

# SYKHIV:

SPACES, MEMORIES,  
PRACTICES



# **SYKHIV:** **SPACES, MEMORIES, PRACTICES**

Results of the Third Urban Summer School "Visions & Experiences"

Lviv 2018

# CONTENTS

6	<b>Sykhiv Summer Program: Beyond the Surface</b> Natalia Otrishchenko	106	<b>Ruralizing the Urban, Urbanizing the Rural</b> Matas Šiupšinskas
14	<b>Sykhiv: An Overview</b> Natalia Mysak	124	<b>Introduction: Practices</b> Svitlana Odynets
18	<b>Introduction: Spaces</b> Natalia Mysak	126	<b>(Un)controlled (In)formality. Sykhiv's Small Businesses in the Wasteland of Perpetual Transition</b> Jelica Jovanović
20	<b>FLUID SPACES</b> Mariya Benovska, Oscar Damerham, Kacper Kępiński, Jana Kočková, Alla Onopchenko, Aliaksandra Strashynskaya	136	<b>Looking for Signs of Gentrification in Sykhiv</b> Otakar Bursa
60	<b>Introduction: Memories</b> Iryna Sklokina	142	<b>What is the Network of Sykhiv-based Services? The Issue of Everyday Practices</b> Oleksii Tkachenko
62	<b>Invisible Postmodernism in Sykhiv. The Case of “Santa Barbara”</b> Anna Barbieri	148	<b>Looking for Baghdad. The Case of Informal Youth Groups in “Iskra”</b> Joanna Lickiewicz
72	<b>Childhood in Mass Housing</b> Yevhenii Vasiukov	152	<b>Sykhiv: No Place for Usain Discovering the Places, Where the Little Human Can Start His/Her Big Sports Career</b> Hanna Tsupko
82	<b>Migration, Memory, and Integration in a Soviet Mass Housing Estate. Chornobyl and Crimea Shaping Sykhiv</b> Dimitra Glenti	174	<b>Authors</b>
96	<b>“Very diverse, very good, sometimes very bad... where my home is:” Place Attachment and Memory of Sykhiv Residents</b> Tetiana Mandzyk		



## SYKHIV SUMMER PROGRAM: BEYOND THE SURFACE

Natalia Otrishchenko

Lviv is an Eastern European city with a history dating back to the thirteenth century. When you google this name, you will probably see a beautiful opera house, the medieval Market square, and attractive baroque churches. However, the majority of current Lviv's population lives within an urban environment created during the second half of the twentieth century. The difference between imagined and experienced Lviv, between pictures from the media and the everyday life of people, motivated us to focus on (post)socialist urbanity.

Sykhiv is the biggest residential area and the last among those centrally designed in Lviv. The construction of residential buildings was mainly completed due to the original idea during 1980s, but many public facilities and infrastructural projects remained unimplemented. After the contextual shifts that occurred with the independence of Ukraine, urban transformations on many different levels have been taking place in the district. Since then Sykhiv started being complemented by new structures and functions, and its urban landscape is facing transformations from prescribed to flexible and liquid meanings, as a greater variety of actors is involved in the process of the (re)invention of Sykhiv. The conceptualization of different types of links between symbolic, material, and social levels of once planned spaces is important for the development of visions of a desirable future of such urban areas. Rethinking mass housing districts and the challenges they face today is also about looking beyond the dichotomies (public / private, urban / rural, center / periphery, traditional / modern, old / new, etc.), which are often used as explanatory tools.

The Sykhiv Summer Program is the third in the row of "Urban Summer Schools: Visions and Experiences" program, either coordinated or co-organized by the Center for Urban History. Two previous schools—"Novyi Lviv" and "Idea of the City: Reality Check"—were held in 2015 and 2016 respectively. Based on our experience of trials and errors, we developed a methodology based on the following key principles:

- **Interdisciplinarity:** facilitating the dialog and cooperation between urban planning, architecture, history, anthropology, cultural geography, sociology, and various other professional fields in order to find adequate responses to current urban challenges;
- **Education through Research:** applying developed-in-the-process methodological tools to specific contexts and situations, comprehensive fieldwork, discussions, and analysis in order to understand our case-study;



1. Participants of Summer School during city walk around Sykhiv, 14 August 2017.  
Photo: Andrii Polikovskiy.

- **Engagement:** bridging education, research, and practice to promote the involvement of professionals, local inhabitants, and activists into spatial development; collaborative knowledge production;
- **Public outreach:** conducting studies that directly or indirectly led to the benefits of community, sharing the results with various audiences in diverse formats.

Therefore, every summer program has three interconnected parts: an international school for young professionals with an emphasis on education and research; a series of public lectures and discussions for the local population; and activities for children. With educational initiatives, we do not provide readymade research questions or methodological instruments—they are developed in the process of teamwork and are simultaneously based on the interests and competences of participants and the general framework of the school. With public programs, we work on “people’s territory,” with people, and for people, as well as cooperate with various local stakeholders. The program focused on Sykhiv consisted of the International Summer School “Sykhiv: Spaces, Memories, Practices,” a series of public events for a general audience called “Sykhiv by Night,” and a summer camp for local children called “Sykhiv: Like and Share.”

#### INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL “SYKHIV: SPACES, MEMORIES, PRACTICES” (13-27 AUGUST 2017)

- School has explored the situations, changes, and challenges of mass housing districts through a combination of architectural, anthropological, sociological, and historical research tools that allow more comprehensive understanding of (former) planned urbanity. The educational program was designed for graduate and postgraduate students (masters and doctoral level) and young scholars both from Ukraine and from abroad. It consisted of a set of two short courses (“A History of the Socialist City: Five Blueprints for Modernity from the Second World” by Dr. Daria Bocharnikova and “The Functionalist City and Its Critics” by Prof. Florian Urban), methodological workshops, a meeting with local activists and urban planners, a study trip to Novyi Rozdil, and field-work in three theme-based studios.
- The “Spaces” studio reinterpreted the Sykhiv district physical space, its structure, and characteristics through spatial analysis and a consideration of users’ perspectives. While intended links within the Sykhiv “micro-districts,” as well as those between the whole district



2. Public lecture by Natalia Mysak at the Center for Urban History, 14 August 2017.  
Photo: Andrii Polikovskiy.

and the rest of the city, were not effective in the changing contexts, alternative links and spaces have been emerging in the district along with the construction of new architectural and infrastructural objects (such as churches, trade centers, tram line, etc.) and changing life conditions. During the studio, students focused on the ways space is produced in the district and developed a narrative on it.

- The “Memories” studio worked with the imaginations and expectations of the residents before moving to Sykhiv and after it. The main question was how the previous experiences of inhabitants were used and rethought in order to adapt to Sykhiv, to appropriate it, and to make it a socially meaningful place. Students considered the broader issue of what are the symbolic resources (related to “history” or not) that are used by dwellers from different groups for their empowerment, struggling for change, and imagining the future of the district.

- The “Practices” studio analyzed the experiences of inhabitants related to the place and functions of the Sykhiv area on the symbolic map of Lviv. The migration of people in Sykhiv also was an important focus for the studio, including “old” migrations from nearby villages to Sykhiv in the 1980s, the “new” internal migrations from Sykhiv to other city districts after partial deindustrialization, as well as current transnational migrations to EU countries after the 1990s. Students looked into the different types of social and material capital that is circulating in these migrations, and the new practices in everyday life.

#### SERIES OF OPEN LECTURES AND DISCUSSIONS “SYKHIV BY NIGHT” (14-22 AUGUST 2017)

- The program has targeted primarily Sykhiv inhabitants. The program promoted a new vision of common spaces, as each event was taking place in a new location. The six events launched a discussion on various aspects of life of Sykhiv and its similarities and differences from other “new” districts. Architects, artists, anthropologists, and historians reflected on the transformations of planned areas, their symbolic representations, and the peculiarities of everyday life for inhabitants of modernist districts.

The guest speakers and discussants of the program were Natalia Mysak (Center for Urban History, Lviv Polytechnic National University, Ukraine), Izabela Pastuszko (Marie Skłodowska-Curie University, Poland), Vlad Naumesku (Central European University, Hungary), Daria Bocharnikova (Leuven Catholic University, Belgium), and Florian Urban (Mackintosh School of Architecture, Glasgow School of Art, UK). Furthermore, there was a discussion “Sykhiv in/for art” with artists Natalia Tulina-Maruniak (project “Sykhiv is Sexy”), Oleh Perkovskyi (project “The Whole Town Downtown”) and Denys Fedieshov (“Domus” theater) moderated by Bohdan Shumylovych (Center for Urban History, Ukraine).

Through our public outreach activities, the school helped to form an increased and historically informed awareness of the social conditions of living in Soviet-era mass housing districts not only in local academia but also among residents of Sykhiv and Lviv themselves. This is a key precondition for people to start creative engagement with their environment, reflect on their attachment to the place, and articulate their needs for the future.

#### SUMMER CAMP FOR LOCAL CHILDREN “SYKHIV: LIKE AND SHARE” (14-18 AUGUST 2017)

- The camp was held in cooperation with the Lviv City Council and coordinated by Khrystyna Boiko from the Center for Urban History. The main goal of the project was to develop, together with children, a vision of the future of Sykhiv through conducting their own exploration and cooperation with professional scholars and practitioners, which would contribute to the diversification of the image of Lviv and the promotion of new districts.

We are convinced that the implementation of the “child-expert” principle in educational practice is the way to educate a generation of young people who know how to work with urban space and are ready to take responsibility for the development and implementation of their own ideas. The camp involved thirteen local children (age 10-16) and consisted of meeting with experts (architect, designer, PR-specialist), intense fieldwork, and discussions for the development of alternative guides to the area. It will contain game elements, an educational function, and will introduce a new vision to the area based on the ideas of young Sykhiv inhabitants.



3. Educational program for children, 18 August 2017.  
Photo: Nadine Egorova.



4. Public lecture by Florian Urban at Dovzhenko cinema, 22 August 2017.  
Photo: Pavlo Palamarchuk.

The educational programs for children are important part of our work. They help us to show the importance of every youngest citizen as an active co-author of urban life. These programs are an opportunity for their participants to learn more about the city, to share their experiences and visions, and to jointly think of alternative methods of urban development. With this activity we create playing models and interactive forms of talking about the city together: about its past, present, and future, and about complicated notions in simple forms and in simple words.

This summer program is a result of joint efforts of a group of people and contribution of various institutions. I would like to thank the team of tutors—Natalia Mysak, Iryna Sklokina, and Svitlana Odynets—for their professionalism, devotion, and optimism; all colleagues from the Center for Urban History, who invested into this summer school their time and skills. This school would not be possible without generous support from the Heinrich Boll Foundation Office in Ukraine. It was also awarded with the Leipzig Prize for Integral Urban Development and informationally supported by the Lviv municipal enterprise “Lvivelectrotrans.” And my warmest thanks to the participants of the International Summer School “Sykhiv: Spaces, Memories, Practices”: “Spaces” studio—Mariya Benovska, Oscar Damerham, Kacper Kępiński, Jana Kočková, Alla Onopchenko, and Aliaksandra Strashynskaya; “Memories” studio—Anna Barbieri, Dimitra Glenti, Tetyana Mandzyk, Matas Šiupšinskas, and Yevhenii Vasiukov; “Practices” studio—Otakar Bursa, Joanna Lickiewicz, Jelica Jovanović, Oleksii Tkachenko, and Hanna Tsupko. Their work is the core of this program and this volume. ■

## SYKHIV: AN OVERVIEW

Natalia Mysak

The areas of mass housing in post-socialist cities are often described with standard narratives, from which we rarely deviate, if there are no obvious reasons to do it. These are large-scale homogeneous developments that arose on the outskirts of the majority of large cities in the second half of the twentieth century and were functionally associated with industrial production. Ironically, many of them inherited the names of villages or settlements that were (partially) demolished in order to manifest modernity in a new form. Since the construction of modernist residential areas and until now, their image has radically changed from a positioning as the utopia of the future to the least desirable place to live. In the process of transition to capitalism, such areas were chaotically transformed, and associated with new social constructs. This is what we often see when looking at a “typical” area of mass housing development in the post-socialist city of Eastern Europe. The participants of the summer school were able to look beyond the standard history and engineering structures of prefabricated panel blocks and explore the very local features of the modernist residential area of Sykhiv in Lviv.

The standard story about the formation of residential areas in Lviv, which were built rapidly during the 1960s and 1980s, can be started from the active industrialization of the city that began in the second half of the 1940s and the large-scale pendulum migration of workers of new factories. Applying the city's planning principle of micro-district and the industrial construction method, a new working settlement for the 120 thousand inhabitants—Sykhiv—was about to appear on the southeastern outskirts of the city in accordance with the general plan of 1965. This construction

began in the 1970s, and the first residential building was put into operation in 1981. According to the city planning concept, the territory of 390 hectares was divided into three planning areas which consisted of thirteen micro-districts, each of which was designed for seven to ten thousand inhabitants. The main elements of the district were large-panel nine-story residential buildings of the 84-typical-series, developed by the Central Research Institute of Experimental Housing Design in Moscow, and substantially modified by Lviv architects. The geography of the application of this residential series, which with certain modifications could be found also in Pripjat, Energodar, Narva, Tikhvin, Cheboksary, Novovoronezh, St. Petersburg, and a number of other cities of the former Soviet Union, are much wider than the geographies of the first inhabitants: people from suburban villages or from other districts of Lviv. Almost all residential buildings were implemented in accordance with a detailed plan, but a number of infrastructure and public facilities, including the complex of the public core of the district, remained on paper because of the economic crisis that began in the late 1980s.

Today, Sykhiv is the largest centrally-planned residential area of Lviv. Together with the changes that accompanied Ukraine's independence, the district began to undergo transformations on different levels. It has been filled with new structures and functions, and still remains one of the most actively developing areas of Lviv. Sykhiv is attractive for investors and at the same time there is an active position by the local community, the composition of which has significantly changed today. Despite the fact that a decade ago Sykhiv often was not even considered part of Lviv, it became increasingly integrated into the city structure and processes. Its transformations can to some extent be positioned in opposition to the general idea of the “failure of the project of modernism.” ■





## INTRODUCTION: SPACES

Natalia Mysak

The research about spatial aspects of Sykhiv residential area can be considered a rather abstract task, despite the specifics of the physical form of mass housing. Given that the space of modernist districts is often interpreted as one with consistent attributes inherent in the “post-” context, the studio was intended to rethink the morphology of Sykhiv, combining spatial analysis with research on practices and perceptions. To do this, it was necessary to outline the specific type of urbanity with transformational structure, dynamic boundaries, and hybrid processes.

The participants of the studio—Mariya Benovska, Oscar Damerham, Kacper Kępiński, Jana Kočková, Alla Onopchenko, and Aliaksandra Strashynskaya—are representatives of various disciplines (architecture, city planning, landscape design, urban studies, social studies, political science) and geographies of academic and living experience (Belarus, Great Britain, Australia, Estonia, Ukraine, Sweden, Poland, France, Czech Republic, Hungary, and elsewhere), which helped us to look at the area in the broader context. Therefore, we tried to form a common theoretical and methodological basis in the form of a dialogue between the disciplines and the academic approaches of the participants. The central issue of the studio was related to the physical space, which, however, was determined to a greater extent due to the “intangible” properties of the environment.

During the first discussions we conducted “mapping” of the experiences and research interests of the participants. By supplementing it with field observations, we decided to stay on the topic of “water” in the broad sense, which is relevant both for the area and close or interesting to each researcher. Therefore, we tried to interpret the initial interest in the research on water from different perspectives: water

consumption culture, the right to water, water as a resource, water as a part of artificial landscape in the general planning hierarchy of the neighborhood and district, etc. We highlighted two research questions in our study: “How does water influence the formation of the living space of a residential area?” and “How does the formation of the living space area affect water?”

The methodology was built on the intersection of interpretations of water concepts and modernist design principles. Taking into account that one of the central intentions of modernist planning (to reduce the functional links between objects) was not implemented when the political and economic contexts changed, new connections and transformations of morphology began to emerge in residential areas. How do these links interact with “water” as a basic daily need, or, for example, a seasonal need for recreation or healing? The application of the concept of service radiuses in the structure of the micro-districts allows us to rethink the meaning of this planning method.

Also, the participants of the studio tried to make a direct impact on the environment using artistic means: an intervention by the sound of water in the place of a dry fountain, which, according to the inhabitants’ memories, worked only twice. It can be considered as a research method and as a way of activating the inhabitants, an opportunity to convey the collected information on water (the map of the water objects of Sykhiv), both available and lost.

It is important to note that the theme of water management is becoming increasingly relevant for the city: recently it was addressed at the level of experimental educational and municipal projects. We hope that the developed methodological concept can be further adopted for the study of Sykhiv and other modernist areas, and the group essay “Fluid Spaces” will become a small contribution to finding alternative ways to analyze the concept of “water” in urban space, particularly, in Sykhiv and Lviv. ■

## FLUID SPACES

Mariya Benovska, Oscar Damerham,  
Kacper Kępiński, Jana Kočková,  
Alla Onopchenko, Aliaksandra Strashynskaya

### INTRODUCTION

Lviv is approximately six hundred kilometers from the nearest coastline, situated between the Baltic and Black Seas in western Ukraine. The city is located on the sources of two river systems which flow in opposite directions, yet it lacks any major water bodies itself. Whilst certainly not deficient in rainfall, Lviv can appear to be a city bereft of water, dehydrated at times, its urban fabric missing a liquid framework to center itself around. Some might suggest this absence of rivers and lakes is of little consequence, yet it is the purpose of this research project to demonstrate that water is a fundamental part of urban life, emerging from the core basis that, as humans, “we came from water; our bodies are largely water; and water plays a fundamental role in our psychology” (Alexander 1977: 323). A city without water therefore comes into direct conflict with these fundamentals of human existence, an existence which is increasingly being concentrated into urban spaces. Through exploring the geographies and narratives around water, or lack thereof, in the district of Sykhiv, at the southern edge of Lviv, this project will seek to study both the effect of water on space and the effect of space on water within a context of water paucity, both natural and man-made, in Sykhiv.

Departing from this context, this project will aim to employ a mixed methods approach in seeking to discover the swimming, ornamental and natural pools of Sykhiv, as well as the streams and pipes of drinking water, fountains, sources, rivers and ponds of the district. In doing so, we shall first contextualize Sykhiv from its foundation as a collection of Soviet “microraiion” developments through an analysis of microraiion Modernist theory and its perspectives on the place of nature and



1. Scheme: Sykhiv (green) in the structure of the city.  
Design: Natalia Mysak.

water within a larger, highly engineered whole, labelled as the **INTENDED**. Developing upon this, our project will then focus on the actualized results of these intentions, studying the BUILT through an implementation of critiques found in *The Future of the City* (Будущее Города) around rethinking microraiions through the concepts of “Frame,” “Texture,” and “Plasma,” and the place of water and nature within this. Arriving at the present condition, we will then present our fieldwork which charts the various **TRANSFORMED** spaces of the district, studying the everyday means by which the residents of Sykhiv interact with water through mapping, interviews, and observations. The final section of this booklet will then propose **POTENTIALS** for the interaction between space and water in Sykhiv, through a whimsical intervention experimenting with sound and memory at an abandoned fountain in central Sykhiv.

### LVIV AND SYKHIV

■ The context of this research, Sykhiv, was the driving force behind this project, influencing both the methods chosen as well as the theoretical ideas explored. Built upon a previously agricultural area, Sykhiv is a residential district in southern Lviv and is home to 146,847 people in 1,681 units (Cherkes 2013: 68). The district is made up of three sub-districts and twelve microraiions and was founded as a worker’s area for up to 120,000 people in 1970, quickly becoming the largest panel housing estate in Lviv (Cherkes 2013: 68). Based on the Soviet ideology of urban planning at the time, Sykhiv was envisaged

Union in the 1950s to establish efficient urban districts within rapidly expanding Soviet cities, and to create an urban environment and the social conditions for a new Soviet way of life heavily influenced by Modernism. The emergence of such developments was stimulated by the Nikita Khrushchev's decree "On Architectural Excess" in which he demanded industrialized construction to solve the housing crisis (Anderson 2015: 5). The microraiion was therefore planned as a highly systematized organizational concept defined by a set of rules that sought to optimize the functionality, efficiency, and serviceability of the city as a whole, coupled with serving the environmental and social needs of inhabitants in each district of the city. The microraiion was intended to occupy a clearly defined territory, delimited by streets with intense traffic or by other strong dividing elements, such as waterways, or railways (Maxim 2009). Key planning principles included residential apartment blocks and a mixture of government, public service, and amenities in a ten to sixty-hectare zone (for between 8,000 and 12,000 residents); a pedestrian-friendly zone with major roadways around the perimeter and easy access to transportation (Jull 2016: 216). To achieve a certain functional and experiential cohesion, its territory was not to be crossed by important streets, and pedestrian and car traffic was to be, preferably, separated inside the microraiion itself. The novelty of life inside the socialist microraiion was both conceived in pragmatic terms (access to basic facilities, sewer, running water, etc.), and in ideological imperatives, with the undoing of old social networks based on the extended family and the subservience of women. Yet



2. Model of the Sykhiv district, 1970s.  
Source: Archive of "Mistoprojekt"

to become a perfected Soviet settlement to service the factories located nearby. In turn, the district was built to shorten the daily commute of workers, which had previously taken place between surrounding villages and Lviv's industrial areas. Its public institutions and urban structure were to provide an ideological re-education of these workers and their families into the communist spirit. On a city-planning level, this goal was manifested through the enlargement of open public spaces as well as the provision of public kindergartens and other community services. After the collapse of the USSR, and the instability that ensued, Sykhiv gained a reputation as being a dangerous, crime-ridden neighborhood. However, over the past several years the perception of the district has improved, partly due to its accessible facilities, improved connections to the city center, and its active community life. Indeed, Bohdan Cherkes claims that "in contrast with other districts, residents of Sykhiv form a strong community and solve almost all problems together." (Cherkes 2013: 69)

### INTENDED

■ Coming to this point we therefore find an inland city, bereft of bodies of water and a district in its south constructed through a Soviet ideology in which Modernism, executed through the model of the microraiion, dominates. To now understand the interaction between this inland, Modernist space and water, it is first important to recognize the intentions behind the formation of Sykhiv's urban form and the ideology which was at the core of shaping it. The concept of the microraiion was developed in the Soviet

what proved to be most attractive was the quality of the flat, its salubrious character, its modern sanitary fittings, and the proximity they had to basic services. (Maxim 2009: 24). However, what was the place of water and nature within this highly planned “whole”?

The place of nature within these intended microraiions has been explored by Dimitrij Zadorin (2009). He explains the core logic of the microraiion with a “System of Stepped Services.” According to this system the city was divided into three scales, each of which was responsible for certain amenities, and within which a hierarchy of services dependent upon the frequency of use could be found. The smallest unit of microraiions consisted of facilities necessary for daily use: schools, kindergartens, grocery stores, and community services. The medium residential scale contained buildings used periodically, which included cinemas, restaurants, polyclinics, and shops selling manufactured goods. Finally, the largest scale was designed to encompass theatres, zoos, and exhibition halls for the pleasure of the district’s residents. Importantly, within this system, the Modernist lens of perceiving nature and water purely as resource-dominated, for instance accessibility to drinking and hot water to each apartment, was taken as matter of course whilst the place of rivers or ponds was largely ignored beyond their infrastructural uses or geographically delaminating features. Rivers and streams were perceived as boundaries rather than attractive centers for public spaces or natural diversity. In the words of Marcel Locar (1960), we can therefore describe the intended microraiion as a residential ensemble conceived so as to constitute an organic unity, intended to connect its inhabitants through the everyday use of shared social and cultural institutions. Yet this ensemble ignored the multifaceted and complex place of nature and water within it. Ironically, the “organic unity” which was aimed for neglected, and even separated itself from, those very biological flows which surrounded it.

Theoretical ideas around intended relationships between buildings, cities, and nature have long been at the forefront of the discourses around architecture and urban design. Considering parameters such as form, scale, materiality, energy, and site have been systematically developed over the past one hundred years with increasing accuracy (Jull 2016: 215). However, one can note the absence of a debate on architectural theory or urban planning based on the classical triad of firmitas, utilitas, and venustas within the discourse behind the intended microraiions such as the units within the structure

of Sykhiv. Furthermore, it can be claimed that the plans behind the intended microraiion paid little attention to local urban development history and context (Meuser 2015: 156). Soviet mass housing is therefore usually blamed for creating the most monotonous built environments in the history of mankind, thus constituting a symbol of individual suppression and dejection. Yet, due to the very scale of construction, the strict, fiercely practical and rationalized intended microraiion evolved into a complex world denoting an abundance of myths and secrets, achievements, and failures. This in turn allowed for informal adjustments to take place, and even for nature and water to be introduced or mutated by those existing in the lived reality of the developments. With this understanding of the intended microraiion, of an “organic unity” which neglected nature yet whose scale left space for it to creep in, we shall now approach the microraiion’s intended water infrastructure as the political and technological system it is, and which transformed “nature” into “city” (Kaika & Swyngedouw 2000). In doing so, this research project hopes to untangle the political, cultural, and material values hidden amongst the interactions between space and water in Sykhiv as it was built.



**3. Residential yard of the micro district in Sykhiv.**  
Photo: Aliaksandra Strashinskaya.



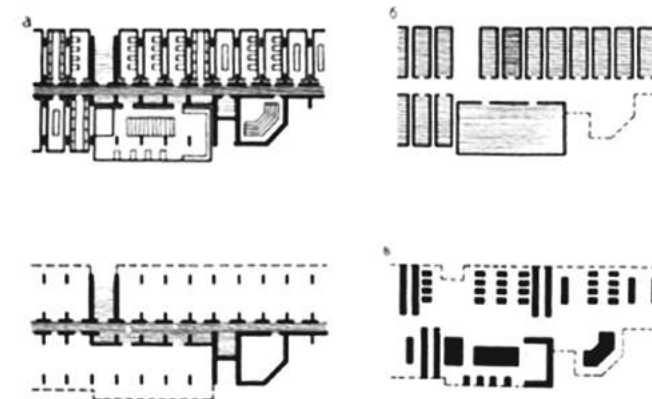
4. Residential yard of the micro district in Sykhiv.  
Photo: Kacper Kępiński.

## BUILT

■ The intention of the microraiion was therefore to create perfected districts whose structure would create a “complete” life for the model Soviet citizen and an organic unity which extricated the district out from its surroundings, both natural and manmade. However, this rigid microraiion format saw early critique, notably in *The Future of the City* (Будущее Города), from 1977, which sought to break out of the cemented, finalized structure of the “intended” microraiion and reflect a reality in which the microraiion was already evolving and mutating away from its intended form. In the formation of this critique the authors sought to introduce the influence of time into the thinking around the development of the microraiion. As a result, the terms “Framework,” “Texture,” and “Plasma” appeared as the three primary notions of an understanding of the more dynamic urban structure the built microraiion districts were appearing to be. The concept of the “Framework” was created to describe the heavy infrastructure of the microraiion, for example its major roads. The “Textures” of this reformed understanding came to stand for the residential blocks within the wider framework, and finally the “Plasma” referred to the smaller architectural forms of the districts as well as the districts’ constituent natural elements. This “Plasma” was proposed as the most flexible and malleable elements of the reconsidered microraiion.



5. Cover of the book Gutnov, Alexei & Ilya Lezhava.  
*The Future of the City* (Будущее Города).  
Stroiizdat Publishers, 1977.



6. Scheme: frame-texture-plasma. From: Gutnov, Alexei & Ilya Lezhava.  
*The Future of the City* (Будущее Города).  
Stroiizdat Publishers, 1977.

The ideas presented in the *The Future of the City* therefore signaled a break with traditional thinking around the independent, perfected organic unity of microraisons and towards a more flexible perception of these districts. Indeed, the inclusion of nature within the “plasma” concept heralded a shift towards seeing nature and water in the microraision as an adaptable service within the district. Parks, lakes, waterways, and forests were to be considered as spaces of temporary use, of value to the population as long as they remained wanted and appropriate. Importantly, this reformed understanding of the microraision continued to view nature as a pure infrastructure of the district, present only at the behest of residents and not for the value and benefit “of nature for nature’s sake.” This perspective on functional nature can also be demonstrated in the context of Sykhiv as it was built, one can observe how the few bodies of water which do exist have variously been activated and deactivated according to need. Take for example the abandoned fountain in the central square, used as a cooling pool for the nearby cinema’s projector, but when rendered useless



7. School sports ground in Sykhiv.  
Photo: Aliaksandra Strashinskaya.

by a new projector system, was left empty and to deteriorate. Indeed, where water and nature are found they merely serve as utilitarian formations whether that be in runoff canalization ditches or the drained lake previously fed by the Zubra River.

These built divergences from the intended microraision can be found in districts throughout the former USSR. Indeed, Kuba Snopek’s analysis of the Moscow residential district of Belyayevo illustrates this clearly. Take for example the evolution of the green belt running around Belyayevo’s diameter, which he describes as having been “irreversibly built up with large-size commercial objects; making up the biggest crack on the district’s integrity.” (Snopek 2015: 81) This district of Moscow therefore demonstrates the changeable treatment of nature within the actualized and built microraisions that it contains, a planned green belt deemed unnecessary and subjugated by other demands, the plasma of the microraisions accepting its recessive fate. Beyond natural infrastructures and returning back to our context of Sykhiv, “some other significant changes (in Sykhiv) are evident: apartments on the ground floors of residential buildings along the main roads have been converted into shops and offices, the former Soviet apartments transformed according to European standards.” (Cherkes 2015: 4) In short, the built residential district diverges from the intended as a result of being “confronted with real life. Orthogonal geometry and purist aesthetics come in contact with the natural and “organic” behavior of people; spaces designed for the average man, with the diversity of the actual population (Snopek 2015: 36). Landlocked Sykhiv and its intended organic unity is therefore perforated by the forces of time, its cemented nature evolving yet continuing to be understood as infrastructure, its landscape of water both ignored and mutated.

## TRANSFORMED

### ■ Introduction & Methods

Having recognized the intended microraision development and ensuing built interactions between water and space in Sykhiv that resulted, our research studio undertook a short-term qualitative research of the contemporary water landscape of Sykhiv over a week in late August 2017. This included undertaking semi-structured interviews with locals as well as with professionals; furthermore, we completed several mapping exercises and a series of lengthy observations in

and around the district. Our studio was made up of six members, two of which were Ukrainians and one of whom was a local to Lviv, and with the other four members coming from other European countries. This research grouping also contained members with a mixture of academic backgrounds, from architecture to sociology to urbanism.

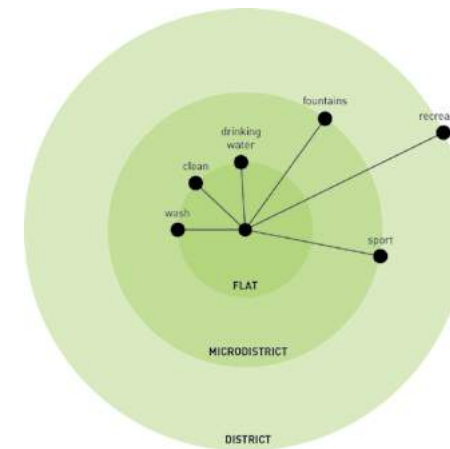
In total, we conducted interviews with ten local residents, five women and five men aged between 27 and 65 (approximately). Some of our interviewees had grown up in the neighborhood while some had moved to Sykhiv recently. The form and settings of each interview varied greatly, from merely talking in a resident's home, to sitting in a café, to go-along interviews through the neighborhood and to group interviews. The final part of each interview involved the creation of a mental map which helped us as researchers understand where the water of Sykhiv was (or was not) present in the minds of our selected Sykhivians. Apart from our interviews with locals we also talked to architects with a focus on water-related matters, urban planners who had created the original plans for Sykhiv, and local activists who have sought to make Sykhiv's public spaces more livable. Most of the interviews were conducted in Ukrainian and simultaneously translated into English, and some were conducted only in English. There were also interviews undertaken solely in Ukrainian and translated afterwards for our non-Ukrainian speaking researchers. We believe that this language barrier did not inordinately affect the collected data as we were not searching for semiotic hidden meanings, but we were interested in the practices, memories, and needs regarding water and nature in Sykhiv which were expressed by the interviewees clearly.

Further sources of qualitative data were the field notes from the observations undertaken by members of the research team. As part of this the researchers lived in Sykhiv for two weeks, staying at a hotel in the center of the district. This contextual immersion therefore provided a wealth of opportunities for both intentional and inadvertent observations of the neighborhood as the researchers each went about their daily routines. These observations often resulted in brief conversations with local residents as they helped us in our attempts to map the interaction between space and water in Sykhiv. Often our project's observations and informal interviews therefore became intertwined with the mapping exercise which was also a key method for this research. Indeed, they aided in revealing the hidden, unmapped ponds, streams, and ditches of

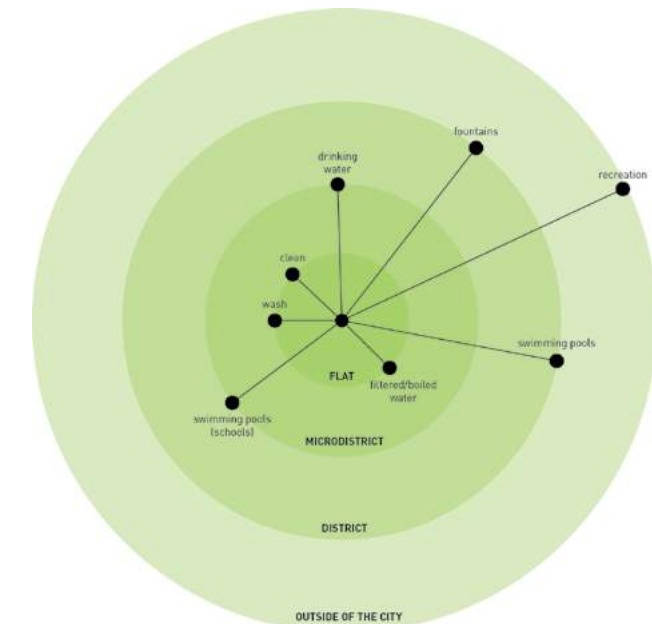
the district, allowing for the formation of a new "liquid" geography of Sykhiv. Through these mixed methods we therefore attempted to discover where the water in Sykhiv is located and how it shapes the mobility of the residents. We also sought to discover how the intended microraiions of Sykhiv were transformed over the years in relation to water—both natural and artificial.

### ■ Overview

As we have understood, the water landscape of Sykhiv diverges between what was intended and what was built. In general, the water supply and water accessibility within microraiions was originally subjected to a planned hierarchy. On the level of flats, each inhabitant of a microraiion was to have access to running drinking water, water for washing and cleaning, and of course each flat was to be connected to a wastewater sewer. On the level of the microraiion within the wider residential



8. Diagram: Intended functional radiuses of accessibility of different types of water sources. Design: Kacper Kępiński.



9. Diagram: Existing radiuses of accessibility to different types of water sources. Design: Kacper Kępiński.



district, approximately three to five hundred meters distance from the flat, there was to be water in the public space with an aesthetic function as well as sport facilities such as swimming pools. On a district level, a maximum distance of approximately seven kilometers from the flat, there was to be water with recreational functions such as a lake or river. However, this research will argue that in the case of Sykhiv these promises were not fulfilled as a result of aforementioned built realities, apartment privatizations, and a lack of finances within the public sector. The following section will detail each form of water within Sykhiv, detailing their spatial functions, residents' interactions with them, and their contemporary state. Each will help weave together the transformed geography of water in Sykhiv and how it interacts with the spaces around them.

### ■ Running water

In Sykhiv access to the drinking water has been problematic since the district's very beginning. Even running water up to the flats has not always been a reality as promised in the intended plans of the Soviet microraion. Some Sykhivians still remember the period when water was only running



10. Water transfer.  
Photo: Kacper Kępiński.

### ■ AQUATERMINALS (24H/7)

- 1 - vul. Chukarina, 26
- 2 - Chervonoyi Kalyny Ave, 40
- 3 - Chervonoyi Kalyny Ave, 49
- 4 - vul. Oleksandra Dovzhenka, 1
- 5 - Chervonoyi Kalyny Ave, 61
- 6 - vul. Manastyrskoho, 2
- 7 - vul. Sykhivska, 10
- 8 - vul. Morozna, 21
- 9 - vul. Sukhivska, 5
- 10 - vul. Polubotka, 13
- 11 - vul. Ivana Kavaleridze, 8
- 12 - vul. Ivana Kavaleridze, 19
- 13 - vul. Kos-Anatolskoho, 18
- 14 - vul. Kolomyiska, 18
- 15 - Chervonoyi Kalyny Ave, 97
- 16 - Chervonoyi Kalyny Ave, 103
- 17 - vul. Antonycha, 10
- 18 - vul. Antonycha, 20
- 19 - vul. Kyryla Trylyovskoho, 33
- 20 - vul. Drahana, 1
- 21 - vul. Drahana, 24
- 22 - vul. Skrypnyka, 39
- 23 - vul. Skrypnyka, 27
- 24 - vul. Drahana, 14
- 25 - vul. Skrypnyka, 17

### ■ WATER SHOP

- 1 - Chervonoyi Kalyny Ave, 38
- 2 - Chervonoyi Kalyny Ave, 48
- 3 - Chervonoyi Kalyny Ave, 39
- 4 - vul. Oleksandra Dovzhenka, 5
- 5 - vul. Manastyrskoho, 2
- 6 - vul. Sykhivska, 16a
- 7 - Chervonoyi Kalyny Ave, 85a
- 8 - vul. Polubotka, 13
- 9 - vul. Kos-Anatolskoho, 12
- 10 - vul. Kolomyiska, 7
- 11 - vul. Kyryla Trylyovskoho, 5
- 12 - vul. Kyryla Trylyovskoho, 16
- 13 - vul. Antonycha, 22
- 14 - vul. Vernadskoho, 14
- 15 - vul. Skrypnyka, 5
- 16 - vul. Drahana, 4
- 17 - vul. Drahana, 30



11. Map: Aqua terminals and water shops in Sykhiv.  
Accessibility: 5-minute walk.  
Graphics: Kacper Kępiński.

from 6 A.M. to 9 A.M. and then for only three hours in the evening, with one resident recalling that *“if you didn't manage to get home from work before 9 P.M. you had to go to the bed dirty.”* Families often solved this situation by creating water reservoirs at home, *“so we always had water all over the flat, in the bathroom, toilet, everywhere, in the kitchen as well.”* It was usually the mother who was responsible for water management in families. In Sykhiv, the water shutdowns gradually transformed from being a continual annoyance to being part of everyday life. A number of respondents still recalled that the water also used to have very strong smell and tasted of chlorine, *“this smell of our water was our specificity, I still remember the smell of it.”* Although nowadays water shutdowns are not so regular, there are still interruptions in the hot water supply. As some of the respondents mentioned: *“...they sometimes switch the hot water off and for several months we have no hot water. So we use gas to heat water. It is not a problem when you are alone in the flat but last year there were eight of us in the flat...”*. Indeed, the people of Sykhiv held fresh memories of encountering problems with access to running water. For instance, there was recently no hot running water for three months over summer due to pipe repairs. These conditions pushed some respondents to buy a personal water heater in order to avoid any inconveniences in the future and save money at the same time.



**12. Water shop**  
Photo: Kacper Kepiński.



**13. Aquaterminal.**  
Photo: Kacper Kepiński.

Another issue this research came across was the quality of accessible drinking water. Although microrraions were meant to have reached the Modernist goal of comfortable and hygienic housing, that is not the case in contemporary Sykhiv. Today, water is indeed available 24/7, but the quality is said to be less than satisfactory. It was said by some respondents that the running water in the city center is much better, at least because it is possible to filter and drink it, despite the fact that it does contain chlorine. Opinions on the quality of tap water in Sykhiv did differ however. Long term residents remembered the days when they drank the water from the tap without the use of any special measures such as filters or boiling before consumption. Later people started to use filters (“Brita”), and today reverse osmosis filters are considered to be the most efficient water purifier. Although some respondents claimed that the water from tap is not defective, none of them drank it and residents buy drinking water from shops or water “automats” dotted around the district. In the afternoons in Sykhiv we observed queues of people waiting for the water at these shops and automats, bringing it home in five liter plastic bottles, yet some claimed to order water deliveries from the water companies. Although the water in the water automats cost less than one hryvnia, the need to buy water outside can be said to demonstrate a failure of the Modernist promise of perfected urban unity and also suggests that water has become commercialized and commodified in this urban landscape of water paucity.

### ■ Swimming Pools

Moving away from the essential water to sports and recreation, we discovered the swimming pools of Sykhiv made up a significant part of the district's liquid landscape. This project found that there were a number of possibilities for indoor swimming in Sykhiv. In the center of the district we found the “Sportlife” center where a swimming pool was available and extensively used by those interviewed. The “Sportlife” center was even located on Sykhiv's central square with floor to ceiling windows opening up the pool to the square's plaza, making the swimming pool seem somewhat present within the public space. However, the wall of glass both practically and symbolically represented the fact the pool is a private business whose waters are only open to those who are willing and able to pay. According to the original plan of the district, there were plans for a swimming pool in each of Sykhiv's numerous schools as well as within every micro-district of the microrraion. Our observations showed that some of these pools were in a rather poor condition

■ SWIMMING POOLS

- 1 - Sykhiv Gymnasium Stadium, vul. Gnata Khotkevycha, 48
- 2 - Sport Life, vul. Zubrivska, 38
- 3 - Secondary School No. 84, vul. Zubrivska, 30
- 4 - Secondary School No. 90, vul. Borysa Antonenka-Davydovycha, 2
- 5 - Delfin, vul. Kyryla Trylyovskoho, 12a

● ACCESSIBILITY: 15 MINS WALK



14. Map: Swimming pools. Accessibility: 15-minute walk.  
Design: Kacper Kępiński.

or were even out of order. Indeed, one long-term resident stated that “in our school it (swimming pool) was not functioning ever, it was in a bad condition at the beginning and now it is even worse.” However, some of the newcomers to Sykhiv did express their appreciation for the relative availability of swimming pools in the neighborhood and even considered them to be “replacements for the sea.”

■ Natural Water Sources

After exploring these manmade water spaces in Sykhiv, our project then began to explore the natural water sources of Sykhiv. At first glance, there are almost no visible natural sources of water within the district, yet through this research we encountered abandoned, privatized, and drained geographies of water. As previously mentioned, Lviv as a whole is on the border between two major water catchment areas, with part of the water going towards the Baltic Sea as the other descends towards the Black Sea. Indeed, we discovered that the boundary between the two water catchments travels directly under Sykhiv itself with the tributaries and sources of the separate water systems lying extremely close to one another according to one of our respondents. One local architect interviewed expanded upon this by stating that “Lviv is positioned upon



15. Natural water object.  
Photo: Kacper Kępiński.

- WATER BODIES
- ARTIFICIAL SURFACES



16. Map: Waterbodies and artificial surfaces: 1 – residential complexes, 2 – parking lots.  
Design: Kacper Keipiński.

a contradictory geography, on the one hand it lies at the source of major river systems and therefore “births” vast systems of water, but on the other hand it remains disconnected from these sources and imports its water from more distant places.” Lviv and Sykhiv therefore appear to be the hosts of an invisible history of waterways, an invisible geography of streams, sources, lakes, and rivers which we sought to uncover.

Focusing in on this invisible geography, our project grouping came across a small river on the western edge of Sykhiv called the Zubra. Some respondents did however question this “river” designation, pointing to the size of the “river” and the quality of water. In this vein, the Zubra River has also received alternative names from the locals: “richka smerduchka” or “richka vonuchka,” which means the “stinky river.” It is claimed that the pollution of the river was caused years ago by an upstream tank factory and oncology hospital. Indeed, through one casual encounter on a bridge over the remaining trickle which is the current Zubra River, our research team met a group of teenagers who joked that the river contained tuberculosis from the hospital upstream. The narrative of the polluted “disease-ridden” river therefore appears to continue. Upon observation it was obvious that the Zubra River is unable to satisfy the needs of the local inhabitants in terms



17. Current state of the area of former Pioneers lake.  
Photo: Kacper Keipiński.

of recreation. One local resident stated that “some people go there but I was there like three times and I have been living here since 1996.” Indeed, we observed people in the park next to the “river” having picnics, making fires, and sunbathing with one respondent stating that even though “there is no water, at least they have sun.” The people of Sykhiv therefore appeared to use the park as if the river was swimmable, sunbathing in preparation for a quick dip to cool off. According to one local architect we interviewed, at the moment there is no vision as to how the system of the contaminated industrial runoffs could be filtered to revitalize the river itself.

The same local architect also stated that during the construction of the “Shuvar” market there was a plan to put the Zubra River underground, but this did not take place, and a significant part of it was preserved despite the market developers’ intentions. Since the mid-80s, several attempts have been made to restore the condition of the river, however all of them failed mostly due to a lack of water flow. The latest proposal was made in 2016 and envisaged the restoration of wider water connections, particularly to a dry stream which could potentially link the Zubra River to a pond near the church in wet weather. As a result of this research into the river we then came across a hidden history of water in Sykhiv which came to be typified by the now drained Pionerske Lake. According to a local architect and another respondent, this lake used to lie where the Zubra River now flows and was drained many years ago before the district’s construction as a result of a group of children falling sick after one of their swims there. During the Soviet era, the now-drained lake between Kozelnyky and Zubra villages was formed, with the Zubra River acting as the lake’s water supply and with its level being controlled by a dam. Through our interviews we discovered that when the lake did exist it served a recreational purpose with a boat station, which attracted large numbers of people over the summer, and in winter it was transformed into an ice-skating space. Soon after the lake was drained, the Pionerskii camp was closed and the former dam became a sledging point for local children. Today, the ruins of the boat station at Pionerske Lake have all but faded away. The area below the emptied Pionerske Lake is now the most productive land in an agricultural sense, with plantations of beech trees around it. The high-quality soil has been split between various residents and fenced off as a private area.

From our interviews and observations, it therefore appeared impossible to find a natural body of water for outdoor swimming in the district. One interviewee noted that *“it is always a*

■ DISSAPEARED WATERBODIES



18. Map: disappeared waterbodies.  
Design: Kacper Kepinski.

*challenge where to spend time in really hot weather, there is no lake nearby, there is none, there is nothing really recreational, so I don't know...*" People described different strategies as to how they deal with the lack of water in Sykhiv. Because most of the inhabitants originally come from villages, children are said to spend their summers with their grandparents in smaller cities and villages and it is said that they find water there: *"I have spent my summer at my grandparents in a village eighty kilometers from Lviv. And we have a river there, so it is my personal water."* The other option expressed by our respondents was to go to one of the lakes near Lviv/Sykhiv, but this was understood to be a more exceptional "event" rather than a casual common routine: *"It is quite far... and I don't like lakes, they are dirty, uncomfortable."* Outdoor swimming holes or available cultivated water elements are therefore clearly missing in the neighborhood.

#### ■ Lakes and Ponds

Upon closer inspection of the district, our research group did however come across several unexplored and out of the way bodies of water. Indeed, the area richest in water bodies in the district was found to be located between Sykhivska and Zubrivska streets. Few respondents, who considered themselves as the original residents of district, mentioned the area even though it was found to be a wonderful place to enjoy the sound of crickets in the evening. Another "water-rich" area in the district, but what has dried out in recent years, is the site where the "Silpo" supermarket is situated. Our observations showed that there was still a dry stream along the railway tracks at the northwestern corner of the district and Zelena Street which sprang to life in wet weather. The second largest body of water in Sykhiv was found in the area near the former Pionerske Lake. This large pond could be seen from behind a large fence which wrapped itself around the grounds of a large opulent looking villa. This pond was therefore private and inaccessible to locals.

#### ■ A Replacement River

With commodified drinking water, private or unmaintained swimming pools, and a polluted trickle of a river, the liquid landscape of Sykhiv therefore appeared to us as limited and neglected. Yet if *A Pattern Language's* emphasis on the importance of water in urban space, as noted in our introduction, was correct, how was Sykhiv coping with its lack of water? It was at this point when we came to focus on the auxiliary role Zubra Park plays within the district. Zubra Park is a forested area next to the remaining river and was often mentioned as being one of the most important

and distinctive spaces in Sykhiv. Today, it is appreciated for being more of a forest than a park, although lately it has become more cultivated as a result of an intervention by a nearby church and the municipality. In 2016, the new master plan for Zubra Park started to be implemented and as a result the hill for ice-skating was destroyed by a new set of stairs leading to the park. A pathway was built through the forest which is suitable for baby strollers with generous lightening which is, according to respondents, important for safety as the forest has apparently not always been a safe place.

Through our interviews the forest was said to give a feeling of being in "wild" nature for visitors who go there with their children to observe birds or jog or simply stroll. As one descends out of the forest, towards the Zubra River, we observed several families having picnics and people sunbathing and reading in the evening light. It was mentioned in one interview that the forest park hosts a rich variety of bird species and that there are even a number of very rare species. On the other hand, because the forest is such a frequented space a lot of litter was observed but local activists claimed that they held special gatherings in an attempt to clean up the place. *"Where there are people there is*



19. Dry stream.  
Photo: Mariya Benovska.

- ✿ WORKING FOUNTAIN
- ⌘ NOT WORKING FOUNTAIN



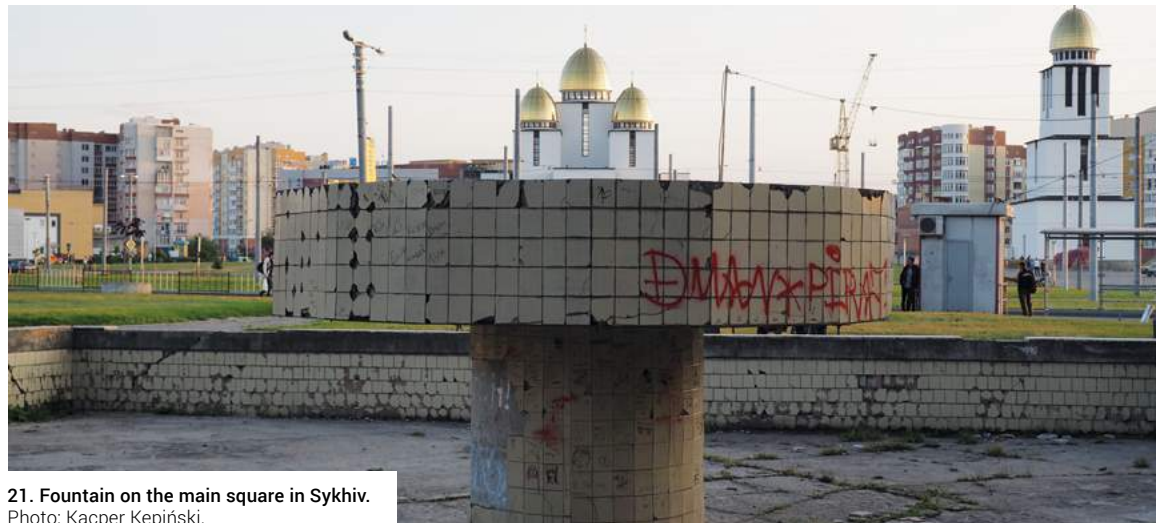
20. Map: Working and non-working fountains  
 Design: Kacper Keipiński.

*also garbage,* quipped one respondent. Some of the respondents mentioned that the forest is also a favorite place of alcoholics and drug addicts who find privacy there. Other respondents complained there is *“nothing to do in Sykhiv”* and that there are no opportunities for youngsters in the district and that is why they spend time drinking alcohol in Zubra Park. Having therefore reflected upon the limited water landscape it could therefore be determined that Zubra Park acts as a sort of substitute for the lack of natural water in Sykhiv, with the activities and habits one might associate with a river or lake side, such as sunbathing or picnics, being performed within the park instead.

### ■ The Fountain

After this varied exploration of the recreational and essential, the natural and man-made waters of Sykhiv, we finally arrived back at a space which our research group had been passing through daily on our trips to and from our hotel. Sykhiv’s abandoned central fountain. Fountains have for centuries played an important role in creating urban public spaces and Soviet residential districts like Sykhiv were no exception. Indeed, the importance of fountains has been said to emerge from their symbolic ability to demonstrate a transition to a new phase of urban life that promises progress and well-being (Schwenkel 2015). The fountain on the central square of Sykhiv therefore sat apart from both the natural water bodies of the district we had observed as well as its infrastructural water systems, such as the water pipes and drinking water terminals. The fountain, abandoned at the heart of the district, became a symbol for us of water “for water’s sake” at the heart of this Modernist neighborhood. Formed around a large area of planted public space, the fountain reflected a clearly neglected belief of water being both an indispensable space of reflection within urban areas and well as an early symbol of progress and modernity. It can also be claimed that the fountain’s presence challenged the formative utilitarian concepts which drove the formation of Soviet residential districts like Sykhiv. Yet today the fountain sits abandoned, its tiles daubed in graffiti, its geometric edges surrounded by expanses of grass and benches and its pool lying dry and forgotten.

Few residents of Sykhiv even remember the fountain ever functioning. One resident claimed he had seen it working twice, once during the opening of the cinema and another time on one of Ukraine’s early Independence Day holidays. Those who do recall water lapping at the fountain’s



21. Fountain on the main square in Sykhiv.  
Photo: Kacper Kępiński.

edges claim that it was used as a cooling pool for the nearby cinema's projector. Other than that, various locals stated that the pool only contains some water during heavy rains. One might assume that the abandonment of the fountain at the main square might suggest a lack of concern for "symbolic water" in Sykhiv. However, one resident stated that many in the district do want a working fountain as it is "a sign of a city" as "you don't have a fountain in a village." Indeed, the same local claimed that when there were plans for the renovation of the square by Santa Barbara "people wanted to have a fountain there. It is fun to have a fountain." Others wished to repair the existing fountain in the central square, stating, "many children and people rest there already."

We therefore came to realize that the abandoned fountain in central Sykhiv both inhabited the memories and mythology of local residents and spatially continued to act as a landmark within the wider urban fabric of the district. Through observations its presence simultaneously remained inconspicuous yet somehow it appeared to maintain a certain status as a landmark within the surrounding square. We saw families and friends congregate around its edge, sitting on surrounding benches facing the empty fountains as if expecting it to spring into life at any given moment. The fountain also sat as a symbol



22. Sykhiv water places guidebooks developed during the studio.  
Photo: Kacper Kępiński.

for the wider water landscape of Sykhiv which we encountered during this research, a landscape of forgotten streams, drained lakes, and privatized drinking water. The fountain therefore presented a route for further exploration, enabling this research to challenge and question the established relationship between space and water in Sykhiv.

## POTENTIALS

- Through discovering more information around the lack of water in Sykhiv, we decided to stretch beyond our observations, interviews, and initial mapping and engage directly with residents on the issues of water and public space in Sykhiv. To process the information we gathered during our research, we created a map which charted all the existing and non-existing water places in Sykhiv.<sup>1</sup> We also created a pathway guiding locals or visitors from one place to another and applied it to a map which became the basis for a Sykhiv water places guide which we developed. Our studio also

<sup>1</sup> Water places guidebooks developed during the studio: <http://www.lvivcenter.org/download.php?downloadid=729>





23. Map with the existing and non-existing water places in Sykhiv.  
From the Guidebook developed during the studio.  
Design: Kacper Kepiński.



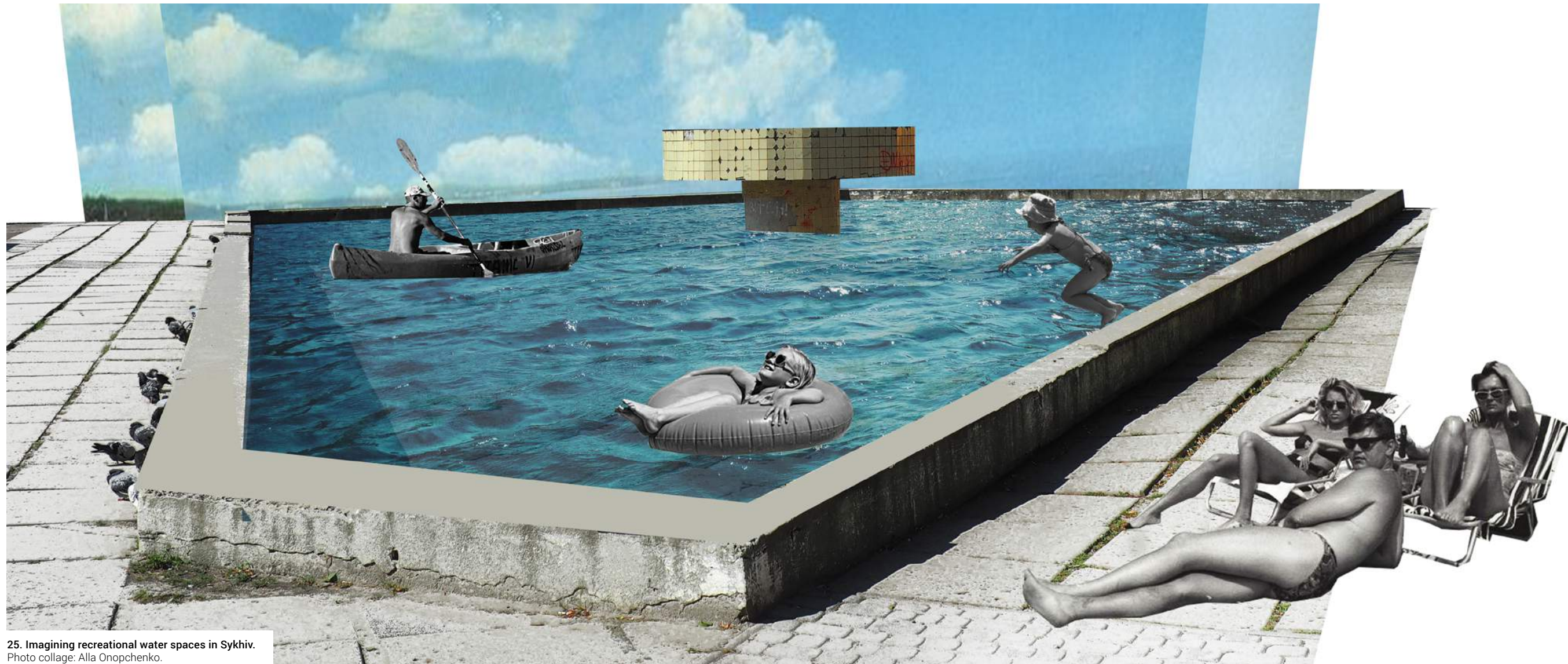
24. Fountain on the main square in Sykhiv.  
Photo: Alla Onopchenko.

came up with an experimental physical intervention centered on the aforementioned fountain. A speculative collage with possible scenarios of using the fountain was also included in the guide; this helped provide us with inspiration for our coming intervention.

#### ■ “Live fountain” Intervention

Water, due to its recreational qualities, often serves as a magnet for people and as a result is at the core of many public spaces. However, even after the abandonment of such water sources, their host public spaces can still be in use. The “Live Fountain” was a sound installation located on the central square in Sykhiv which contains an abandoned waterless fountain.<sup>2</sup> The square has remained a vibrant public space and the fountain has served as a sculpture for the past few decades, despite its degraded façade and surrounding empty pool. Our artistic intervention involved playing audio of trickling water through speakers at the edge of the fountain one weekday evening in late August. Through this we sought to explore how the sound of natural water can shape a space by observing its user’s reactions.

<sup>2</sup> Sound intervention on the main square of Sykhiv “Live Fountain,” 24.08.2017: <https://youtu.be/Ch5bDZ9ncFU>



25. Imagining recreational water spaces in Sykhiv.  
Photo collage: Alla Onopchenko.

climbed into the empty fountain pool and mimicked that they were swimming. Many ran around the fountain itself and jumped up to try and see what was up there. Parents congregated around the pool watching their children with passers-by often approaching the fountain to see if water was indeed flowing there again. Throughout the hour in which the sound of water echoed around the fountain and Sykhiv's central square we distributed our Sykhiv water places guide to locals, which prompted further discussion about the hidden rivers and streams of the district.

In short, we believe that bringing art into the public realm through an intervention can, as we did, activate the imaginations of those who encounter it and remind even the most urban of residents about the connection between people, the city, and water. We hope our work will result in the emergence of a renewed landscape of water in Sykhiv in the long run, whether that be in the form of a fountain, through the fundamental provision of clean drinking water for its residents, or a rejuvenated Zubra River.

## CONCLUSION

■ Through our research we discovered the linkages present between Soviet urbanity and nature in the form of water, as well as the interconnections between natural and artificial sources of water and water infrastructure in microrraions. Yet it is also important to reflect upon how the interactions between water and space this research has uncovered affects the sociological and political environment of Sykhiv

By means of this intervention we also sought to bring attention to the lack of both recreational and infrastructural water in Sykhiv. The aim of the intervention was to further activate the space and provoke local residents to reimagine it by bringing the sound of what we understand as being a missing element of life in Sykhiv, water, into its heart. Using sound, we attempted to engage Sykhiv's residents in a sensory experience which we hoped would provoke a deepening of their connections with the place of nature and water in the urban environment. Beyond this, we sought to stimulate the Sykhivians' imaginations as to what Sykhiv is lacking and the potentials that could be formed out of abandonment and emptiness.

Our project's intervention was employed as a tool to engage the local community in processes of potential change and we consider it as having been rather successful. Indeed, during the intervention itself passing people expressed their desire to help us to start a campaign to renovate the fountain. There were also people who thought the sound installation was an advertisement for a water company as well as those who were embarrassed due to the absence of water in the fountain and didn't want any attention drawn to it. The assumption that our intervention was a commercial ploy perhaps illustrated the power and prominence of water companies in Ukraine as well as the reality that people are used to the fact that water is not easily accessible and is not free, an illustration of the increasing commodification of natural resources. Throughout the intervention a number of local children



26. Fountain during the sound intervention.  
Photo: Kacper Kepinski.



27. Fountain during the sound intervention.  
Photo: Kacper Kępiński.

more broadly. Indeed, through our work we demonstrated that water has an influence on the everyday life and mobility of Sykhivians, who are forced to travel significant distances to reach water sources. We also discovered that the privatization of land and residential flats has made accessibility to water, both potable and recreational, more complicated. It can be asserted that complex structural renovations of the pipes in the district as a whole is needed but due to the fragmented ownership structure, which has emerged since the 1990s, this appears to be next to impossible. The privatization of land has also created distinctive forms of inequality in the access to water. While some residents are able to afford the entrance fee to the private swimming pools found in Sykhiv, others are forced to travel far to lakes in distance villages.



28. Fountain during the sound intervention.  
Photo: Kacper Kępiński.

While some residents are able to buy an osmosis filter to access potable water in their flats, others have to buy it bottled down on the streets.

If we therefore look at Sykhiv as a planned Soviet residential district as it was intended to be, it must be asserted that, in regard to water, it has not achieved its originally desired form or standard. Also, since the collapse of the Soviet Union “the water system’s breakdown has also revealed the failure of European ideas of modernity to achieve a state of recovery...” (Schwenkel 2015: 531). Continued inaccessibility to (potable) water in Sykhiv has tainted the dream of a modern, hygienic, and technologically sophisticated environment with a

potentially transformative role in creating a prosperous and egalitarian urban society. Indeed, the degraded water landscape of Sykhiv can be reflected in the Vietnamese case studied by Christina Schwenkel who showed that the failure of infrastructure designed to bring the good life to workers by bringing hygiene into private homes, forced residents back outdoors instead (Schwenkel 2015).

Furthermore, this research project also demonstrated clearly that in Modernist microraisons, such as those found in Sykhiv, water continues to be treated as a pure resource and not a right for all and a common good. Going back to the critique found in *The Future of the City*, whilst theoretical ideas around the microraisons have shifted from that of “organic unity” to that of framework/texture/plasma, water and nature continue to be seen as solely infrastructural, resources to be exploited by rising urbanity. Nature and water therefore continue to be treated as recessive plasma. Questions as to how to integrate water as a common good into a Modernist post-Soviet space need to be pursued further. These questions will challenge the very formation of space in Sykhiv, and in all micro district developments in general. Indeed, the introduction of spaces for public fountains and revived rivers will both confront the rigid original Soviet structure which sought to control and exploit the space of water and nature, as well as the post-Soviet reality which privatized and fragmented them. The simple act of resurrecting a public water fountain in Sykhiv, as we abstractly attempted to do through our short intervention, introduces a space in which water has the potential to facilitate psychological reflection, play, and aesthetic appreciation.

The lack of water in Sykhiv also opens up the possibility for further research into questions of emerging community and solidarity in the neighborhood as well as the issue of the gendered division of labor in terms of water management in households. In a global context, the issue of water accessibility is getting more and more severe and our Sykhiv case has demonstrated this growing problem, albeit on smaller a scale. A change in thinking around water is needed. Architects, urban planners, and communities must focus on a more sustainable approach which integrates water and nature as a whole into the spaces being created or renovated. The issue with space and water in post-Soviet residential districts like Sykhiv are not going to solve themselves, but they will create new and rather unexpected situations which will inevitably fall on the shoulders of residents. ■

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alexander, Christopher & Sara Ishikawa, Murray Silverstein. *A Pattern Language*. Oxford University Publishers, 1977.
- Cherkes, Bohdan. “Socialist Birth and Afterlife of the Largest Lviv District of Sykhiv.” *Residential Environment*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2013, pp. 68–73.
- Cherkes, Bohdan. “Development of the Largest Residential District of Lviv – Sykhiv.” *Architectural Studies*, vol 1, no. 1, 2015, pp. 1–6.
- Gutnov, Alexei & Ilya Lezhawa. *The Future of the City (Будущее Города)*. Stroiizdat Publishers, 1977.
- Jull, Matthew. “Toward a Northern Architecture: The Microrayon as Arctic Urban Prototype.” *Journal of Architectural Education*, vol. 70, no. 2, 2016, pp. 214–222.
- Kaika, Maria & Erik Swynghedouw. “Fetishizing the Modern City: The Phantasmagoria of Urban Technological Networks.” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, vol. 24, no. 1, 1990, pp. 120–138.
- Locar, Marcel. “Pentru Dezvoltarea Urbanismului Socialist.” *Arhitectura RPR*, vol. 4, no. 1, 1960, pp. 5–7.
- Meuser, Philipp & Dimitrij Zadorin. *Towards a Typology of Soviet Mass Housing: Prefabrication in the USSR*. DOM Publishers, 2015.
- Snopek, Kuba. *Belyayevo Forever: A Soviet Microrayon on its Way to the UNESCO List*. DOM Publishers, 2015.
- Schwenkel, Christina. “Riverside Spectacular Infrastructure and Its Breakdown in Socialist Vietnam.” *American Ethnologist*, vol. 42, no. 3, 2015, pp. 520–534.
- Zadorin, Dimitrij. “Microrayon Handbook.” *Volume: The Block*, vol 1, no. 3, 2009, pp. 20–31.



## INTRODUCTION: MEMORIES

Iryna Sklokina

The idea to create the Memories studio during the summer school about Sykhiv was a challenge both to common stereotypes and to ourselves. The stereotypical view of Sykhiv as the “youngest” district and “sleeping district” opposes it to the “historical” and “cultural” center of Lviv. Our idea was to go beyond the widespread perception of history as ancient and heritage as “high” and to focus on the residents of the district in order to understand how they create cultural senses of the built, natural, and social landscapes of Sykhiv.

Since the construction of planned micro-districts, Sykhiv inhabitants have already felt the fluidity of time. The answers in closed sociological questionnaires mainly contribute to the story through widely distributed media images (well-known public figures and events of the national level); however, the narrators during in-depth interviews showed rather the vernacular heritage of their area, connected primarily with the process of the gradual construction and development of infrastructure, as well as post-Soviet transformations. The memories described special places of meetings, the exploration of nature, the emergence of new commercial spaces that were not available during the times of socialism, as well as the overcoming of everyday life difficulties in an ever-expanding area. In addition, in order to explain their vision of Sykhiv, the narrators mentioned other places and times important for their individual formation: the family histories of former villagers; the experience of travel and previous places of residence in other planned socialist districts; and the power of dreams and metaphors, which helps to compare Sykhiv and its morphology with

known places or distant (and inaccessible) countries. The process of remembering was not only initiated by the researchers: people from Sykhiv create the meaning of the history of their area primarily in everyday life—through family history, photo albums, walking around the district, as well as participation in public holidays and commemorations. It turned out that the inhabitants go far beyond the common media images: as well-known figures can appear on a witty market loader or as a photogenic seller, and that culturally-rich places are not only officially planned buildings, but also street graffiti and places with very, very unconventional aesthetics.

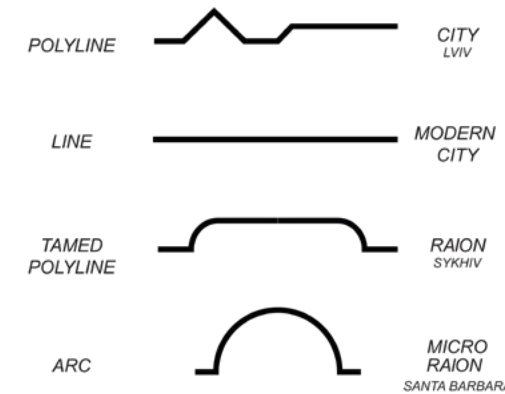
We discovered that the specifics of Sykhiv's memory is empowering a sense of unity between personal history and history of the district (as many of today's residents “grew together with the area”), as well as various strategies for deconstructing the hierarchical opposition between the center and the periphery of the city. Every participant of the studio chose a specific aspect of the link between people and the past, creating a peculiar mosaic. Anna Barbieri analyzed the “Zubra” (“Santa Barbara”) shopping mall as a potential heritage site; Yevgenii Vasiukov developed one of the common subjects of personal stories, namely, childhood in Sykhiv, its representations in narratives and photos; Dimitra Glenti drew attention to the history of immigrants from Prypiat and Crimea as an example of the creative use of previous experience for a new place of residence; Tetyana Mandzyk conducted a pilot quantitative survey, and Matas Šiupšinskas traced the continuity of gardening practices and ties with the land as a kind of “cultural memory.” Although these are only the first attempts to approach Sykhiv, we still hope that the reader will accept them as a manifestation both of our sincere sympathy, and critical research interest in the district and its inhabitants. ■

# INVISIBLE POSTMODERNISM IN SYKHIV. THE CASE OF “SANTA BARBARA”

Anna Barbieri

In *The City of Tomorrow* Le Corbusier uses the straight line as a comparison to a human being knowing his way in life. Further, he applied this concept of rectilinearity onto his architectural ideal of white undecorated housing towers and slabs in modernist city planning. These concepts are well known and any mass housing estate around the world draws direct inspiration from his dictum. Individual architectural or visual identity is often considered lacking in those estates. The flats look the same, the buildings look the same, the districts look the same. Sykhiv is not very different from other mass-housing districts in the post-Soviet landscape. Lines, lines, and more straight roof lines; each housing block a thick extruded line. Nevertheless, it is easy to spot hidden but subtle differences to other microraisons.

Looking closer at the facades, fenestration, and especially the loggias of Sykhiv’s housing blocks, it becomes apparent that Sykhiv’s planners began to modify the existing design paradigms applied to mass housing estates. They introduced a modified slightly rounded “straight” line, giving the windows and loggias a distinct character. Facades are decorated with colors and tiles breaking the uniformity of the prefabricated panels. Furthermore, the existence of different architectural forms like arcs on buildings housing public functions contribute to Sykhiv’s micro and macro visual landscape. The straight white line has been transformed, bent, and colored to establish a visual identity for Sykhiv.



1. Diagram: Anna Barbieri.



2. Photograph and Diagram: Anna Barbieri.

This essay investigates the postmodern heritage of “Santa Barbara” and its relation to visual culture. It presents the case of “Zubra-Center” as a building, which has established a local identity and reflects on this particular building’s contribution to Sykhiv’s visual landscape and culture. The main question that the essay attempts to answer is whether “Zubra-Center,” commonly known as “Santa Barbara,” can be identified as an alternative landmark and heritage site for Sykhiv’s young history.

## “SANTA BARBARA”: INVISIBLE POSTMODERNISM, INVISIBLE DESIRES

Sykhiv is divided into three unofficial-official districts marked by a shopping or trade center: “Shuvar,” “Iskra,” and “Santa Barbara.” Each of these names represent something specific to Sykhiv: “Shuvar” is a plant (acorus calamus) and relates to the adjacent forest. “Iskra” is the name of the light bulb factory located to the east of Sykhiv, and “Santa Barbara” obtains its name from a nickname locals established for the area’s shopping and public center originally called “Zubra-Center.” This nickname derives from the connection that the building’s most notable architectural feature—the arc—establishes with graphic elements used in the opening theme of the popular 1990s American soap opera “Santa Barbara.”

Moreover, “Zubra-Center” in fact bears a visual resemblance to Spanish Colonial architecture of Southern California, with arcs and the circumferential





3. Photo: Yevgenia Minkova. Published in Darka Hirna "Sykhiv. A Place Where There Are No Tourists"  
URL: <https://zaxid.net/projects/sykhiv/>, accessed 10 May 2018.

arcade as elements hinting to its stylistic connection. It articulates a plaza, an urban ensemble around a central elongated square. The square's front side is occupied by yet another arc in front of a school. On the northern side of the plaza, "Zubra's" arcs are reflected by another arcade forming the plinth of a housing block. As a one-story building, the center stands out as a low-rise structure amid high-rises providing a different visual stimulation on eye-level. It is also distinctive due to its function as a place for consumerism and leisure.

Opening its doors in 1994, the inauguration of "Zubra-Center" coincided with "Santa Barbara's" peak in audience appreciation. Ukrainians watched it every day. Its popularity stems from it being the first and only American show available on early post-Soviet television. For many fans, the show provided the first glimpse into a world outside the Soviet Union filled with consumerism, abundance, and freedom of choice.

The soap opera opened a window of brief escape for Ukrainians and also Sykhivians. Its airtime became a moment for a dreamy pause in a time of scarcity and the chaotic restructuring of independent states. "Santa Barbara" became a synonym for desire and joy. The arcs of the soap opera's introductory theme can be described as the architectural embodiment of this synonym—a gateway to a place of yearning. Considering the feelings Ukrainians, and also Sykhivians, had for "Santa Barbara," it is understandable that the newly-opened "Zubra-Center"



4. Stills from the "Santa Barbara" Opening Theme.



was perceived as the built incarnation of the new lifestyle. Not only did the function of the building promote a new consumerist society, but also the simple resemblance to Spanish Colonial porticos provided a scenography for Sykhivian dreams and desires.

It is not clear when the nickname "Santa Barbara" appeared for the "Zubra-Center." To some extent, it seems as if it has always been there, will always be, and initially was meant to be. Today, the neighborhood around the shopping center is also referred to as "Santa Barbara." The buses and "marshrutkas" [minibuses—Ed.] list "Santa Barbara" as a stop on their routings. Hence, on the map, "Zubra-Center" is officially named as "Santa Barbara." The center's arcs became the logo of the local street market. It branded itself with a sign similar to the ones found along Californian boulevards.

#### A LANDMARK

■ The glory of the 1990s has faded. The street market was demolished in 2016 as a result of the construction of Sykhiv's tramline and the "Santa Barbara" sign disappeared. Locals deem the market's clearance as "the fall of 'Santa Barbara.'"

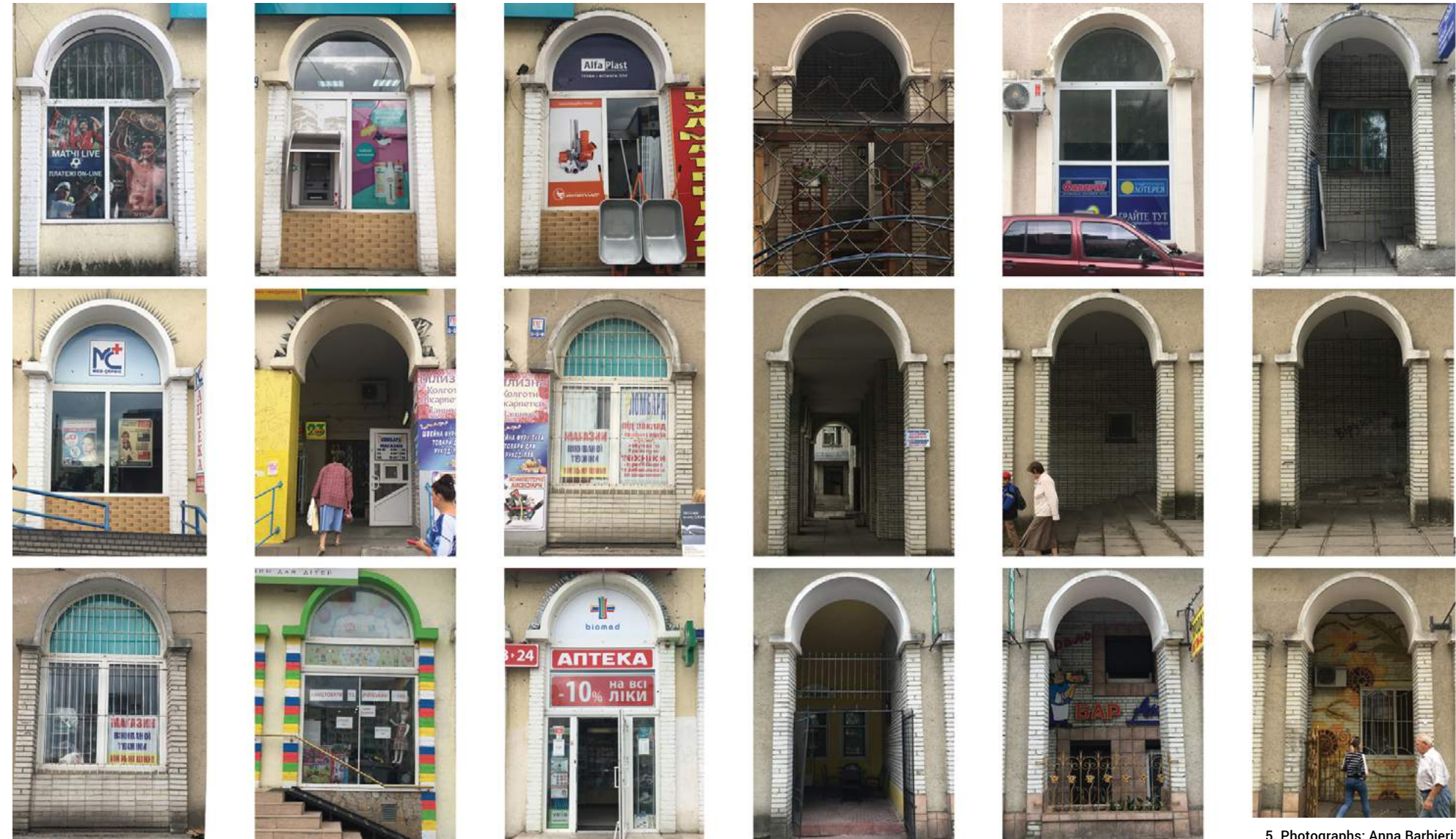
The "Zubra-Center" is also not highly regarded amongst locals anymore. The shops are considered outdated. New malls and supermarkets have taken "Santa Barbara's" place on the consumerist scene. The building itself has undergone many changes. The shops and retail spaces are now individually owned. The facade has been revamped and the arcs modified to fit advertisements and shop branding. The walls and roofs of the center have attracted signs and letterings. The building is modified to fit the contemporary notion of consumerism and business. In front and to the side of the center, kiosks grow like mushrooms, blocking the center's face to the street. Young people do not know about "Zubra-Center's" connection to the soap opera.

EVERYTHING WAS SO BEAUTIFUL!  
OH, EDEN CAPWELL!  
SHE WAS SO BEAUTIFUL!  
THE BEAUTY, THE SEA, LOVE!

Today, only one café carries the name "Santa Barbara" and its bar is decorated with timber arcs on a green background—a time capsule to 1994.

The nickname "Santa Barbara" was successfully transcribed into local language and is widely used today. Newspaper articles use "Santa Barbara" as a nostalgic reference and to describe chaotic circumstances in a sarcastic way. Local intention to relate a public and shopping center to a far-away place is often ironically noted. "Santa Barbara" seems to be pushed in the background. Nevertheless, you are still able to find older and younger people who remember with joy the first glimpses of a new lifestyle emerging after the collapse of the Soviet Union and how they inscribed new ideals and values on their district's main building.

"Santa Barbara" is the only of Sykhiv's three trade centers constituted by an award-winning building originating in the early 1990s. The "Shuvar" and "Iskra" centers have not only been extended but any original building source from the 1990s—in the case of "Iskra"—has been completely covered underneath advertisements. "Zubra-Center's" outer appearance mostly stayed as it was initially designed though slight amendments were undertaken. The notion of it being a central place for shopping, trade, and consumerism was enforced by new signs, advertisements, and kiosks popping up in front of it. But its arcs are still readable as the key architectural feature. Architecturally, "Zubra-Center" breaks with



5. Photographs: Anna Barbieri.



## CHILDHOOD IN MASS HOUSING

Yevhenii Vasiukov

From the very first days of getting to know Sykhiv and staying there during the summer school, I have had a picture shaping in my mind about the life in the neighborhood, with childhood as one of its key elements. My first impressions and observations found their support in articles, public lectures, and a tour that transmitted attitudes of the district residents as a good place for children. In addition, there is a practice when families move to Sykhiv after they have babies. After all, children are the most numerous age group in Sykhiv courtyards and streets.

In this essay, I will analyze the line of childhood in Sykhiv, its role in the life of the neighborhood, and its place in the memory of Sykhiv inhabitants. I will attempt to describe the characteristics of narratives about growing up in Soviet times, and to compare them with narratives about present-day childhood. A special focus will be on shaping the memory of Sykhiv citizens through practices of taking photos that are also often related to raising children and socialization (and self-presentation) of parents.

In this essay, I will focus on the modern history of the district that dates back to the construction of standard multistory building blocks in 1979. Some two years after, the first residents had a festive ceremony of receiving the keys to their apartments and moved to Sykhiv. The construction of separate micro-districts lasted until the mid-1990s, while the projected public center failed to be implemented. The residents of the new neighborhood had to live in an environment of ongoing construction and

incompleteness. They were mostly workers of Lviv factories and military people, as well as their children. In fact, the children were the first generation of those who can relate to Sykhiv in particular, since they were either born here, or their early memories go back to life in this area. Presently, these people, aged 30 to 40, could share their memories and reflect upon their experience living within the standard high-rise buildings. Also, they gave life to the second generation of Sykhiv residents with the childhood years coinciding with our times.

During the summer school, I had a chance to conduct narrative interviews with three generations of Sykhiv people and look at their family photo albums with comments from their holders. I could trace the changes in their childhood in different times, and see how memory was shaped and preserved about life in standard housing. My own observations were an important element as well. They helped me view childhood in Sykhiv from a more applied perspective, and to combine the memories with the present day.



1. Construction of Sykhiv, photo from the private collection, Urban Media Archive, Center for Urban History.

## CHILDHOOD IN A TRANSITION PERIOD

■ The first years of life in Sykhiv entered the minds of the adults as the years of ongoing construction, and the lack of infrastructure and transportation: *"In the beginning, when we were moving in here, it was a bit scary. Because the district was still under construction. Public transport... well, there was little transport. There were only mini-buses and big buses, and they seldom ran. Of course, there was a lot of dust, and mud. Construction sites, there were construction sites everywhere"* (female, 71, recorded on 20.08.2017). During the years of building Sykhiv, residential housing was first commissioned, followed by schools and kindergartens. Landscape improvement of the yards was not a priority. Playgrounds were hardly built anywhere. The lack of arranged sites for playing forced children to look for alternative kinds of leisure time. Children found some inappropriate, often dangerous, locations. Construction sites, factories, and abandoned buildings are mentioned in most interviews as the most interesting sites for taking walks. The respondents with their childhood years in those times recall them with warm feelings and humor: *"A lot of space, a lot of fields, the forest near us... We had a lot of fields to play in, a lot of playgrounds, because there were not a lot of buildings yet and after that buildings started to be built and we had a lot of fun going to unfinished construction"* (male, 35, recorded on 21.08.2017).

The late 1980s and early 1990s were a transition period both for Sykhiv and the entire Soviet Union, and later for the independent Ukraine. Children were growing up within the development of a new district and a new country. Those were hard times when parents had to work hard, so they could not spend much time with their children: *"We were left all to ourselves; nobody was hardly taking care of us or bothering about us. Since all parents had to spend much time at work, they were building socialism, we were all alone"* (male, 39, recorded on 11.08.2017).

Another important component of the memories about childhood in Sykhiv was going to school—it was not about the learning process but rather about attending school and kindergarten premises after classes. As mentioned above, they were first building housing in a new district, as well as schools and basic infrastructure, while improvements in the landscape were not in focus. That is why most memories about the childhood years in Sykhiv mention the grounds of schools and kindergartens as the most popular places where children and teenagers were spending time.



2. Viewing the family album during the summer school "Sykhiv: Spaces, Memories, Practices."  
Photo: Yevgenii Vasiukov.

On the one hand, the use of school sports or playgrounds after classes implied the reasonable utilization of the area. On the other hand, they signify lack of other options.

## FAMILY ALBUM IN SYKHIV

■ The analysis of family photo albums of the neighborhood residents showed that the practice of taking photographs in Sykhiv is closely related to childhood. Hardly anyone was taking photos of architecture or landscapes: the cases are exceptional.<sup>1</sup> For the most part, children were in the focus of the composition. Children at school festivities, children at the entrance hallway, children in the school yard, children in the forest, children at home. In some case, parents started taking photos and arranging family photo albums during pregnancy, thus recording all the developmental stages of their children in the neighborhood growing along with them. Due to these photos, Sykhiv indirectly

<sup>1</sup> For example, a family photo album of Ustynia Maslovskaya. The father, an architect, was taking photos of her with buildings and natural landscapes in the background. See Urban Media Archive of the Center for Urban History.

entered the memory of people as a background for the most important events in their lives. Therefore, we can now see how residents were adding sense to an infinite space around them. We can see popular practices, the most important locations, and the related memories.

One of the central places in the memory of Sykhiv residents belongs to school. The school is associated with the warmest feelings both for parents, and for children: *"The school, obviously. The school is well remembered. The First Day of School celebrations, the teachers... I was going to the first grade when Ukraine was actually independent. My mom still bought that kind of a star shaped badge with Lenin on it, but I did not need it any longer. Thank God. I still keep it as the memory about the period. We started the first grade with the blue and yellow flag but still in a uniform. These are some first memories, I guess"* (female, 32, recorded on 21.08.2017). Memory about the school is represented in detail in most albums I was lucky to see: there are photos with flowers on the Day of Knowledge, and the photos with classmates and teachers. Also, parents went for walks at the premises of schools with their children, where they were taking family photos. They saw the school grounds as the most proper place for it in the district that was still under construction.



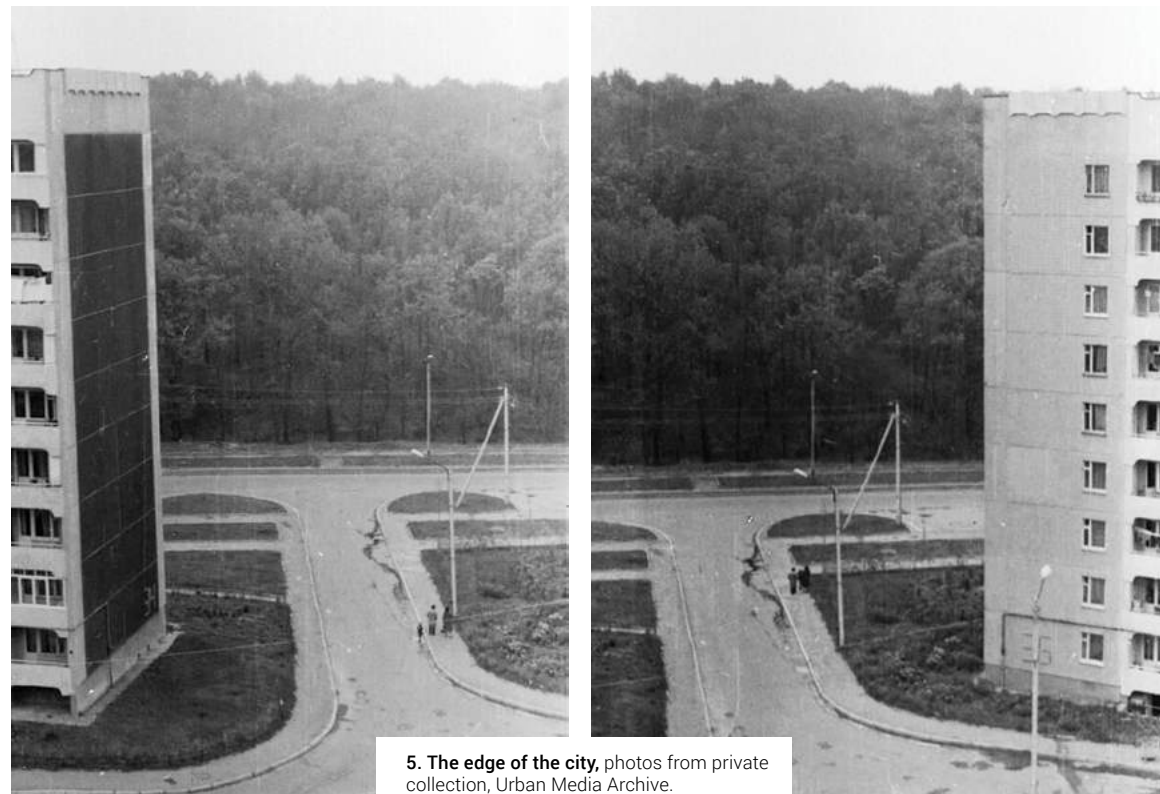
3. Photo in front of the school, private collection, Urban Media Archive.



4. Celebrations of the Day of Knowledge, photos from private collections, Urban Media Archive.

Zubra Forest was no less important for locals. The citizens believe it to be a huge advantage for the district: *"When we used to live next to the forest, we used to go there for a walk very often, we had a dog. When the grandchildren were still young we used to go there for a stroll with a pram... It is a beautiful forest indeed... The new houses are all around. It is very nice to have a place like that"* (female, 75, recorded on 20.08.2017).

Picnics, making a fire, walks, skiing, sledging, playing snowballs—the majority of respondents had much to tell about their walks to the forest and their leisure time there. Memories of the forest are also reflected in the photo albums of Sykhiv residents.



5. The edge of the city, photos from private collection, Urban Media Archive.

Respondents hardly ever mentioned religious life in the context of childhood memories, but this aspect of life plays an important role in the history and space of Sykhiv and is also found among other family photos. That is why I believe it necessary to mention the church as another memorial site for Sykhiv residents. A cross on the site of the future church, the process of its construction, attending the ceremony—all of these are important occasions when residents were taking photos. The visit of the Pope John Paul II to Lviv, specifically to Sykhiv, was an extremely mediatized event when very many people were also taking personal photos. The event entered a visual canon of the history of Sykhiv and combined personal and “big” history.



6. Surrounded by nature, photos from private collections, Urban Media Archive.



7. The presence of religion, photo from private collection, Urban Media Archive.

## CHILDHOOD IN CONTRAST

■ Talking to respondents of different age groups helps us learn both about the place of Sykhiv in people’s memories, and also trace the changes of the district and its perception with time. Older people recall moving to Sykhiv with apprehensive feelings because the district was still under construction and there was no infrastructure. However, these days, twenty to thirty years after moving here, they believe their decision was right because it worked out.



The development of the area, the infrastructure, the landscape improvement, the possibilities to buy goods and services with no need to go to the city center, did change the attitudes of the residents. Sykhiv is currently called “a city within a city” because there is virtually everything needed for living. It is also reflected on the childhood and on the attitudes of adults towards childhood. In terms of raising children, two key attitudes could be detected.

On the one hand, parents praise many new interest groups, clubs, studios, sports sections, courses, and Plast [Ukrainian scouting organization—Ed.] centers as a positive feature in the development of the district. They are willingly enrolling their children for these extracurricular activities. One of the respondents even stated that his son was attending five clubs of the kind. On the other hand, persons who were growing up in the times of active development of the district claim their childhood was more interesting, while today’s children are less self-reliant. They tend to spend more time at the computer, and they take longer to become adults. Their childhood games have long been forgotten, while no one would really think of going now to an unfinished



8. Derelict surroundings, photos from social media.



construction site: *“Unfortunately, he would not be going to such places [the places that used to be favorite visiting places in the respondent’s childhood year—construction sites or pits] It’s a pity he would not be going there... but maybe it is fortunate [laughs], maybe, it is on the contrary—maybe it’s better. I feel it takes them longer to become adults. It is because we spend more time with them, we have more time for them. When you find yourself in a situation when you are all alone, or when you have nothing to do, then you tend to grow up faster”* (male 39, recorded 11.08.2017).

However, some children keep visiting the derelict buildings. The practices are still popular and even acquire new senses. Children go to abandoned sites to take photos in order to boast with them to their peers: *“There are these non-habitable sites. Today, everyone would go to the ‘neglected’ [zabroshki] There are several high-rise chimneys, like fifty to sixty meters high. There used to be a water pump station, or something. So, the kids would be climbing them up on the ladders, they take photos and selfies, they wander around the factory”* (male 39, recorded 11.08.2017).

## CONCLUSIONS

■ I tried to trace how people retain memories about Sykhiv, and how fear over moving to a new place transformed into warm memories about the district. Therefore, a focus was made on the theme of childhood. I used it as a lens to analyze information. It helped me detect the places of memory of Sykhiv residents, how they managed to adjust to the life in a new neighborhood, and appropriated it.

All respondents pay attention to the large number of schools and kindergartens in Sykhiv. Also, they state that the school buildings that had been allocated in the 1990s to host clubs and music schools are reclaiming their original functions. This is a sign that there is growth in the number of children in this district. That is why the theme of childhood in Sykhiv remains important. We must not underestimate collecting memories from previous generations, preserving the memory of childhood years in different times, and reconsidering the experience of growing up in standard housing in our analysis of changes of the district and its residents. The collected data can have quite a practical significance and be used to create a development strategy for the area with regards to how it is remembered and used by Sykhiv residents. ■

# MIGRATION, MEMORY, AND INTEGRATION IN A SOVIET MASS HOUSING ESTATE. CHORNOBYL AND CRIMEA SHAPING SYKHIV

Dimitra Glenti

## INTRODUCTION

The mass housing estate of Sykhiv grew and continues to grow in the shadow of the historical city of Lviv, forming a complicated relationship of interdependency that is impossible to miss. These two urban entities are subjected to a set of binary oppositions that go far beyond that among a center and a periphery. Sykhiv, marked as inescapably Soviet, is commonly perceived as the antipode of a Lviv that is labelled as essentially European. Indeed, the list of stereotypical notions that contrast the two is never ending: old/new, urban/rural, ornamental/modernist, diverse/monotonous, formal/informal, and city of locals/district of migrants. Our Memories group sought to deconstruct some of these stereotypes by focusing on the diverse social and physical landscape of Sykhiv. The contribution of this short essay is to broaden the narrow scope of comparison that creates false contradictions away from the Sykhiv/Lviv juxtaposition, by relating it to other Ukrainian cities through the lived experience, memory, and the integration process of internal migrants.

Sykhiv is the biggest panel housing estate in the Lviv urban district, constructed in the early 1980s in order to house 120,000 workers of the nearby industrial hub. Planned in the Soviet model [micro-district (microraiion) < housing estate (rayon) < city (misto)] the estate contains twelve micro-districts of mainly large-panel housing blocs surrounded by lush greenery. The construction of the residential buildings was largely concluded over the years, but as in many similar cases some public facility projects were not implemented.<sup>1</sup> The incompleteness of the urban plan and the ongoing transformation from the communist to the capitalist city leaves Sykhiv in a state of transition. I further argue that Sykhiv, betwixt and between the planned and the accidental, acquired a sense of openness that is welcoming to newcomers and invites adaptation and appropriation.



1. Sykhiv housing estate.  
Photo: Oleksandr Shutiuk.

<sup>1</sup> For further reading regarding Sykhiv district see Cherkes, Bohdan. "Socialistic Birth and Afterlife of the Largest Lviv District of Sykhiv," *Residential Environment*, vol. 11, no.1, 2013, pp. 68-73; Mysak, Natalia. "The Morphology of Open Spaces within Large-Panel Housing Estates: The Pedestrian Perception (A Case Study of the Sykhiv estate in Lviv, Ukraine)," *Środowisko Mieszkaniowe*, #13, 2014, s. 164-172; Naumescu, Vlad. "Modes of Religiosity in Eastern Christianity: Religious Processes and Social Change in Ukraine," *Halle Studies in the Anthropology of Eurasia*, vol. 15, Lit Verlag, 2007.



2. Lviv city center.  
Photo: Dimitra Glenti.

## SYKHIV AS A PLACE OF MIGRANTS

■ During my stay there, I heard repeatedly that Sykhiv is a district of migrants, shaped by people that resettled from nearby villages and other parts of Ukraine. It is a fact that in this relatively new district no dweller over the age of 35 can be considered a born local. This absence of deep rootedness and the particular link of Sykhiv to migration sparked my interest due to my previous research experience on displacement and refugeeness. Among the hundreds of migration routes that can be traced in Sykhiv, there are two cases that exemplify displacement in the most dramatic way:

- Migration from Prypiat. The monotown built by the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant and the surrounding villages were evacuated after the disaster in 1986. A small group of the affected population was allocated to Sykhiv, in the large block known locally as the “Berlin Wall.”

- Migration from Crimea.<sup>2</sup> The recent conflict between Ukraine and Russia also brought additional newcomers to Sykhiv, especially Crimeans that settled there before and during the annexation of the peninsula to Russia in 2014. Crimean IDPs [Internally Displaced Persons—Ed.] are quite dispersed but have changed the social landscape of Sykhiv as dwellers, business owners, and important local actors.

This short research focuses on these two groups that faced different migration patterns at different times but share the feeling and notion of a “lost homeland.” Their experience of displacement and resettlement can provide us with insights of Sykhiv as a hosting urban environment, and as a “new home” for the displaced. The main research questions that arose were:

- How do memories of other places of origin inform the experience of living in Sykhiv?
- What differences and similarities are there between the former and the present living areas?
- What role does the urban environment of Sykhiv play in the adaptation and integration of these migrants? And vice-versa, how did displaced newcomers change the socio-spatial landscape of Sykhiv?

In order to investigate these issues, we decided to collect oral testimonies from members of these groups. Six semi-structured interviews were produced during this process, in the form of biographical narratives with additional in-depth questions.<sup>3</sup> These interviews by no means aim to represent the two groups but are nevertheless valuable as particular life stories that contribute to the socio-cultural mosaic of the district. The interviewees were also asked to draw what they consider their former and their new home. The mental maps and drawing that were produced

<sup>2</sup> UNHCR, “Ukrainians’ attitudes towards Internally Displaced Persons from Donbas and Crimea. Summary of Opinion Polls.” April 2016. Pikulicka-Wilczewska, Agnieszka & Uehling, Greta (editors), URL: [http://unhcr.org.ua/attachments/article/1605/Public%20Survey\\_36\\_ENG\\_www.pdf](http://unhcr.org.ua/attachments/article/1605/Public%20Survey_36_ENG_www.pdf), accessed 10 May 2018; McGlinchey, Stephen. Migration and the Ukraine Crisis: A Two-Country Perspective. E-International relations, 2017, URL: <http://www.e-ir.info/publication/migration-and-the-ukraine-crisis-a-twocountry-perspective/>, accessed 10 May 2018.

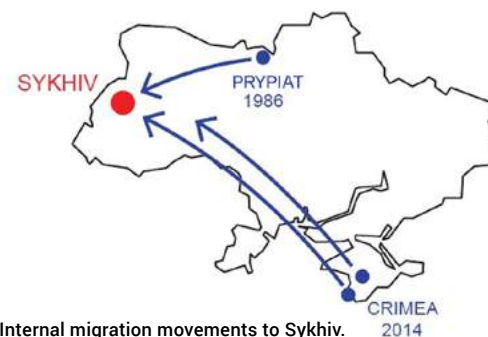
<sup>3</sup> The interviews could not have been realized without the simultaneous interpretation by Iryna Sklokina to whom I am very grateful.

helped in the non-verbal expression of sentiments and notions linked to home, up/rootedness, resettlement, and adaptation. Another source that contributed to the exploration of these ideas was the guest book of the Crimean café “Krymska Perepichka” located in the district. Remarks and drawing that were found there helped in further understanding the role of such places as trans local points of reference that are important for the displaced communities.

### NARRATIVES OF DISPLACEMENT AND RESETTLEMENT

■ Serhii, the interviewee from Prypiat, was only three years old when his family had to move. Both his parents were workers at the Chornobyl Nuclear Power Plant and liquidators for a short period after the disaster. Although he has no personal memories from his place of origin, Prypiat played an important role in shaping his identity. *“I have so many sketches of my family history in my head”* he says, *“I cannot take Prypiat out of me”*. And indeed, he consciously tries to practice a symbolic tie to that lost place, by collecting stories from family and neighbors, photos from the media, historical publications, as well as transmitting this information to his children. Thus, his narrative is based on an assemblage of post-memories where displacement has lost its painful aspect. The attachment to Prypiat is empowering and the past here is used as a personal entrance to international history, as his life story meets with a global event.

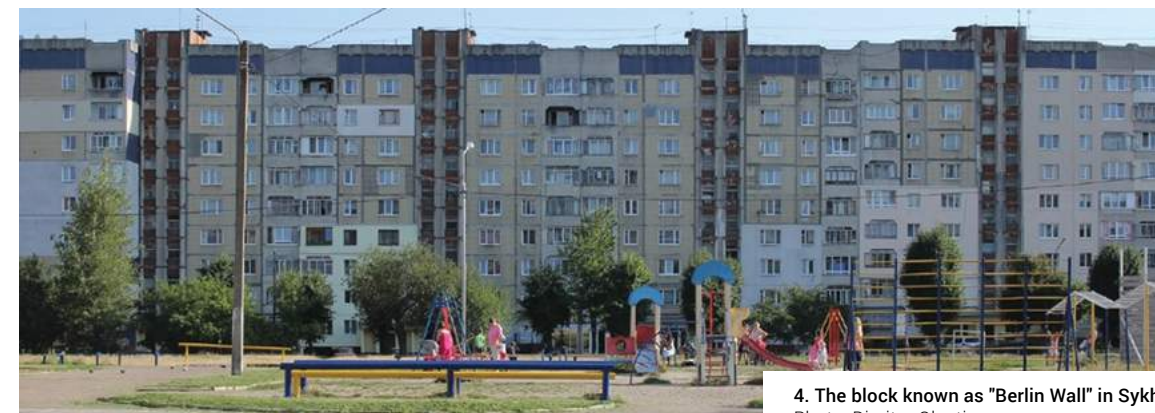
Prypiat is remembered as a youthful, hardworking soviet city with a strong communal life *“where everything was provided and there was no scarcity of goods,”* in contrast to other cities of the time. The family attachment to the soil and nature of Polesia emerges through the story of his grandparents, settlers in the nearby village of Chystohalivka. Children walking and skiing through the lush forest to go to school, often seeing deer and other wild beasts, enriches this imagery. *“The [Chornobyl] Nuclear Power Plant both united us and dispersed us.”* People in the area came together under a general spirit of youth that had desire to work, but the disaster dissolved those ties,



3. Internal migration movements to Sykhiv. Scheme: Dimitra Glenti.

sending people to Kyiv, Slavutych, and other places.<sup>4</sup> After the accident his family spent months in dormitories around Crimea before ending up in Sykhiv. There were many neighbors from Prypiat, all given flats in the massive block known as “the Berlin Wall.” Solidarity networks were necessary and highly functional throughout the first hard years of adaptation when the community of *“our Chornobyl people”* emerges but later softens its ties. Comparing his place of origin with the place he ended up living, Serhii says:

*Sykhiv is a modernist district and Prypiat was as well. Sykhiv was planned in late 70s. There they had similar houses, ample streets, wide alleys, a central building uniting the district. For us it is Dovzhenka Cinema, in Prypiat there was a monument of Prometheus and a cultural center with the same name. Lifestyle is similar and in Soviet times it was the same. You can go from one city to another and you cannot feel the difference. Maybe only if you discuss with local people. People may be different, but blocks are the same. There they lived and here they had to survive. There you had everything, but here you should struggle yourself.*



4. The block known as “Berlin Wall” in Sykhiv. Photo: Dimitra Glenti.

<sup>4</sup> The communities that lived in Chystohalivka and other villages of the Chornobyl Exclusion Zone were settled as a whole in Nebrat, a newly constructed village in Kyiv Oblast. Slavutych is a city that was also built with the sole purpose to house the evacuated personnel of Chornobyl.

Serhii has embodied the idea of an "easterner" living in western Ukraine,<sup>5</sup> much like people from Crimea with whom he sympathizes. They also had to start their life from scratch, but in their case, there is still hope of going back home, he says. *"Only I cannot dream of returning. Plutonium is forever."*

The interviewees from Crimea are all women and the process of remembering is still painful, hanging between a longing for a lost homeland, the bitterness that war inflicts, and the desire to adapt. For them, the community of Crimeans is important, but some interviewees stated clearly the primary goal of socializing with the locals in order to adapt to the new environment.

Natalia, a former journalist from Sevastopol that now works as a tourist guide in Lviv, categorizes her experience as *"immigration and not internal migration"* because of the great differences between Crimea and western Ukraine. *"In Lviv people are closed. In Sevastopol we are open, we are warm, we are southerners, friendly and emotional."* Natalia seems determined to integrate and explains her strategy: *"I did one important thing, I decided not to be too often together with other Crimeans. I decided I should enter the Lviv community. This is the right way of immigration. You shouldn't suffer, thinking about Crimea too much."* But as a self-described *"sorrowful optimist,"* she admits that nostalgia will follow her forever and that *"we will always be foreigners here. We will never become Lvivians."* Regarding her decision to settle in Sykhiv she explains that it was an impulsive action, *"another emotional mistake"* (taking into account that she had much better career perspectives in Kyiv) influenced by her friends that also moved there. She ended up buying an over-priced flat she had only seen photos of and describes her initial shock when she arrived in the estate. *"I always found sleeping districts to be terrible"* she says, although she grew up in a Khrushchiovka.<sup>6</sup> *"It's an old rule, if you want to integrate you should live in a better district, like the city center. There is a widespread stereotype of Sykhiv as being poorer and migrants are always advised not to move into poor districts."*

<sup>5</sup> A common stereotype that came up from many interviews and discussions, where "easterners" are considered more soviet-minded and self-made independent, while "westerners" are tradition-keeping and family-oriented.

<sup>6</sup> Khrushchiovka refers to a typology of panel or brick housing blocks of three- to five-stories which was developed in the Soviet Union during the early 1960s when Nikita Khrushchev was in government.

But later she explains how she found notions about Sykhiv to be false and outdated and came to see all the benefits of living in the district, namely the proximity to a forest, schools (including one with Russian language of instruction), park, tram, shops, and pharmacies. *"And lots of fresh air, like ours in Crimea, the quality in Sykhiv is much better than in the city center."* She describes how much her son loves Sykhiv and dislikes *"the dusty old stuff"* that she shows to the tourists. She finds houses in Lviv to be very old and in bad condition, stating that she wouldn't like to live there. Natalia is aware of the clichés that accompany Sykhiv and subordinate it in the urban hierarchy where Lviv center holds the top. She tries to break them down or reverse them while at the same time consciously dissociates herself from it. The flexibility of notions is a very important tool in the process of adaptation.

Tania is an architect from Simferopol that currently works at the Crimean Café in Sykhiv. The decision to leave Crimea was quick and her family was looking for a city in western Ukraine to move to. She arrived in Sykhiv carrying only her clothes and a mattress. They lived initially in a flat that a friend of her brother provided for them for free, before buying their own. Tania also describes the hardships of adapting to a new cultural environment, especially the language issue, the difficulty in making friends and the absence of family networks that would offer her an entrance to employment. *"Here they have a family culture, it is difficult to find a job if you don't have a relative. I went through fifteen interviews and no one hired me. I was so depressed, it was very difficult."* On the other hand, she describes her adventure of displacement as a short period of rupture that eventually had a liberating and empowering effect in her life. *"I am who I am because of Crimea. I used to cry a lot but I grew stronger. I was very proper back then, but here I allow myself to do crazy things. Now I have less fear and more self-confidence."* Sykhiv seems to play a positive part in this transformative process:

*Sykhiv reminds me of Crimea. It has very wide streets. It's spacious. Buildings of Soviet style and newly constructed. And people are simpler. It's a city within a city. When I arrived with my mother in Sykhiv I said I feel like I'm in Simferopol, I was surprised! I thought that Lviv was all about narrow streets and cobble stone, but here it's as if you're in Crimea. I grew up in a suburb of Simferopol, smaller than Sykhiv. Again, Soviet style but older, with five-story buildings. I lived on the fifth floor in*

*a big three room apartment. I could see the entire Simferopol from my house. We had just renovated it and then we had to leave. Here we live six people in a one room flat. It's ok. I have air and space here, a very positive feeling. There's everything that you need. I go to the city center, but rarely. There everything is tourist oriented. The architecture is beautiful, but nothing for your soul. Sykhiv is a modern district, it's easier to live here. I don't have to fit in the Lvivian framework, so I am more relaxed.*

Yevheniia came from Sevastopol in 2014 and opened a hair and beauty salon together with her husband in Sykhiv. The daughter of a military officer, she travelled across the Soviet Union in her childhood and youth before settling in Crimea in 1999. Though not a born-and-raised Crimean, it is obvious during the interview that the process of narrating her experience is still quite painful. *"Everything bad that could happen has already happened to us. Only death is worse than that".* She and her husband decided to abandon Sevastopol when they started feeling threatened due to their political views and ended up in Lviv accidentally. *"We had no idea where to go. We wrote different names of cities on papers and pulled by chance. In the end we were left with three choices. There were only tickets to Lviv for that particular period. Kyiv is too big, and I never liked Odesa, so we ended up in Lviv."* She describes how they found a flat and a place for their salon in one week. In her opinion Sykhiv offers a great potential due to the large number of its inhabitants and indeed their business is successful. But adaptation hasn't been easy in her case either. She points out that the climate especially has been a shock to her, but also differences in language, humor, and mentality gave her a hard time. On the important role of Crimean networks, she says: *"At the beginning we were like a club of Anonymous Alcoholics, we met, told our stories and had a chance to complain."* But also her work gives her the opportunity to do her own social research, as she states humorously. *"At first people were anxious, there was adrenaline. Now there are no emotions left, so people are slightly depressed. But I think that only now the period of adaptation started. Back then it was that hard period of struggle. Now we have to work on acceptance."* Much like every other interviewee, Yevheniia longs for the sea, the weather, and the landscapes of Crimea. The total absence of water as an element from the district makes it harder to heal nostalgia. But there seems to be a counterpart in the nature that surrounds Sykhiv. *"I very much like the forest of Sykhiv. In Crimea trees are very small but here I came into a real forest. It is impossible to see the sky! It's a magical feeling, you expect to see knights on horses!"*

Svitlana and Oksana are two sisters from Simferopol that own the Crimean Café in Sykhiv. At the time of the interview Sviltana had just returned from a short visit to Crimea. It was her second visit in three and a half years to see part of the family that stayed there and takes care of property that she didn't manage to sell. She emotionally narrates the stressful part of crossing the borders and the strange feeling of being there while everything has changed, like in a dream. *"Once again I confirmed that it's very sad to come back to something that you've already lost."* They both left Simferopol even before the referendum, ended up in Lviv, and were initially involved in a NGO of self-help for Crimean IDPs. Oksana remembers the enthusiasm and support they received during the first period of their displacement. But later things settled down and life became ordinary again. The painful aspect of exile is present in her case too, where intimate memories and Crimean nature play an important role. *"There you can always go to the sea. We used to go to different places. Mountains, forests, beaches and we knew that all. Crimea is very compact and diverse. Different climates and historical places. It's very rich. Lviv is rich as well and dense, but it is not ours. We didn't start here, we don't have memories of our first steps, first school, first love. Here our memories are short"*. She manages to balance the feeling of homesickness by attributing it to *"fake nostalgia"* and associating it to *"something which no longer exists."* She says the decision to open the Café saved her from depression and remembers that initially people didn't believe that they were really Crimeans, but simply named it Crimean for commercial reasons. *"It was fashionable to be an IDP."*



5. A wall inside the Crimean Café.  
Photo: Dimitra Glenti.

*The locals only look at the city center and have no idea that many things can be done here in this sleeping district. They didn't even see a future here. They thought that our business would fail. But when we first came here we saw so many children, so many people. And after our example other new things started appearing.*

Nevertheless, Oksana believes that Sykhiv is more receptive than the city center and other districts. In her experience people are more open and friendly. She attributes that feature to the fact that Sykhivians

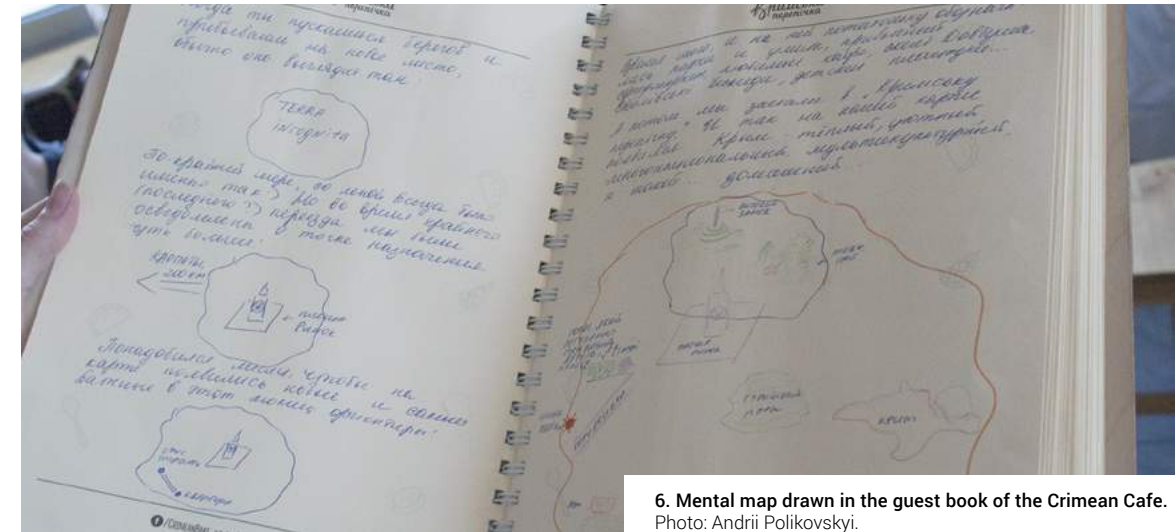
were migrants themselves. She also acknowledges that negative stereotypes about Sykhiv derive from that fact and from the notorious criminality of the district in the 90s but claims that they are false and exaggerated. Svitlana also challenges such stereotypes as she remembers her first impressions of arriving in Sykhiv:

*When we came here, I saw the church, the Intercity, my eye rested after the city center which is overcrowded. Too many people, too many tourists. And here it was so calm. The same in Simferopol, you walk in the downtown and come back to your district, to a quiet place. There was a square, young trees were planted, the new church. Despite its size it doesn't seem too big in this vast open space. The square in front of Dovzhenko, I showed it on a picture to my relatives, and they said: "wow, where is this beauty?" and I was thinking: "where is this beauty?" and nice flowerbeds with nice flowers were there. And even I had forgotten and realized: "oh wow, this is my district!" I like the square very much, where the tram goes, it is very wide. In the city center the tram climbs on people's heads. And here it is in the field blossoming with flowers. It is inviting to go and lay on the grass. It's like Europe. Like Europe!*

### CRIMEA EMERGING ON THE LOCAL MAP

■ It is quite obvious that in the last three years Crimeans changed the urban landscape of Sykhiv with their initiatives. Today, apart from the Café and the beauty salon, there is also a dental clinic and a theater company, all owned by Crimean IDPs. And vice-versa, Sykhiv has become a place of reference for the displaced community network. These newly emerging places function positively in various ways:

- As initiatives that enrich daily life in Sykhiv, that has been long perceived as a "sleeping district," heavily dependent on the city center for a variety of services and activities;
- As meeting points for the Crimean community, helping in the maintenance and expansion of informal solidarity networks;
- As places offering employment in a period of crisis to both locals (that are increasingly oriented towards emigration) and immigrants (that are deprived of kinship networks);



6. Mental map drawn in the guest book of the Crimean Café. Photo: Andrii Polikovskiy.

- As places of interaction between locals and IDPs that facilitate cultural exchange, mutual acceptance, and integration;

Crimea has entered the map of Lviv on a mental and symbolic level. The following example illustrates the significance of these trans-local references for an individual who has faced displacement. Browsing through the pages of the Crimean Café guest book we found written:

*When you start on a journey and arrive to a new place, usually it looks like this: Terra incognita. At least, it was like this in my case. But during the last (the last?) relocation we were a bit more informed about the destination point: Market Square -> (200km) Carpathians. One month was needed for new points to emerge, most important for that moment: Office-Flat. As time passed, parks and streets, usual supermarket, favorite cafes, Rocks of Dovbush [tourist place in the Carpathians], Skolivski Beskydy [part of Carpathians], kids' playgrounds...And then we drove to Krymska Perepichka [Crimean Café]. And that's how Crimea—warm, comfortable, multinational, multicultural, and very...homey—emerged on our map. [In the drawing] High Castle,*

*Shevchenkivskyi Hai [Park and skansen], Market Sq., train that regularly brings friends, as back then in Simfa [Simferopol], Stryiskyi Park, Crimea, my dear work, Horodotska [street], Home [with a spoon], Sknylivskyi Park where I jog. Thank you for Crimea on our map!*

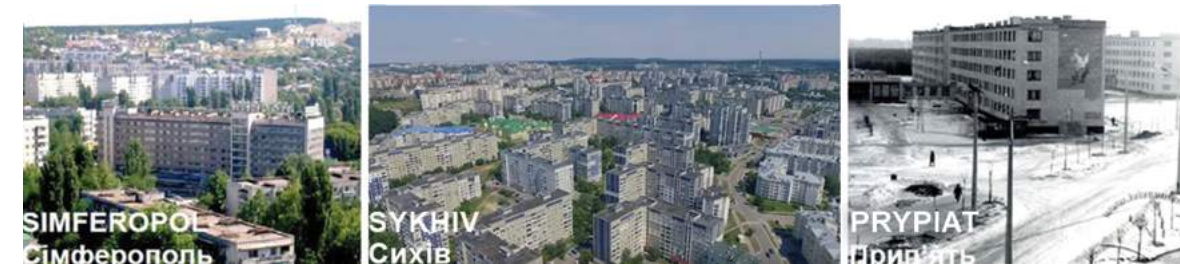
## CONCLUSIONS: SYKHIV THROUGH THE LENS OF MIGRATION

■ In this short research project, a bottom-up approach was attempted in order to investigate the link between a Soviet mass housing estate and migration. Sykhiv exemplifies stereotypical notions of a “sleeping district” as dull, homogenous, monotonous, rigid, dysfunctional, unpleasant, and outdated. All these are amplified due to the relation of interdependency with Lviv, a city that has been listed as UNESCO patrimony for its historical and architectural values. The inevitable comparisons between the two urban entities draw upon generalizations that can be challenged by allowing alternative narratives to be heard. The main themes that prevailed in the accounts presented above will be briefly summarized here:

- Nature prevails and functions as a link to the past. The forests of Polesia and the seascapes of Crimea find a counter reference in the omnipresent greenery that surrounds Sykhiv. Sykhiv stands somewhere between the urban and the rural, placed on the outskirts of the city and in close proximity to the forest. But also, more urban greenery like grass and the flowerbeds seem to enhance the experience of living in the district. However, nostalgia for the sea and the rivers cannot be cured here, where the water element is absent.
- “Sykhiv is a normal sleeping district, like everywhere else.” The generically produced raion districts that are found across the former Soviet Union create a familiar environment that makes the experience of migration and the process of adaptation somewhat smoother. Almost every interviewee had lived in the past in housing blocks similar to those in Sykhiv. Contrary to what is commonly believed, these modernist housing districts appear less alienating and more homey.
- Sykhiv as a hosting place features a sense of openness, a metaphor to a blank sheet, poor in references and notions but rich in potentiality. “There are many things missing, many things to be done,” and this notion of emptiness invites the newcomer to participate and shape urban

space on the contrary to what we think of such districts as over planned and rigid. “You can be free here.” A sense of liberation from formal forms and predetermined notions is found here, in comparison to the old center of Lviv, which is described as attractive but crowded and chaotic, full of people, buildings, and meanings, and a place that imposes its own rules on the newcomer. The process of becoming a Sykhivian seems much easier than becoming a Lvivian.

- Ample space and air are a positive feature in comparison to the density of the city. Instead of being thought of as “too Soviet” or outdated, the urban plan is appreciated by the inhabitants. The scale and analogy of built/open space appears fitting to contemporary living. And opposite to what is often thought, Sykhiv sometimes appears as more European than Lviv.
- Finally, it becomes obvious from this case study that different communities participate and shape both the physical and social environment of Sykhiv. In contrast to stereotypical ideas of such districts being homogenous and monotonous, Sykhiv invites diversity and hosts various memories, experiences, and stories to be told. ■



**7. Contrasts and similarities.** Collage of photos from open sources, a frame from Blog360 video and an image from the Urban Media Archive.



## *“VERY DIVERSE, VERY GOOD, SOMETIMES VERY BAD... WHERE MY HOME IS:”*

### PLACE ATTACHMENT AND MEMORY OF SYKHIV RESIDENTS

Tetiana Mandzyk

Sykhiv is the biggest and one of the most dynamic housing estates of Lviv. It is a centrally-designed modernist district and has its specific architecture, social composition, and atmosphere. There are many stereotypes about Sykhiv and its residents: it is called a “sleeping district,” a “district with uniform architecture,” a “district of workers and villagers,” etc. At the same time, people usually create some connections with place of residence. According to studies by Leila Scannell and Robert Gifford, place attachment has an emotional, cognitive, and behavioral aspect (Scannell, Gifford 2010). Moreover, a positive valence of relations with the place of residence gives many benefits for people and for places (for example, supporting psychological balance and well-being, helping overcome the crisis of identity, giving a sense of stability, and facilitating civic engagement in local areas, etc.) (Manzo, Devine-Wright 2014). The first glimpse gives an impression of Sykhiv as “boring,” “non-safe,” “strange,” “without architectural diversity,” and “without face and his own history,” but is this true? Can Sykhiv be a subject of attachment or a place for identity-making? According to the anthropologists Michael Kenny and Kirsten Smillie, memory is a key to personal, social, and cultural identity (Kenny, Smillie 2014), so in this essay I will try to delineate a “face” of this district based on various personal narratives.

This pilot research is focused on peculiarities of the place attachment and place memory of Sykhiv residents. More specific research tasks are:

- to identify and analyze Sykhiv’s place identity and place attachment of Sykhiv residents, especially attachment to the district and to the city;
- to explore memories, connected to the place, which are manifested in knowledge of famous/important persons, important moments and places in the history of the district.

Quantitative (self-completion questionnaires) and qualitative (in-depth interviews) methods were implemented in this research. I compiled a questionnaire with measures of emotional bonds with places (place attachment and place identity), measures of place memory, and socio-demographic measures.

1. **Place attachment.** Place attachment was measured in accordance with ideas of Maria Lewicka with the “Place Attachment Scale” (Lewicka 2012: 127-131) that consists of nine items, which are rated on a five-point scale describing positive and negative feelings towards the place. In this investigation, the items were evaluated with respect to two places: the city district (Sykhiv) and the city (Lviv).
2. **Place identity.** Participants were offered a list of possible subjects of identification: house, city district (Sykhiv), city (Lviv), region (Lviv region), country (Ukraine), and Europe. They were answering the question “Who I am?” (resident of a house, resident of Sykhiv district, resident of the city of Lviv, resident of Lviv region, resident of Ukraine, resident of Europe). Participants were asked to rank each item on a five-point scale (from 1—definitely don’t agree to 5—definitely agree).
3. **Place memory** (famous persons, important moments, and places in Sykhiv district with certain historical value). Participants were asked three open-ended questions: “Which moments in the history of Sykhiv do you consider as important?”, “Which places are the most important in the history of Sykhiv?” and “Can you mention names of famous / important persons whose life or activities are connected with Sykhiv?” Answers to the questions were rated with respect to number of the listed items, number of persons / moments / places mentioned, and the content of the answers. Famous / important persons were rated according to their nationality, profession,

and time period of their activities. The most important moments in the history of Sykhiv were rated with respect to the time period in which they have taken place and the most important places were analyzed based on the number of positions mentioned and their frequency, which shows the intensity of sense of this place.

4. **Socio-demographic measures.** Socio-demographic measures included age, gender, education (three levels: higher, incomplete higher, secondary), length of residence (in years) in the district and in the city, and the type of accommodation (owner of apartment, tenant in rented apartment, other).

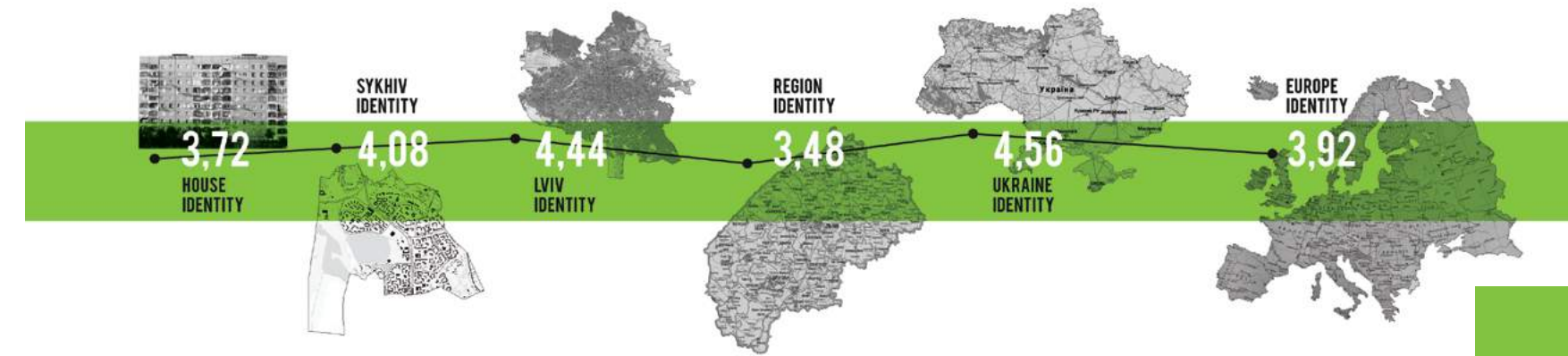
Participants of the quantitative part of study were residents of the city of Lviv and recruited from the Sykhiv district (16-60 years old) (n=25). The average length of life in Sykhiv of participants of the survey is 20 years (in Lviv 27 years). 72% of respondents own an apartment, 12% rent an apartment, and 16% gave other answers. 84% of participants have higher education, 16% have incomplete higher. Respondents were recruited in two ways: from open lectures in the public program “Sykhiv by night” and from personal contacts. To achieve more valid results, I additionally processed five interviews with the residents of Sykhiv from the Urban Media Archive of the Center for Urban History of East Central Europe (conducted in 2015).<sup>1,2</sup>

Place identity can emerge when the elements of a social or physical environment match personal values and temperaments of individuals (Twigger-Ross, Uzzel 1996). First of all, let's discuss the identification of Sykhiv residents. So “Who I am? Resident of Sykhiv, Lviv, Ukraine or Europe?” Profiles of different kinds of the place identity of Sykhiv residents is presented on the picture 1.

The highest levels of identification are expressed in relation to country and city. So, for surveyed residents of Sykhiv connections with country and city of residence are stronger. At the same time, we can find the markers of local identity in Sykhiv in the interviews with its residents, for

<sup>1</sup> For more about Urban Media Archive see URL: <http://www.lvivcenter.org/en/uma/>, accessed 10 May 2018.

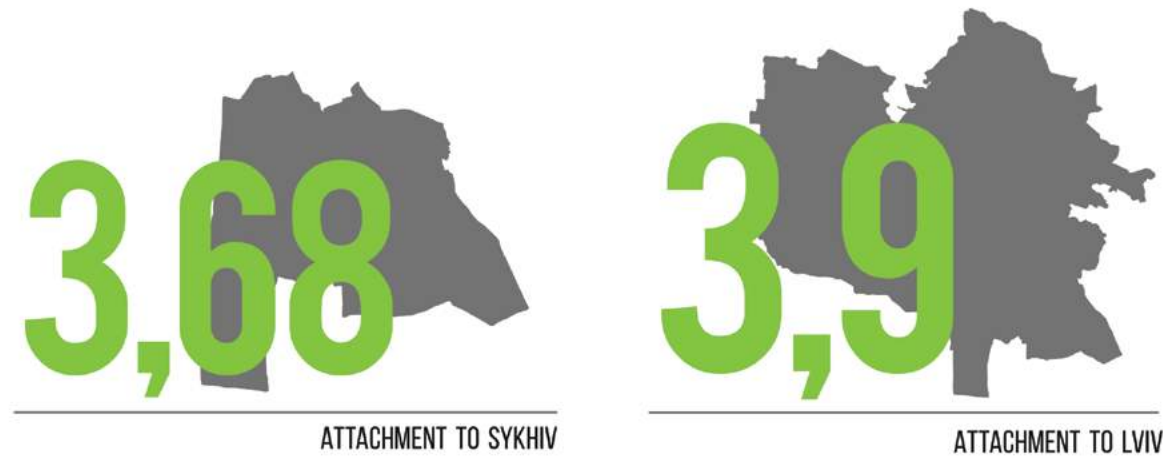
<sup>2</sup> For more about the “Imagined and Experienced: Planned Districts in Late Socialism and Beyond” research project see URL: <http://www.lvivcenter.org/en/researchprojects/imagined-and-experienced/>, accessed 10 May 2018.



1. Profiles of different kinds of place identity of residents of Sykhiv. Diagram: Oksana Nesterenko.

example: “I have... perhaps, it is can be called local patriotism in some way... interesting point, as for me, only people who live in Sykhiv, identify themselves like ‘sykhivchany,’ I have never heard that people from other districts, for example from Zaliznychnyi district, call themselves in this way... so there is some identification” (male, 22; recorded July 16, 2015). In the interviews we can also find some interesting thoughts about the perception of Sykhiv in the relation to Lviv: “Well, I consider Sykhiv like a pearl in the crown, a pearl in the crown of a Lion, in the crown of our city, a young pearl, which still has much to update. Well, young, but it is a pearl” (female, 43; recorded August 12, 2015). Therefore, Sykhiv has its distinctiveness, which is emotionally recognized by local inhabitants.

The other aim of this research was the comparison of levels of emotional attachment to the district and to the city. The hypothesis was that attachment to the city of Lviv will be statistically higher in comparison with attachment to the district, which can be explained by the wider cultural, historical and social heritage of the city of Lviv. As we can see in picture 2, there is no significant difference between emotional attachment to the city (M=3,9) and to the district (M=3,68). People are proud that they are from Sykhiv, want to live there, participate in the life of district, etc. It is an important moment for the future development of the district, which might become a base for wider civil engagement.



**2. Graph of comparison attachment to district and to city of residents of Sykhiv.**

Diagram: Oksana Nesterenko.

The willingness to stay in the place of residence and a desire that in the future family and friends will live in this place are the criteria of emotional attachment to this place. In the responses we can find manifestations of such a type of place attachment: *"We did not want to move, because (...) we settled here. Now we do not regret the relocation, for sure, because this place became native, so I don't want to move anywhere. I would like to live in this district further"* (female, 43; recorded August 12, 2015). Sykhiv can also evoke some contradictory emotions: *"...very diverse, very good, sometimes very bad... but mostly for me it is the emotion of where my home is"* (male, 26; recorded July 14, 2015), *"I like this district. I believe that this district has big perspectives... There are many opportunities, a lot of space..."* (male, 22; recorded July 16, 2015).

There were different answers considering the relocation from Sykhiv, but the majority of respondents want to stay there, because this district gives them many opportunities: *"I feel very comfortable here. If Sykhiv provides my children with a good education and leisure, I do not need anything more from Sykhiv"* (female, 33; recorded August 4, 2015); *"I do not think that we have to run*

*from there, move, because many people in Sykhiv think that we have to run from here, not a fact, then you will still go shopping here. I have the impression that all of Lviv is going there [Shuvar market, one of the largest in Lviv] ... there it is cheaper"* (male, 26; recorded July 14, 2015). In this response we can find some kind of stereotypes about Sykhiv: *"a place from where people have to run."*

One of the main aims of this research was to explore the memories connected to various Sykhiv locations, and to answer the question "Does Sykhiv have a memory?" and "(if yes) What kind of memory is it?" An analysis of open-ended questions from the survey could be a good way to deal with these issues. The notion of "place of memory" is understood here as a site vested with historical significance due to the nature of the historic events that occurred there. One respondent presented her knowledge of Sykhiv history in the following manner: *"Sykhiv has a beautiful history, we have a magnificent church which has endless treasure and endless history, which can compete with other architectural monuments"* (female, 43; recorded August 12, 2015). As we can see further, in many cases memories about the history of Sykhiv are mixed up, non-chronological, with gaps and blind spots, but in general residents express their interest in history: *"There was the village Zubra and the river Zubrivka, Sykhiv was built on two rivers—the Poltva and Zubra... the first one who wrote about the village Pasiky Zubrycki was Ivan, I don't remember his surname..."* (female, 31; recorded July 21, 2015).

Sometimes school courses of history and spending leisure time around Sykhiv also can trigger the interest in history: *"[I] had some interest [in the past], because our teacher of history at that time taught us how to make a wall newspaper (...) we were forced to look for the sources... To my surprise, many people do not know that we have a wooden church, made without a single nail (...) When I already had a bicycle, I began to explore the actual areas of the old Sykhiv and the old factories, which unfortunately in most cases do not work and are empty, it was still a certain excursion into the industrial (history of factory)"* (male, 26; recorded July 14, 2015).

The majority of people surveyed declare that the most important thing which happened with Sykhiv was the visit of Pope John Paul II in 2001. This event was mentioned by 68% of the respondents, so it had a significant impact on the residents of Sykhiv. The next most important moment is the

building of a new tram line (mentioned by 60% of the sample). As it is shown in the Table 1, all other moments are related to construction: the planning and building of Sykhiv district, building the Church of the Nativity of the Holy Mother of God, and building the "Shuvar" market. Sixteen percent of the respondents were reluctant to mention any moments in history of Sykhiv.

TABLE 1. THE MAIN MOMENTS /EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF SYKHIV

Nº	Moments /events	n	% of all	Year
1	Visit of Pope John Paul II	17	68	2001
2	Building of a new tram line	15	60	2016
3	Building of market "Shuvar"	3	12	2010s
4	Planning and building of Sykhiv	3	12	1960s
5	Building of the Church of the Nativity of the Holy Mother of God	3	12	1995-2000
	None	4	16	

As one respondent stated: *"Every resident of Sykhiv will probably name the visit of the Pope in 2001 among the key events... the building of the Church of the Nativity of the Holy Mother of God began with whole complex. For the visit of the Pope, all the roads were repaired, infrastructure was put in for the best connection, and just some of the houses were repainted"* (male, 26; recorded July 14, 2015). In this way, the visit of Pope is the most symbolic event in the history of Sykhiv. It also influenced other important moments, like the construction of the church, transport links, the improvement of buildings, etc. It was perceived as the starting point in the further development of Sykhiv district.

The next quote presents the meaning of "Shuvar" market, not only for the residents of Sykhiv, but also for the residents of the entire city: *"And I think that it is true for me that... many will disagree, [but] it is really important, the construction of this complex 'Shuvar' has fundamentally changed the*

*flow of passengers. At the 'Lower Shuvar,' you can even meet more friends than on Halytska Street and at Rynok Square [central locations of Lviv] (...) The building of the 'Upper Shuvar' was also a big event"* (male, 26; recorded July 14, 2015). As is shown in Table 2, there are several most important places in the history of Sykhiv, which have some symbolical sense for the residents: Church of the Nativity of Holy Mother of God (named by 60% of respondents), the Oleksandr Dovzhenko Cinema (mentioned by 32% of surveyed people), and the "Shuvar" market.

TABLE 2. THE MAIN PLACES IN THE HISTORY OF SYKHIV

Nº	Places	n	% of all
1	Church of the Nativity of the Holy Mother of God	15	60
2	Oleksandr Dovzhenko Cinema	8	32
3	Building of "Shuvar" market	5	20
4	Church of the Holy Trinity (XVII cent.)	4	16
5	The "Spark" ("Iskra")	4	16
	None	3	12

A confirmation of the validity of these results can found in the interviews. There was a question, "What, first of all, do you think about when you think about Sykhiv?" Three main places were most frequently mentioned by respondents—the church, the cinema, and the market:

- 1 *"Of course, our temples, they are very beautiful and each one is special. Also, the cinema, we have it, and it is a beautiful building. Well, many people associate Sykhiv with 'Shuvar,' because it is also the first market in our neighborhood. Well, and now also the Catholic University is a great one"* (female, 43; recorded August 12, 2015);
- 2 *"Church of the Nativity of the Holy Mother of God, it is the largest and central, the Dovzhenko cinema, then Santa Barbara, later 'Iskra,' and then probably the UCU [Ukrainian Catholic*

*University] at the Khutorivka [street], later are both Upper and Lower 'Shuvar'" (female, 31; recorded July 21, 2015);*

- 3 *"Sykhiv is always, for me, the environment where I grew up, the church in the middle... One of the most culturally interesting places that come to mind is the Dovzhenko Cinema. Another interesting area is 'Santa Barbara'" (male, 26; recorded July 14, 2015).*

As for famous people in the history of Sykhiv, the most frequently mentioned in the quantitative survey was Yuriy Verbytsky (1963-2014), a Heavenly Hundred Hero of Maidan, who was murdered in 2014. Second one was VovaZIL'Vova (Volodymyr Parfeniuk), a hip-hop and rap performer and the author of a famous song about Sykhiv ("My district Sykhiv"). The next one was Orest Fredyna, a priest of the Church of the Nativity of the Holy Mother of God. Also mentioned was: Ivan Rudnyckiy (politician, ex-worker of Sykhiv administration), Kateryna Mihailicyna (poet), Dmytro Dobrodomov (politician), the brothers Radkovci (tourist guides), Fedir Pynda (architect), Larysa Skoryk (architect), and Natalia Valeniuk (artist). Forty-four percent of the respondents did not name any famous person who was born, lived, or worked in Sykhiv.

Furthermore, we received additional information about Sykhiv's famous people from the interviews: *"I think the priest Orest Fredyna, he is the main person of the church... he is the face of Sykhiv... he is associated with Sykhiv. Well, in principle, you can somehow associate a little bit, I do not really know how it is now, but with Roman Fedyshyn [businessman, owner of "Shuvar" market]. Too much effort was invested by this person. I do not know how constructive it is and how much it is in the interests of the community"* (female, 33; recorded August 4, 2015). All the people mentioned were of Ukrainian nationality and most of them are not from the distant past, but from the present time: *"Well, I know that there are not a few writers who live here in Sykhiv. This can be [Halyna] Vdovychenko, Liana Kosanovska, and Halyna Pohutiak"* (female, 43; recorded August 12, 2015). As we can see, people also remember a number of songs about Sykhiv and their performers: *"I can mention three songs about Sykhiv: 'I will not go from Sykhiv to Lviv,' then Xy4 [Pop-punk group] [song about] Sykhiv, 'With you, Sykhiv,' this is probably more for fun, well, and VovaZIL'Vova 'My district Sykhiv' (...) I know another person... Natalia Popovych, she recited poems very well, she lived in Sykhiv. For me she is a cult figure from Sykhiv, and actually gave her life for Ukraine"* (female, 31; recorded July 21, 2015).

This essay presents the findings of a pilot research project. For achieving more valid and reliable results broader research with a more representative group should be conducted. Nonetheless, it is interesting that my results in general agree with the conclusions reached by research conducted by the City Institute in July 2017.<sup>3</sup> For me, one of the most important conclusions is the necessity to combine quantitative and qualitative methods. Using only one type of research tool could not give a complex vision of the subject. This research also shows that Sykhiv, as a district of the city, can be a significant subject for the formation of identity and emotional bonds. For local residents, it is important to be part of Sykhiv on the same level as to be a part of the city. Sykhiv is a place which has its memory and its own face, represented by famous people, important historical moments, and places. The majority of interlocutors declared their wish to remain in Sykhiv, even in case of moving to another flat. Moreover, most participants underline the fact that Sykhiv provides many opportunities for development and has the potential to become a better place for living. ■

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Kenny, Michael G. & Kirsten Smillie. *Stories of Culture and Place: An Introduction to Anthropology*. University of Toronto Press, Higher Education Division, 2014.
- Lewicka, Maria. *Psychologia miejsca*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe SCHOLAR, 2012.
- Manzo, Lynne C. & Patric Devine-Wright (eds.) *Place attachment: Advanced in theory, methods and applications*. Routledge, 2014.
- Scannell, Leila & Robert Gifford. "Defining Place Attachment: A Tripartite Organizing Framework", *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 30, 2010, pp. 1–10.
- Twigger-Ross, Clare L. & David L. Uzzell. "Place and identity processes", *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 16, 1996, pp. 205–220.

<sup>3</sup> More information about the survey "Problems and Needs of the Inhabitants of Sykhiv District" could be found at URL: <http://www.city-institute.org/index.php/uk/doslidzhennia/136-problemy-ta-potreby-meshkantsiv-sykhivskoho-raionu>, accessed 10 May 2018.

## RURALIZING THE URBAN, URBANIZING THE RURAL

Matas Šiupšinskas

The conflict between the urban and the rural was a popular and constantly revisited topic among soviet city planners. From the era of 1920s experimentation till the late soviet years they were discussing how to overcome differences between village and town. There were different approaches proposed for a resolution—from the utopian to more realistic strategies. To put it bluntly, they were looking for an answer to the question if it was the rural that needed to be equipped by modern, urban facilities, or was it the urban that required more greenery and nature?

The urbanization of rural areas was considered a part of the modernization program—new shops, kindergartens, and public buildings were appearing in villages planned next to industrial farming areas. At the same time new urban residential areas, mass housing raions, were planned as compositions of free-standing objects placed in an open and green landscape. This greenery and frequent visits to recreational facilities were in theory supposed to compensate for the lack of contact with nature.

However, the closer interaction between urban and rural was happening not in the structural, but on a personal level. Soviet cities were rapidly expanding, and a wave of villagers came to work in factories and related services. The housing shortage was acute, and industrial methods were used in order to build new neighborhoods





**2. Contrasts of Sykhiv mass housing district.**  
Photo: Matas Šiupšinskas.



quicker. People were moved into modernist mass housing areas designed for an imaginary future society, but the practices and preferences of newcomers were still rooted in the village tradition.

My presumption is that this interaction of two different ways of life (urban and rural) created not only conflict, but also new forms of cohabitation. This friction between the rural past and the promise of a modern future created a new form of urban—one which had modernist “hard” infrastructure surrounded by “soft” structures created, or appropriated, by inhabitants themselves. The notion that the urban and the rural are not opposed to each other but actually are strongly interdependent is worth investigation.

Sykhiv is a mass housing district in Lviv that was built in the 1980s and 90s. From the first glance it is quite similar to other mass housing areas of that time in both its urban planning and material presence. However, two weeks spent living there and an opportunity to interact with local inhabitants was a great opportunity to look for specific traces of rural life that Sykhiv still has. People that I met during the interviews or walking in the raion itself mentioned different links to rural life experienced in their close environment:

1. They buy vegetables from “babushkas” (grannies) that travel by train from villages to the local market;
2. Some of the interviewed people mentioned relatives living outside the city and the common practice of supporting young urban families with food brought from villages;
3. The remains of old Sykhiv village was mentioned quite often as a separate space which is part of Sykhiv, but at the same time it is “other,” a different part of it;
4. Finally, people mentioned that their neighbors grow vegetables inside the Sykhiv raion or next to it.

This last practice showcases the contrast of soviet-built mass housing areas quite well. Talks with inhabitants and *flâneur* walks helped me to find locations within the neighborhood that are used for gardening. However, analyzing publicly available aerial photography and maps ([openstreetmap.org](https://openstreetmap.org), [maps.google.com](https://maps.google.com), [yandex.com/maps](https://yandex.com/maps)) were useful in order to understand the scale of this trend and also made it easier to better find hidden gardening locations.



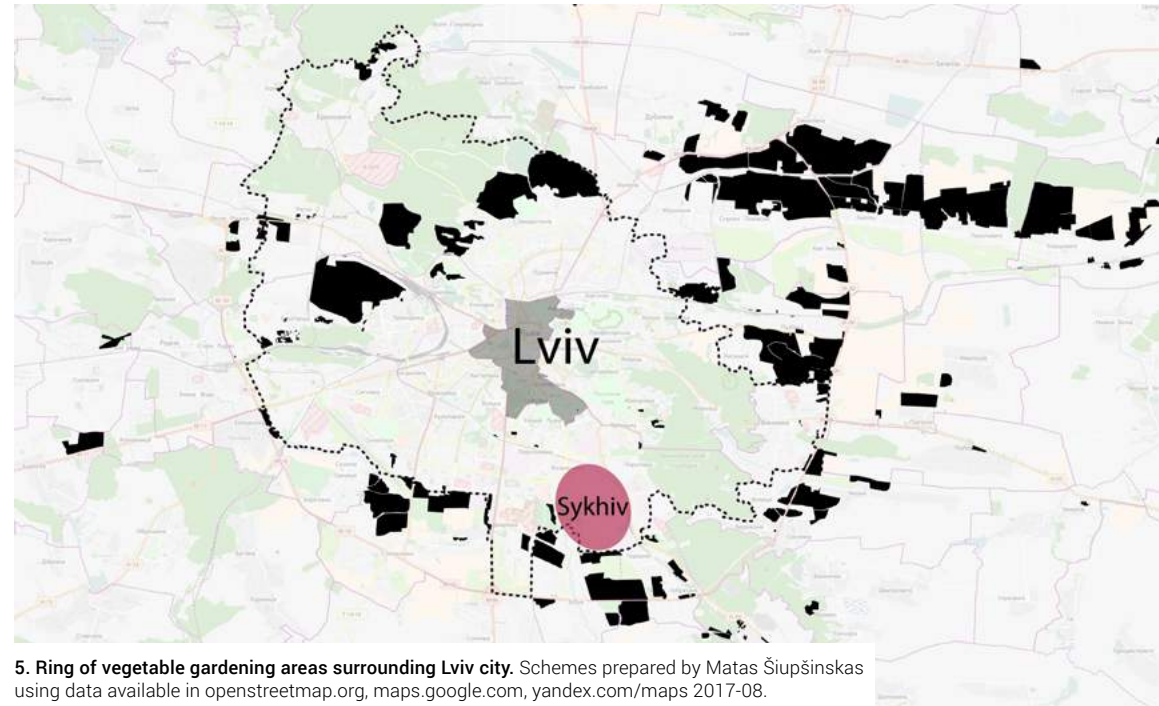
**3. Traces of rural life in Sykhiv: remains of Sykhiv village.**  
Photo: Matas Šiupšinskas.



**4. Traces of rural life in Sykhiv: babushkas in the market, private gardens next to a block of flats, and people waiting for the train.**  
Photos: Matas Šiupšinskas.



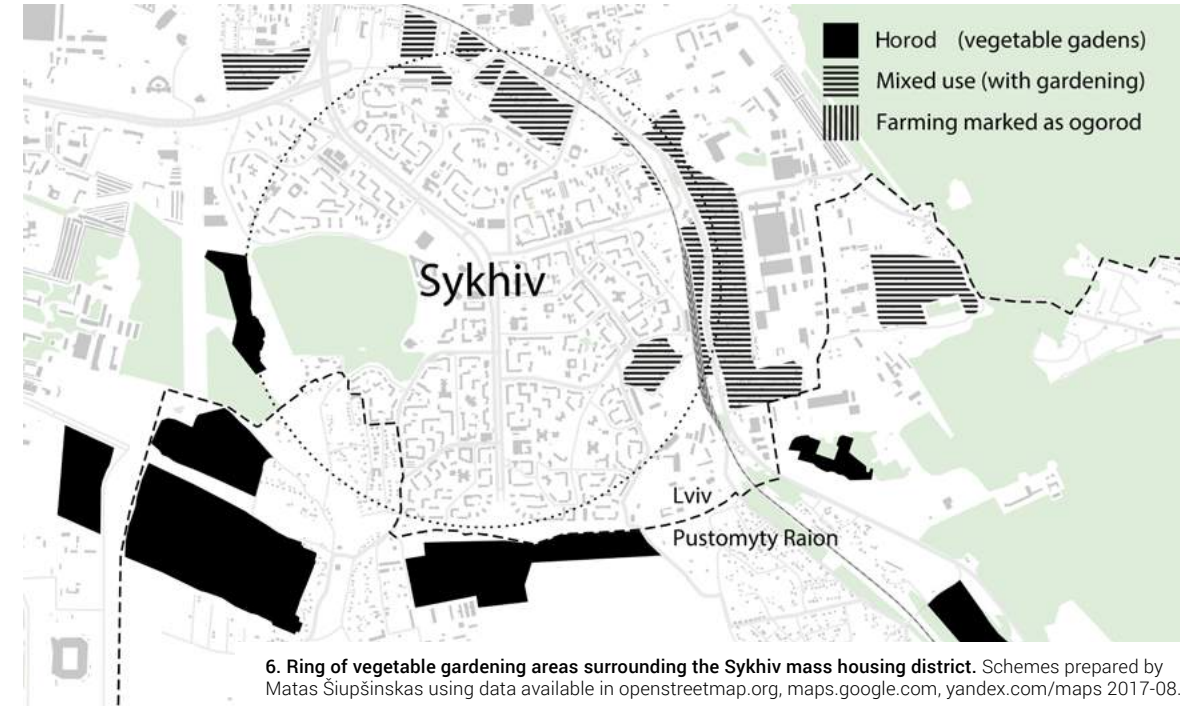




5. Ring of vegetable gardening areas surrounding Lviv city. Schemes prepared by Matas Šiupšinskas using data available in openstreetmap.org, maps.google.com, yandex.com/maps 2017-08.

From this analysis it is visible that the entire city of Lviv is surrounded by a ring of official and non-official vegetable gardens usually called *horods* (from Ukrainian word *город* – garden). Official *horods* are planned in a grid-like manner, with small roads leading to the plots, and have greater chances to be used for building a suburban house or a “dacha” (summerhouse). What is most striking is the scale of informal *horods* that have a more organic structure and appear in very different locations overlooked by planning institutions.

Sykhiv is a smaller scale replica of Lviv itself and surrounded by a ring of different areas where food is grown. There are several large areas of *horods* and also mixed-use areas where gardening is practiced as well. Some of these are next to the railway, and some adjacent to apartment buildings



6. Ring of vegetable gardening areas surrounding the Sykhiv mass housing district. Schemes prepared by Matas Šiupšinskas using data available in openstreetmap.org, maps.google.com, yandex.com/maps 2017-08.

or (according to locals) even near the flower beds. They might be fenced or hidden behind scrap wood and plants. Strong attempts to protect each allotment suggests that the *horod* is something practiced individually and not a very social activity. At least this is how it appears at first glance.

The most radical place for individualist gardeners is next to the park and the Zubra River. Hidden deep inside the bushes there is a labyrinth of self-made pathways with gates to different gardening plots. Behind the walls you can find a hidden paradise—a paradise indeed for a rural man. Some of the allotments are neglected, others are quite well-kept—with pathways, small sheds, and reservoirs to store water, etc. Some of them are purely gardening locations, but other places have evidence of leisure infrastructure such as benches, bonfire place, green lawn, and flowerbeds.



**7. A horod area hidden in bushes with complex structure of pathways, walls, and doors.**  
Photos: Matas Šiupšinskas.



**8. Hidden Paradise.**  
Photo: Matas Šiupšinskas.

But this is not only an individual activity. Depending on topography you can have a different kind of informal *horod*. Next to the end of the tram line (Vernads'koho Station), a vast field with garden patches appears. It is so close to the blocks of flats that according to Lesia—a gardener I met there—people watch their gardens from balconies here. In this area you can find only small fences, so it is easy to walk around and meet people that work here. They are quite open even for foreigners and those that I approached accepted to talk and later pose for pictures. Maria is an 82-year-old pensioner living next to Iskra and comes here by “marshrutka.” She started gardening six years ago and uses three allotments (she calls them “try kuska”). She started to use the last allotment after being invited by her neighbor after the original user moved out. She used to have a dacha in the past, but after her husband died she decided to sell it and start gardening here.



**9. Horod area located in an unused field next to the Vernads'koho tram station.**  
Photo: Matas Šiupšinskas.



**10. Horod near blocks.**  
Photo: Matas Šiupšinskas.

Marina arrived to Sykhiv with her parents after the Chernobyl disaster. When she was younger the economy was declining and there was a lack of food products, so her parents fenced a piece of land and started to grow vegetables here. Now she is the one taking care of the garden, but her children don't want to join her anymore. She is not angry if some vegetable disappears. "We are all hard-working people here," she says.

Lesia was an architect and is now a pensioner. She lives in the city center, but part of her family is currently living in Sykhiv. Two years ago, a neighbor suggested to her to start gardening this place because the last user of the allotment died. Her neighbors have small sheds, but she doesn't need one. Lesia dreams that one day this place will be a park and she will move her garden somewhere else.



11. A structure of a horod in Sykhiv: closed labyrinth.  
Source: yandex.com/maps.

In the field where I met these women, the interaction between neighbor gardeners is unavoidable. They not only know each other, but also formed a network of knowledge and self-management. The ability to use an allotment here is based on customary law—either you fenced an unused piece of land yourself and claimed it as your garden or it was passed to you by someone who did.

Neighbors can also expand to a neglected allotment nearby or invite their friends to take it. It is therefore a practice that is individual and communal at the same time.

This is a creative practice that uses the leftovers of modernist planning and turns it in to a possibility. It compensates for what was missing in top-down planning and creates an environment of interdependency. It is opposed to the lifestyle that was theoretically supposed to blossom in a socialist city, but at the same time this practice is impossible without having a densely populated



12. A structure of a horod in Sykhiv: open field.  
Source: yandex.com/maps.

neighborhood nearby. Informal gardening on such a scale is impossible without a mass housing area where great number of inhabitants were living in tiny apartments and where most of the land was considered as public or semipublic.

The landscape of informal horods that appeared in Sykhiv is created by collective effort, by a group of people that are all different but share the same need to work the land. For me this is evidence of a rural mentality, and the physical representation of an unconscious memory of village life. Unconscious because it was embedded in the habits people had (and still have), reflecting a part of their procedural memory and collective heritage. These habits empowered the inhabitants of a mass housing district to shape their environment into the one they desired. Maria, Marina, Lesia and their counterparts were in a way more successful than soviet planners in overcoming differences between urban and rural—they simply brought the rural into the city itself and utilized available land as efficiently as they could. ■



13. Lesia and Maria—practitioners of informal gardening.  
Photos: Matas Šiupšinskas.





## INTRODUCTION: PRACTICES

Svitlana Odynets

I believe the idea to conduct a two-week anthropological course in Sykhiv with young scholars who did not see themselves as social anthropologists was rather risky and ambitious. The varying disciplinary backgrounds of the students can give more freedom for brainstorming, creating interesting visions, and generating original hypotheses, but tends to be more challenging in terms of fieldwork and analysis of the results. Nevertheless, the harder this experiment seemed to be for us, the more attractive it was.

Since our studio consisted of social geographers, architects, historians, and journalists from Serbia, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Ukraine, we started from a general discussion that could be insightful for all students. But after three days we decided to dive into the field without special preliminary theories and the results exceeded all expectations. We prepared the collective project “Gentrification in the Iskra Microraion of Sykhiv: The First Signs?” The main research questions included: how are the everyday lives of people influenced by the rapid development of the district in terms of infrastructure, the real estate market, and the appearance of a new tram line? Has this already generated the first evidence of gentrification? What role does migration from Crimea and Donbas after 2014 play here? The students conducted non-participant observation of the age structure of customers in selected pubs and almost thirty semi-structured and non-structured interviews with Sykhivians.

This part of the volume includes five individual contributions prepared by students of the Practices Studio after our summer school concluded. Jelica Jovanovic in her text “(Un)controlled (In)formality. Sykhiv’s Small Businesses in the Wasteland of the Perpetual” looks into the phenomenon of the business landscape in Sykhiv through the wider perspective of similar economic processes in many countries of Eastern Europe. Otakar Bursa uses a concept of “daily rhythms” and discovers probable inequalities in the “Iskra” neighborhood. Oleksiy Tkachenko proposes a “warm map” of services for residents of Sykhiv, which they use in everyday life. The preliminary anthropological involvement in the field is described in Joanna Lickiewicz’s essay “Looking for Bagdad. The Case of Informal Youth Groups in Iskra, Sykhiv.” It is about the physical area between residential blocks—an arena for gangs meeting and negotiating in the earlier 1990s. From that time “Baghdad” has existed only in the memories of their participants, and sometimes is referred by them as a “golden imagined past.” However, for the majority of Sykhivians this type of area is virtually non-existing. Finally, Anna Tsiupko presents the photo collection “Sykhiv: No Place for Usain: Discovering the Places Where the Little Human Can Start His Big Sports Career”.

We hope that these findings will enrich current visions of the district’s development and strengthen the attractiveness of Sykhiv in public city discourses. ■

# (UN)CONTROLLED (IN)FORMALITY. SYKHIV'S SMALL BUSINESSES IN THE WASTELAND OF PERPETUAL TRANSITION

Jelica Jovanović

Just a small stroll down Sykhiv's main streets provides an insight into the business landscape of the area and the obvious demand for a variety of services, all well known to any resident of the new housing estates, that spill into the public space. However, the modalities are not the same. Depending on the opportunity, ambition, and connections of the owner/entrepreneur, some get the possibility to build on the previously empty lots, aimed for central functions. Others apparently had to think of something else: buy or rent a ground floor flat and refurbish it, build a MAF ["small architectural form," such as a kiosk, see below—Ed.] or just sit on the street and sell products. This inspired me to look a bit more into this phenomenon. Coming from Serbia, I am all too familiar and "adjusted" to these kind of practices and structures. I wanted to see the differences, or perhaps better called local varieties, by interviewing actors and observing the area and occupants' behavior.

## THE SHIFT TOWARDS INFORMALITY

■ The informality, extra-legality, or even illegality and bootleg practices were not unknown or exclusive to Eastern Europe. It is a common human practice, especially in dire times, that is arguably more often present in the history of humanity. However, with the fall of Soviet Union, a great wave of informal practices swept post-soviet

countries and were most visible in the cities. With the collapse of the system, informality became the mainstream in many ways. The empty lots of land, often fully equipped with infrastructure, were completely out of reach of the new urban poor. Those were the places for the *nouveau riche*, the fittest of the transition to dwell, develop and flourish on. The jobless proletariat, freshly released "until further notice" from the factories they used to work in, had to come up with another strategy to survive, by basically claiming the public spaces and spaces that were easy to physically transform. .



1. Business landscape.  
Sketch: Jelica Jovanović.



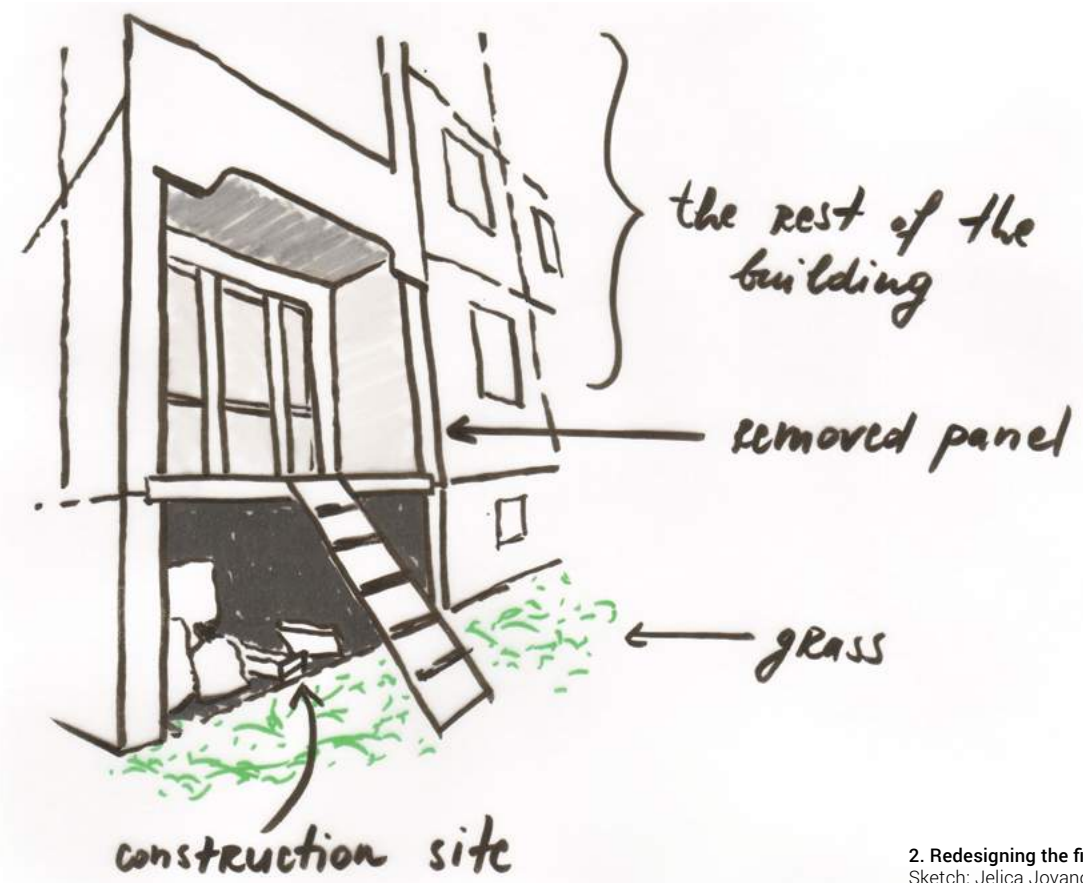
When walking down Chervonoyi Kalyny Avenue and then down Sykhivska and Kavaleridze streets, one must notice—in-between the distant “supply nodes” such as “Shuvar,” “Iskra,” “VAM,” and “Santa Barbara” trade center—a whole world of small (or not so small) free-standing structures, or adaptations that overflow out of the housing blocks and into the public space. Furthermore, depending on the time of the day, one can see the green market and its surroundings swarmed by “rogue” sellers, neatly exhibiting their modest offer of fruits and vegetables on the makeshift stands on the street. Considering the landscape of informality in Sykhiv, this materialization, be that permanent or (semi)temporary, cannot be bypassed and each tells a part of the same story.

### THE GROUND FLOOR IS (NOT) ATTRACTIVE

■ In the 1970s, when the first microraion of the district was finished (widely known as “Iskra”) it looked similar to any other newly-built housing neighborhood in (Eastern) Europe, with a strict separation of functions and urban zoning of the wider perimeter. Housing units contained only housing, all the trade and services were integrated into one raion center, and there were schools and kindergartens. Basically every structure, every building, tended to be mono-functional. During the 1990s, with the introduction of “the right to buy,” most of the flats were being privatized, but a peculiar process was happening in the ground floors surrounding the busy streets. Some of the ground floor apartments were purchased by entrepreneurs, retrofitted, and turned into shops and services. The planners failed to foresee that the ground floor, even if detached from the ground, is the least desirable living space, while this is completely the opposite case when it comes to businesses.

The housing units were built in prefabricated technology with the panel system T-80, which is infamous for its lack of flexibility: the load-bearing walls are transversal to the main facade, forming a modest shoe box out of each room of the flat. Translated by in-situ practices, this means that only the facade panel could be removed and reshaped, while the interior would have to stay mostly as per original design of the housing unit. Out of this constraint, the entrance to the new shop became the new design opportunity to communicate the content of the businesses on the inside. Given the fact that the ground floor is elevated approximately one meter above the

ground, staircases would be attached to the units from the outside and a shop window installed along with the new entrance. Some are very basic and modest, some are lavish and have flashy signs, but they all coexist very well with the neighborhood they are in. Although they emerged and still function within some form of a not fully regulated grey zone, these do not have the aura of an urban or architectural “parasite” that is usually associated with phenomena like this.



2. Redesigning the first floor.  
Sketch: Jelica Jovanović.

## MAF IS PAF!<sup>1</sup>

■ A more intriguing urban phenomena in Sykhiv, or Lviv better say, is the appearance of so called MAFs. MAF stands for Мала архітектурна форма in Ukrainian, meaning small architectural form. Essentially, it started off as a kiosk for selling fruit, liquor, or newspapers, occupying public space. Usually it sits on a part of greenery or a sidewalk where possible, but lately it is becoming somewhat different. It is difficult to pin point what, but there is a new trend to the appearance of MAFs, that are becoming less ephemeral. That does not, however, automatically mean permanent or solid building. There is a variety of MAFs: some are indeed small, others are quite big and are starting to resemble the regular typified and assembled chain supermarkets. There are also MAFs that look like proper restaurants, grocery shops, and food suppliers, exposing the issue of sanitation in these structures and the question of connection to the infrastructure. Some are connected, while other remain detached from the sub-terrain and attached to the supra-terrain infrastructures, such as electricity, phone, and Internet.

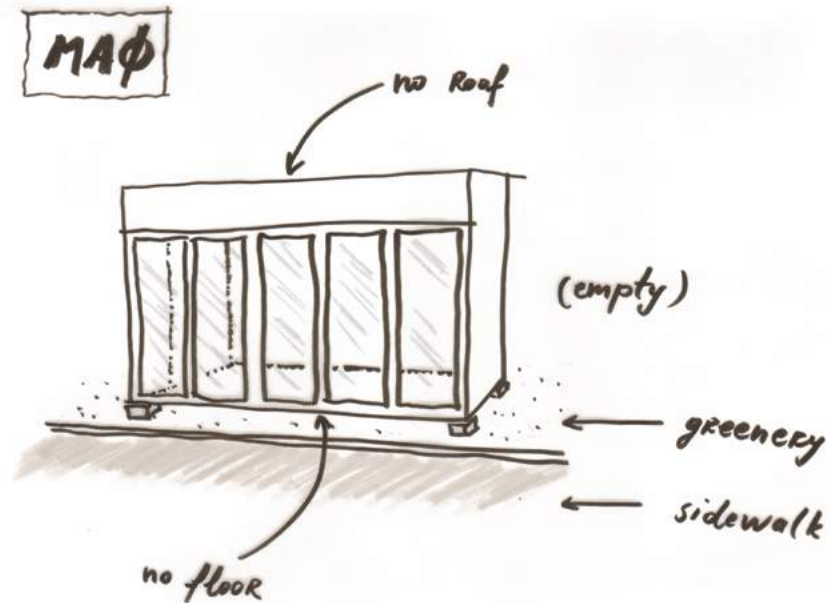
The issue with MAFs today seems resolved, if judging just from appearances: orderly stacked boxes, with neat and rich stands, covered with goods. However, right there on the site there was a single structure, revealing the process behind the emergence of MAFs—a small, empty MAF to the side of Kavaleridze Street, having no floor or roof, set on a stacked pile of bricks. Digging deeper into this occurrence, I discovered that it is a part of an informal “procedure.” You bring the walls of the MAF and set it on a desired (public) space, as a form of announcement of your intentions to the local community that a new MAF is in their “hood,” and leave it there for a month or so. This is very important since there were cases of residents opposing and finally managing to fight back and basically banish the usurpers of their appropriated public space. This leads us to the conclusion that while the business itself can be, and probably is, completely legal, the structure containing it might not be. On one side, if the opposition to it is strong, the owner would simply move the mounted walls

<sup>1</sup> The slang term PAF! is borrowed from Serbian, and it means cool, trendy, or awesome. The inspiration came from the toy book written by Nataša Jovičić and Bogdan Bogdanović, APSOLUTNO PAF, published in 2002, in which they describe their tour of Bogdanović’s monuments to see their post-war condition, using the form of a game and humor to describe the perplexing situation his architecture was in.



3. MAFs.  
Sketch: Jelica Jovanović.

elsewhere and restart the process. In this scenario, we begin to understand the “process.” While claiming the space with the outline of the structure and the mounted walls, the owner of the business is minimizing the potential risk of damage to the MAF. If things were to escalate into an open conflict with locals, the risk of vandalism is minimized since the MAF is not yet fully materialized there. On the other hand, if the “process” goes smoothly, usually in locations that already have clusters of MAFs—such as places swarmed by customers such as “Iskra” raion—you simply come back and finish the construction of the MAF. You add the roof and the floor, connect to the infrastructure, move in, and start your business.



4. Pre-life of MAF.  
Sketch: Jelica Jovanović.

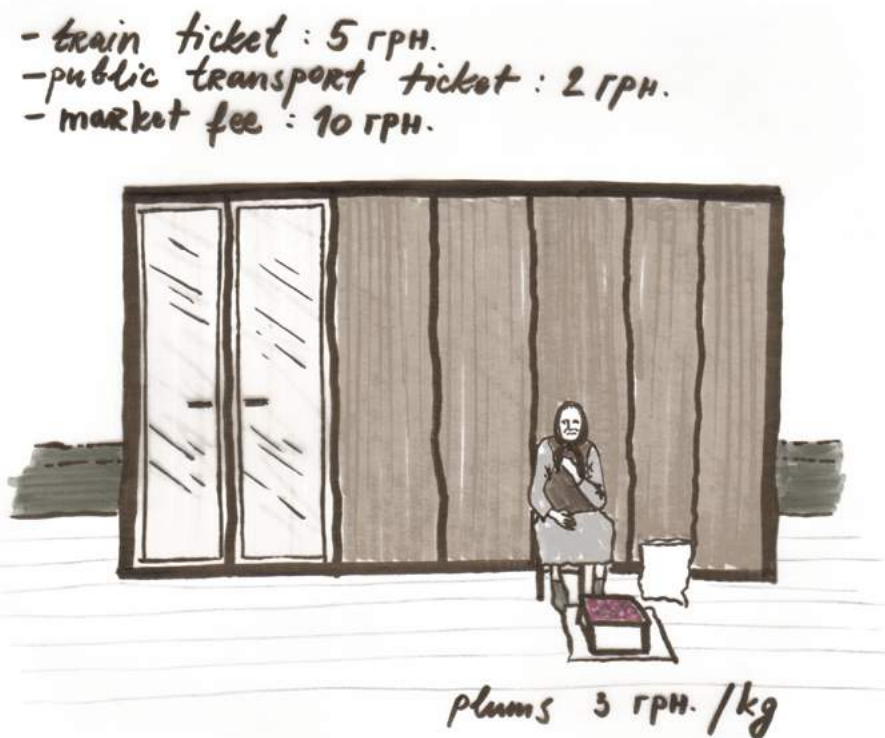
The described “process” leaves a lot of room for speculation about the (il)legality of the MAF structures themselves. First, there is the issue of the original plan of Sykhiv, that places bike lanes where the MAFs are currently located—the currently marked bike lanes are curvy in this area and bypass the MAF clusters built on top of the old trajectory of the lane. Second, why the need for the above mentioned “process” if everything is legal? The MAF is essentially a light prefabricated structure that can be erected within a day, even if built from scratch. Finally, the original planner of Sykhiv, who is still working in the Planning Institute of Lviv, claims in the interview that MAFs are legal, but never went on to elaborate the details and the scope of their legality. Furthermore, he gradually steered the conversation into another direction, focusing on the widespread unemployment after the collapse of the Soviet Union that caused the initial emergence of these structures in the city. This could lead to an array of conclusions that shift the point of this issue: from what is (il)legal to what is (il)legitimate in this case.



5. Informal green market.  
Sketch: Jelica Jovanović.

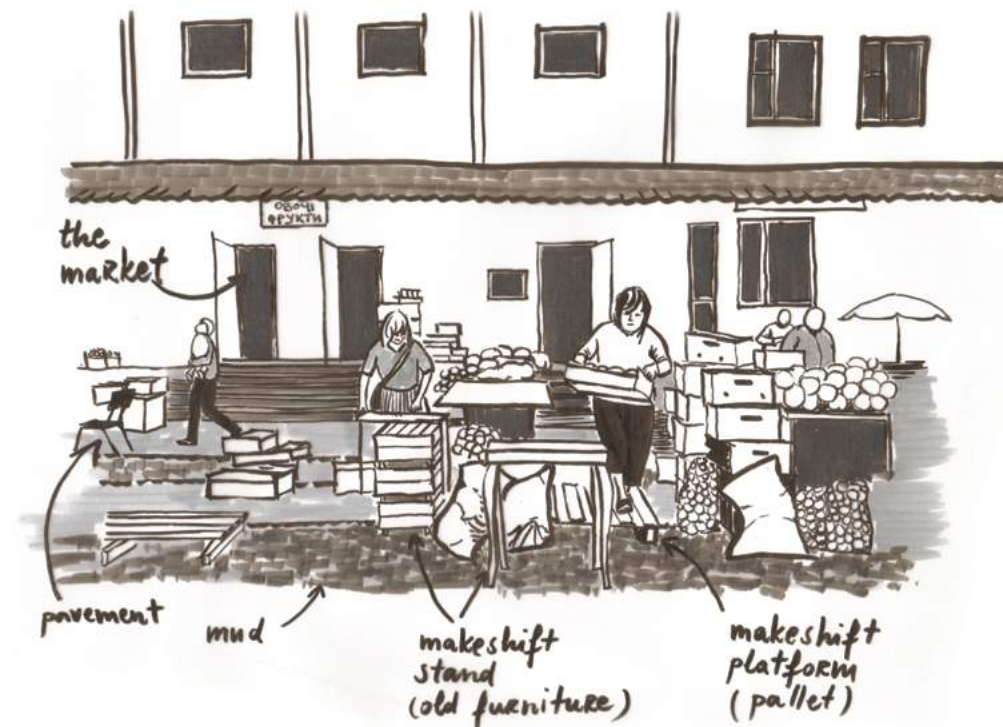
#### A TOLERATED MAKESHIFT FOR THE DISENFRANCHISED

■ The third case is the most obvious and most prominent case of the informality in Sykhiv: it is the *rogue green* market surrounding the “Iskra” market. The process went something like this: the microraiion center had a supermarket, services, and a *kolhosp* (cooperative) green market, where people from the surrounding villages could bring their products and sell freely to the customers from the city. The “Iskra” market was and still is very popular, since the amount and the quality of the groceries is better than elsewhere in Sykhiv, or even in the city of Lviv. Due to the proximity of the train station, it is easy and most profitable for villagers to travel by train and then come on foot, bringing what they can carry in a bag or in a handcart, and not use crowded public transport to go into the city. On the other side, a few years ago the market facilities were privatized and refurbished, meaning that the villagers were left without their *kolhosp* market and the right to use the premises, shifting their sales spots from just outside the market to the sidewalks. They became *rogue sellers* since it is not viable for them to pay the fee for the stand.



6. "Single bag" entrepreneur.  
Sketch: Jelica Jovanović.

Hence, the "single bag / handcart" strategy suddenly gets a completely new meaning. Although the city's communal policy is to "turn a blind eye" to this practice, the fact that they are INDEED illegally selling their products comes with the knowledge and risk that those products can be confiscated, and the *rogue sellers* can be fined—for being rogue. It comes as no surprise that the survival strategy of these sellers is contained within a single plastic bag: once the inspectors appear on the site you could just walk away from it, or just cram the products back into your bag and pretend that you have just purchased them from someone else. Either way, the loss is minimal—if we disregard the fact that the precarious work conditions of these people eventually take a toll.



7. Everydayness of informal market.  
Sketch: Jelica Jovanović.

This brings us back to the question of illegality and informality. At what precise point does the illegal become informal, and therefore more tolerated? Also, is what is legal also legitimate and fair to those who are inevitably left behind? In these cases, something was taken away from the people behind these processes, and they were left to find a solution on their own. I would argue in this case that informal Sykhiv and informal "Iskra" are showing the way on how a legitimate right to work, to adapt physical space, and to question the planning and legal procedures can be materialized and should be used to find a path to legalization. ■

## LOOKING FOR SIGNS OF GENTRIFICATION IN SYKHIV

Otakar Bursa

**A**t first sight, the housing estate of Sykhiv may be seen as a monotonous assemblage of high-rise apartment blocks permeated by a dull dimness. Nevertheless, as our studio (comprising five students from the Czech Republic, Poland, Serbia, and Ukraine led by social anthropologist Svitlana Odynets) proceeded through the district during exploratory walks, we distinguished a number of extraordinary patterns which might signify at least a microscale diversification in the physical as well as socio-economical structure of Sykhiv. This subjective perception<sup>1</sup> of observed oddities included differences in the typology and quality of local services, (Figure 1), the condition of public spaces, sidewalks, or roads (Figure 2), and the physical state of adjacent buildings.<sup>2</sup>

Could the above-mentioned features be the first signs of a possible ongoing gentrification in the area? In any case, gentrification is not only about new “visible” investments (a power of capital) to shape housing and landscape changes or lifestyles through better quality services (Smith 1996) but also the inherent process of the settlement of upper-middle classes in (formerly) faded neighborhoods occupied by a low-income population which usually precedes the former (Ley 1996). Therefore, it was needed to go more deeply into the case. However, since the entire

<sup>1</sup> Due to the lack of any detailed statistical data, we had to start from a simple “subjective” observation.

<sup>2</sup> However, it became obvious that the physical condition of buildings is rather similar everywhere and thus we decided to skip their further evaluation.



1. Wealth and poverty dialectics. The fashion store surrounded by outdoor kiosks with cheap unbranded clothing. Photo: Otakar Bursa.



**2. Visible contrasts in the condition of public spaces.**  
Photos: Otakar Bursa.



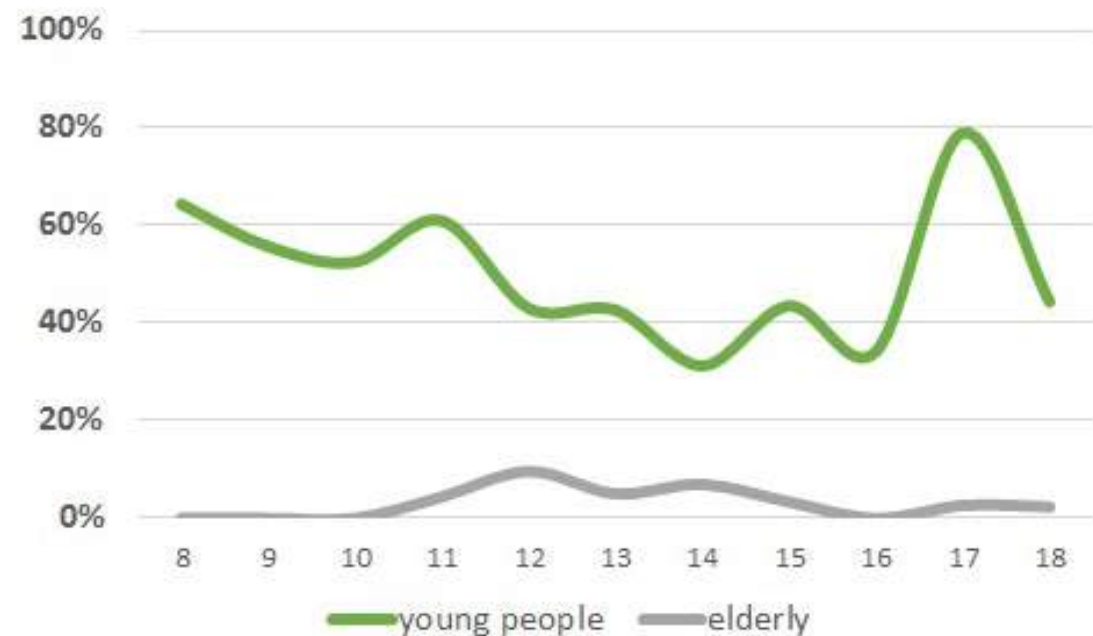
Sykhiv district is too large to attempt a one-week comprehensive research project, we decided to focus only on the part known as the neighborhood of “Iskra,” where we perceived the most striking unevenness.

Besides the observation and mapping of the typology of local services and the rather subjective evaluation of the condition of the physical aspects of the area, we also took part in an investigation of the service-users’ structure through the concept of daily rhythm (Parkes, Thrift 1980).<sup>3</sup> Moreover, in order to find out who are exactly these people and whence they came, we conducted almost thirty semi-structured interviews with customers, owners, and local experts. Our mixed-method approach was finally carried out in four localities—two cafés, a pub, and the mentioned fashion store.

Nevertheless, the results have shown that not all services of the better quality in the area are serving the specific population group as we previously expected. Higher shares of younger people (potential gentrifiers) were only noticed in both cafés (Figure 3), whereas the other two facilities comprised a rather equal structure of their customers, including the elderly. Surprisingly, during the interviews we encountered a number of IT-workers resettling from other parts of Lviv and Russian- speaking immigrants from Eastern Ukraine and Crimea (almost 50 % of all interviewees). The further analysis of the spatial location of these (mostly newly established) services exposed their concentrated pattern in the core of the “Iskra” neighbourhood and alongside the main street in the direction of the city center (Figure 4). Furthermore, this trend also corresponded with newly renovated sidewalks and other maintained spaces between buildings such as playgrounds, benches, or entrances.

Despite the fact that we cannot guarantee that the ongoing process has all of the features of gentrification, we documented at least its first signs such as investments to improve the condition of public spaces and the availability of better services. The specific (sometimes newly incoming) users of these services can be clearly distinguished in particular areas of Sykhiv. In our view, all these changes might reflect the process of transformation in terms of social stratification at the microscale level as well.

<sup>3</sup> Since the gentrification process usually involves immigration of young professionals (Ley 1996), we thought that at least some services of the better quality could produce an excessive structure of their users during the day.



3. The daily rhythm of Lviv Croissant café. Diagram: Otakar Bursa.

When I first arrived in Sykhiv, I was a foreigner. As I was leaving, I felt like a Sykhivian. These two amazing weeks gave me not only a priceless working and conference experience in a heavily challenged post-socialist country, but also the insight that it is always necessary to evaluate anything not only from the outside but much more importantly from the inside. Lviv, and especially Sykhiv, revealed that even a poorer environment may be irreplaceable in its liveliness, self-organization, and community relations. Finally, I would like to thank all of the members of the Center for Urban History for East Central Europe, our studio tutors, volunteers, and last but not least all of the summer school participants for the wonderful two weeks which consisted not only of tough work, but also fantastic people, places, events, experiences, and especially newly-created friendships which I will never forget about in my life. ■



4. Mapping the spatial allocation of the better quality of services inside the Iskra neighborhood. Each red dot depicts one service. The direction of the city center is to the west. Map: Otakar Bursa.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ley, David. *The New Middle Class and the Remaking of the Central City*. Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Parkes, Donn & Nigel Thrift. *Times, Spaces and Places: A Chronogeographic Perspective*. Wiley, 1980.
- Smith, Neil. *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City*. Psychology Press, 1996.

## WHAT IS THE NETWORK OF SYKHIV-BASED SERVICES? THE ISSUE OF EVERYDAY PRACTICES

Oleksii Tkachenko

In the process of team theoretical study of the elements of gentrification in the economically active cluster of Sykhiv named “Iskra,” we made an attempt to identify a map of consumer behavior of Lviv’s largest residential area. The Sykhiv mass housing estate forms the basis of the administrative Sykhiv district. According to Vlad Naumescu, “[i]n relation to Lviv, Sykhiv emerges as the ‘representative Other’ in full contrast to the historical center and the celebrated past of the city.” (Naumescu 2007). The new strategy of Sykhiv integration into the other parts of Lviv, mainly into the Halytskyi district, does not lead to a development of Sykhiv’s local infrastructure, but increases the passive character of the Sykhiv district activities.

During our research, we were guided by two crucial questions. How dependent are the residents of Sykhiv on the city center? Is there a need for a “sleeping area” to organize these service functions in Sykhiv? Also, what steps can be carried out by the local administration to better integrate Sykhiv into the structure of the city within the framework of the service development strategy of the network: Sykhiv—Historical Center—Lviv? Answering these questions will help us to outline the main strategic directions of Sykhiv’s development for the sustainable integration process of the largest district to the whole city in terms of provided services. The urgency of the goal is conditioned by the successful implementation of the “Integrated Strategy for the Development of Lviv. 2012-2025.”

The choice of research methods was due to the shortness of time in the field work and an orientation on testing the theory, rather than on practical research. Participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and mapping were among the tools we used.

Throughout the entire period of study during the summer school the participants of the studio lived in the local hotel, located just opposite the Church of the Nativity of the Holy Mother of God, in the so-called “Sykhiv Center.” The use of public places, such as cafes, supermarkets, libraries, religious institutions, cinemas, and open markets, as well as daily use of the tram and walking through the streets and residential neighborhoods, made it possible to record interesting observations:

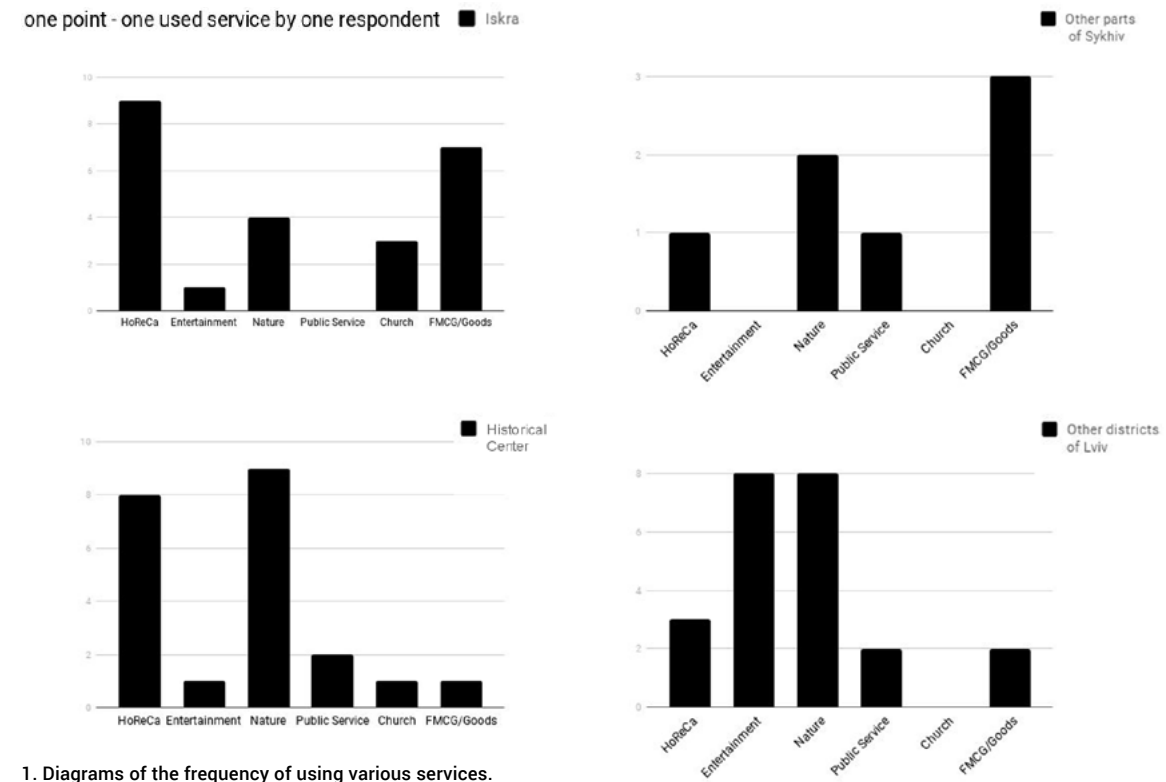
1. One of the main socially active centers of Sykhiv life is the sub-district “Iskra,” which is characterized by the accumulation of commercial functions. Shopping centers and open markets create a consumer boiler for residents of all parts of Sykhiv. Other “warm” social places in Sykhiv include churches and school playgrounds, mainly for young mothers and teenagers.
2. Despite the strong influence of the new tram line on Sykhiv, many people use marshrutkas because electric transport crashes almost every day. This, in turn, reduces the possibility of quickly integrating “Sykhivians” into the center and other areas of the city.
3. From personal conversations it is clear that the younger generation (up to 35 years old) consider Sykhiv as one of the places of residence, and not as a place for active life.
4. Most of the “Sykhivians” use the historical center as a work space, a recreation zone, and a place to satisfy their aesthetic needs.
5. Among the comfortable sides of life in Sykhiv are spacious courtyards, clean streets and roadsides, a separate collection of garbage, etc., which makes the district convenient for everyday life.
6. The largest cultural space of Sykhiv—the Dovzhenko Cinema—is not involved in the formation of the cultural life of the inhabitants. There are only two movie screenings daily and no other events.
7. Sykhiv is still sometimes considered by local residents, and especially by residents of the historical center, as a crime-ridden area, which reduces interest in the inner migration of Lviv residents to this area.

We have chosen semi-structured interviews as the main sociological method of the research. In addition to the variables of age, localization, education and occupation, we asked questions about different kinds of services visitors used or consumed within the network “Iskra” – “Sykhiv” – “historical city center” – “other parts of Lviv.”



Our short list of respondents included customers of two “Iskra” cafes. In “Lviv Croissant Cafe” (Thursday, 24 August 2017): Yulian (16-year-old student), Lilya (30-year-old MA in Economics, now on maternity leave), Oksana (59-year-old pensioner, food technologist), Volodia (36-year-old MA in Geography, now a builder), Pavlo (21-year-old sales manager), Sun (20-year-old student, translator), Yulia (18-year-old student, translator). At “Craft Beer” (Thursday evening, 24 August 2017): Svitlana (37-year-old BA in Economics, civil servant), Zoryana (23-year-old economic accountant).

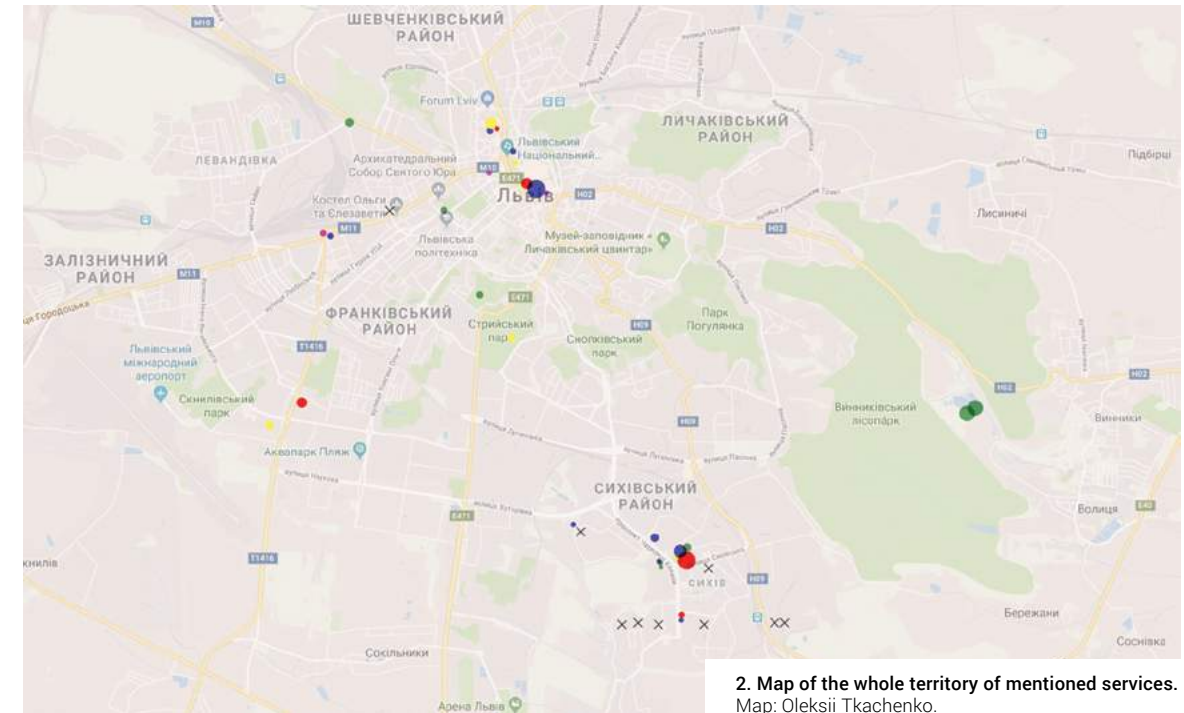
According to the results of a short survey, we tried to draw a “warm map” of services, users of the sub-district “Iskra.”



1. Diagrams of the frequency of using various services.  
Diagrams: Oleksii Tkachenko.

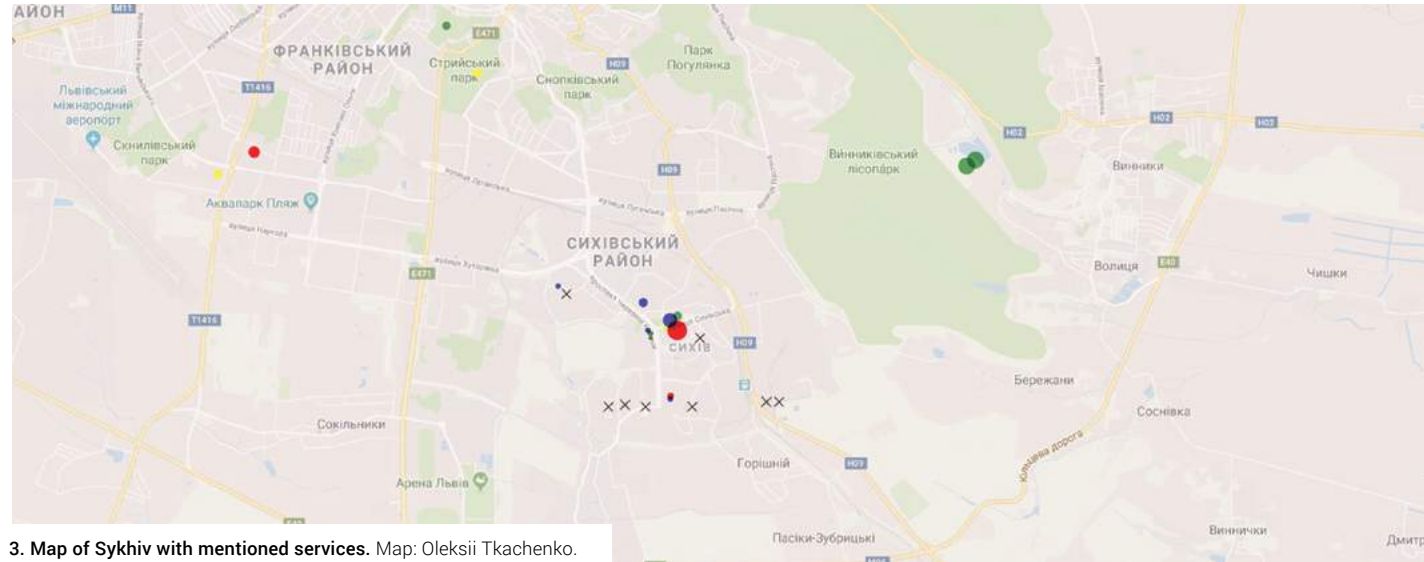
Most of the services that respondents used are connected to their everyday practices. However, most ecological, cultural, aesthetic, as well as, probably, all administrative needs for the residents of Sykhiv are satisfied exactly in the tourist-loaded historical center of the city. This leads to complications with public and private transport, an environmental burden on the center, and the lack of development of the cultural infrastructure (cinemas, theaters, galleries, exhibition grounds, etc.) in Sykhiv. Proceeding from the principles of “New Urbanism” and the realities of Lviv, the priorities of the service development of Sykhiv can be:

1. The transition from a “sleeping area” stereotype, from a perceived crime-ridden district to a prosperous area for living and the realization of their daily and creative needs.

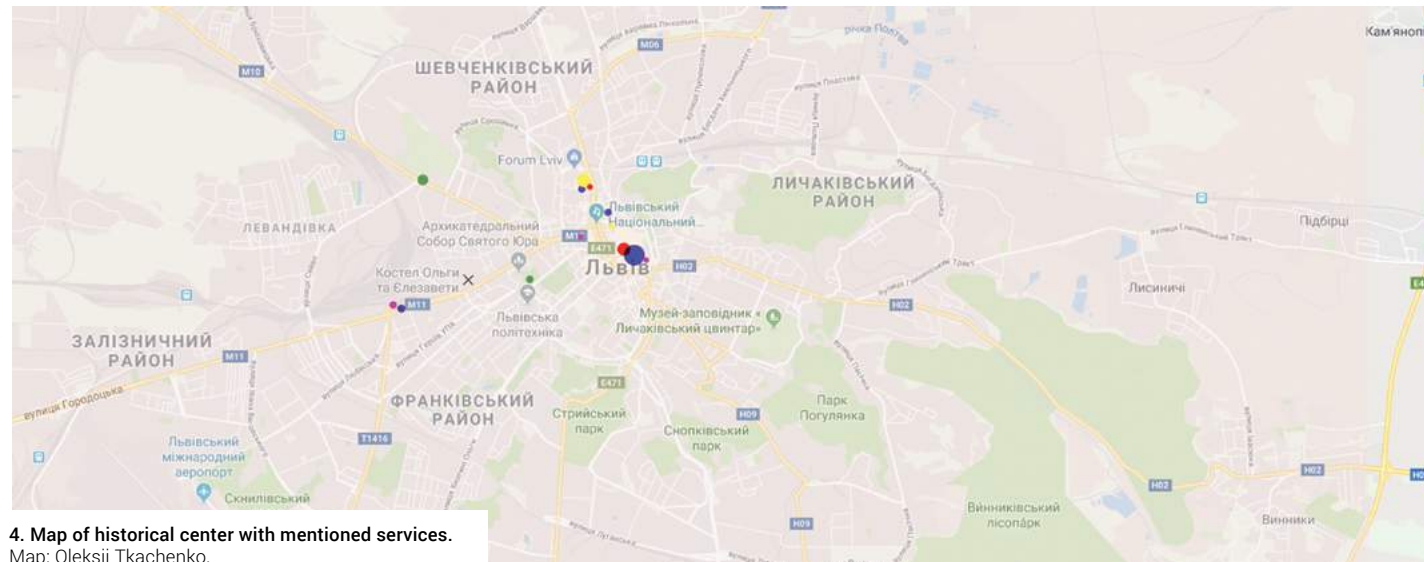


**MAP LEGEND :**

- HoReCa  
(cafes, restaurants etc.)
- FMCG/ Goods  
(everyday goods, clothes etc.)
- Nature  
(parks, squares, lakes)
- Entertainment  
(movies, theaters, music halls, gyms)
- Public service  
(schools/ universities, municipal institutions etc.)
- Churches
- × Private apartment of respondents



3. Map of Sykhiv with mentioned services. Map: Oleksii Tkachenko.



4. Map of historical center with mentioned services. Map: Oleksii Tkachenko.

2. Creation of unique, attractive places for residents of Sykhiv and residents of other districts of the city. The development of the parks, cinemas, theaters, galleries, exhibition grounds, and restoration of the “Pionerske” lake.
3. The district must mix functions (shops, offices, individual apartments) to rebuild an evenly distributed balanced social landscape, and prevent the negative consequences of gentrification and social inequality.
4. The implementation of the concept of “working distances” for Sykhiv. Five to ten minute pedestrian access to a range of daily use services. The completion of a cycling infrastructure from the buildings to the main cycling arteries.
5. The development of an interactive warm map of public (municipal and commercial) services for analyzing strategic policy on the management and development of investment policy. The purpose of this map is the balanced integration of the Sykhiv district with the other parts of city in order to help implement the “Integrated Development Strategy of Lviv 2015-2022.” ■

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Naumescu, Vlad. “Sykhiv: From Microraiion to Macrohistory,” 2007. URL: <https://lia.lvivcenter.org/en/themes/sykhiv/>, accessed 10 May 2018.

## LOOKING FOR BAGHDAD. THE CASE OF INFORMAL YOUTH GROUPS IN “ISKRA”

Joanna Lickiewicz

### “ISKRA” RAION IN SYKHIV

The “Iskra” market, together with other local landmarks such as “Shuvar” and “Santa Barbara,” is considered to be one of the three sub-centers of Sykhiv. The market has been operating for almost thirty years and remains one of the favorite places for shopping for the inhabitants of the district and the neighboring villages to this day. Due to its popularity, the surrounding area has also been informally referred to as “Iskra” (Eng. spark) by other Sykhivians.

Over the last few years, the raion has showed several signs of significant changes. First if all, the tram was inaugurated nearby, allowing faster and more convenient transportation with the city center. Secondly, “Iskra”—similarly to other raions in Sykhiv—has welcomed a new wave of migration from eastern Ukraine and from Crimea after Russia’s annexation. Thirdly, new types of businesses, which often represent higher prices and an alternative business approach, started to bloom. It is debatable whether such changes are enough to bear the name of gentrification, or if they are just signs of a rapid development of the area; nonetheless, it is certain that “Iskra” has started to be perceived as a more attractive place to live.

The image of the raion in the 1990s, however, seemed to be fairly different from the present times. As a team, we conducted several interviews with Sykhivians and inhabitants from other parts of Lviv. Respondents from both groups shared stories

about the past of “Iskra,” including street robberies and a high rate of violence. We were informed about how spaces between buildings in different neighborhoods—here understood as groups of several blocks—were controlled by local drug trafficking gangs, which often competed with each other.



1. A typical neighborhood in Sykhiv.  
Photo: Oleksandr Shutiuk.

Given the short amount of time we had for conducting research, there was no way to examine to what extent such stories were true. Some of them could have been exaggerated, some of them would probably fall into the category of urban legends. One story, however, was particularly interesting: it talked about a mysterious place within the raion called “Baghdad,” that apparently exists to this day. Upon hearing the name, we became instantly intrigued and decided to start investigating the topic.

### “EXCUSE ME, WHAT IS THE WAY TO ‘BAGHDAD’?”

■ Locating “Baghdad” was not an easy task. Most of the Lvivians we talked to had admitted that they had never personally heard of such place. Some of them were jokingly making links to the Iraqi capital and advising us to go to said country instead. To our surprise, inhabitants of Sykhiv also seemed oblivious to the case and not only could not provide us with any information, but they did not recognize the name “Baghdad” at all. That was true for even the oldest Sykhivians, who have lived in the district since the beginning of its existence. The only clue we came across was an academic paper on the quarter called “Baghdad,” but we quickly realized that the area described in the text was in fact depicting another similar neighborhood.

After a couple of days, however, we managed to establish that there were at least two different neighborhoods in Lviv which were being unofficially referred to as "Baghdad." One of them was in the immediate vicinity of the center and took its name from immigrants from Asia who lived in this area. It is worth mentioning, though, that they migrated mainly from India and Bangladesh, and not from Iraq as the name would suggest. In a random encounter, a young Sykhivian who approached us on the street upon hearing the English language offered to show us the way to "Baghdad." This allowed us to confirm the existence of a second neighborhood with such a name. This time, it seemed to be the "Baghdad" we were looking for, as it was indeed located in "Iskra."

The mysterious "Baghdad" turned out to be a quarter of tall, prefabricated blocks of flats in a slightly deteriorated condition that at first glance did not seem to be different from other neighborhoods in "Iskra." Between the buildings there was a playground and a small green square, which was filled with children during the day, and the local men who established it as their beer consumption place during the evening. The fact that we were in "Baghdad," however, was resembled by numerous inscriptions painted on the walls of buildings. Most of them were quick, simple graffiti scribbled on the walls. We were told that the largest of them, located at the top of one of the blocks in the quarter, was created by breaking into the roof and holding the volunteer upside down by his legs, while he painted the letters on the facade.



**2. Graffiti on the walls.**  
Photo: Joanna Lickiewicz.



**3. Inscription saying "Baghdad" (Ukr. "Багдад") on top of the block of flats.** Photo: Google street view.

## UNDERSTANDING "BAGHDAD"

■ "Baghdad" appeared to be a mystery even within its own territory. Most importantly, the residents of the quarter did not feel any relation to the name and certainly did not identify themselves as "Baghdadians." While they acknowledged the existence of graffiti, most of them did not know where such inscriptions came from, nor did they understand the meanings they conveyed. Very few of them were able to connect the word "Baghdad" to the past of the area, and when they did, their explanations were mostly blurry and revolved around "groups of young boys" rather than dangerous gangs.

We did not come to "Baghdad" with clear expectations; nonetheless, we could not help but feel a little disappointed. It turned out that the mysterious "Baghdad" was merely a name chosen by the young boys from one neighborhood for their informal group, sometimes referred to as a "gang." Although it had a strong spatial reference, the community factor seemed to have been far more important in its case. There was most probably some unwritten rivalry about which quarter was perceived as the most "dangerous," and thus the most respected among the others; hence the exotic name and the use of the word "gang." Using a specific name could have also helped to distinguish the members of this neighboring group from the others, as well as create stronger bonds within it.

Of course, we soon discovered that "Baghdad" was not the only one "gang" in the area: right next to it was located "Kuwait," further away there was "Brooklyn," "Madrid," and a few others. As previously mentioned, such groups were bounded by the place of the residence of their members, and even though they represented a high level of informality, factors like age (their members were mostly schoolboys) and gender were also extremely important. Girls, even if they were living in the very same quarter, possessed no right of admission to such groups.

Most of the memories of the "Sykhiv gangs" date back to the 1990s, when one of the first prefabricated buildings were being put into use in Sykhiv, and along them appeared the new-coming families with children, who later on formed the groups. At present, names such as "Baghdad," "Kuwait," or "Brooklyn" have lost their original meaning. Their members, once young boys, have grown up and in many cases moved out of the raion; therefore so-called "gangs" have naturally ceased to exist. However, they still remain as an urban legend of Sykhiv, reproduced with graffiti on the walls of the blocks. ■

# SYKHIV: NO PLACE FOR USAIN DISCOVERING THE PLACES, WHERE THE LITTLE HUMAN CAN START HIS/HER BIG SPORTS CAREER

Hanna Tsupko



- Where: Chervonoyi Kalyny street, the inner yard of #102 apartment building.  
When: 21.08.17, 12:57.  
Who: No kids detected.



■ Where: The place between the entertainment center and the church.  
When: 21.08.17, 19:03.  
Who: The future church people and "Intercity" visitors.





■ Where: Kavaleridze Street.

When: 24.08.17, 17:02.

Who: One of them is the owner of the ball, which was bought for his younger brother.



- Where: The school near the church.  
When: 24.08.17, 17:03.  
Who: They. Kobe? Is that you?





■ Where: Near school #90.  
When: 24.08.17, 17:21-24.  
Who: They told me "Shakhtar" was not a bad idea for Lviv.



■ Where: Sykhivska Street, near the apartment building #10-a  
When: 26.08.17, 16:59.  
Who: Nominees for the best duet of the yard.





■ Where: School #84.  
When: 26.08.17, 17:19-25.  
Who: The former sport objects.





- Where: School #84.  
When: 26.08.17, 17:19-25.  
Who: The legs, which are not going to run away



■ Where: Zubrivska Street, apartment buildings #36-36-a.  
When: 26.08.17, 17:39.  
Who: Rain was their main enemy.



Rain? Rain! Go away! And you too, miss, please



There's definitely no place for Usain.  
But there's always enough room for anyone else. ■

## AUTHORS



### ANNA BARBIERI

studied architecture at the Glasgow School of Art and the Technische Universität Wien. Anna has collaborated on the publications *Lemberg / Lviv Architektur & Stadt: 100 Bedeutende Bauwerke* (2012) and *Uneasy Balance* (2013). She is currently studying in the Critical Studies master's program at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, with a particular interest in the relations between gender, politics, media, and constructed environments.



### MARIYA BENOVSKA

architect and landscape designer. She graduated from the Lviv Polytechnic National University and held a scholarship at the Estonian University of Life Science. Her master research project was focused on urban sprawl in the post-soviet sphere, with a comparison of Lviv and Riga. Currently, Mariya is a master student at Dessau Institute of Architecture, Hochschule Anhalt.



### OTAKAR BURSA

urban geographer, graduate student of Social Geography and Regional Development at Charles University in Prague. His current research concerns residential satisfaction in suburban localities of Prague with the focus on availability of civic amenities and their impact. He is also interested in urban planning, especially in the countries of so-called "Global East."



### OSCAR DAMERHAM

political scientist and Urban Studies researcher. He recently graduated with MSc in Urban Studies from Malmö University. Oscar has previously worked as a research assistant with the CRUSH Research Platform (funded by FORMAS), exploring Sweden's current acute housing crisis with further projects including the history of public housing in the city of Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates. Oscar is interested in rural-urban connections and experimental research methods.



### DIMITRA GLENTI

architect, PhD candidate. She graduated from the National Technical University of Athens as an architect and received a master's degree in Social and Historical Anthropology from the University of the Aegean. Dimitra has been awarded a full scholarship for her current research, that concerns the formation and transformation of the urban refugee settlements of Lesbos through a cultural-historical approach.



### JELICA JOVANOVIĆ

architect, PhD student of the Technische Universität Wien. As independent researcher, she is working with non-governmental organizations Docomomo Serbia and Grupa arhitekata. Her research interests are in the fields of mass housing, prefabrication technology, technology export and import, and modernist city building in the former Yugoslavia. Jelica is associate of the following projects: the exhibition of Yugoslav architecture in MoMA, "(In)appropriate Monuments," "Lifting the Curtain," and "Unfinished Modernisations."



### KACPER KĘPIŃSKI

architect and activist from Cracow. A participant in the Architectural Institute Foundation. Kacper coordinated educational programs on modernist architecture, and took part in the preparation of the exhibitions "Impossible Objects" (Venice Biennale, 2014) and "Home at Last. The Polish House During the Transition" (Warsaw Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016). He studied at the Cracow Polytechnic and at the National School of Architecture Paris-Belleville.



### JANA KOČKOVÁ

urban sociologist, PhD student at Masaryk university in Brno. Jana is interested in post-socialist cities, specifically in urban communities, housing, public spaces, and transportation. Her ongoing research concerns the change of everyday life in post-socialist large housing estates in Budapest (a one-year study at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest) and in Brno.





### JOANNA LICKIEWICZ

master student at the College of Inter-Area Individual Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Warsaw. She is interested in participatory urban planning, mass housing, and gentrification processes. Joanna currently lives and studies in Lisbon, where she conducts research on the gentrification of post-industrial districts.



### TETYANA MANDZYK

psychologist, assistant of professor at Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, is a consultant in cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). The topic of her master thesis was “Psychological peculiarities of place identity in different age groups (the example of Lviv).” Tetyana’s ongoing research project is focused on psychological determinants of place attachment by young urban residents.



### NATALIA MYSAK

architect, research fellow at the Center for Urban History. She graduated from the Lviv Polytechnic National University and held scholarships at the University of Malmö and the Technische Universität Wien. Her ongoing research concerns identity formation of mass housing estates of late modernism, based on examples of housing developments in Lviv and Malmö. She took part in participatory planning projects of public spaces in Lviv.



### SVITLANA ODYNETS

anthropologist, PhD, research fellow at the Department of Social Anthropology in the Ethnology Institute of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, journalist, and blogger. Her research projects are concerned with women’s temporary transnational migration between Ukraine and Italy; and changing post-imperial and national identity boundaries among Ukrainian migrants in EU countries after the Maidan 2013–14. She was a researcher on the EURA-NET project Transnational Migration in Transition: Transformative Characteristics of Temporary Mobility of People (2014–17), and Country Expert for Ukraine on the ITHACA project (2014–15).



### ALLA ONOPCHENKO

architect, obtained her Master of Immediate Architectural Intervention from Umeå University, Sweden and graduated from the Kyiv National University of Construction and Architecture. Alla is interested in urban strategies and participatory approach to planning projects.



### NATALIA OTRISHCHENKO

sociologist, PhD, research fellow at the Center for Urban History. She graduated from the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, studied at Berea College in the U.S., Slovenia (IEDC–Bled School of Management), as well as taught at the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg. Her areas of academic interests include the methodology and methods of sociological research, oral history, urban sociology, and transformations after state socialism.



### MATAS ŠIUPŠINSKAS

architect and PhD student at Vilnius University Faculty of History, where he is researching the urban phenomenon of collective gardens in Soviet Lithuania and its contemporary transformation. He is the author of articles in popular and scientific magazines (*Volume, Monu, Archifroma, SA, Journal of Architecture and Urbanism*). His interests include the history of urban planning, mass housing, urban morphology, collective gardens, and Soviet architecture.



### IRYNA SKLOKINA

historian, PhD, research fellow at the Center for Urban History. She graduated from the V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University (majoring in the history of Ukraine), held a scholarship at the University of Toronto (Center for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies), and taught during summer schools “Novyi Lviv” (2015) and “Idea of the City: Reality Check” (2016). Iryna is interested in (post)soviet memory politics and industrial heritage.



### ALIAKSANDRA STRASHYNSKAYA

BSc student of architecture at the Belarusian National Technical University. Aliaksandra has taken the “Planning and design with water” course at the Summer School of TU Delft. She also participated in SESAM’16 (Small European Students of Architecture Meeting) and the 4th, 5th, and 6th Minsk Architectural Forums.



### OLEKSII TKACHENKO

project manager in the NGO “Urban Institut.” He graduated from Illia Mechnikov Odesa National University with a Master’s degree in history. Oleksii worked as a research assistant for the anthropology department of the Michigan State University on the project of internally displaced people in Ukraine (2014).



### HANNA TSUPKO

content and SMM manager, journalist, graduate of the Ukrainian Catholic University, Master’s Program in Media Communication. The principles of mass housing and the ways of living and communication there, as well as modern urbanism in general, are among her main interests and hobbies.



### YEVHENII VASIUKOV

architect, coordinator of research project “Architecture of Mykolaiv.” He graduated from Odesa State Academy of Building and Architecture (majoring in Architecture of buildings and structures). Yevhenii participates in different urban projects in Mykolaiv, mainly focused on the exploration and preservation of local architectural heritage from different periods, the development of public spaces, and regulation of commercial signs on facades.

Edited by Natalia Otrishchenko

Authors

*Spaces Studio:*

Mariya Benovska, Oscar Damerham, Kacper Kępiński, Jana Kočková, Alla Onopchenko, Aliaksandra Strashynskaya, tutor—Natalia Mysak;

*Memories Studio:*

Anna Barbieri, Dimitra Glenti, Tetyana Mandzyk, Matas Šiupšinskas, Yevhenii Vasiukov, tutor—Iryna Sklokina;

*Practices Studio:*

Otakar Bursa, Jelica Jovanovic, Joanna Lickiewicz, Hanna Tsupko, Oleksii Tkachenko, tutor—Svitlana Odynets.

Translated by

Svitlana Bregman

English language editor

Peter Bejger

Design and layout by

Oksana Nesterenko

© Representative Office of “Center for Urban History of East Central Europe. Dr. Harald Binder Private Foundation”, 2018

© Authors of publications, 2018

