

Nations and Nationalism 21 (4), 2015, 700–720.

DOI: 10.1111/nana.12119

Redefining ‘sub-culture’: a new lens for understanding hybrid cultural identities in East-Central Europe with a case study from early 20th century L’viv-Lwów-Lemberg

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ABSTRACT. This paper proposes a new definition of the term ‘subculture’, as a way of better understanding hybrid identities specific to East-Central Europe, before applying this definition to a case study from the now-Ukrainian city of L’viv from around 1900. The first section outlines the theory, arguing that the continued focus on the nation state – either from the ‘top down’, or else the ‘bottom up’ as a source of contestation, by historians and anthropologists, has limited the ability to study groups in the interstices of the national projects that typically remain defined in monolithic ethno-linguistic terms. It examines the theoretical term ‘subcultures’ to propose a new definition that accounts for such hybridity, by having particular sensitivity to context (historical, social, geographical) and cultural practice, in addition to any prevailing national narratives at a given time. The case study in the second section focuses on linguistic hybridity in the city then known more commonly as Lemberg (German) or Lwów (Polish). It argues that Lemberg/Lwów/L’viv produced an urban dialect that blended Polish, Ukrainian, Yiddish and German elements. This dialect should be reassessed as a mixed, hybrid or transitional code, rather than as a linguistic variant of a titular nation. Archival evidence – in particular, court records – is quoted to show that at the lower end of L’viv society, people routinely mixed and transcended linguistic and, thereby, ethnic and religious boundaries. This offers direct evidence of a specific subsection, or subculture, in urban life where people interacted and intermingled intensely. As such, the paper offers new possibilities for investigating ‘hybrid’ identities, as well as proposing a counterpoint to recent research focusing on deliberate indifference or opposition to national segregation for various socio-political, economic and cultural reasons (Judson 2006: 19–65; King 2002; Zahra 2008).

KEYWORDS: hybrid identities, L’viv, language contact, Polish, subcultures

I am a public employee, an Austrian, a Jew, a Pole – all in the space of an afternoon (Bruno Schulz¹)

Part one: background and methodology

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Cultural identity in East-Central Europe: current paradigms and their limitations

Discussion about the formation and expression of cultural identity in East-Central Europe remains pertinent and itself highly divisive. Since the collapse of Communism in 1989, both domestic and intra-regional affairs have been shaped by such issues as lustration (Kopeček 2008), the ‘politics of history’ (Werner-Müller 2002) and competing discourses of memory (Blacker et al. 2013; Esbenschade 1995). Examples include the incumbency of Poland’s historically retributive Kaczyński twins in the mid-2000s; the rise of far right Jobbik Party in Hungary, trading in historically rooted discourses of ethnic hatred; and the ongoing struggles over the Ukrainian state between broadly pro- and anti-Russian camps. At stake in these and other cases is no less than the cultural definition of the nation(s) in question, often couched in the familiar and binary, in- and exclusionary terms of ethno-linguistic nationalism. However, as the recent Ukrainian example alone shows, this is a region with complex legacies of cultural and ethnic hybridity that often belie classical definitions of nationhood: to use just one example from this case, speaking Russian does not automatically mean affiliation with the Russian nation (Wilson 2002).

Common historical experiences, then, permit some qualified generalisations about the region: notably, its legacies of trauma, including genocide, deportations (Snyder 2010), and the experience of Communist rule from without (Shore 2013). A crucial factor is that this was a region forged in diversity, but remade largely by Stalin’s policies after World War II along more ethnically homogenous lines. Thus Poland, as is well known, was moved wholesale to the west: losing its historic Eastern borderlands (Polish: *Kresy*), populated previously by large numbers of Jews, Ukrainians, Belarusians and Lithuanians, among others, to gain Western territories that had been part of Prussia, then Germany. In tandem came huge waves of ‘resettlement’, to use the contemporary euphemism, mainly of Germans and Poles, moved to fit the new ethno-nationalistically defined borders (Service 2012).

Against this background, until recently, the dominant concern of historiography has remained the titular, ethno-linguistically defined nations, examined from the top down, and asserting themselves against Empires, whether of the early 20th-century kind (Russia, Germany and Austria-Hungary) or else Nazi (until 1945) and Soviet (until 1989, or 1991 in Ukraine’s case). Cultural identity is examined accordingly: through the prism of the nation-states and their own rules and definitions of citizenship (Pyrah and Turda 2010). These perspectives have been enriched over the last decade or so, mirroring the turn towards oral, regional, urban and micro-history that uses ethnographic

methods such as interview material, and concepts such as ‘memory’ and periphery, as part of an attempt to incorporate the subjective and individual, into the more monolithic nation-state narratives (Brubaker et al. 2006; Henke et al. 2007; Judson 2006; Prokopovych 2008; Stauter-Halsted 2001). There is also a considerable secondary literature written from diverse disciplinary perspectives, including political science, history and anthropology, on ethnic groups and minorities in the region; their composition, historical evolution, and political status in given states or contexts (Promitzer et al. 2009; Wicker 1997).

Broadly absent, however, are attempts to understand the dynamics of cultural identity formation, expression and contestation in a fully integrated way, relevant to aspects of the region’s historical experience: to analyse simultaneous, hybrid, shifting forms of identification beyond the relatively straightforward paradigm of ‘top-down’/‘bottom-up’. An exception that proves the rule includes work on the ‘liminal’ Mazure people of North-Eastern Poland, whose *sui generis* historical identity blends ‘German’ and ‘Polish’ features in unexpected ways according to classical ethno-linguistic nationalism (pro-Prussian, Protestant, but Polish-speaking: Walser Smith 2008). Another such liminal case involves those who before 1945 had a flexible Czech or German identity and were labelled ‘amphibians’ by the Nazis (Bryant 2002). This paper, therefore, presents a new methodology for understanding such cases of either historic or present-day, residual hybridity, beyond the normative, linear definitions of cultural identity offered by such standard categories as ‘national’, ‘ethnic’ or ‘minority/majority’. It represents early, sample findings from a wider, comparative research project spanning the region, and the 20th century.²

The opening quotation of this essay underscores the task at hand: to unpack identities frequently perceived subjectively in this region as multi-layered. We will do this by defining a new conceptual apparatus in the first section, and offering an empirical case study from early 20th-century L’viv (now in Ukraine, then Habsburg Lemberg) by way of illustration in the second. The quotation is emblematic, coming from the Jewish-born, but Polish-language author Bruno Schulz (1892–1942). His statement, however ironically intended, represents a form sometimes defined as a ‘hyphenated’ identity, and one which multi-national Empires to differing degrees encouraged within a broader expectation of loyalty and (non-national) definition of citizenship. In addition to the hyphenated form given by Schulz, we take inspiration from works that use the language of myth, or the creative understanding of place to conceptualise discursive notions of identity that are more fluid in space and time than typically allowed for by the existing models (Boia 2001; Spector 2000; Wolff 2012).

Our contention is that a new definition of ‘sub-cultures’ might offer useful and subtle insights into the dynamics of cultural identity formation and disputation, specifically in the East-Central European context. It involves examining groups resisting full classification by the standard labels of ‘majority’,

'minority' or 'ethnic group'. The definition entails considering a complex interaction of factors through which their identity is expressed and contested, namely: (1) in a given geographical, political, social, regional, context; (2) over time; (3) through use of ritual and symbols, as well as cultural practice more broadly; (4) in language and forms of linguistic expression; (5) but also how it is channelled, or interacts with very specific, historical and contemporary discourses at both micro- and macro-levels: within a group; as determined by a national or other macro-context; within a particular 'minority' discourse (which may or may not be incorporated); and among individuals. This definition therefore aims to integrate empirical research, as intended by historians applying a perspective from the bottom up, with an understanding of rituals, behaviour, use of symbols, 'performance' and expression (through language), as observed by anthropologists and linguists, combined with a sensitivity to place, and its cultural or discursive construction, as put forward by cultural geographers and some historians.

*Subcultures, post-subcultures, hybridity and hyphenation:
conceptual apparatus*

Subcultural studies, as has been well documented, is generally understood as a subset of 'Cultural Studies' rather than its own discipline (Gelder 2005). It is usually applied to youth or subaltern groups, as a way of understanding their dynamics of self-identification within a particular society. Almost exclusively, this refers to a named country or national context. Our approach therefore clearly diverges by referring neither (mainly or exclusively) to youth groups, nor by only focusing on only one national context, but by working intra- and trans-regionally. However, the term remains highly relevant in modified form, by supplying a means of understanding the dynamics of identity building in groups that fall between the discourses conventionally examined by nationalism studies.

Furthermore, the focus on a single nation limits interest in, and focus on, forms that cross between discourses such as the groups we intend to study. All the same, nationalism studies offer useful starting points. Anderson's ubiquitous idea of 'imagined communities', looking at how identity is created discursively and fixed through ritual and symbols from the top down, clearly has congruity with the 'constructionist' approach of subcultural studies, to which we now turn.³

Work to date on the concept of subcultures broadly falls into three types, reflecting its historical evolution, growing up initially around particular academic institutions. The first, stemming from early works such as Robert Park's seminal *The City* ([1925] 1968), revolve around the so-called Chicago School from the earlier part of the 20th century, and are concerned primarily with urban ethnography, evolving later to focus on criminality and delinquency, in other words dealing with the socially (self-)excluded, non-normative, or overtly ostracised. The second and arguably still most discussed is the second,

a mainly semiotic and class-based sociology emanating from the Birmingham Centre for Cultural Studies (CCS) in the 1960s-1990s, starting with the co-authored volume *Resistance through Rituals* (Hall and Jefferson 1977), and incorporating the hugely influential work *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* by Dick Hebdige (1979). The theme of social 'difference' continues. Observations on specific British subcultures such as punks and how their use of stylistic phenomena constitute symbolic resistance to bourgeois society, as in the quoted work by Hebdige, are the cornerstone of the school and its influence. Its authors use Gramsci's theory of hegemony (framed by a given national and social context: in Hebdige's case, Britain of the 1970s) as a conceptual starting point.

The third phase, variously labelled 'Post-subculture' (Muggleton and Weinzierl 2003) or 'After Subculture' (Bennett and Kahn-Harris 2004) takes a postmodern approach, using the fact of globalisation and the erosion of nation-state perspectives to critique the Gramscian model, suggesting a greater degree of flux, relativism and *bricolage* – a term referring to the supposedly pick-and-mix, fluid nature of contemporary identity building, especially among the more globally mobile and internet-connected young. These studies are not tightly grouped around a set of academics or school. They incorporate work from the early 2000s concerned with the 'club culture' of the 1990s and after, as another example of identity that cuts across the Gramscian lines of the Birmingham theorists, transcending class, age, gender, sexuality, geography, and, to some extent, ethnicity (Redhead 1997; Redhead et al. 1997; Thornton 1995). Other works predating this approach, but anticipating the criticism of the Birmingham school, include Judith Butler's work (Butler 1990), and the lack of previous attention to women has since been noted extensively (e.g. Gelder 2005).

However, as Gelder has pointed out in his work as editor of various volumes of key texts on subcultures (notably Gelder 2005), not only does the 'postmodern' approach depend on some of the selfsame terms, concepts and, albeit more latently expressed, ideas from the Birmingham school, it posits a hyper-relativism (Polhemus 1997) that risks dissolving into total disregard of still-extant and externally reinforced categories, be they gender, class, ethnicity, or the self-definition, social norms and legal framework of a particular nation-state within which citizenship and culture are to differing degrees circumscribed. Others have joined in countering the postmodernists, notably Hilary Pilkington in her work on youth culture in Russia. Hers points the way to an approach beyond the third cluster of works around post-subcultures (Pilkington 2004: 119):

[E]mergent strands of 'post-subcultural' theorizing do not engage adequately with youth cultural practices outside the 'global core'. [...] [E]mpirical data from the Russian field illustrate that terms such as 'postmodern subcultures', 'post-subculturalists' or 'neo-tribes' – which suggest that youth cultural practice is based on a fundamentally new form of sociation, in which the classic identity markers of modernity have become redundant – have geo-politically limited explanatory power. [...]

[G]lobal-local positionings are more than the points at which 'global culture' is accessed; they are markets of difference that are mobilized reflexively by young people alongside others (gender, ethnicity, social status) in the production of diverse, locally rooted but globally resourced youth cultural *strategies* (emphasis in the original)

Thus, a 'fourth' dimension has emerged, albeit tentatively, with an integrationist approach and historical sensitivity. It paves the way for our particular understanding and use of the term 'sub-cultures'.⁴

Firstly, Pilkington's observations on Russia signal the reintegration of local and global factors through a more granular understanding of context. According to Pilkington, Russian young people form micro-groups which constitute an 'emotional community' (Maffesoli 1996) that transcends individualism. But on the basis of her empirical data, '[in the Russian case] this emotional community is rooted neither in 'subcultural style' nor in post-subcultural lifestyle – constituting consuming practices, but in an embodied communicative practice [. . .] rooted in specific configurations of spatial, socio-economic, gender and ethnic relations articulated via reworked 'alternative' and 'mainstream' identities on the youth cultural scene' (Pilkington 2004: 119).

This position reflects the argument by Orvar Löfgren about the 'nationalisation' of global trends in certain societies, quoted by Rolf Lindner, who uses the example of West German punk from the subcultural world to show how codes were reinterpreted contextually to signal political *anomie* (W. Germany) rather than social protest (UK) (Lindner 2001).

Second, as the editors of a volume collecting fieldwork-based studies on East-Central European subcultures also point out, shared historical experience distinguishes and shapes the region more so than in the historically Anglosphere-centric work on subcultures (McKay et al. 2009). Previous approaches, therefore, albeit to differing extents, risk neglecting the ongoing presence of the past that is still overwhelmingly important in the East-Central European experience, not least at the level of overt political discussion, as evidenced by the discussions over 'memory' mentioned at the beginning of this essay.

Third, in tandem with this experience is the ongoing importance of the nation-state as a frame of reference in East-Central Europe, which counters the supposition by Muggleton about post-subcultures, that there may no longer be 'a coherent dominant culture against which a subculture can express its resistance' (Muggleton 2000: 48).

Fourth, although Pilkington focuses on youth, she signals a broader move towards understanding subcultures as heterogeneous constituencies, vis-a-vis the 'old' subcultural categories of class, gender and so on.

Fifth, these groups still possess patterned forms of self-expression that mark them out against and within given cultural contexts. Such modes of expression include use of language on a spectrum from mainstream via hybrid or arcane and more dialect-based; as well as religious and cultural practice. In short, such mechanisms are constants in the discussion about how to unpack or constitute a 'sub-cultural' identity. The enduring emphasis on 'otherness',

expressed with varying degrees of strength – for instance the *outré* visual style of punk as opposed to ‘club cultures’ – remains relevant to our study of how particular groups identify themselves, or are identified externally, in the East-Central European context.

Turning to the groups in question for our paper and wider study, the conventional understanding of them as ‘ethnic minorities’ is insufficient, if we consider their fluid constitution beyond the level of official policy. As Brubaker states, ‘ethnicity, race and nationality are fundamentally ways of perceiving, interpreting, and representing the social world. They are not things in the world, but perspectives on the world’ (Brubaker 2006: 17). The context we examine, moreover, contains a multitude of complications and historical anomalies that do not fit the patterns of migration, and the majority/minority ethnic dynamics more typical of Western Europe. Our wider study includes, for example, remnants of former majorities, such as Germans in Wrocław and Poles in Lwów, who, after border shifts and population transfers, are now minorities. How do they construct and express their identities, across generations, amid shifting political discussions, a complex of shifting influences and an evolving, often mixed self-understanding? How are they, in turn, constructed (Pilkington 1994), within and outside national, ethnic, regional borders? A typical migratory or ethnic approach is insufficient. These groups interact differently over time with the shifting historical discussions around their own ethnicity, region, domicile, ‘historical place’, within and outside their own numbers; neither assimilation nor self-preservation as conscious minorities account fully for nuances. Others confront different narratives of presence amid absence, and vice versa, for example Jews across the region, or Poles forcibly constructing a new narrative within the ‘recovered territories’ of Silesia. Again, studies incorporating discussion of ‘memory’ are relevant here (e.g. Henke et al. 2007). However they tend to stop at the level of top-down/bottom-up, or both, patterns of discourse, while the subculturalist approach that integrates the missing dimension of style, ritual and cultural practice is missing. Also useful are the terms ‘hybridity’ and ‘hyphenation’, although neither go quite far enough on their own to unpack the politics of (self-)identification.

‘Hybridity’ has been used primarily in recent academic discussion around post-colonialism, stemming from Homi Bhabha’s definition of ‘hybrid displacing space’ (Bhabha 2004). The result is a predominant focus on non-white immigrants to primarily white, Western cultures, e.g. Indians in the UK, with examinations of cultural syncretism that emerge in recent generations of migrant parents or grandparents (Huq 2006). Studies of black African- and African-American identities have a longer tradition within subcultural studies, and are named by Hebdige (1979) as the source of much of the ‘resistant’ music culture in the UK prior to punk. Les Back sums up the issue by referring, in a work otherwise more concerned with the politics of white-on-black racism, to no less than the experience of contemporary Poles experiencing a sense of loss for the Jewish presence that once shaped their urban culture and landscape. He

proposes transcending the postmodern debate by using ‘the fact of hybridity’ as a starting point for understanding cultural identity in mixed contexts, to investigate ‘how [it] is lived and coexists with racism, exclusion and essentialised definitions of identity, belonging and entitlement’ (Back 2002). Our use of the term ‘sub-cultures’ attempts to go one step further: to get ‘under the skin’ of that hybridity within specific groups, while understanding that their very hybridity is what gives them integrative potential: as groups incorporating elements from the conventional but, until now, discretely understood and analysed categories of ‘majority’, ‘minority’ and ‘ethnic group’ (Kraidy 2009).

‘Hyphenation’ is another useful component part of that understanding, but again neither the full picture nor a sufficient conceptual apparatus in itself. Rather, as with Schulz’s exposition, it can help describe aspects of (self-)definition in a given case, using the power of metaphor and imagination. Its more subjective force is captured expressively by Sirin and Fine (2008: 295), in a work on Muslim American youth:

The hyphen [is] the pivotal psychological hinge where identities cast ‘in tension’ are at once joined and separated. The psychological texture of the hyphen is informed by history, the media, surveillance, politics, nation of origin, gender, biography, longings, imagination, and loss. How one experiences and narrates the hyphen may vary from a fence to a membrane, a point of collaboration to a checkpoint, a site of contamination and shame to a new ‘fusion’ of selves. The hyphen may feel alive, like a vibrant, liminal zone for trying on new freedoms. Or it may choke, like a wall of constricted and scrutinized movement.

By contrast, understanding the groups in question using our newly enhanced definition of ‘sub-cultures’ aims at a more nuanced and sophisticated understanding of the politics around their (self-)identification, both subjectively and externally, by way of looking empirically at their forms of cultural expression, and accounting for the discursive environments against and within which their identity is shaped, over time and in given discursive, cultural, linguistic and geographical contexts.

Part two: case study

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Linguistic ‘sub-cultures’ in L’viv around 1900

L’viv: a trilingual city around 1900

In the following section we will try and apply the notion of ‘sub-culture’ to a practical case study. The focus will be on the example of late-Habsburg L’viv, or Lwów in Polish, or Lemberg in German. Today a mid-sized European city in Western Ukraine, L’viv was at a crossroads of competing regional and international forces in East-Central Europe at the beginning of the 20th

century. Since the Polish-Austrian compromise of the late 1860s the city was dominated by the Polish middle classes in return for loyalty towards the Habsburgs (von Bieberstein 1993; Buszko 1989). At the same time, Ukrainians increasingly claimed L'viv as their own intellectual and political centre (Isaievych 2007: 255–279). Finally, there was a large Jewish constituency oscillating between emancipation and assimilation (Everett 1982; Mendelsohn 1982).

To illustrate the multicultural character of L'viv historians customarily refer either to the late Austrian censuses of 1880, 1890, 1900 and 1910, or to the two Polish censuses from the interwar period of 1921 and 1931. For example, the Austrian census of 1900 yielded the following results: around 77 per cent of L'vivans were put on record as Polish speakers, 10 per cent as Ukrainian speakers, and 13 per cent as German speakers, most of whom were the city's Jews who were not allowed to declare Yiddish as their 'language of everyday communication' (*Umgangssprache*), as this characteristic was called officially. Ukrainian was known by the historical term 'Ruthenian' (Unbegaun 1953). This was politically significant, but is not immediately relevant to the discussion here. In terms of religious affiliation, approximately 52 per cent of L'viv's population was recorded as Roman-Catholic, 28 per cent as Jewish and 18 per cent as Greek-Catholic. This was for the city alone, while the district of L'viv had a much higher proportion of Greek-Catholics and Ukrainian speakers (Österreichische Statistik 1902, accurately reported, e.g., in Zamorski 1989: 82–83, 100–101, and Wnęk et al. 2006: 72, 88). Reference to figures of this kind is frequent in writing about L'viv, whose multicultural past before the Second World War and the Holocaust, and its legacies, have garnered so much attention in recent years that this would merit a study in its own right. The census figures, however, need to be qualified carefully in various respects, including questions such as: who was actually counted, and how; in what manner was the census conducted in practice; can the results be considered reliable; and how may they have been subject to manipulation or falsification for political purposes? We know, for example, that the Austrian censuses, in particular the data on 'language of everyday communication', were a major battleground of the late empire's notorious nationality conflicts. As far as L'viv and its province of Galicia were concerned, this was a struggle between Poles, Ukrainians and Jews. There is a detailed study on the politics of the late Habsburg censuses by Brix (1982). For all its exemplary breadth of reference to sources, its precision and acumen, Brix' book is peculiarly simplistic about the very notion it sets out to analyse: 'language of everyday communication' as surveyed in the Austrian censuses between 1880 and 1910. Brix seems to depart from an underlying assumption that there was such thing as a true proportion of speakers of Ukrainian, Polish and Yiddish in Galicia in general and in L'viv in particular. An accurate survey without politically motivated distortion, so the assumption goes, should have been able to reveal the true and correct figures.

This, however, is an assumption which calls for more careful linguistic investigation. We know, for example, from contemporary urban settings with migrant populations that immigrants, for everyday communication, often use both, their language of origin as well as the language of their adopted home country. Bi- and multilingualism of this kind is a common feature of modern cities around the globe and has yielded diverse forms of switching between languages or mixing them. For instance, Wei et al. (1992) studied the Chinese-English community of Tyneside; to refer to just one particular study in the burgeoning field of linguistic research on bilingualism (Bhatia and Ritchie 2005) and code-switching (Bullock and Toribio 2009). It readily provides counter-evidence to any assumption that it should always be possible to count individuals in on one language alone. Linguistic hybridity is in fact a widespread feature of modern urban society. There can be no doubt that it was in the past too, albeit in a very different form. This is where the interest of a case, such as historical L'viv lies. Here, multilingualism, as far as it went, was autochthonous, rather than the result of recent external migration as it is often the case today. What is more, it came into conflict with nationalism, one of the most powerful ideologies of our times, and ultimately succumbed to it. Historical, Polish-Jewish-Ukrainian L'viv is gone forever. It represented a prime example of autochthonous European multilingualism and its subsequent demise. This warrants attention from a historical point of view, particularly in the context of nationalism studies. It also warrants attention from a linguistic point of view since the context differs so radically from contemporary forms of bi- and multilingualism.

Bi- and multilingualism among L'viv's middle classes

Some more detailed coordinates of the linguistic situation in L'viv at the turn from the 19th to the 20th century and through to the Second World War are known. Polish was undoubtedly the dominant language, at the expense of Ukrainian speakers whose proportion grew faster in the suburban villages surrounding L'viv, as often remarked upon with some alarm by Polish commentators, such as Kulczycki (1912: 64). Yiddish, in turn, was concentrated in those districts of L'viv where Jews settled after their small ghetto in the old town had become overcrowded. This was especially the second, 'Kraków' district (Bałaban 1909), outside the borders of the historical city where Jewish L'vivans had moved before all legal restrictions on settlement were lifted as a result of the Austrian constitution of 1867. Despite the dominance of Polish in all public domains of L'viv, there was an emerging middle class who identified as Ukrainian and considered Ukrainian their native language. Unlike the previous generation, they were not members of the Galician Greek-Catholic clergy (Himka 1999a). They were lawyers, students, journalists, politicians, teachers, scholars, doctors. Albeit modest in extent in its beginnings, the shift towards the middle classes is in evidence from the fact that a key demand of Ukrainian activists and politicians in the city and the province came to be the foundation of a Ukrainian university (Mudryi 2002). Higher education and

the development of a local educated middle class were clearly seen as central ingredients to Ukrainian nation-building. The natural place for this university was considered L'viv, which illustrates that the Ukrainians understood the city as the centre of their ethnic territories in Galicia. Towards the end of the 19th century and in the first decades of the 20th century, Ukrainian must have undoubtedly been an increasing presence in some corners of the city, while the corridors of power and public life to a large extent continued to be dominated by Polish. Visiting and resident Ukrainians who belonged to the new layer of professionals bitterly lamented this fact, as is in evidence from memoirs (Arkusha 2012). For example, the prominent Ukrainian lawyer and politician Ievhen Olesnyts'kyi complained in his memoirs, with reference to the turn from the 1870s to the 1880s, that in many restaurants and coffeehouses it would have been considered 'extraordinary' to address a shopkeeper or a waiter in Ukrainian (Olesnyts'kyi [1935] 2011: 200).

This was probably true, but it was equally true that Olesnyts'kyi and any other educated visitor or resident of L'viv would have had no problem in addressing them in Polish. In fact, bi- and multilingualism among the professional classes of L'viv was the norm. To be sure, it was not on an equal footing. At the end of the 19th century, educated Yiddish and Ukrainian speakers would have often had full proficiency in Polish, acquired in high school and university, while Polish speakers would have been unlikely to know Ukrainian, let alone Yiddish. Most of them in turn would have typically had proficiency in German too. Ukrainian-Polish-German trilingual professionals who considered themselves Ukrainian, Polish-German bilingual professionals who considered themselves Polish, and polyglot Jewish professionals – these are safely attested patterns in fin-de-siècle L'viv. Above, we mentioned Ievhen Olesnyts'kyi (Arkusha 2005). We also have, for example, the Ukrainian lawyer and activist Stepan Fedak (Stasiuk 2012), the Polish high-court counsellor Józef Reichert (Grodziska 2010) and the Polish-Jewish Schorr brothers of whom the eldest, Moses, came to particular prominence due to his activities in the humanitarian society B'nai B'rith (Sroka 2012) – to name just a few. The choice of individuals is random, and their biographies differ in many respects. Still, they converge on one important feature. They were bi- or trilingual, highly educated members of the middle class. Their knowledge of languages directly reflected the balance of power in the city and beyond, with German as quasi-official language of the empire, Polish as official language of the province and city, Ukrainian as acknowledged, yet underrepresented regional language, and Yiddish deprived of any official status. Bi- and trilingualism along this hierarchy was incompatible with the ever growing national aspirations of the city's three main constituencies. Hrytsak (2005) contends that the consequences for L'viv were twofold, resulting in compartmentalisation of city life along national lines and in assimilatory pressure on Jews and Ukrainians to adopt Polish, and on Poles to adopt German, if they had higher ambitions. He surmises, thus, that 'most of the modern civic institutions and places for public exchange (incl. L'viv's famous café houses) were staffed and attended

according to the national identities of their members' (cf. also Himka 1999b: 45), while 'dialogue between different cultures meant an assimilation of a sub-ordinate group by a dominant culture' (60–61).

At first glance, Hrytsak's view is confirmed by the vigorous emergence in L'viv of separate associations and clubs, such as 'Sokil' and 'Hasmonea', the Ukrainian and Jewish responses to the Polish sporting club 'Sokół' (Isaievych 2007: 475–482). However, insistence on national and linguistic segregation as the main pattern of late-Habsburg L'viv raises important questions too. It places overriding emphasis on the Polish-Ukrainian-Jewish antagonism, marginalising processes in the city that may not have followed the generally perceived trend of ethnic conflict and compartmentalisation. Czaplicka (2005: 39–40), for example, surmises that there was also a 'degree of urban-cultural integration and community that did exist among the nations'. He feels reminded of it in the southern historical district of L'viv where fine villas were inhabited by Poles, Ukrainians and Jews of similar class and similar tastes. How urban cultural integration and community might have exactly worked and manifested itself at the upper end of the social spectrum would require proper investigation. In the following, the focus will be on the other end of the social spectrum, those living in the poor quarters of the city and neighbouring villages. It can be shown that among them there was considerable transcendence of ethnic and linguistic boundaries. People, such as labourers, servants, peddlers, tradesmen, journeymen and janitors, very regularly mingled across the city's linguistic and religious divides and brought about a subsection, or subculture, of urban life which we may call hybrid. The evidence is twofold.

Mixed languages among the lower classes: L'vivan linguistic subcultures

Firstly, L'viv produced a mixed or hybrid urban dialect that blended Polish, Ukrainian, Yiddish and German elements. It has been typically described as a local variant of Polish or Ukrainian. Kurzowa (1983), for example, studied the Polish-Ukrainian blend of L'viv as a variety of 'borderland Polish' ('*polszczyzna kresowa*'). Rudnyc'kyj (1943), on the other hand, discussed L'viv Ukrainian in the context of the surrounding south-western Dniester dialects. In turn, mixed Polish-Yiddish codes used in L'viv and elsewhere were described by Brzezina (1979) as Jewish Polish ('*żydowska odmiana polszczyzny*'). The linguistic data presented in these works suggest that the L'viv urban dialect should be reassessed as, in fact, a mixed, hybrid or transitional code, rather than as a linguistic variant of a titular nation. For instance, it features the distinctly Ukrainian reduction of unstressed vowels on otherwise Polish lexemes (Kurzowa 1983: 74). Stieber (1938) judged feature combinations of this kind in Polish-Ukrainian contact situations as examples of a mixed dialect. Detailed investigation of existing and further evidence will need to show whether this is a question of substance or of terminology; a question whose theoretical ramifications have in fact been discussed since Małecki (1934). In the given context, we shall leave aside the specifically linguistic facet of hybridity, i.e. the emergence of mixed substandard codes in

the multilingual context of historical L'viv. We shall, instead, turn to the second type of evidence, mentioned above, which shows that, at the lower end of L'viv society, people routinely mixed and transcended linguistic and, thereby, ethnic and religious boundaries. It is based on fragments of everyday life and its linguistic and communicative practices in historical L'viv as we can reconstruct them on the basis of archival materials. Promising sources for this purpose are court and police records from the 'Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in L'viv' (*Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi istorychnyi archiv Ukraïny u L'vovi* = TsDIA) and from the 'State Archive of L'viv Oblast' (*Derzhavnyi archiv L'vivs'koï oblasti*). It is these kinds of records which, more than many other sources, promise close approximation to the lives of ordinary people. This is so because common folk did not normally go on record unless they did something deemed illegal or inappropriate which caught the authorities' attention. Court records have, therefore, been used more widely to reveal aspects of everyday life in 19th-century East-Central Europe and Eastern (e.g. Gorbacheva 2011).

The records of the criminal court and the state prosecution of the city of L'viv document a police and court case involving a day labourer of the name Aleksandr or Oleksa Diduch (TsDIA Fond 152: Regional Court/Inventory 2: Criminal Matters/Files 20443–20444). Diduch was accused of theft, together with his wife Katarzyna, who is on record as a laundress. Oleksa Diduch's sister Katarzyna or, in Ukrainian, Kateryna was also accused, together with her husband Jan Tychochód. Katarzyna Tychochód was a laundress too, while her husband Jan, Oleksa Diduch's brother-in-law, is on record as a caster and casual labourer. The theft occurred in February of 1900 and was sufficiently grave to be reported in the city newspaper and official gazette *'Gazeta Lwowska'* on 24 February 1900 (nr. 44). The case against the two couples was conducted at the criminal court of L'viv from December 1900 to the summer of 1901. The final court trial by jury on 5 June 1901 was also announced in the *'Gazeta Lwowska'*, in the edition of 22 May 1901 (nr. 116). The files show that Oleksa Diduch and his sister Kateryna were Greek-Catholics from the village Obroszyn (ukr. *Obroshyne*), about 15 kilometres to the south-west of L'viv, but located in the district of Gródek (ukr. *Horodok*). According to the Austrian census of 1900, in Obroszyn there were 296 Roman Catholics, 824 Greek Catholics and 5 Jews. 265 of Obroszyn's population are on record as Polish speakers, while 855 were Ukrainian speakers (K. K. Statistische Zentralkommission 1907: 194). Despite the sizeable presence of Polish in Obroszyn, which certainly also extended to the time when the Diduchs were born – Oleksa in 1870 and Kateryna in 1864 – the siblings were likely Ukrainian speakers because they were Greek Catholics. What is more, the brother is frequently referred to in the documents as Oleksa, the distinctly Ukrainian short form of the Christian name Alexander. Oleksa Diduch's wife Katarzyna, on the other hand, was Roman Catholic and born in the Polish village Bobrowniki Małe near Tarnów. Finally, Oleksa Diduch's brother-in-law, Jan Tychochód, was born in L'viv. Throughout most of the file he is on

record as GreekCatholic, which suggests that he may have been a Ukrainian speaker. The sole exception is the initial police report which describes him as RomanCatholic. His Christian name is quintessentially Polish, while the surname has a semi-Polonised Ukrainian phonetic appearance (Red'ko 1966: 70). Jan Tychochód attended three years' of elementary school in L'viv. Born in 1860, he would have attended school at a time when in the city there were Polish elementary schools only (Moklak 2004: 117–118, cf. also Rzemieniuk 1991: 179). So he would have been taught in Polish, irrespective of what he spoke at home.

The picture that emerges is that of two couples where one part was Greek Catholic and a native in Ukrainian, while the other was a Polish speaker. This was precisely the set-up in which Polish-Ukrainian code mixing flourished, and the Diduchs and Tychochóds likely used a hybrid variety of sorts in their everyday life. In fact, an older file of Oleksa Diduch, compiled in the context of a previous police investigation of 1891, records him 'to speak Polish', which will have likely been a mixed urban Polish-Ukrainian code, rather than standard Polish. There are further factors which support the assumption of code mixing among the two couples. Of all four, Jan Tychochód was the only one able to sign testimonies. His wife and the Diduchs were illiterate even though Obroszyn, for example, did have an elementary school (Chlebowski et al. 1886: 350). Despite the introduction of compulsory school attendance in 1869, illiteracy in Galicia, particularly outside the cities, remained exceptionally high (Baczkowski 2006; Rzemieniuk 1991: 181). Thus, the linguistic practices which the Diduchs and Katarzyna Tychochód engaged in remained unchecked against the norms of written Polish as well as Galician Ukrainian, which by the end of the 19th century had achieved some degree of codification, for example in form of Smal'-Stots'kyi's and Gartner's school grammar of 1893, based on phonetic spelling principles proposed by Zhelekhiv'skyi in his Ruthenian-German dictionary of 1885–1886. Poor educational attainment is further reflected in the fact that all three were unskilled occasional labourers who, at the time of the theft, lived in Zamarstynów (ukr. *Zamarstyniv*), one of L'viv's poor semi-rural suburban villages with a highly diverse population (K. K. Statistische Zentralkommission 1907: 338) where L'viv's mixed urban varieties flourished in particular. At the time of the theft, Jan Tychochód also lived in Zamarstynów. However, it is worth adding that, at the time of the court proceedings, he lived separated from his wife and had moved into a workshop at the more affluent Sykstuska Street in the second district; presumably thanks to the fact that he had some education in terms of trade and also literacy. His estranged wife remained in Zamarstynów, while the Diduchs had temporarily moved to Silesia to work in the coalmines, only to return to L'viv for the court proceedings.

The victim of the theft was a certain Ewa Schapira, a merchant's widow, who lived at Smolka Square 2, not far from the above mentioned Sykstuska Street. It is possible that Katarzyna Diduch briefly worked as a servant for Ewa Schapira. Finally, there is the peddler Jossel Tennenbaum, resident in

Zamarstynów, who was accused of selling on the items stolen by the Diduchs and Tychochóds. The files explicitly record him as a speaker of Yiddish and Polish. In any dealings with the Diduchs and Tychochóds he will undoubtedly have used the latter, most likely in its local ukrainised form. Unlike his gentile accomplices he was literate, in the Hebrew alphabet. Thus, the court case effectively included all religious and linguistic constituencies of L'viv society at the turn of the century. The encounter was intense, located at the city's poor fringes and was most likely conducted in local hybrid varieties that blended Polish and Ukrainian or Polish and Yiddish.

Numerous other records of police proceedings and court cases in the archives in L'viv similarly provide rich evidence of the fact that, at the lower end of late-Habsburg L'viv society, people routinely mixed and transcended ethnic, religious and linguistic boundaries. At the same time it is important to stress that, from a linguistic point of view, this evidence is circumstantial only. The files studied do not themselves show hybrid linguistic usage. This is so because documents were prepared by trained officials predominantly in the Polish language, which was Galicia's main official language since 1869 (Fischel 1910: Nr. 328)². This also included most records of interrogation, witness statements and testimonies by defendants and plaintiffs. It is rare that we find direct petitions authored by any of the involved parties, or by someone on their behalf. Ukrainian, for example, is largely absent from the records, even though the principle that parties could use it in dealings with the authorities had been firmly established since 1860 (Fischel 1910: Nr. 250)². The same right, by the way, did not extend to Yiddish. As a result, the vast majority of police and court records show linguistic usage by L'viv officials, rather than by members of the public. In some instances usage included interesting local, urban dialectal deviations from contemporary written Polish. Very occasionally we also find documents in Galician Ukrainian authored by, or on behalf of, members of the public in L'viv. However, neither one nor the other amounts to direct evidence of the linguistic cross-over which court materials from historical L'viv strongly, yet indirectly suggest. To that end, one will need to look towards other materials, such as those used by Kurzowa (1983).

While, thus, court records by and large only provide circumstantial evidence of code mixing and linguistic hybridity in late-Habsburg L'viv, they do offer direct evidence of a specific subsection, or subculture, in urban life. It took place in the poorer suburbs and suburban villages. Here, people mixed and mingled across the religious, ethnic and linguistic divides which nationality politics had by then moulded into key categories for the distribution of power and resources. Despite these, interaction clearly remained intense as fragments from everyday life, richly attested in court and police records, illustrate. We cannot know from these fragments whether people living in L'viv's mixed subculture remained oblivious to the newly devised socio-political demarcation lines along nationalities, or whether they chose to ignore, or even counteract, them. The former, i.e. some degree of obliviousness would seem more plausible given that the lower urban classes had less to gain

from the new politics of nationalism. This would lead to an interesting contrast with a new strand in research on the Habsburg Monarchy and its successor states, Bohemia and Czechoslovakia in particular, which focusses on the latter, i.e. on deliberate indifference or opposition to national segregation for various socio-political, economic and cultural reasons (Judson 2006: 19–65; King 2002; Zahra 2008). While this question cannot be pursued further here, it is clear that, intentional or not, everyday practices on the socio-economic fringes of the Galician metropolis transcended and blended the new national and linguistic categories which had become culturally dominant by the end of the 19th century. In that sense, these practices were subcultural.

Conclusion

Subcultural practices in East-Central European and other societies which cross over national, ethnic, linguistic and religious divides of the modern era may take different forms, depending on place, time and the constituencies involved. The case study presented in the second part of the paper is a particular example from late-Habsburg L'viv. The history of the region's many ethnically diverse cities and its legacies is prone to reveal manifold instantiations of hybrid identity amidst an era that is otherwise characterised by segmentation in monolithic ethno-linguistic terms, either as a 'top-down' project such as the creation of a nation state, or as a contesting 'bottom-up' project such as the defence of minority rights. The newly defined notion of subcultures as outlined in the first part of the paper is set to shift the focus onto groups whose members did or do not conform to uniformity in these terms. Subcultural non-conformity may be intended for certain political purposes, or it may be coincidental and contingent upon other driving forces as in the case of some semi-rural suburban quarters of fin-de-siècle L'viv. It may involve terms of ethnic, linguistic, religious or national attribution. It may be retrospective and incorporate past multi-ethnicity into present homogeneity, as can be observed, for example, in some forms of Habsburg nostalgia. Thus, there is not *one* type of subculture that is to be reconstructed as a compound of common traits and characteristics which may be present conjointly in any one taxonomic group yet to be found. Subculture is a heuristic term, a tool, to understand forms of East-Central European hybrid cultural identities which are orthogonal and invisible to the prevalent terms of nation and minority.

Notes

1 Cf. Schulz ([1930] 1993: 35). Translation by Luiza Bialasiewicz in Magocsi and Hahn (2005: 180).

2 'Sub-cultures as Integrative Forces, 1900–present', a four-year AHRC-sponsored major research project at the University of Oxford, run by the authors, with Co-Investigator Dr Marius Turda of Oxford Brookes University, 2012–16, <http://subcultures.mml.ox.ac.uk>.

3 For a rare example of work seeking to link a trans-national 'sub-culture' to the conceptual process of nation-building, see Davila (2001).

4 See also 'Introduction' in Hodgkinson and Deicke (2007); esp. p. 12, where they note the importance of 'locally or nationally distinct manifestations of global, genres, styles or associated cultural practices', although retain a focus primarily on youth groups.

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