

THE SATIRICAL CURRENT IN POPULAR YOUTH CULTURE: ROCK MUSIC AND FILM IN UKRAINE IN THE 1990s

Romana Bahry

The most recent wave of popular youth culture, rock music, videos, youth film festivals and rock concerts in Ukraine began in 1986. These mass manifestations of sub-culture or counter-culture were slow at first, no doubt as a result of the awareness of the fate of earlier similar expressions in the sixties and seventies.¹ The first independent rock music concert of this most recent wave took place at Kiev University's Faculty of Foreign Languages on 26 April 1986, the same evening as the Chernobyl explosion. This rock concert was followed by another, "Debut 86," in October that year, though not without opposition from the local Young Communist League.² In Lviv the first rock concert was authorized and held in January 1988.³

Since then many rock and pop music concerts and festivals have been held. Some of these were: "Rok-dialoh" (Rock Dialogue), April 1987, Kiev; "Fonohraf" (Phonograph), July 1987, Kiev; "Blits-parad" (Blitz-Parade), September 1989, Kiev; "Rok artil'nyk" (Rock Workshop), February 1988, Kiev; "Iolky palky" (Evergreen Needles), January 1990, Kiev; "Ms. Rok Evropa" (Ms. Rock Europe), January 1990, Kiev; "Beatlemania '89" (a Beatles retrospective rock concert), June 1989, Dniprodzerzhynsk; "Chervona Ruta" (Red Rue Flower), September 1989, Chernivtsi; "Festival of Green Art," April 1990, Kiev; "Let's Save the Azov Sea," September, 1990, Berdniansk; "Chorna Rada" (Black Council), September 1990, Kiev; "Chervona Ruta No. 2," August 1991, Zaporizhzhia.⁴

In addition, international youth film festivals titled "Molodist'" (Youth) have been taking place annually in Kiev in the *Budynok kino* (Film House) every November since 1989, and a biannual international animation film festival "Krok" (Step) has been taking

place in Kiev since 1989 as well. Some of these have been accompanied by art shows. For several years the Andriivsky Spusk (Andriivsky Hill Street), near the old part of Kiev known as "Podil," has been the setting, in Spring, of a street festival called "Days of Kiev," with street theatre, jugglers and mimes, painters, and strolling folk and pop musicians. The underpasses beneath Khreshchatyk, Kiev's main street, daily attract performing musicians, and their walls display various sub- and counter-cultural posters.

Some of the rock festivals have been held in huge arenas such as the Kiev Sports Stadium and have attracted thousands of young people. These mass gatherings have been comparable in size to political and ecological rallies and to meetings of followers of the occult.⁵

The history of the Ukrainian language column "Fonohraf" in the newspaper *Moloda hvardiia* (Young Guard) reflects the progress of this youth rock counter-culture in Ukraine toward general acceptance. When the column was initiated in September 1985 it appeared only once a month and the word "rok" (rock) was consistently edited out of it. But its frequency increased and there were over 100 issues in the course of 1990. In summer 1991 it began to appear as a separate newspaper. In 1989, an eighty-page Ukrainian-language overview of rock music in Kiev entitled *Fonohraf Digest* was published in Kiev.⁶ By 1990 there were regular columns on rock and youth culture entitled "Klub 636" in the Kiev Russian-language *Komsomol'skoe znamia* (Young Communist League Banner), while the column "Muzychnyi ekspres" (Music Express) appeared in the newspapers *Prapor iunosti* (Flag of Youth) in Dnipropetrovsk and *Rovesnyk* (Contemporary) in Ternopil. Ukrainian state radio programmes, such as "Kontakt" (Contact), "Blits," "Vechirnie studio" (Evening Studio) and "Kontrasty" (Contrasts) now include rock music. Ukrainian state television has broadcasts on rock culture and rock music, for example in the programmes "Video mlyn" (Video Mill), "Vechirni novyny" (Evening News), "Vechirni visnyk" (Evening Herald) and, above all, in the weekly youth programme "Hart" (The Tempering).

The Kiev journal *Novyny kinoekranu* (Film News), a Ukrainian-language monthly edited by O. Hordy and Leonid Cherevatenko, gives comprehensive reviews of all Ukrainian and Russian-language films produced in Ukraine—feature films,

documentaries and animated films—and also presents information on European, North American and Indian films and their actors and actresses. This journal also reviews film festivals. Although *Novyny kinoekranu* is mainly devoted to film reviews, it also publishes articles on rock and pop culture. For example, there has been an article on the documentary rock music film "Kinets' kanikul" (End of the Holidays) about the former Leningrad rock musician Viktor Tsoi, directed by the Kiev Ukrainian film-maker Serhy Lysenko,⁷ and an article on the documentary "Vrubai bitlov" (Turn on the Beatles), about the impact of the Beatles and their music in Ukraine and Russia. This film, directed by the Kiev Ukrainian documentary film-maker Yury Tereshchenko, also includes footage from the Dniprodzerzhynsk Beatles retrospective rock festival of 1989.⁸ There have also been articles on Viktor Tsoi,⁹ on American pop singer and rock video actress Madonna,¹⁰ on the American comic strip character and film *Batman*,¹¹ and on the meaning of rock culture in general and its relationship to film.¹²

The importance of popular youth culture has been noted by literary critic Ivan Dziuba, who wrote in 1988,

the full functioning of a national culture also requires the development of mass entertainment genres and forms, such as various types of cabaret, circus performance, happening, entertainment cinema, popular songs and so on—that is, of youth subculture and urban subculture in general.¹³

Leading Ukrainian female pop and rock singer Vika (Viktoria Vrady) has also stressed the importance of rock counter-culture and its inevitability:

The phenomenon of rock culture can be compared to toothpaste. Once you squeeze it out of the tube, you can't push it back inside. [...] Rock is not only music, it's a social phenomenon. It is a way of thinking. It is how a person thinks. It is the person's ideas, life, way of life. One expresses one's thoughts through such music.¹⁴

Petro Cherniaiev in *Novyny kinoekranu* writes the following about rock counter-culture:

Rock is not so much a style as a kind of existence. These are people who stand apart from the official stage and generally reject everything official. [...] Rock culture ... is a layer of spiritual life and culture. It is a social movement and a form of social protest. It is a new genre.

It is a type of religion with its own commandments, myths, saints. It is a way of life.¹⁵

Related to this wave of rock music and rock and pop culture is

the current flood of video films and video salons. Like their predecessors, rock music and tape recorders, video films and video cassette recorders were banned under the totalitarian regime, but to no avail. Oksana and Natalia Musienko in their article, "Deshcho pro video" (A Few Words About Video) in *Novyny kinoekranu* assess the impact of this new electronic medium on the culture of Ukraine as revolutionary:

Video, a new means of mass communication, has come to occupy a significant place in society.

We can see everything on video film: seductive beauties, frightening apparitions, monsters from distant galaxies and invincible masters of kung-fu and karate. Video has become a fact. In keeping with tradition there will be many who will pose the questions: "Who is to blame?" and "What is to be done?" We shall express some of our views. First of all one must reject the thought that this phenomenon should be forbidden, banned, or liquidated. It is impossible to stop this phenomenon and there is no need to do so. What is necessary is a serious dialogue, based on mutual trust, with the viewer.¹⁶

Much of this youth counter-culture, rock music and video culture is dominated by Western and specifically American influence. It appears that the majority of young people want to listen mainly to American rock music and to watch mainly American videos. The appetite for North American and British rock music and above all for North American videos seems insatiable, and the co-operative (semi-private) commercial video salon business is booming.¹⁷ (Video salons offer group screenings in small movie theatres, not video rentals). Apparently, the thousands of new video salons in the cities, small towns and villages of Ukraine mostly screen second-rate American horror,¹⁸ kung-fu, and, above all, pornographic movies.¹⁹ There are no controls or restrictions on the age of viewers, and this situation is beginning to cause some concern.²⁰

However, the impact of second-rate American movies and the widespread interest in pornography²¹ is not the focus of this presentation. The topic that I will be analysing here is the strong current of satire in contemporary popular youth culture in Ukraine, particularly as it is manifested in original rock and pop music lyrics and in original motion pictures, particularly animated motion pictures produced in Ukrainian studios. The satirical is defined here as a blend of "critical attitude with humour and wit for the purpose of improving human institutions or humanity." It takes as

its subject matter not "great sinners and criminals" but "the general run of fools, knaves, ninnyes, oafs, codgers, and frauds." Its purpose is to improve human institutions, rather than to destroy them.²²

The satirical current is not the only one, of course, and there are justifiably just as many invectives and jeremiads as there are satires. There is no lack of condemnations of the "sinners and criminals" of a society that has been ruled by a totalitarian government for seventy years and is now experiencing an identity crisis and a sense of its loss of moral values and spiritual direction. The documentary film genre, as I have argued elsewhere,²³ has been in the vanguard of this critical movement, exposing such social, economic, ecological and cultural problems as pollution,²⁴ dying collective farms,²⁵ the deplorable working and living conditions of women workers on collective farms and in factories,²⁶ the neglect and abuse of old people and the handicapped,²⁷ and the after-effects of Chernobyl.²⁸ "Tomu shcho liubliu" (Because I Love), a documentary movie based on a script about young offenders by writer Yury Pokalchuk, takes a mercilessly critical look at some of the problems facing youth in Ukraine today—crime, suicide, rape and drug-abuse.²⁹

Many pop and rock songs have also been devoted to ecological and political problems. Kiev pop singer Taras Petrynenko sings "Rukh" (about political opposition to the Communist Party) and a song entitled "Chornobyl's'ka zona" (The Chernobyl Zone). The Kiev rock group "Komu vnyz" (Going Down) uses the words of Taras Shevchenko's "Subotiv" and Samiilenko's "El'dorado" to criticize the policies of communism. Folk singer-bard Eduard Drach sings "Viddaite movu" (Give Us Back Our Language) and pop singer Taras Kurchyk sings "Ne sudit'—My zabuly vse" (Don't Judge!—We Have Forgotten Everything), a song against Russification. The Kiev rock group "Perron" (Train Platform; the name also alludes to Perun, the pagan Slavic god of thunder) sings "Reket" (Organized Crime) and "Pyvo bliuz" (Beer Blues), which sarcastically condemns wife assault and alcoholism. Taras Chubai, a pop singer of the Lviv cabaret group "Ne zhurys'" (Don't Worry) uses the lyrics of the Ukrainian poet Viktor Neborak in his bitterly sarcastic and misogynous song "Lolita." Many other serious subjects are taken up in song, particularly by the many bards and folk singers.

Many rock and pop concerts had ecological or political

objectives. "Save the Azov Sea" and "Chervona Ruta" were cases in point. The Chervona Ruta Festival of Ukrainian contemporary song and popular music was the first in the history of the Ukrainian S.S.R. in which all the songs had to be in the Ukrainian language, a condition specified by the sponsors of the festival. Since the festival took place in September 1989, one week after the inaugural congress of "Rukh," it took on the appearance of a political rally with blue and yellow national flags and with participants shouting "Slava Ukraini" (Glory to Ukraine) and lighting candles. There is no doubt that the Chervona Ruta Festival was a political and social consciousness-raising event of great historical significance, as Mykola Riabchuk has observed³⁰ and as had been anticipated by Kyrylo Stetsenko in the festival's program notes:

The power of popular songs lies in the fact that they can bring back those who have lost their nationality. The power of these songs is to be able to uncover in the souls of these people sources of national existence which have been destroyed by foreign influences and education, ... and so ... the Ukrainian song has the right to be one of the powerful and primary factors of the national reawakening and education of our people.³¹

Rock concerts in Eastern Europe, writes Pedro Ramet, often have such a political quality, for "rock music is deeply coloured by political messages and political allusions... In the communist world ... rock is very much attuned to political messages."³²

The difference between the songs and films which I have just described and those that I am about to describe is the ingredient of humour, laughter and wit. Hard as it may be to laugh in the face of seemingly insurmountable problems, some Ukrainian song writers and composers, script writers, directors and animation artists have accomplished this.

A satirical, that is, a critical and simultaneously witty and humorous approach is already evident in the names of some of the rock groups. The name of the Kiev rock group "Komu vnyz" (Going Down) is a play on the word "Komunizm" (Communism). One Kiev rock group calls itself "V.V.," short for "Vopli Vidopliasova" (The Wailings of Vidopliasov; Vidopliasov is a character in one of Dostoevsky's stories, "The Village of Stepanchikovo"). An English-language trash metal rock group in Kiev has chosen the name "Edem" (Eden). Other groups with humorous names include the Kiev rock group "Kollezhskii asessor" (Collegiate Assessor; this was the name of the lowest

rank in the bureaucracy of the Russian Empire), "Godzadva" (the name of an Indian philosopher and also a play, in Russian, on the words "in one year or two"), and the Lviv cabaret group "Ne zhurys'" (Don't Worry).

A particularly funny and iconoclastic underground Ukrainian-language magazine on Ukrainian rock culture bears the name *Vidryzhka* (Vomit) and the subtitle "histerychno-patolohichnyi zhurnal" (a hysterical-pathological journal). The fourth issue of *Vidryzhka* carries on its cover page the slogan, "Proletari, vse chotko?" (Proletarians! Is Everything O.K?)—a reference to the title of a Communist Party-inspired article against the Lviv punk rock band, "Braty Hadiukiny" (Snake Brothers). *Vidryzhka* is produced by the Ukrainian student community in Warsaw, but its subject matter is rock culture in Ukraine. This satirical publication prints the texts of Ukrainian-language punk rock songs such as "Tantsi" (Dances) by "V.V.," "Mertvyi piven" (Dead Rooster) and "Narkomany na horodi" (Drug Addicts in the Back Yard) by Serhy Kuzminsky, the leader of "Braty Hadiukiny." It also has the lyrics of Serhy Kuzminsky's "Mis'ku, vvazhei" (Mis'ko [i.e., Mikhail Gorbachev], Watch Out!).³³

Satire aimed at political institutions and figures is not new in Ukrainian culture. It existed in the animation genre as early as 1968. The animated film "Kamin' na dorozhi" (A Stone on the Road) was made in 1968, but was censored and shelved by the state controlled Goskino (State Committee for Cinematography) in Moscow. It was not released until 1988, when a portion of one fragment, "Demahoh" (Demagogue), was included in the Polish Mini-Max Film Festival. The film consists of four sections: "Superechka" (A Disagreement), director: Dakhno; "Kariera" (The Career), director: P. Provzansky; "Demahoh" (Demagogue), director: Volodymyr Honcharov; and "Kamin' na dorozhi" (A Stone On the Road), also directed by Honcharov. The script was written by Felix Kryvin and Volodymyr Honcharov. There is no dialogue in any of these four segments, only groans, grunts, sighs, gasps and gibberish.³⁴

"Disagreement" depicts two men painting a fence, one with blue paint, the other with yellow paint. They argue and splash paint on each other, whereupon both become green. Once they realize that they are in fact the same, there is harmony and agreement. "Career" portrays a dictator being elevated onto a pillar by his

admirers until he begins to float in the air, losing his footing. The pillar topples, the dictator falls to the ground and his remains are swept into a dust pan by a janitor. The third film, "Demagogue," is the most innovative stylistically and the most abstract. Numbers are used instead of people to depict how the demagogue rises to power. Paper cupids appear periodically as a sign of approval. The last film of the series, "Stone on the Road," comments on the psychology of misery. The first character who trips over a stone in the road, instead of warning the next, enjoys watching the other person suffer the same mishap. The cycle is repeated several times, until someone tosses the stone away. These films were considered so dangerous that they were banned for twenty years.

The same group of animation artists in the Kiev Animation Association of the Kiev Popular Education Studio, with Volodymyr Honcharov at their head as director and animation artist and Felix Kryvin as scriptwriter, made the political satire "Kam'ianyi vik" (The Stone Age) in 1987. The film shows two warring tribes of apes who end up destroying themselves. In 1988, Honcharov (director and animation artist) and Kryvin (scriptwriter) made the humorous political satire "Pravda krupnym planom" (A Close-Up of the Truth) in Monty Python style, using grotesque visual juxtapositions. Not only is the influence of Monty Python evident here, but also that of Pink Floyd's *The Wall*.³⁵ At first Goskino in Moscow, which still held authority in 1988, rejected the film. It was then submitted to the Commission on Conflicts, which overturned this decision, quoting the words of academician D.S. Likhachev, "Laughter, by destroying the signs of culture, prepares the foundation for a new culture—a more just one."³⁶ The film was released and shown at the animation festival in Kiev in 1989. It has since been screened at the York University Ukrainian Glasnost Film Festival (January 1990), at the Ottawa International Film Festival (October 1990), across Canada and the U.S., and in London, England.

The film deals with the problem of presenting truth in small doses, which only leads to its distortion. The opening scene presents a socialist realist monumental sculpture of the young strong Soviet proletarian man and woman, the pillars of society, who hold up the massive concrete Soviet edifice on top of which Stalin is seated behind a dinner table. The place setting consists of a plate with a red flag instead of food, and a sickle and hammer instead of a fork and spoon. Marshal Beria is the waiter. Attractive

but expressionless mannequins applaud, and continue applauding as Khrushchev appears at the podium, banging with his shoe until the concrete monument begins to crack. Brezhnev replaces Khrushchev, and the mannequins automatically lift their red party cards in approval. The mannequins applaud as the parade of Soviet government moves by. A cavalry officer with sword uplifted is followed by a tank in the shape of a turkey. The crowd continues to applaud as Brezhnev becomes a three-headed monster with two other heads—Stalin's and Khrushchev's. Brezhnev begins to sway back and forth, in spite of attempts to prop him up. He topples over and is revealed to be a mere coat hanger. The mannequins applaud and cupids appear around the edifice.

Suddenly there is lightning, and the glass in which the mannequins are encased begins to crack and shatter. The cataclysmic tremors continue, and the socialist realist monument topples over. Monster-crows appear in the ruins and mummified figures with bandaged heads and mouths begin to rise as if out of tombs. These mummified figures develop mouths, from which we hear the shout "pravda" (truth), which grows into a chant.

The curtain rises to reveal the booted feet of a new monument with an inscription below: "Nohy pravdy" (The Feet of the Truth). The monumental figure changes from male to female; the trousers fall from this female figure, revealing a sign with the text "Give us a close-up!" over the pubic area. The breasts grow larger, and then diminish as the torso becomes a muscular male chest. The suit jacket which replaces the bare masculine chest turns into a field where police are ploughing the earth with farmers' bodies, while monster-crows sit around munching on gold watches. A sombre funeral parade marches by.

Another monument appears. This time it is the massive Woman-Warrior monument, built during the Brezhnev era, that stands on the hills of Kiev overlooking the Dnipro river. The scenes begin to replace one another quickly. A masculine jacket covered with medals is on a body that has naked female legs. A naked male chest appears and is replaced by a skeleton, which is in turn replaced by a mannequin. The mannequin is replaced by a naked female body, which this time has no sign covering the pubic area. But the female body has a male policeman's head sewn on to it; as the head looks down and realizes, to its horror, that it has been misplaced, it blows the whistle.³⁷

Not only political reality but also the economic situation has been satirized in film. A series of short documentary films called satirical millstones ("zhorna"), produced in the Kiev News and Documentary Studio, reflect satirically on such problems as food, housing and gasoline shortages. Two film-makers who excel in this genre are Serhy Bukovsky and Yury Tereshchenko. Satirical Millstone No. 24, "Braty Hadiukiny" by S. Bukovsky, is a satire on food shortages. The film shows young people being trained to become gourmet cooks and waitresses in fancy restaurants, while in reality basic food is hard to obtain. Contemporary scenes, such as a performance by the Snake Brothers, are juxtaposed against archival documentary and news film footage from the revolutionary years. The latter depicts food workers, cafeterias and such propaganda texts as "the conquest of food problems depends on us" and "the pig will help us solve our meat problems." This propaganda statement by Yakovlev at the 16th Communist Party Congress is followed by archival footage of a stuffed pig and rabbits in a museum of biology. "Rozvod'te kroliv!" (Breed rabbits!), reads the accompanying slogan.³⁸ Finally the camera focusses on a long queue in front of the McDonald's restaurant in Moscow. What adds to the humour of this film are the satirical lyrics of the Snake Brothers, written and composed by their lead guitarist and singer Serhy Kuzminsky. The three songs in the film are "Mis'ku, vvazhei!," "Roksolano," and "Ameryka." The words for "Ameryka," the song that one hears while the camera focusses on the McDonald's line-up, are partly in Ukrainian Lemko dialect, partly in urban slang, and partly in accented English:

When *midnight* replaces the bright day
 And everybody is resting after work,
 I haven't yet closed my eyes:
 In my *dreams* I'm flying to New York.

Life is very nice for us,
 All of us honest workers
 In the Soviet system.
 Whoever thought that even once
 We would have a chance
 To go to America?

Everybody:

[Refrain:] America, you say to me "welcome,"
 As they say, *Oh yeah, America,*
 will I ever sail to your shore?

I will drive in a *car on the highway*,
 I will eat at *McDonald's* and will eat hot dogs,
 And I will meet a *fine girl*
 and the police will respect me.
 Skyscrapers, robbers,
 In *Central Park*
 Prostitutes, drug addicts—
 All are smoking *marijuana*
 Cigarettes.

[Refrain]

On *Broadway* I will meet *Mick Jagger*
 And we will go visit *Tina Turner*.
 I will fall before her on my knees
 And we will spend *all night* together.
 She will say to me *bye-bye*
 And will sing a *lullaby*. *My baby*,
 They say I'm *strange!*

[Refrain]

Collective farms are also satirized, as in the 1989 film "Mali Huliaky" (Little Idlers), directed by Yury Tereshchenko, who had made a serious documentary film on this topic in 1988, just as his fellow satirist Bukovsky also made serious films, such as "Tomorrow is a Holiday" about the working conditions of women in a chicken factory.

Male-female relations and family life, too, are satirized by contemporary Ukrainian film-makers. An animated film released in 1990, "Kokhannia ta smert' kartopli zvychainoi" (The Love and Death of a Common Potato), is a satire on blind female passion and its result. A potato, singing melodramatic operatic arias, falls in love with a knife, which uses her as a sex object and then abandons her for another potato. In despair, the potato jumps into a pot of boiling water as kitchen utensils sing in woeful chorus.³⁹ Considering the stress placed in contemporary Ukrainian society on women as sex objects (as evidenced by the popularity of beauty contests and the wide acceptance of pornography by females and males), this is a timely film. Yet in Ukraine its significance as a film that raises the issue of the objectification of women has not been widely noted. Some commentators have interpreted it as a social parable: the potato is naive because it is from the village.⁴⁰ Moreover, the film has been shown only to small specialized audiences in the "Budynok kino" (Film House in Kiev).

Another satirical animated film, entitled *We Women*, is in three

parts. The first part, "The Most Beautiful" (director E. Kasavina), juxtaposes modern fashion and punk make-up against classical paintings of women to the accompaniment of the music of Vivaldi. The second part, "The Sweet Life" (director L. Tkachinova), contrasts the realities of married life to escape fantasies, and the third, "The Log" (director S. Kushnerov), is a witty satire on a male (the log) who does nothing at home and his nagging, overworked wife. The wife is so frustrated by the inactivity of the log that she assails it first with an ordinary handsaw, then an axe, a cross-cut saw, a drill, two saws simultaneously, and, finally, an electric circular saw. The "log," however, comes to life as soon as he leaves the house and sees a woman in a low-cut dress.⁴¹

There are other films with satirical subjects. "Iz zhizni zamechatel'nogo cheloveka tovarishcha Gruzilova" (The Life of the Extraordinary Human Being Comrade Gruzilov), which premiered at the Youth Festival in Kiev in November 1990, is a satire on socialist realism, Soviet slogans and Soviet socialist realist positive heroes. Volodymyr Honcharov's animated film "Al'ternatyva" (The Alternative, 1986) is a humorous cartoon about friendship and harmony in personal relationships. Natalia Marchenkova's "Moia sim'ia" (My Family, 1989) is about a schoolboy writing an assignment in Ukrainian about his family while listening to "Film Travellers' Club," a popular Russian-language television show hosted by Y. Senkevich. T.V. images of animals and birds are shown in comic juxtaposition against depictions of the family members.⁴² The animated film "Strasti mordasti" (Horror Stories, 1991) consists of three miniatures: "Vtecha" (The Escape, director Volodymyr Honcharov), "Hist'" (The Guest, director Vadym Tyriaiev), and "Kolobok" (The Round Loaf, director Valery Konopliiev). The scripts of "The Escape" and "The Round Loaf" are by Alexander Rubnov, that of "The Guest" by Valery Konopliiev. Utilizing the genre of horror film, and yet parodying this genre at the same time, "Strasti mordasti," like "The Potato" and "The Alternative," goes beyond politics and looks at the nature of human existence, freedom and choice. In "The Escape" a piece of meat decides that it does not wish to become a hamburger and runs away from the plastic gloves, knives and forks that pursue it to the accompaniment of a Beethoven symphony. The meat escapes the meat grinder and the cat, but it cannot escape the maggots that crawl out of it at the end. In "The Guest," mutants are visited by a person in a gas mask. They are terrified when the

guest reveals a smiling human face beneath the mask. However, the face is itself a mask which the guest discards to reveal a monster. All that is left of the guest's humanity is the discarded smiling mask. "The Round Loaf" reverses a familiar folk tale: grandmother bakes a round loaf which, instead of being eaten, mutates and begins to consume everything in sight—the rabbit, the wolf, the bear, the fox. Eventually, the loaf begins to circle the earth, finally devouring the planet and the grandmother who made it. In the end only the monstrous loaf remains. Natalia Hrytsenko writes of this film,

"Strasti mordasti" is a sign of the era and of its general mood. These pre-apocalyptic times are characterized by scepticism and lack of belief in the victory of moral values. [...] The subject matter and style shock the spectator into taking a look at contemporary existence.⁴³

Satirical themes also have their place in rock and pop music. In fact, criticism of the Communist system was the main theme of the Chervona Ruta Festival. The pop group "Avans" (Advance) from Zaporizhzhia, for example, sang a song entitled "My Mother Washed Me" (Myla mene maty), starting with the melody of a Ukrainian folk song and then switching to rock rhythm and sarcasm with the words, "she washed me with the soap that she bought with ration coupons."⁴⁴

The tradition of political satire in contemporary Ukrainian pop and rock music has its origins with bards or folk-singers who, like Bob Dylan and Joan Baez, sang songs of social protest. In Ukraine such bards as Viktor Morozov, Andry Panchyshyn and Vasyl Zhdankin of the Lviv cabaret group "Ne zhurys" (Don't Worry) were singing satirical songs of social protest already in the early eighties. An example is "Pan Bazio" (Mr. Bazio), a song about a corrupt businessman who deals in many services, including women. The song describes the men that use the service: a millionaire, a Ph.D. candidate, a dentist, etc. Sex, a subject formerly forbidden by the Communist party, is the theme of "Kama Sutra" (1989), by Andry Panchyshyn:

For the majority of the Soviet people
The secrets of the East are necessary.
In the East they sit naked on nails.
So what do Petro and Mykola have to learn from this?
We achieve our triumphs in work and sport without yoga.

But there are secrets of the East
That would do our people a lot of good.

Among these is a wisdom that is called
Kama Sutra.
This is an ancient wisdom.
This is ultimate sexual education.

They know the Kama Sutra in Laos.
The Eskimos have mastered it.
Even from the point of view of the
Guatemalans we are very behind in this,
Because we have had no progress
Since the construction of the
Dnipro hydroelectric power station.
To be able to take advantage of the Kama Sutra
You have to learn it from childhood.
It is best to start at school,
Though it's never too late.
I believe the secrets of the East
Will still serve our people.⁴⁵

In "Ukrains'kyi vampir" (The Ukrainian Vampire), composed and sung by Taras Chubai—the words are by Andry Panchyshyn—we hear the strains of Michael Jackson's "Thriller" and "Billy Jean."

The satirical compositions of Serhy Kuzminsky are particularly noteworthy. Kuzminsky is probably one of the most creative, original and witty punk rock composers in Ukraine today. In an interview he described how he composed his song "Rok-n-rol do rana" (Rock and Roll Until Morning) after listening to the official folk choir of the city of Ivano-Frankivsk singing "kolomyiky" (comical folksongs). He decided to compose his own satirical punk rock "kolomyiky," in Lemko dialect, following the kolomyika rhythm. The text is as follows:

I will go to the mountain pastures to sing
How pleasant it is to live in this Soviet land.
Across the mountains, across the forest
flew a cuckoo.
I will go to the propaganda headquarters
and will announce:

[Refrain:] Hey, there's a party, rock 'n' roll,
Drink, dance, have a good time!
Turner, locksmith, don't worry—
We will work hard; we will build a new world
In our native U.S.S.R.

One, two, three, *kholera!*⁴⁶

A cow was walking down the street
and a calf behind it.
The Lemkos had achieved their five-year-plan:

Uncle was riding along on his bicycle
and had a flat tyre.
A worker and a peasant—that's a power!⁴⁷

Kuzminsky also wrote the texts for the two songs sung at the Chervona Ruta Festival by Vika Vrady, who had previously sung with the Snake Brothers as "Sister Vika": "Han'ba" (Shame), a song about the loss of cultural values, and "Shakhtars'kyi bugi" (Coalminer's Boogie), a satirical attack on proletarian positive heroes and socialist realism:

I love you for your strength
And because you give me flowers.
Beneath you I feel like a soldier under a tank
And when you drink, you sing:

[Refrain:] Coalminer's boogie, coalminer's boogie, Oh yeah!

I saw you in the crowd immediately,
Although you were dark-haired like the rest.
But in your eyes there shone such intelligence,
And you sang with a hammer in your hands.

[Refrain]

For youth all roads are open:
Straight to the coalmine with a pass from the
regional party committee.
I want to be your anthracite,
You be my hammer.

[Refrain]⁴⁸

Vika also writes the words to her own songs about male-female relationships, sex and love, school and the city life. Like Kuzminsky's songs, hers are full of humour, irony and sarcasm. In Vika's words,

We have a lot of problems in our society, in our day-to-day life, in relationships with people and so forth. And so we look at all these themes through our own prism, and we do this ironically. But the people understand what we mean.⁴⁹

The lyrics of her song "Mamo, ia durna" (Mama, I'm Stupid) are the following:

You, mama, sent me to school in Lviv.
I went to college,
I got fat like a cow on that scholarship
Because buns are cheap as in wartime.

[Refrain:] Mama! What am I to do?
Mama! Gee I'm stupid.

You told me, mama, not to go out on dates
Because the Lviv boys just want sex.
So I fell in love at last with my director.
He has a car, but he's old as a dog.

[Refrain]

I bleached my hair blonde,
I shaved my legs,
I have a manicure.
Now during the nights I study sex
And during the day I drink coffee and smoke.

Vika, who has short punk hair and dresses according to punk style in torn jeans and boots, projects toughness as well as a sense of irony and humour. She has many fans and admirers, particularly among young women, many of whom see her as a new woman role-model. Vika, who is in her thirties, is married and has a teenage son. "I do not want to be pleasing," she states. "Women always want to be beautiful. I want to be accepted as I am."⁵⁰

¹ For a history of rock music in Ukraine since the sixties see Romana Bahry, "Rock Music in Ukraine," in S.P. Ramet, ed., *Rock Music in Russia and Eastern Europe*, forthcoming. For a brief overview in English see Romana Bahry and Alexander Rudiachenko, "Rock and Roll Always Lives: The Rise of Rock Culture in Soviet Ukraine," *Compass: A Jesuit Journal*, 9(1991), No. 1, 45-49. For general overviews of rock culture in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe see Timothy W. Ryback, *Rock Around the Bloc: A History of Rock Music in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union* (New York, 1990); Artemy Troitsky, *Back in the USSR: The True Story of Rock in Russia* (Boston, 1987); Pedro Ramet, "Rock Culture in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union," *Survey: A Journal of East and West Studies*, 29(1985), No. 2, 149-80; Pedro Ramet and Sergei Zamascikov, "The Soviet Rock Scene," *Journal of Popular Culture* (Summer, 1990).

² Audio tape interview with Alexander Rudiachenko, rock and pop music critic and editor of "Fonohraf," the music section of *Moloda hvardiia* (Kiev), 31 August 1990, Kiev. Interview conducted by Romana Bahry.

³ Audio tape interview with Serhii Kuz'mins'kyi, leader of the Lviv rock band "Braty Hadiukiny," 23 May 1990, Toronto. Interview conducted by Romana Bahry.

- 4 Kyrylo Stetsenko, "Ukraina: rok festyvali 1986-1988" and "Ukraina: rok muzyka," in Artemii Troitskii, *Rok muzyka v SSSR: opyt populiarnoi entsyklopedii* (Moscow, 1990), pp. 345-47 and 338-45, respectively.
- 5 The hypnotist Kashpirovsky holds mass meetings in the Kiev sports arena during which he hypnotizes hundreds of people. See the documentary video film "Kashpirovsky: Hypnotist of the Masses," directed by Rostyslav Boon' (Kiev, 1988). Serafima Rudenskaia, who calls herself "a white witch," conducts public exorcisms in the Concert Hall "Ukraina," which are also attended by thousands of people. See also Antonina Drana, review of the documentary film "Chakluny XX stolittia," directed by Oleksandr Rozhen, *Novyny kinoekranu*, 1990, No. 3, 8-9.
- 6 Olexandr Rudiachenko, "Shcho to za sztuka Fonohraf?" in *Fonohraf daidzhest*, ed. Olexandr Rudiachenko and Olexandr Ievtushenko (Kiev, 1989), p. 4.
- 7 "Kinets' kanikul," *Novyny kinoekranu*, 1991, No. 2.
- 8 Liudmyla Novykova, "Z lehioniv Dzhona Lennona," *Novyny kinoekranu*, 1990, No. 11, 18.
- 9 "Nash Viktor," *Novyny kinoekranu*, 1991, No. 6, 14-15. Viktor Tsoi died in a car accident on 15 August 1990.
- 10 "Madonna," *Novyny kinoekranu*, 1991, No. 4, 8-9.
- 11 Nataliia Musiienko, "Znaiomtes', Batman," *Novyny kinoekranu*, 1990, No. 12, 16.
- 12 Petro Cherniaiev, "Ne v detsybelakh sprava," *Novyny kinoekranu*, 1990, No. 8, 16-17.
- 13 Ivan Dziuba, "Chy usvidomliuiemo natsional'nu kul'turu iak tsilisnist'?" in *Nauka i Kultura* (Kiev, 1988), pp. 309-25, here p. 321.
- 14 Audio tape interview with Vika Vradii, 15 May 1990, Toronto. Interview conducted by Romana Bahry.
- 15 Petro Cherniaiev, *Novyny kinoekranu*, 1990, No. 8, 16-17.
- 16 Oksana Musiienko and Nataliia Musiienko, "Deshcho pro video," *Novyny kinoekranu*, 1990, No. 6, 12-13.
- 17 "Interv"iu z liudynoiu, iaka poboialasia nazvaty svoje prizvyshche," *Novyny kinoekranu*, 1989, No. 10, 14.
- 18 Volodymyr Boriev and Oleksandr Morozov, "Fil'my zhakhiv: spetsyfika zhanru i hramatyka osiahnennia video," *Novyny kinoekranu*, 1990, No. 4, 14-15.
- 19 O. and N. Musiienko, "Deshcho pro video," *Novyny kinoekranu*, 1990, No. 6, 12-13.
- 20 See "Vy nam pysaly" (letters to the editor), *Novyny kinoekranu*, 1991, No. 3, 17.
- 21 Even the serious new independent journal *Nova heneratsiia* (New Generation), edited by Kostiantyn Kononenko, published a full-page pornographic photograph of a woman alongside literary works and articles on religion and history. *Nova heneratsiia*, 1991, September.
- 22 C. Hugh Holman and William Harmon, *A Handbook to Literature*, 5th ed. (New York, 1986), p. 447.

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- 23 Romana Bahry, "Soviet Ukrainian Documentary Films and New Directions in Filmmaking," in Romana Bahry, ed., *Echoes of Glasnost in Soviet Ukraine* (North York, 1990), pp. 188-97.
- 24 "Zalozhnyky" (Hostages), director T. Rodachenko (Kiev News and Documentary Studio, 1988).
- 25 "Ukrains'ki sela: real'nist' i perspektyvy" (Ukrainian Collective Farms: Reality and Future Prospects), director Yurii Tereshchenko (Kiev News and Documentary Studio, 1988).
- 26 "Zavtra sviato" (Tomorrow is a Holiday), director Serhii Bukovs'kyi (Kiev News and Documentary Studio, 1987).
- 27 "Krysha" (Roof), director Serhii Bukovs'kyi (Kiev News and Documentary Studio, 1990). The film won the first prize at the International Documentary Film Festival in Leipzig in 1990.
- 28 Romana Bahry, "Soviet Ukrainian Documentary Films...", p. 190. See also Larissa Onyshkevych, "Chornobyl in Soviet Ukrainian Literature," in *Echoes of Glasnost in Soviet Ukraine*, pp. 151-70.
- 29 Director B. Kvasn'ov (1990). Feature films by young directors about youth, suicide, despair and alienation include "Kordon na zamku" (The Border is Closed), director Serhii Lysenko (1988), "V daleku put'" (The Long Journey), director Les' Ianchuk (1989), and "Tranzyt" (Transit), director Ihor Shkurin. The last of these is about a veteran of the war in Afghanistan.
- 30 Mykola Riabchuk, "Ruta proty rutyny," *Nauka i kultura* (Kiev, 1990), pp. 396-404.
- 31 Kyrylo Stetsenko, program notes of the Chervona Ruta Festival, 21 September 1989, p. 3.
- 32 Pedro Ramet, "The Rock Scene in Yugoslavia," *East European Politics and Societies* (Spring, 1988).
- 33 *Vidryzhka*, No. 1, 3 and 4 respectively.
- 34 See Romana Bahry, "Soviet Ukrainian Documentary Films...", p. 189; Romana Bahrii, "Novi napriamy ta stari problemy v ukrains'komu kino," *Suchasnist'*, 1990, No. 10 and Volodymyr Honcharov, "Mini-maks-89," *Novyny kinoekranu*, 1989, No. 10, 5. After the screening in Poland in April 1989, "Demahoh" was shown at the York University Ukrainian Glasnost Film Festival in Toronto in 1989. All four segments of the film were shown for the first time at the New Orleans International Conference on "The Spirit of Satire and Soviet Cinema" at Loyola University, 26 October 1990.
- 35 Sergei Kudriavtsev lists the film *Pink Floyd—The Wall* as one of the films available in the former U.S.S.R. *Video-Catalogue 500: Films* (Moscow, 1991), p. 240.
- 36 Volodymyr Honcharov, "Pro mynule i ioho oskolky," *Novyny kinoekranu*, 1989, No. 7, 13.
- 37 Volodymyr Honcharov, "Pravda krupnym planom" (Kiev, 1988).
- 38 Serhii Bukovs'kyi, director, "Zhorna 24—Braty Hadiukyny" (Kiev, 1990). Translations of this and all subsequent song texts are by Romana Bahry. Words in italics are in English in the original.
- 39 Nataliia Marchenkova, director (Kiev, 1990).

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- 40 Nadiia Shumak, "Provintsiina istoriia na kukhni," *Novyny kinoekranu*, 1991, No. 5, 4.
- 41 Interview with Ie. Syvokin', "Boius', shchob ne zapiznytysia," *Novyny kinoekranu*, 1989, No. 10, and A. Volkov, "Persnyi krok," *Novyvy kinoekranu*, 1989, No. 10.
- 42 Antonina Syniavs'ka, "Zvychainyi khlopchyk i ioho dyvna rodyna," *Novyny kinoekranu*, 1990, No. 5, 5.
- 43 Nataliia Hrytsenko, "Kolobok, kolobok, ia tebe boius'," *Novyny kinoekranu*, 1991, No. 6, 16.
- 44 Audio cassette recording, "Pop muzykanty" (Toronto and Kiev, 1989).
- 45 "Kartoteka Pana Bazia" (Mr. Bazio's File), audio tape home-produced in Ukraine. The text has been published in Andrii Panchyshyn, *Ballads* (Toronto, 1989). Translation by Romana Bahry.
- 46 *Kholera*: literally "cholera." In Western Ukraine the expression is a mild curse.
- 47 Audio cassette recording, "Braty Hadiukiny" (home-produced in Lviv, 1989).
- 48 Audio cassette recording, "Vika" (Toronto and Kiev, 1990).
- 49 Audio interview with Vika Vradii, 15 May 1990, Toronto. Interview conducted by Romana Bahry.
- 50 Audio interview with Vika Vradii, 15 May 1990.

UKRAINE IN THE 1990s

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