turn in Soviet Ukraine. These events opened Soviet public space to unofficial culture, to carnivalesque buffoonery and strob, which produced a culture constantly fluctuating between folklorism, revivalism, mourning, hope, modernity and uncertainty.¹³⁹² So, starting in 1986, Soviet folklorism merged with an emerging national agenda and the carnivalesque aesthetics of “unofficials”. Thus, Chervona Ruta in 1989 became an exemplary case where all these aspects, like Soviet and supposedly anti-Soviet attitudes merged in an unified carnivalesque event.

Conclusion

1. This chapter starts with perestroika and its influence over Soviet Ukrainian media and ends with examples of mass mobilisation, which used both Soviet traditions and anti-Soviet attitudes. By consolidating regional programming from 1965-1970, Kyiv created national television in Soviet Ukraine and among the main features of this television, besides regional news about socio-economic development, was folklorism. In December 1986, the Ukrainian Media Committee exchanged letters with Central Television in Moscow. Comrades from Moscow acknowledged that Kyiv and its subordinated television and radio committees were among the most active contributors to Soviet Central Television.¹³⁹³ They normally sent informational topics and programmes about the socialist economy, and fewer cultural programmes and television theatrical performances. If some sort of cultural programming was sent from Kyiv to Moscow for all-Union broadcasting, then they were stories related to folk creativity and amateur culture.¹³⁹⁴ In the late USSR, Ukrainian television had become specialised in folklore and programming related to folk or neo-folk arts and culture.

¹³⁹¹ Beissinger, 30. Tides on nationalism are different from Sidney Tarrow’s mobilizational cycles because they transcend the contours of mobilizational cycles.

¹³⁹² This uncertainty was caused by Chornobyl and socio-political changes that started under Perestroika. Many people felt that these changes led to obscure future therefore culture and arts often expressed transgression and fear of transformation.

¹³⁹³ “Reports” (Ukrainian Committee of Television and Radio, 1986), Arkush 111, Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 2913, TsDAVO, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine.

¹³⁹⁴ “TsDAVO (1986), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 2913,” Arkush 113.

2. National television programming, which became *khutorianske telebachennia* [village television], was valued by Soviet Ukrainian officials, but young people in the republic mainly disliked its folk-oriented nature.¹³⁹⁵ The Ukrainian intelligentsia was puzzled: how to keep the traditions of the past but not lose the young generation, oriented towards modernity and future? In 1988, airing the programme *Ukraine, My Song* on national radio, the young composer Yurii Shevchevchenko, whose song “Its Autumn Again”¹³⁹⁶ was aired as an example of young and accurate Soviet Ukrainian music, needed a metaphor to explain why national music was still stuck in the past. He explained to the audience that styles have changed and now we have new, young and active people in Estrada who want to “speak” in a different way to their fathers and grandfathers. However he still had a challenge: how, while driving the modern car of music, equipped with computers and synthesizers, can one not forget that it drives on the same soil, upon which great classics have walked long ago?¹³⁹⁷ His proposal was to listen deeply to the music of our ancestors to better understand ourselves. However, in the late 1980s young Ukrainians better understood themselves through the German pop band Modern Talking, which did not require them “to listen to ancestors.”
3. By continuously promoting folklorism in the 1970s and 1980s, the Soviet Ukrainian media fostered cultural resentment among young Ukrainians who wanted a modern and fresh popular culture in the national language. These people were among those “inventors of traditions” who initiated the festival of popular culture Chervona Ruta (named after the famous song of Volodymyr Ivasiuk) in the context of perestroika. This jubilee of pop-music followed other similar Soviet festivals, forming a tide of cultural mobilisation and aiming to advance socialism in the country. It was sanctioned by the Ukrainian communist party, organised by Komsomol and partially hijacked by nationally minded intelligentsia and nationalists.¹³⁹⁸ This aspect of the festival’s organisation supports the argument that Soviet cultural institutions and even state institutions, despite being conservative, were often the producers of new cultural meaning in the UkrSSR.¹³⁹⁹
4. This study discovered that the feeling of the imagined community created through the common language and *imagined sound*, in Soviet Ukraine, had different effects in 1986 and in 1989. The mass folk singing in Ternopil in 1986, despite mobilising an imagined community of Ukrainians, did not fuel anti-Soviet attitudes. By contrast, the festival of popular music in Chernivtsi in 1989 challenged Soviet power by bringing together young and singing people. In both cases, there were singing masses, but their outcomes were entirely different. One hypothesis is that these mass events employed different

¹³⁹⁵ “TsDAVO (1990), Fond 4915, Opys 2, Sprava 4663,” Arkush 80.

¹³⁹⁶ This song was put on the verses of Viktor Kordun and performed by soloist from *Vatra*, Marian Shunevych and his colleague Lidia Mykhailenko.

¹³⁹⁷ “TsDAVO (1988), Fond 4915, Opys 1, Sprava 4135,” Arkush 48. Obviously land exemplified ‘eternal’ tradition and car stood for contemporary culture, which is transient.

¹³⁹⁸ Mamchenkova, “Festyvalna istoriia: iak progrymila I chomu stykhla ‘Chervona Ruta.’”

¹³⁹⁹ Elizabeth A. Armstrong and Mary Bernstein, “Culture, Power, and Institutions: A Multi-Institutional Politics Approach to Social Movements,” *Sociological Theory* 26, no. 1 (March 2008): 91.

evocations of cultural memories, since folk singing and popular culture referred to similar, but still different myths (identity mobilisation).¹⁴⁰⁰ Alternatively, we could explain these events through Beissinger's theory of the tide of nationalism, pointing to the fact that in 1986 nationalism was "sleeping" in the USSR but had awakened by 1989, when nationalist feelings dominated across eastern Europe.

5. This chapter affirms that the Chervona Ruta festival was also different from other Soviet Ukrainian festivals due to its appeal to young people and active involvement of the youth. This festival produced effects that helped to change Ukraine from the Soviet Republic into a post-Soviet independent state. Many participants of Chervona Ruta protested in 1990 on the Square of Revolution in the centre of Kyiv, which would later be called the Revolution on Granite.¹⁴⁰¹ This first youth revolution in Soviet Ukraine created a myth and a model of protests which are still practiced in post-Soviet Ukraine.

¹⁴⁰⁰ Timothy B. Gongaware, "Collective Memory Anchors: Collective Identity and Continuity in Social Movements," *Sociological Focus* 43, no. 3 (2010): 214–39; Aidan McGarry and James M. Jasper, eds., *The Identity Dilemma: Social Movements and Collective Identity*, Politics, History and Social Change (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2015).

¹⁴⁰¹ Yekelchuk, *The Conflict in Ukraine*, 2.

General conclusions

As was stated in Introduction, this thesis analyses and discusses Soviet (regional and national) mediascape, an evolving set of institutions, practices, technologies, ideologies, and actors that produced media content, symbols, and narratives. This study focuses on a socialist mediascape, which developed in the western regions of the USSR and was exposed to numerous national or transnational media flows (Chapter 4.2.). I argue that the Ukrainian mediascape was deeply Soviet, although it had a complicated structure that connected it to the transnational media (socialist and capitalist). Another important focus of this research was the fuse of popular music and media since the field of regional and republican television had a symbiotic relationship with that of state-sponsored popular culture in the USSR. They each depended on the other, and in a close collaboration created the specific Soviet popular media culture (Chapter 1.6.; Ch. 3; Ch. 5). Even though officials strived to put this culture under control (Chapter 4), in various Soviet republics the mediascape fostered diverse popular media cultures. Following such differences, my major concern in this research is the production of modern (and often national) imaginary through socialist media.

In this regard, my thesis differs from other studies of Soviet television and radio, which mainly focused on centrally located media. This research incorporates a double focus and is mainly concerned not with Soviet Central TV but with republican television, moreover, considering regional production that is normally out of focus of scholars. I argue that without considering regional and republican (national) media, it is difficult to grasp the correct image of Soviet mediascape, which often formed different cultural consequences. The comparison of central and peripheral was especially fruitful for my study since it uncovered how the republican and regional media often followed, contested, copied, or misunderstood programming policies and the aesthetics of Soviet Central television.

My research mainly confirms Mayhill Fowler's earlier findings that many actors in Soviet Ukraine used the centre against the periphery and the periphery against the centre (Chapter 4). It also corresponds to Serhiy Yekelchuk's conclusions, that cultural relations between Moscow, Kyiv and Ukrainian peripheries often reminded Soviet imperial practices, especially through the making of pervasive folklorism (Chapter 5 and 6). However, this thesis is not concerned specifically with folklorism or folk-oriented media programming, it rather takes into consideration some genres that involved ideas/concepts/stereotypes of a socialist nation or a folk culture. Therefore, my study builds on Marsha Siefert's and Elena Prokhorova's proposals to look at Soviet television as an institution that articulated cultural values via specific genres, like television musicals (Chapter 3) or folk music programs (Chapter 5.2.-5.4.).

Soviet Ukrainian republican/national television developed during specific phases, which partially coincided with the political changes in the country. Thus, as an outcome of this thesis, I propose historical periodisation for the field of Soviet Ukrainian media (Chapter 2). The first and the semi-autonomous period of development I call the *concentration phase*, which started in 1957 and reached its peak in January 1965 when the first all-Ukrainian

national programming took place. The second phase I call *consolidation* and it marks the development of Ukrainian Television as a national brand (1965-1972). The phase from 1972-1985 may be defined as the *mature* period in socialist television, and the final period in the development of media in the UkrSSR between 1986-1991 was marked by the late Soviet media *reform*. Therefore, this thesis proposes a scheme of four periods: *concentration* (1957-1965), *consolidation* (1965-1972), *maturity* (1973-1985), and *reform* (1986-1991).

From the late 1950s, the Soviet party-state developed an extensive network of media infrastructure, which aimed at the total coverage of the huge territory of the socialist country by a common information system. The substantial part of this system was a network of regional television, which developed in the USSR much earlier than republican/national broadcasting. This development forged the so-called mixed broadcasting, a combination of regional, national, and supranational, that was part of the everyday life of the Soviet people in different places of the USSR (Chapter 1). I claim that in the western Ukraine, the mediascape was even more complicated since it included foreign (capitalist and socialist) radio and television broadcasting. Furthermore, there were practically no Soviet transmissions in certain places in western Ukraine even in the late 1960s, and thus local people were exposed to non-Soviet media content (Chapter 2.3.). In this border zone, characterised as a place of cultural encounters, a new popular media culture was shaped which was national in form, socialist in content, and hybrid by nature.

My findings confirm that in the late 1950s and 1960s, Soviet television became a new form of a public sphere in the USSR.¹⁴⁰² This statement does not contradict historical knowledge about the cultural production in Soviet-type societies. Indeed, official Soviet culture was carefully controlled by the party-state's establishments and an arrangement of important rewards and various pressures structured intellectual life in Soviet Ukraine. Soviet powers did not suppose maintaining non-political art and creativity nor they were interested in having a public sphere for uncontrolled debates. My findings prove that in the late 1950s and the 1960s television was part of the important top-down attempt to create specifically Soviet and regulated public sphere. It differed from the model identified by Habermas, however as other historians affirm, Habermasian type of public space describes only one among many other possible models.¹⁴⁰³ Media scholars, who study relations between television and the public sphere, acknowledge that:

There is a difference between an elite democracy where communication between established power and the laity takes the form of dissemination from the powerful and the representation of ordinary beliefs as mass opinion, and a participatory democracy where established power is engaged in some kind of dialogue with the public.¹⁴⁰⁴

¹⁴⁰² I borrow the argument about the opening of Soviet public space initially at the XXVI Party Congress and later in Soviet media, in the form of newsreels featuring Nikita Khrushchev, from Jörg Baberowski, see: Jörg Baberowski, "He Gave Us Our Laughing Back. Nikita Khrushchev and De-Stalinisation" (Consolidation of Power in Post-1945 Europe: Patterns of Integration after Crises and Upheavals, Florence (Italy): Presentation, 2017).

¹⁴⁰³ Behrends and Lindenberger, *Underground Publishing and the Public Sphere*, 16.

¹⁴⁰⁴ Sonia Livingstone and Peter Lunt, "The Mass Media, Democracy and the Public Sphere," in *Talk on Television: Audience Participation and Public Debate* (London: Routledge, 1994), 9.

USSR was not a participatory democracy and for long period, up until 1986, Soviet media did not express a variety of public voices and did not contest established power to identify the complexities of everyday life under socialism (Chapter 8). But at the same time, Soviet media involved in dialogue with the public, especially through participatory television programmes, and offered an institutional forum which orchestrated not only positive but also critical opinions (Chapter 5). It practiced negotiation of preferred norms through mediatized dialogues and almost fairy-tale type models, promoted by entertaining programmes. Thus, I build on scholars (like Christine Evans), arguing that entertainment and popular media culture instituted an important part of the Soviet public sphere. Ukrainian elections of 2019 confirmed that popular media culture is still an important part of the public sphere and political life in this former Soviet republic.

Soviet public sphere's development overlapped with the opening and liberalisation of the Soviet urban space, for instance, in the form of clubs and cafés (Chapter 1.4.). In the context of de-Stalinisation, television promoted important debates and stimulated creative thinking. In addition, regional television in the UkrSSR reacted to rapidly developing entertainment programming in Moscow and neighbouring socialist countries (Chapter 1.3.). The shift towards entertainment in Soviet Central Television in this period, stimulated the creation of multiple programmes on a regional level that aimed to amuse, interest, inform and educate the audience. The Soviet audience was not passive but reacted with enthusiasm to new programming policies. My findings build on studies, which argue that throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Soviet media shows on central, republican, and regional levels involved audiences as directly as possible in pronouncing norms of socialist behaviour and proper consumption (Chapter 5.3.).

After the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 Soviet television changed due to the heightening of Cold War tensions, however, for some regional television studios in Soviet Ukraine, this period coincided with first production experiments. My research discovered that regional television musicals that were produced in L'viv in the late 1960s and early 1970s became possible because most of the officials "switched attention" to the more important political matters (Chapter 3.). The new political and ideological environment after 1968 contributed to an innovative search for modes and ways of imagining and consolidating the Soviet public. Anxious attitudes towards popular entertainment on Soviet television also reduced during political and cultural détente in the 1970s and served to increase the importance of popular music and consumer lifestyles as arenas of Cold War competition (Chapter 5.).

This thesis discovered that regional television in western Ukraine was able to produce its genuine content (the combination of music and visuals) in the 1960s. It actively used regional cultural memory, namely the genres, motifs, plots, and characters that moved from texts of high and popular culture into the texts of new media culture, for instance, in the genre

of television musicals (Chapter 3.).¹⁴⁰⁵ This local production derived from the constant urge from the upper officials to meet the demand for television films produced by the Soviet turn to entertainment in the 1960s. However, on the ground, the production of television films was impossible without actors like Taras Brykailo, who were not only driven by party imperatives, but also by a personal drive (Chapter 3.1.-3.2.).

Combining the picturesque imagery of the Carpathian Mountains with popular music, Soviet regional television in Ukrainian SSR produced media reality, which helped people to be absorbed by specific national imaginary. This creation of a media fairy-tale reality coincided with a shift in state ideology – the ensuring re-articulation of national and individual values – and this caused the fragmentation of the Stalinist master narrative (Chapter 3.3.). In the late 1960s, the socialist realist masterplot was transformed and gradually replaced by new genres, developed within Soviet television. In this period, Soviet myth entered the stage of “decomposition”, which found its ideal form in fragmented television texts and media fairy-tale reality (Chapter 3.3.-3.4.).

But even though the Czechoslovak crisis fuelled the development of socialist media entertainment in the USSR, it also directed the attention of officials to national matters, especially in the republics neighbouring socialist European countries. Soviet Ukrainian Television, which was consolidated between 1965 and 1972 and formed its audience over the 1970s (Chapter 2.), found itself at the centre of an ideological war, which started in 1965 and lasted until the end of the 1970s (Chapter 4.). In the early 1970s, the communist officials reacted to overt romanticism, sadness, and the excessive love of locality and history in cultural products. They called for the creation of a positive culture which would lead to a great socialist future, with no national or social distinctions. Soviet Ukrainian culture had to be cured of the supposed alienation caused by nationalism and anti-nationalist attitudes dominated in the official culture of the 1970s (Chapter 4. and 7.).

The anti-nationalist crusade in Soviet Ukraine (1965-1975) succeeded in purging so-called nationalists from public institutions, and national culture, in general, was elevated to the level of the simulacrum. If performers and creators did not follow instructions and could not withstand ideological battles, they withdrew from making art, in itself a form of resistance. Even if they consented to produce “performative” national culture, which often looked like kitsch and folk mimicry, they still successfully reinforced nationalism, but this time “clichéd nationalism.” This clichéd cultural nationalism of the 1970s was not much different from the Ukrainian popular culture of the 1960s. However, while cultural products (like television musical) in the 1960s endeavoured to fragment or unbalance the master-narrative (or Soviet myth), in the 1970s they were normalised to the level of imitation (Chapter 6.).

The highest party officials required the Soviet media to develop good Soviet citizens: people shaped by socialism and who had the responsibility of building communism in the near future. Soviet Ukrainian popular media culture developed accordingly and often was made up

¹⁴⁰⁵ Astrid Erll call this combination ‘premediation’, see: Astrid Erll, “Literature, Film, and the Mediality of Cultural Memory,” in *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, ed. Ansgar Nünning and Astrid Erll (New York, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 389.

of various nationalities, transcending borders and cultures, but at the same time, officials, who were tasked with uncovering and fighting nationalism, frequently considered this popular culture as nationalist. Since Soviet powers supported Ukrainian folk culture, but at the same time strove to shape a Russian speaking and universal Soviet people, in the 1970s Ukraine developed a performative mode of perceiving and practicing the nation (Chapter 5. and 6.). It was normal to perform as an “urban peasant” who likes folk culture but at the same time, to share socialist universalism and non-traditional habitus in everyday life. This performative mode of experiencing or imagining a nation in the 1970s was widely expressed through media programming, often labelled as secondary folklore. Build on arguments of Guntis Šmidchens, this thesis argues that such conscious use of folk tradition, as a symbol of ethnic, regional, or national culture, could have served both nationalist and socialist ideologies (Chapter 4.).

The example of the music ensemble Vatra shows (Chapter 6.) that Soviet Ukrainian national politics in the 1970s and early 1980s created special hybrid forms of culture and art, which combined local music and visuals with western styles and technology (for instance, Japanese electronic keyboards). Electric folk or folk revival practices of the late 1970s and early 1980s presented a specific form of Soviet popular media culture that, together with television, was able to shape a national and very hybrid imaginary (Chapter 5.). Produced by the socialist mediascape imaginary, could combine folklorism, the regional landscape, and ethnically driven travesty (dressing in folk garments). I argue that this imaginary was shared by the Ukrainian audience and became a part of a new national imagination, which dominated during the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Soviet Ukrainian audience was not homogenized, so if middle-age people appreciated folk imitations, younger generations leaned to Russian speaking urban culture (Chapter 7.). At the end of the 1970s Ukrainian officials discovered that apparently, the hearts of many of these young people were spoiled not necessarily by nationalism, but rather by consumerism and mass culture from the west (Chapter 7.2.-7.3.). Thus, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the party initiated an anti-popular culture crusade and attacked those forms of art that avoided ideology. It caused a new wave of politicisation of state-sponsored popular culture, which reached its peak in 1984 when many music ensembles and media programmes were closed or dismantled. This research discovered that within this campaign against popular culture some of the neo-folk music bands, like Vatra, also suffered censorship, even though for many observers they seemed to reserve a safe place in cultural-political spectrum of UkrSSR (Chapter 6.5.).

At the same time when the Soviet anti-pop campaign strived to normalize youth tastes, officials required media committees to report on youth sensitivities and to research the Soviet audience. My study exposed that in the first half of the 1980s Ukrainian media committee became a major producer of knowledge in the republic about young people’s media and cultural preferences. The frequently conducted questionnaires unclosed the cultural preferences of young people, which supported fears and resentment that was felt by the nationally minded intelligentsia (Chapter 7.1.). The Ukrainian language was diminishing in

usage in many regions of UkrSSR and youth ignored culture, which was considered by officials to be national. Obviously, the republic was not de-nationalized by Soviet Ukrainian policies of the 1970s and early 1980s, however, it was losing some important aspects of a nation, like a native language. It was Soviet Ukrainian media, especially radio and television in national language, which consequently reminded what constituted the mere nature of a nation. Ethnic culture and folk songs broadcasted by republican media, neo-folk music, or media folklorism maintained the performative nationality. I argue that television programmes like *Soniachni Klarnety* preserved an imagined nation of Ukrainians and by landing the media such programs mediated the land and its people.

Such a conclusion supports the importance of Soviet institutions in upholding national cultures under socialism. Republican and regional television in Soviet Ukraine managed to create its own and stable audience. The final argument of this study stresses that this audience was mobilized in the second half of the 1980s, while media personnel from Ukrainian television actively participated in the organization of national songs festival in 1989 (Chapter 8.). Perestroika (1986-1991) and its policy of cultural dialogue (*glasnost*) made the re-consideration of national popular culture, music, and songs possible through mass festivals (Chapter 8.3.). Initiated in 1986, and conducted in 1989, Chervona Ruta festival referred to a famous Ukrainian song, that was produced by regional and national television in the late 1960s. It also evoked the feelings of national resentment, since its author (Volodymyr Ivasiuk) has died in obscure circumstances in 1979. In 1989, ten years after this tragic event, the festival symbolically expressed a desire to preserve national popular culture. In reformed Soviet media, which between 1986 and 1991 turned to a more democratic public sphere, popular media culture and entertainment once again proved its political importance. I argue that festival of popular songs Chervona Ruta may be considered in similar terms as singing revolutions in Baltic republics.

Indeed, songs and singing have numerous denotations, some obvious and others mainly ardently felt. However, the important element of group singing is that songs give people courage and remind them that no one is alone. Studies of music and its role in political movements often stress the role of singing or music plays in group behaviour. Music breaks down barriers and forges trust among people. It has the power to regulate social behaviour and to strengthen group beliefs through aesthetic persuasion and manipulation. It can also define and reinforce social identity and create group-level collaboration. In some cases of Soviet history in the late 1980s, people found the courage not only in rock and popular music but also in folklore and folk revival, because they felt that “it created a feeling of liberation.”¹⁴⁰⁶ My study stresses the importance of collective singing in the late 1980s to mobilize the people, whom we can also describe as a television audience, that was shaped during late socialism (Chapter 8.5.).

To sum up, this thesis claims that Soviet television and its programming, like in other societies, possessed an essential characteristic, such as polysemy, or multiplicity of

¹⁴⁰⁶ Šmidchens, *The Power of Song*, 325.

meanings.¹⁴⁰⁷ By watching television Soviet people experienced its audio-visual aesthetics, appreciating interesting information and artistic qualities of media. At the same time, people were looking *through* the medium, connecting with the past or other imaginary worlds (Chapter 5.5.).¹⁴⁰⁸ The experience of watching television was a convergence of different spaces and times, so a spectator and a cultural text merged into a new hybrid imagination (Chapter 3.). This was not an imagination of the “world as exhibition”, it was the imagination of the “world as television.”

Soviet television, therefore, even if it presented imagined or fictional space or time (for instance a television musical), functioned as a trigger that connected factual space/time with the personal mental images of the viewer.¹⁴⁰⁹ For instance, by consuming folk media events on television or radio, the Soviet Ukrainian viewer could feel as though they had been part of some historically remote and imaginary group of people. Television did not just *represent* the past through traditional songs and costumes but made this past *present*.¹⁴¹⁰ The ability of television to convey a particular memory of the past was similar to the concept of “temporal thickness,”¹⁴¹¹ and this experience often created special and emotional connections, carrying viewers into the national past or mythology (Chapter 1.6. and 6.4.).¹⁴¹² In this regard, Soviet Ukrainian television even if it shared an ideology of transnational socialism, shaped an important imagination for modern nationalism.

¹⁴⁰⁷ Fiske and Hartley, *Reading Television*, 15.

¹⁴⁰⁸ Richard A. Lanham, *The Economics of Attention: Style and Substance in the Age of Information* (University of Chicago Press, 2006), 75.

¹⁴⁰⁹ On differentiation between graphic, optical, mental, verbal and perceptual images see: W. J. T. Mitchell, “What Is an Image?,” in *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (University of Chicago Press, 1986), 10.

¹⁴¹⁰ Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton, Revised ed. edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 77.

¹⁴¹¹ Sydney E. Hooper, “Whitehead’s Philosophy: ‘Space, Time and Things,’” *Philosophy* 18, no. 71 (1943): 221.

¹⁴¹² The relation between myth and mass media was already a subject of debate in the late 1950s, see for instance: McLuhan, “Myth and Mass Media.”

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