The Skinhead Movement in Russian Federation: Street Xenophobia or 'State-Sponsored' Radical Nationalism?

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Abstract

Before 1991, Russia had never existed as a nation state, but it still preserved the 'mentality' of the core of a larger empire. Imperial Russia was succeeded by the Soviet Union, an empire that, at least on the ideological level, endorsed the values of internationalism and egalitarianism and compted for world hegemony with the 'capitalist' West.[1] *Bringing forth a number of new nation states, disintegration of the Soviet Union has lead to a new stage of Russian 'development'—establishment of 'national identity' in terms of new socio-political and cultural borders.*

Nurtured by clash of anticommunist nationalists and national-minded communists, the 'crisis-society' of the post-Soviet Russia became a perfect terrain for revatilization of nationalist, xenophobic, anti-semitic and even fascist sentiments. Commonly preached to be burried in fields of communist 'internacional,' these powerful concepts have 'suddenly' emerged in the 1990s, penetrating all levels of Russian society—from the niche of chief political leaders and thinkers to the spheres of working- and middle class majority. 'Tranformed' into political parties, newspapers and radical, violent movements, nationalist and xenophobic rhetoric became one of the driving forces behind political and socio-economic existence of modern Russian state, oftentimes, beging 'applied' through means of ireful physical acts.

This project will examine the phenomenon of the 'skinhead movement'—one of the most malign and exterminative occurences of xenophobic nature. Since thorough description of ideological, 'socio-cultural,' political and economic grounds of the skinhead movement is available in both Russian and Western European academic and media sources, this project will not concentrate on depiction of nature of the movement, or discuss the socio-political background of the targets of the skinhead attacks. Rather, examining racist, xenophobic expressions that became tangible in media, religious- and political agenda of the country, it will try to answer the question of 'why, overall, the Russian government responds in a way it does to the skinhead movement—conceals, remits and sometimes simply ignores the skinhead crimes?'

[1] Chris Chulos, *The Fall of an Empire, the Birth of a Nation: National Identities in Russia* (USA: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2000), 161.

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INTRODUCTION

NATIONAL SENTIMENTS OF RUSSIA: FROM KIEVAN RUS' TO GORBACHEV'S PERESTROIKA

As the Russian poet, Tyutchev, once wrote, "one cannot try to measure what is meant by 'Russia,' nor understand her only with the mind; one can know Russia by faith alone." Further, he implied that it is this faith that will itself assure the brilliant future of this great country.[2] Leskov has also predicted that the iron will of Germany, the sharp axe of German aggression, would ultimately be absorbed and lost in the vastness of Russia.[3] Both of these writers' rhetoric could be seen as the typical of the consciousness of the nineteenth century Russia, with Slavophilism and Panslavism, national and religious symbols, folk songs and 'ethnomythology' being deeply penetrated with tones of national sentiments. Found as early as during times of *Kievan Rus'*, it was from approximately eleventh century that peoples of Eastern Europe – primarily modern Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, became unified around the concepts of common faith, language and culture. Despite the Mongol invasions of 1237, and the capture of Kiev and Vladimir after 1240, divided Russian populations of Galicia and the Suzdal, Moscow and Novgorod regions remained united by socio-cultural and religious ties. It is as early as from the Middle Ages that the concept of 'Pan-Russianism'[4] became a reality.

With years of victory over the Tatars, formation of the Russian Orthodox Church as the background of Russian national consciousness, birth of 'Slavophilism,'[5] and adaptation of

[2] Tyutchev, 1860 „Umom Rossiyu ne ponyat', arshinom obshcnim ne izmerit', y nej—osoobennaya stat', v Rossiju nado tol'ko verit'."
[3] N. S. Leskov, *Five Tales* (London, Angel Books, 1984), 185.
[4] N. S. Leskov, *Five Tales* (London, Angel Books, 1984), 187.
[5] Slavophilism was the first systematic formulation of Russian nationalism. It is rooted in the publication of 'The First Philosophical Letter' by P. Ya. Chaadayev (1836), who commented on Marquis de Custine's critical painting of the Russian Empire by stating that "Russia's past was unbearable, and she had no future…" (M. Slonim, The Epic of Russian Literature (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1969), p 144). Having their roots deep in the patriarchal soil of peasant Russian, the Slavophiles believed that the system of 'Petersburg Russia' has

Slavophile ideas by the political right of early 20th century Russia and the Tsar Nicolas II himself, the Russian society became penetrated with dogmas of anti-Semitism, xenophobia and even fascism. With "Russian consciousness being convinced of the "possibility and necessity" to create its own philosophy, based on its own spiritual roots,"[6] thinkers like Ivan Kireevsky were claiming that "the heritage of the Eastern fathers of the church should be the very cornerstone of the future of Russia,"[7] stressing the difference of patristic thought and its approach to issues of reason, human being, and spiritual life from that of Western thinking. The question of 'how should Russian national philosophy relate to Western philosophy?' was further 'answered' by Slolov'ev's metaphysics of *All-Unity*, where, according to him, "*Russian religious philosophy defined itself as a new school within the framework of classical European philosophical tradition.*"[8] As its driving motive, the "authentic Russian spiritual experience, that of the Russian soul and mentality, individual and national being, religion and culture of Russia"[9] were the common elements that embraced the systems and doctrines of Russian philosophy, and, at the same time, presented Russia as a separate, distinctive socio-political unit.

The 1990s: 'Eine Umwertung aller Werte'[10]—A Change of the Ideological Climate in Russia

Though the replacement of the tsarist system with that of 'internationalist' Leninist ideals seemed to destroy hopes of Russian nationalists, the Bolshevik Party—home of Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Ordzhonikidze, Dzerzhinski and many other Jewish and Latvian members, did not achieve its goals of socio-political and cultural unification of the Soviet

adopted a style of autocracy that was alien to Russian traditions and stated that the pre-Peter's Russia was the ideal towards which political and social reform should be directed.

[6] Wendy Helleman, *The Russia Idea: In Search of a New Identity* (USA: Indiana University Press, 2004), 166.
[7] Wendy Helleman, *The Russia Idea: In Search of a New Identity* (USA: Indiana University Press, 2004), 166.
[8] Wendy Helleman, *The Russia Idea: In Search of a New Identity* (USA: Indiana University Press, 2004), 167.
[9] Wendy Helleman, *The Russia Idea: In Search of a New Identity* (USA: Indiana University Press, 2004), 169.
[10] Chris J. Chulos, *The Fall of an Empire, the Birth of a Nation. National Identities in Russia* (University of Helsinki Press, 2000), 125.

Union republics. On the contrary, Khrushchev's criticism of Stalin's rule and the declaration of nationalism as being a 'bourgeois' doctrine was slowly transformed into the rhetoric of a failure which, despite the successes of Sputnik, nuclear ice-breakers, improved living standards, and 'thaw' and limited de-Stalinization, has filled the vacuum of public terrain.The European fin-de-siécle disillusionment, nurtured by Spengler's developmental *pessimism* and anti- civilizationism of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, has thus found its Russian equivalent.[11]

Popular among the conservative thinkers like Dostoevsky, Danilevsky, Pobedonostsev, and Leontiev, who wanted to save Russia from 'rotten Europe' depraved by liberalism and socialism,[12] ideas of western decline and antagonism toward 'foreign-type' of thoughts became extremely popular in the post-Soviet Russia. Aggravated by financial, political and socio-cultural crisis of the 1990s, the country thus stood as a perfect ground for extremist, radical movements. Surviving among the political emigrants and manifesting itself through different movements including the intellectual Eurasians (Евразийцы), the Russian Fascist Party in Kharbin, or the National Labour Union (Народно-Трудовой Союз), ideas of fascism and rightist ideologies became 'new' examples of Russian 'westernization,' with first radical groups such as those of the "skinheads" appearing in Moscow, St Petersburg and other smaller cities of the country.

The Skinhead Movement: From 'West' to 'East'

Derived (as a term) from a working-class movement of 1960s-1970s England and punk and rock stream of 1970s-1980s America, the skinhead movement of modern Russia embodies

[11] Chris J. Chulos, *The Fall of an Empire, the Birth of a Nation. National Identities in Russia* (University of Helsinki Press, 2000), 126.
[12] Chris J. Chulos, *The Fall of an Empire, the Birth of a Nation. National Identities in Russia* (University of Helsinki Press, 2000), 126.

hybridized 'sociology' of the post-Soviet socio-political structure of Eastern Europe,[13] where the post-perestroika generation was caught 'in between'—from one side, the oftentimes officially neglected but still publicly praised philosophy of the communist "internacional," and from the other, the new, Western concepts of "democracy" and "globalization." Different from that of early 1990s (where members of the skinhead movement came from a lower, primarily working-class background[14]), members of modern (the '21st century) skinhead groups in Russia belong to economically and socially *diverse* backgrounds. Walking 'hand in hand' with other rightist groups such as the anti-Semite, anti-Islamic, or radical religious unions, the skinhead movement is one of the most aggressive and violent expressions of hatred in modern Russian Federation, which attracts more than 80 000 individuals all across the country (mostly males, from 16 to 28 years old),[15] and serves as one of the major physical threats to immigrants and ethnic minorities of Russia.

Since thorough description of ideological, cultural, political and economic background of members of the skinhead movement is available in both Russian and 'Western' literature, this project will *not* discuss the actual nature of the movement, or go into detail about the socio-political and racial origin of the targets of the skinhead attacks.[16] Rather, examining racist, xenophobic trends that became tangible in media, religious- and political agenda of the country, it will try to answer the question of '*why, overall, the Russian government responds in a way it does to the skinhead movement—conceals, remits and sometimes simply ignores the skinhead crimes?'*

[13] In this particular context, the term 'Eastern Europe' presents primarily 'Slavic,' Russian-speaking countries of the post-Soviet era—Russia, Ukraine and Belarus.
[14] Verkhovskij, Alexandr. *Russian Nationalism: Ideology and Spirit* (*Русский национализм: идеология и настроение*), (Moscow: The Analythical Center „Sova", 2006), 12.
[15] Verkhovskij, Alexandr. *Russian Nationalism: Ideology and Spirit* (*Русский национализм: идеология и настроение*), (Moscow: The Analythical Center „Sova", 2006), 15.
[16] In Russia, at it will be shown later, the skinhead aggression is based on racial (or ethnic) background of the individuals, with representatives of Caucasian, Asian and Black minorities being attacked the most.

CHAPTER 1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Neither in Eestern-, nor in Western European or North American literature, the topic of the skinhead movement in Russia has been given 'full-scale' attention. While the subject of 'nationalism,' of course, has been broadly covered in both the post-Soviet and 'Western'publications, as socio-political phenomenon, the skinhead movement in Russian Federation remains a relatively unkown occurrence when it comes to identification of its roots, its leaders and actual 'ideological' or political background. The following chapter aims at examining the already-existing literature written on this subject, and will try to raise further theoretical questions for 'practical' findings of the research.

1.1. The Flaws of the System

Out of all books and articles that have been covered for this research, two sources of the Analytical Center "SOVA," *Цена Ненависти: Национализм в России и противодействие расистским преступлениям* (*The Price of Hatred: Nationalism in Russia and the Opponency to Rasism-based Crimes*)[17] and *Русский национализм: идеология и настроение* (*Russian Nationalism: Ideology and Spirit*), edited by Alexandr Verkhovskij, stood out as the ones giving 'full' picture of ideological and cultural basis for the skinhead movement in Russia. Founded as the background for the project called "Language of Enmity in Russian Media" ("Язык вражды в российских СМИ"), in the fall of 2001, the center "SOVA," which is the publisher of the just-mentioned works and hundreds of other publications, presented the series of books that not only describe the phenomenon of racisim and

[17] *Цена Ненависти: Национализм в России и противодействие расистским преступлениям* (*The Price of Hatred: Nationalism in Russia and the Opponency to Rasism-based Crimes*) was the first book out of the two which was published in October of 2005, and aimed at explaning the phenomenon of 'Russian nationalism' ('российского национализма', 'rossijskogo nacionalizma'[17]) in terms of interconnectedness of crimes with feelings of harted which, oftetimes, were grounded on racism.

nationalism in Russian society, but also *explain* this issue from both economic and socio-political and cultural perspectives.

According to the authors and editors of the 'SOVA' publications, it is the general mood of antagonism toward immigrants and all the visible minorities of modern Russian Federation which has penetrated all spheres of the society and is constantly preventing both the authorities and 'ordinary' citizens of Russia from defining and, most importantly, solving the problem of racism in the country. Furthermore, even if the majority of the public defines someone as being racist, it is the ineffectiveness of the judicial system of Russia which remains major obstacle for both the executives of the juree and ordinary citizens. As the authors illustrate it clearly, both the Russian law and the investigation-process are not designed to address and resolve 'racist crimes' in an adequate, effective manner. Oftentimes, it is due to the flaws of the judicial system itself that most of the 'racism-based' crimes go unpunished.

In his work, Alexandr Verkhovskij analyses most famous *'hate-crimes'* which were committed in Russia since the collapse of the Soviet Union, and gives explanation of this bitter phenomenon as of the one being grounded on both political and economic basis. Specifically, he is arguing that the skinhead movement in Russia could not be seen as the monolithic, 'cross-national' phenomenon, but is to be treated as a *regionally-divided* occurance. The cities of Moscow, St Petersburg and the region of Tatarstan, for instance, could be seen as the examples of how the cultural, economic and religious background of a person may serve as the basis for 'native'-'foreigner' tagging.

If being compared to *Цена Ненависти: Национализм в России и противодействие расистским преступлениям* (*The Price of Hatred: Nationalism in Russia and the Opponency to Rasism-based Crimes*), in the second book of the "SOVA" organization, *Русский национализм: идеология и настроение* (*Russian Nationalism: Ideology and Spirit*),

the authors describe nationalism as being 'the politic,' the 'criminal *element*' of the society, illustrating "ideological evolution" of Russian nationalism that has occured throughout the 20th century, and breaking the popular myths of "working expansion" of migrants as being the major source of racial tensions in the country. Instead, giving the examples of racial nature of Northern Assetian government's laws in regard of "the inability of peaceful co-existance of the Assetian and Ingush people," and the later 'reponse' of Russians with another wave of antagonism toward *all* peoples of the Caucasus, for example, Alexandr Verhovskij shows the complexity of the issue of racism in terms of reciprocity of its character. The Russian society is presented as a "market system," where both material and intellectual "goods" (or characteristics of an idividual) serve as the basis for one's self- and social identification. As the deputy of the state Duma, the leader of the Communist Party of Russian Federation, and a member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (since 1996), Gennady Zyuganov addresses the nature of Russian nationalism in his book *Россия-Родина моя: идеология государственного патриотизма* (*Russia is my Homeland:The Ideology of State Patriotism*), those were the "founders" of the post-Soviet realm (politicians, academics and media representatives) who have 'created' the society where the myth of a "well-developed socialism" was replaced with the story of "all powerful capitalism."[18] According to Zyuganov, it was theoretical populism which has virtually destroyed social, political and economic background of Russian society, and has led to dissolution of both the inner- and the international image of the Russian state. Millions of Russians were literally left in financial and *moral* crisis, trying to indentify themselves in relation to the still unknown ideology of "democratic Western civilization."[19] It is due to all of these reasons (political, economic and cultural crisis of the post-Soviet Russia) that all of its citizens were trapped in a

[18] Gennadij Zyuganov, *Russia is my Homeland: The Ideology of State Patriotism (Россия-Родина моя: идеология государственного патриотизма*) (Moscow: Informpechat Press, 1996), 58.
[19] Gennadij Zyuganov, *Russia is my Homeland: The Ideology of State Patriotism (Россия-Родина моя: идеология государственного патриотизма*) (Moscow: Informpechat Press, 1996), 62.

"crisis of national self-awareness."[20] As the solution to the crisis, the author proposes the formula of 're-definition' of the term "Russian," meaning the restoration power of the state, the re-organization the society around traditional values of Russian culture, religion and history, and the promotion of unity and equality of all ethnic, political and economic classes of the society.

This work of Gennadij Zuganov is also an excellent synthesis of works of both Russian and Western European thinkers such as Leo Gymilev, Halford Mackinder or Karl Haushofer, as it not only describes the socio-political nature of the post-soviet Russia, but also addresses the factor of *geopolitics*, which, according to Zuganov, has contributed to birth and development of nationalist movements in modern Russian Federation.

1.2. Nationalism and 'Nation': From Ethnicity to Geopolitics

Being one of the key elements of nationalist movements in Eastern Europe, the concept of *ethnicity* remains the subject of the most vivid discussions of both Eastern and 'Western' scholars, when it comes to evaluating the role that it plays in the skinhead movement of Russian Federation. As the authors of the book *Конструирование этничности: этнические общины Санкт-Петербурга* (*Construction of Ethnicity: Ethnic Communities of St Petersburg*), Victor Voronkov and Ingrid Oswald argue, the popular trends of defining the post-Soviet society according to its ethnic and cultural differences did not result into open ethnic conflicts. This, however, could be said primarily about large, capital cities such as Moscow and St Petersburg. When it comes to smaller, more rural towns of Russia, Voronkov and Oswald assume that it is the level of socio-economic development (the much lower one in the case of the latter) that plays one of the key roles in defining relations between various ethnic groups living in the country. Despite the fact that religious, cultural, political

[20] Gennadij Zyuganov, *Russia is my Homeland: The Ideology of State Patriotism (Россия-Родина моя: идеология государственного патриотизма*) (Moscow: Informpechat Press, 1996), 59.

differences of various ethnic groups could not be blended through creation of a homogeneous "Soviet nation," philosophy of 'mixing' the peoples of the Soviet Union into a single, powerful nation regardless of their cultural or religious preferences resulted into blurring of the boundaries between distinctively different ethnic groups (be those the Slavs, Caucasians or Asians). At the same time, as the authors argue, it is the deportation of some ethnic groups (as part of the Soviet policies) to the territories that, historically speaking, did not belong to these people that led to aggravation of the already existing tensions between various ethnic communities, and has promoted ongoing conflicts on the territories that were occupied by Russian Federation even after the collapse of the Soviet empire.

The book *Конструирование этничности: этнические общины Санкт-Петербурга* (*Construction of Ethnicity: Ethnic Communities of St Petersburg*) gives excellent examples of such 'ethnic' clashes, where various ethnic minorities of St Petersburg—Estonians, Tatars, the Russian-speaking Poles, Armenians and russified Germans are being discriminated due to their "non-Russian" origin. Also making the comparison of ethnic context of Russia with that of Germany (specifically, the city of Berlin where more than 100 000 members of former Soviet Union have immigrated right after the collapse of the USSR), the former Soviet citizens' ethnic self-identification should be considered as well—whether ethnic belonging of these people matters more to them than their socio-political or "national" heritage. Interestingly, according to the results of the research, though a lot of people who lived in Germany where considered 'immigrants' or 'ethnic minorities' back in Russia, they still identified themselves as comers from the former Soviet Union and, at the same time, specified their ethnic origin as a *separate* category of their identity. For both the minorities of St Petersburg and Eastern European immigrants of Berlin, the term 'identity' is a complex combination of, first of all, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, with 'ideological' or political belonging playing secondary role in a person's self-identification. Whether or not the

rhetoric of current political leaders of Russia regarding 'multicultural nature of Russian Federation,' 'reciprocal tolerance,' and 'uniformity of all ethnic groups of the country along the socio-political lines' will result in elimination of racism is another question still to be addressed in this study.

1.3. The Russian Law: (il)legal Solution to Racism?

As K.V. Kalinina and S.V. Kulishov state in their studies *Национальные меньшинства в Российской Федерации* (*National Minorities in Russian Federation*), and *Национальная политика России: история и современность* (*National Politics of Russia: History and Modernity*), respectively, realization of rights of national minorities, just as the actual term "national minorities," varies from continent to continent, and from country to country.[21] In Russia, this term is defined by the specificity of its formation in terms of its multicultural nature, socio-historical and juridical traditions, the geographical location of the peoples and the forms of their self-identification.[22] Even though throughout centuries no ethnic minority of Russia has disappeared from the country's map, and has managed to preserve its culture, language and religion, in practice, these ethnic minorities are not being adequately protected by Russian constitution, not to mention ongoing discrimination when it comes to migration of these peoples into larger, 'Slavic-dominated' cities such as St Petersburg or Moscow, for instance.

As Kuleshov argues on this complex topic of Russian minorities and their relations with dominant Slavic population, the process of creation and implication of laws that are sensitive to *all* Russian citizens regardless of their cultural, religious or ethnic background is one of the biggest challenges of modern Russian state. Not only the government of Russian

[21] K.V. Kalinina, *National Minorities in Russian Federation* (Национальные меньшинства в Российской Федерации), (Moscow: RAGAS Press, 2006), 72.
[22] K.V. Kalinina, *National Minorities in Russian Federation* (Национальные меньшинства в Российской Федерации), (Moscow: RAGAS Press, 2006), 92.

Federation has been constantly failing to pass culturally-sensitive laws that could act as a standard at both federal and local level, it has also failed to affect the *mentality* of Slavic population whose negative attitude toward visual minorities of the country could be seen as a rather traditional, or *cultural* phenomenon.[23] Though already in the year of 2008, 42 members of the skinhead movement were found guilty of committing "racist crimes" and 32 of them were put into prison (comparing to only 15 in the year of 2005, 8 in 2004, and only 4 in the year of 2003),[24] judicial cases are usually being processed extremely slowly (as was with the famous "Volgograd case, "where the case of a group of skinheads composes of 13 individuals was "being reviewed" for almost 4 years).[25] Meanwhile, the criminal codex of Russian Federation is oftentimes being changed, causing additional complications in detecting and imposing penalties on the delinquents. All in all, as tensions between 'native,' Slavic' majority, and ethnic and immigrant minorities of Russian Federation continue to grow, it is through effective, transparent rule of law that the problem of racism could be if not eliminated, then definitely epitomized to a 'minimal' level.

Already during year of 2002, few cases of Russian mass-media's stirring of tensions along the ethnic lines were brought into court. The so-called "motives of hatred" and the "promotion of conflict" where common forms of depiction of visible minorities, portraying them as "the foreign elements of Russian society."[26] While, as Hellberg-Hirn argues, "Russianness unites people—and peoples—through culture, communication, generosity and benevolence, embracing different nationalities and leading them into a communion by

[23] As Kuleshov illustrates in his book, antagonism of Slavic marojity of modern Russia toward the 'newcomers' or anyone of a different ethnic backgound could be partially explained by the ongoing attemps of both 'Eastern' (or „Asian") and 'Western' neighbours to take control over Eastern Europe. As a result of its history, the image of 'true Russia' is still the one of a relatively homogeneous, Slavic society with ethnic minorities playing minor role in cultural, political and economic life of the country.

[24] Verkhovskij, Alexandr. *Russian Nationalism: Ideology and Spirit* (*Русский национализм: идеология и настроение*), (Moscow: The Analythical Center „Sova", 2006), 38.

[25] Verkhovskij, Alexandr. *Russian Nationalism: Ideology and Spirit* (*Русский национализм: идеология и настроение*), (Moscow: The Analythical Center „Sova", 2006), 39.

[26] Alexandr Verkhovskij, The *Price of Hatred: Nationalism in Russia and the Opponency to Rasism-based Crimes (Цена Ненависти: Национализм в России и противодействие расистским преступлениям)*, (Moscow: The Analythical Center „Sova," 2005), 139.

offering them cultural categories that can be shared by all,"[27] this same 'Russianness' has another 'side of the coin'—the extremely dividing, racially-biased and ethnicity-oriented one, which, oftentimes, leaves no space for an ethnically and culturally diverse 'compromise.'

As Anatoly M. Khazanov argues in his book *After the USSR: Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Politics in the Commonwealth of Independent States*, "the pretentious slogan about "the unbreakable friendship and brotherhood" of the Soviet peoples was nothing but a poor cover for old and new antipathies and grievances,"[28] and it is due to inability of the Russian government to cure the 'old wounds' of ethnic tensions (with proper cultural, political and economic policies) that the problem of racism was engrained even further. Exploring interconnectedness of nationalism, ethnic relations, social structure, and the ongoing political and socio-economic processes of the Soviet- and the post-Soviet Russia, the author demonstrates the applicability of modern, Western, non-Marxist schools of thought, providing both 'practical' and theoretical background of origins of 'modern' Russian nationalism. The question of 'whether the existence of Russian Federation is possible *outside* of traditionally empirical or 'union state' frameworks, and whether the current socio-political course of the post-Soviet decade truly contributes to promotion of cultural, social and economic equality of all Russian citizens is the one still to be answered.

[27] Chris Chulos, *The Fall of an Empire, the Birth of a Nation: Natioinal Identities in Russia* (England: Ashgate Publishers Ltd, 2000), 177.
[28] Anatoly Khazanov, *After the USSR: Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Politics in the Commonwealth of Independent States* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), 12.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

In principle, the category of the *russkii*—of those who belong to the community of 'ethnically' or culturally 'true' or 'pure' Russians, in the same way as that of the *rossiyanin*, seems to be an open one. Theoretically, when it comes to identification of a person as being 'Russian,' his or her ethnic or cultural origin should not be a decisive factor. In practice, however, the situation is indeed different.

For this project, I tried to combine the comparative analysis of secondary sources such as books mentioned in the previous chapter with that of analysis of the interviews which were conducted during my research trip to Kiev, Ukraine. Though, of course, the skinhead movement in Kiev has its specific trends such as nationalism being grounded on *both* the anti-Caucasian *and* anti-Russian dispositions, for example, there are still a lot of similarities between the two countries. Despite the fact that the actual skinhead movement in Ukraine has started between the 1994 and 1996, a bit later than that in Russia, already in 1998, the leader of the first Ukrainian skinhead group called "Bulldogs" ("Бульдоги") has established close ties with the rightist radical organization "Social-Nationalist Party of Ukraine" (СНПУ), and has started delivery of Russian radical literature such as the newspaper "I am Russian" («Я русский», published by *People's National Party*), and "Russian Order" («Русский порядок»)[29], extremely polular in late 1990s. In addition, the skinhead groups of Kiev continued to keep close ties with the Russian *Party of Slavic Union* (leader—Oleg Bahtijarov), and also with smaller Russian fascist groups. All in all, since early-mid 1990s, the ideas of "great Slavic fascism"—the "anti-foreigners," "anti-racial minorities" movement

[29] Andrei Klimenko, Natalie Morris, "Skinheads against Ukraine," ("Скины против Украины"), *SP Capital News* (*СП Столичные Новости*) (June 17, 2002), http://cn.com.ua/N217/invesigation/invesigation.html, Accessed May 23, 2010.

of Russian Federation, Ukraine and, to a lesser extent Belarus,[30] have penetrated the post-Soviet space to such extent that the skinhead movement could be seen as 'logical outcome' for existing socio-political situation of that time.

2.1. From 'Kiev to St Petersburg,' from 'Moscow to Vladivostok': Does the post-Soviet Nationalism Have 'Borders'?

The following images illustrate high tendencies of racist, violence-provoking rhetoric and acts that provoke xenophobia in Russia (as well as Ukraine).

Fig.1 Kiev, Ukraine (2010)[31]

Fig.2 Kiev, Ukraine (2010)

According to one of the interviewees whom I have spoken to during my research trip to Kiev—professor of Eastern European Studies and an expert on the post-Soviet nationalist movements, Evgenij Gorban, "traditionally, in most of the Eastern European states, there has always been strong difference between theory and practice, whatever subject one may touch."[32] If, according to him, most Russians and Ukrainians would usually ("officially") express tolerance towards immigrants or visual minorities of their countries, when it comes to talking to people in close, friendly environment, their opinion on issues of 'national identity,'

[30] Andrei Klimenko, Natalie Morris, "Skinheads against Ukraine," ("Скины против Украины"), *SP Capital News* (*СП Столичные Новости*) (June 17, 2002), http://cn.com.ua/N217/invesigation/invesigation.html, Accessed May 23, 2010.
[31] This picture was taken in Kiev, during my research trip to Ukraine. It literally says: "Slavs, do not drink, exercise to protect your Homeland!"
[32] Kiev, Ukraine, April 19, 2010 (interview with Evgenij Gorban)

'national pride' and their country's past, present and future differ dramatically.[33] As Dr Gorban stated, "the category of *russkij* (meaning 'Russian,' more often in ethnic terms) is the one which causes most difficulties, for, for the general public, it is being defined by mostly *ethnic* (in rare cases cultural) characteristics of a person—of one being born 'Russian' (or being of Slavic appearance)."[34] This 'ethnic' approach to one's "national identification," I would argue, could be seen as the 'Russian' (or 'Ukrainian') characteristic of racism. Rather than grounding their attacks on social/class differences (as it was happening at the original, most early stages of the skinhead movement in Europe, particularly in its cradle—Great Britain), the skinheads in Russia are targeting their victims due to their racial background—primarily 'non-Slavic' (non-Russian) origin.

This point was fully confirmed by another interviewee I have spoken to during my research trip—a member of the skinhead movement in Kiev, Vitalij[35] (for the request of the interviewee, the name was changed). Conducted on April 18, 2010, the interview took place in a coffee place called "Shokolanica" where Vitalij has kindly agreed to answer questions regarding the movement itself and his personal involvement into one of the skinhead groups in Kiev.

Specifically, the interviewee was presented with a number of questions concerning the occurring situation with immigrants (mainly visual minorities) in Kiev and Russian Federations, and was asked to give his opinion on topics of 'race,' 'national identity,' and the overall reasons behind his involvement into the movement. All of the questions were the open end ones (no 'yes' or 'no' questions), so that, in case the interviewee was willing to, he could give as much information as possible.[36]

[33] Kiev, Ukraine, April 19, 2010 (interview with Evgenij Gorban)
[34] From the interview with Dr Gorban, Kiev, Ukraine, April 19, 2010.
[35] Vitalij is a student at one of the state Universities in Kiev, 21 years old.

Overall, Vitalij was very open and willing to share his opinion; there was almost no 'ice' to break; he was extremely passionate in his answers, but at the same time, not at all aggressive. The following are the questions and, most importantly, answers which summarize main points of the interview.

Question: If you were asked to define who 'Russian' or 'Ukrainian' is, what would your answer be, and what grounds would you base your opinion on?

Answer: It does not matter…Russian or Ukrainian…This is, first of all, a person who was born in these countries; a person who is ethnically Slavic; the one who speaks the language, who is born into this culture, who has our mentality…

Question: So, what is more important for you—ethnicity (Slavic or not) or knowledge of the culture?

Answer: This comes as one for me. But, if you ask me to distinguish, I would say ethnicity. This is how we distinguish who is 'our' ("nash", "наш") and who is not. It is crucial nowadays to preserve our heritage, our past and present…I believe it should be done, first of all, through preservation of our race.

Question: Can a person be Russian or Ukrainian even if he or she does not speak the language? If he or she has left the country long time ago, for example, but is still ethnically "Slavic"?

Answer: Yes, of course. I just think that these people do not care about our country that much any more. They are changed; they lean toward the West, they are different people, probably.

Question: Thank you. And what do you think are the major problems of Ukrainian or Russian societies nowadays?

Answer: Economy…political system overall. People do not have a say in what is going on. It is as if we exist into two different, parallel worlds. People come, people leave...and they just do not care. Our job is to change this. If the government cannot solve the problem, we will do it ourselves.

Question: And what is the biggest problem?

Answer: There are a lot of them. Lack of job is one of the most serious ones right now. Poverty. There are those who come and steal the opportunity to simply own a piece of bread[37] from ordinary people, from *our* people…And then there are those hundreds of oligarchs...

Question: Who are those who, as you say, "come and steal?"

[37] The expression "to own a piece of bread" is a synonym for earning money.

Answer: Well, the Caucasians, Chinese…Mostly Caucasians in Ukraine…All markets are full of them…They are everywhere. They are already rich and they come to get more and more from us…

Question: As time goes by, do you think integration of these people into the mainstream Ukrainian or Russian society as one of the possible options of solving the problem? (Let us assume that the person is willing to).

Answer: I am confident that this is not the solution. If we have that many problems already, if our own people suffer, we should care about them first. Let those "priezzhie" ("newcomers" or "foreigners") go where they came from…

[Other parts of the discussion were not recorded word by word. The general theme and answers of the interview, though, are presented in the section above].[38]

In view of the stereotypes concerning members of the skinhead movement, answers of Vitalij confirm the already existing clichés about the reasoning behind the skinheads' attacks on visible minorities in Russia (and Ukraine). In the above quotations, the interviewee is openly stating that, both in Ukraine and Russia, race is the number one factor that defines someone as "ours" ("nash") or "foreigner," thus granting or depriving a person of certain socio-political and economic rights. Moreover, answers of Vitalij could also be 'defined' by clear expression of patriotism or, I would say, nationalism. The interviewed young man admits that, nowadays, there are a lot of problems in Ukraine and Russia; at the same time, he tries to provide his own 'solution'—extermination of visible, 'easy to diagnose' targets: ethnic minorities, immigrants, and illegal workers. The willingness 'to do good' for his country is often mentioned as the main criterion for action, and, compared to that, the 'price' paid for the 'result' has little (if any) significance.

The following chapter of this project will move from 'personal' to 'political;' it will try to *explain* '*why*,' after seventy years of Soviet politics of "multiculturalism" and "friendship of the peoples," racist, xenophobic attitudes, such as the skinhead movement,

[38] The original interview was conducted in Russian.

become extremely popular among young people of Russian Federation. Specifically, social, political, economic and religious factors will be discussed.

CHAPTER 3. FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE: THE CLASH OF FACTORS

"Knowing the others outside, it is possible to affirm identities inside. Knowing identities inside, it is possible to imagine the absences outside"

R.B.J. Walker

The issues of belief and identity play strikingly important role in Russia. Coming to occupy the center of political, sociological, anthropological and cultural fields, the term 'national identity' is not only the widely discussed topic of modern Russian politics, but is also a 'mirror' of socio-political tranformations that have occured in Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union. This chapter will examine the role that the term 'national identity' plays in nowadays Russia, and will try to illustrate the ways in which the concepts of national 'self-identification' (as an ethnosocial, ethnocultural, biological or political and territorial category[39]) and nationalism (civic or ethnic) are being (re-)defined and applied in the post-Soviet space—particularily by members of the skinhead movement. Finally, by briefly touching on socio-political content of modern Russian Federation, this chapter will also illustrate the role that the Russian Orthodox Church plays in promoting nationalism in Russian society, and will show how religion, overall, is being closely tied to Russians' *cultural (national) identity*.

3.1. Who is the Enemy? Role of national Identity in the post-Soviet Russia

Just as their pre-revolutionary predecessors, contemporary Russian intellectuals agree that the concept of nation, although very much alive in late 19th-century Russia, was always associated with a "retrograde policial order couter to political ideals of intelligentsia,"[40] with loyalty to the tsar and identification with the Orthodox Church and the traditional emblems of

[39] Vera Tolz, "Forging the nation: national identity and nation building in post-communist Russia," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 50, Issue 6 (2002), 995.

[40] Elena Hellberg-Hirn, *Soil and Soul: The Symbolic World of Russianness* (England: Ashgate Publishing, 2000), 217.

Russian naitonality playing the key role in 'national identity' image. Moreover, it was the existence of an empire (or, later on, the multi-ethnic composition of the USSR) that had, as Tolz states, "a formative influence on the national consciousness of Russian people."[41] Though, oftentimes, ideologists are divided in interpreting the peculiarity of Russian situation (with some arguing that it was the empire that "prevented Russians from developing into a modern nation[42]" and others, like Berdyaev, Fedotov and Illin, for example, stating that it was due to intermingling with other ethnic groups that Russians managed to create a new type of community on the territory of the Russian empire (USSR)[43], which was distinctively different from all the European-type nations), the majority of intellectuals see the commonly defined 'West' as the *constituting other* which 'opposes' Russian identity.

Historically speaking, be it France, Britain, Germany or the USA, in different periods and different eras, these 'Western' countries were serving as a reference point for Russian self-representation in a sense of embodying an 'alien,' 'European' way of existence. Colley, for instance, argues that British common identity was formed not only in opposition to the French, but that the sense of difference between the British people and the colonial peoples they conquered was also of great significance.[44] In the case of Russia, Tolz emphasizes, the early creation of an empire (well before the process of Russian nation building has begun), the empire's land-based character and the resulting high level of mutual cultural influences and assimilation between conquerors and conquered have (to some extent) blurred the feeling of difference between the imperial people and other subjects of the empire[45]. Being different

[41] Vera Tolz, "Forging the nation: national identity and nation building in post-communist Russia," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 50, Issue 6 (2002), 998.
[42] This is an argument of Vasily Osipovich Klyuchevsky, the prominent pre-revolutionary historian and thinker who was the first one to shift attention from political and social issues to geographical and economical forces and agencies, and to believe in Russian "peaceful colonization" of Europe, Siberia, and Far East.
[43] Vera Tolz, "Forging the nation: national identity and nation building in post-communist Russia," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 50, Issue 6 (2002), 999.
[44] Vera Tolz, "Forging the nation: national identity and nation building in post-communist Russia," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 50, Issue 6 (2002), 1000.
[45] Vera Tolz, "Forging the nation: national identity and nation building in post-communist Russia," *Europe-Asia*

from nationalisms of 'traditional' imperial nations, Russian national identity could be compared to that of colonial and post-colonial Asian and African societies where culturally-engrained 'nationalism' and national identity are being empowered by *distinction from the West*. This constant presence of 'the other' has proven to not only 'underline' the self-identification border of "Russianness," when it comes to drawing both physical and cultural boundaries of the country, but has also served as the leading force behind economic and political development of the state.

For modern nationalist movements as that of the skinheads, the anti-Western tendency, or the necessity to have the 'other,' ('Western') or simply 'foreign' enemy is one of the core elements of the 'skinhead ideology.' Though not fully supporting the pupular "Union Identity" approach—originated from the Pan-Slavists' theory of "Russian nation being defined by its imperical mission of unifying the poeples of the Eurasian continent,"[46] and stating that "the peoples of the former USSR now have a single genetic code"[47] (allegedly discovered by scienctist at the Institute of General Genetics of the Russian Academy of Sciences), members of the skinhead movement in Russia remain the promoters of the 'ours' ("nash") -'others' ("chyzhoj") approach, supporting the idea of superiority of the Slavs over the peoples of other racial backgrounds.

Though not officially, this vision of "uniqueness" and 'missionary' assignment of Russia and its "Russian" people is being also actively promoted by the current government. As Igor Torbakov, the author of "Putin's New Deal: Kremlin Plays Up Nationalist Card" article argues, "the overall tone of Putin's and Medvedev's speeches could be clearly characaterized as nationalistic, further amplified by the purposeful quotations borrowed from the works of Russian nationalist thinkers ranging form the liberal Dmitry Likhachev to

Studies, Vol. 50, Issue 6 (2002), 1001.

[46] Vera Tolz, "Forging the nation: national identity and nation building in post-communist Russia," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 50, Issue 6 (2002), 995.

[47] Vera Tolz, "Forging the nation: national identity and nation building in post-communist Russia," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 50, Issue 6 (2002), 996.

conservative nationalists such as the philosopher Ivan Ilyin and the auther Alexander Solzhenitsyn."[48] In most of their rhetoric, both Putin and Medvedev are oftentimes focusing on two key social issues: the state of the country's demography and the state of the its armed forces. Both of family and army, as Torbakov states, are highly conservative social institutions,[49] and traditionally generate large amount of national sentiment. Preservation and proliferation of these 'key issues' is also one of the primary goals of the skinhead nationalists. It could thus be said that, to a certain extent, in terms of protection and perdurance of these 'national' values, the interests of the goverment and members of the skinhead movement *coincide*. These are the means of achieving these 'goals' that, of course, are different.

3.2. 'Community of Russian Speakers'—the common 'Slavonic' identity?

Historically speaking, it was since early 19th century that the notion of *cultural* rather than political or religious identity was particularly attractive to the upwardy mobile people of the Russian Empire, the so-called *raznochintsy*, who saw culture as the major provider of connections across the social rifts, and perceived cultural cleft as a primary producer of 'national unity.'[50] Understanding the term 'culture' in a sense of common social values, the leading elites of Russia, members of different political and social persuasions, "shared a common belief that a 'proper' literature was a necessary bacon to guide the Russian majority along a dimly perceived path out of generations of serfdom and backwardness."[51] Specifically, it was through seeing *language* as the primary force capable of unifying different

[48] Igor Torbakov, "Putin's New Deal: Kremlin Plays Up Nationalist Card," The James Foundation, Volume 3, issue 93, (2006): 2, http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=31673, Accessed May 28, 2010.

[49] Igor Torbakov, "Putin's New Deal: Kremlin Plays Up Nationalist Card," The James Foundation, Volume 3, issue 93, (2006): 2, http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=31673, Accessed May 28, 2010.

[50] Douglas Blum, *National Identity and Globalization: State and Society in Post-Soviet Russia* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 178.

[51] Douglas Blum, *National Identity and Globalization: State and Society in Post-Soviet Russia* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 179.

ethnic and social groups of the Russian empire that the notion of *communication* as being the main marker of Russian national identity came into power. According to Hosking, ”during the 19th century, Russian literature and language, in which it was couched, was to do far more...than was done by the output of state or church—to lay the foundations for a Russian national identity which could embrace both the elites and ’ordinary’ people.”[52]

Later on, with the Soviet Union policy of ’russification,’ even those non-Russians whose first language was Russian (especially Ukrainians and Belarussians) started to identify themselves as Russians in their passports and censuses. Morevoer, as more than 25 millions of Russians were encouraged to settle outside ’Russian’ territory, more than 25 millions of Russian-speakers found themselves outside the borders of the Russian Federation, and were then proclaimed by some intellectuals to be a part of now divided Russian nation.[53] As it was proven with recent case of the 2008 Georgia-Russia armed conflict, Russian language, culture and ethnic belonging continue to serve as an indicator of ’Russian national identity’ and to provide basis for ’protection’ of the Russian-speaking diaspora as of ’an inseparable’ part of the Russian nation. The paradox of the present, however, is that the term ’Russian identity’ is being used primarily for the interests of Russia: when possible, to expand the socio-political influence of the state, and, in the case of foreigners (or the (il)legal immigrants who come to Russia seeking employment), to use the very same terminology of national, ’Slavic’ identity to protect the country form ’foreign invasions.’

3.3. Radical definition of ’Nation’: The ’Russian’ Approach

Comparing to the Western model of national identity, where, according to Anthony Smith, ”historic territory, legal political community, elegal political equality of members, and

[52] Vera Tolz, ”Forging the nation: national identity and nation building in post-communist Russia,” *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 50, Issue 6 (2002): 998.
[53] Vera Tolz, ”Forging the nation: national identity and nation building in post-communist Russia,” *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 50, Issue 6 (2002): 998.

common civic culture and ideology are the components of the standard, Western model of nation,"[54] the Russian approach to the terms 'nation' and 'national identity' could be seen as a rather non-Western model of 'ethnic' conception of the nation. Comparing to the perception of people as members of the political community which is the subject to common laws and institutions,[55] the Russian approach to national identity can be defined as an 'ethnic' rather than a 'civic' one. Whether its members stay in Russian Federation or emigrate to another society, "incluctably, organically, they remain members of the community of their birth [Russia] and are forever stamped by it."[56]

As Tolz states further, in the case of Russian Federation, it could be argued that, to some extent, "the multi-ethnic nature of the land-based Russian empire and of the USSR has not only encouraged a high degree of ethinic assimilation...[but has also provoked a feeling that] the Russian status in the non-Russian republics was being threatened."[57] Furthermore, with excessive economic, political, social and demographic burdens escalating through late 1980s and early-mid 1990s, there was a sense that the survival of Russians as of a distinct collectivity was undermined; it became the prevailing feeling of not only Russian, but also the Ukrainian and Belarussian people. It was during that time that, according to Gumilev and Borodai,[58] "a purely racial definition of a nation as of a biological category"[59] started to appear, with 'ethnos' being the source from which a nation emerged—the phenomenon of "natural" rather than a social nature. Furthermore, with Russian intellectual community claiming that "demographic trends might soon make Slavs a minority within the Soviet

[54] Smith, Anthony, *National Identity* (England: Penguin Books of London, 1991), 13.
[55] Smith, Anthony, *National Identity* (England: Penguin Books of London, 1991), 12.
[56] Smith, Anthony, *National Identity* (England: Penguin Books of London, 1991), 11.
[57] Vera Tolz, "Forging the nation: national identity and nation building in post-communist Russia," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 50, Issue 6 (2002): 995.
[58] Nikolay Gumilev and Andrei Borodai were the founders of the *Acmeism Movement* (1910, Russia).
[59] Taras Kuzio, " National identities and virtual foreign policies among the Eastern Slavs: Belarus, Russia and Ukraine," *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 31 Issue 4 (2003): 434.

Union,"[60] all visual minorities such as individuals with distinct Central Asian appearence, or, later on (especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union), people of Jewish, Asian or Caucasian origin, became objects of open estrangement. As Gumilev's vews on biological definition of ethnoses/nations were published in widely circulated popular periodicals and books,[61] post-communist period of Russian history became marked by open racist propaganda. Based on ethnic rather than civic characteristics of the country's members, Russian national identity has turned into a concept of not only moral (or cultural) but also *physical* subtraction, leading to an outburst of various forms of 'ethnically-defined' violence, with the most vivid one, of course, being the skinhead movement.

3.4 Role of the Orthodox Church

Stavrogin: "You have reduced God to a simple attribute of nationality".
Shatov: "...on the contrary, I raise the people up to God...The people is the body of God... A truly great people can never be reconciled to a secondary role amongst humanity, or even to a primary role, but only and exclusively to the first role...But truth is only one, and therefore, only one of the peoples can have the true God, even though the other peoples have their own great gods. The only "God-bearer" people is the Russian one, and... and... and do you really take me for such a fool, Stavrogin,—he suddenly screamed madly—who does not distinguish whether his words at this time are old, worn-out nonsense, ground over on all the Moscow Slavophile mills, or are a completely new word, the last word, the only word of renewal and resurrection..."

(Fyodor Dostoevsky 1984:7:266-267)

Being one of the most prominent and influential religious and cultural bodies, the Russian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate) is a highly visible institution in Russian Federation, and is, oftentimes, claiming to be the driving force behind Russia's post-Soviet renewal and recovery. As surveys show, Russians trust the Orthodox Church more than any other public institution, including law courts, trade unions, mass media, the military, the police and the

[60] Margot Light, "In search of an identity: Russian foreign policy and the end of Ideology," *Journal of* Communist Studies and Transition Politics. Vol. 19 Issue 3 (2002): 49.
[61] "When two or more ethnoses with a 'negative mutual complementarity' live together and intermingle, this inevitably leads to the death of one or both ethnoses"— one of his most popular statements of Nikolai Berdyaev.

government[62]. With estimates of the number of self-identified Orthodox adherents ranging from 50 million to 70 million, or roughly one half of the population,[63] and the former head of the Moscow Patriarchate, the governing body of the Orthodox Church, Patriarch Aleksii II, ranking in the top fifteen of the country's most influential political figures, it could be said that the Orthodox Church plays a tremendous role in Russia's socio-cultural and political realm. Starting from the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991, "Russian nationalism has been a prominent feature of Russian polity and society, and understanding of the place that Russian Orthodoxy plays in interpretation of Russia's trajectory"[64] is essential for examining escalating post-Soviet nationalism.

Being closely related to the country's political manoeuvres, and, oftentimes, reflecting general tendencies of the government in power, Russian Orthodox Church became the promoter of nationalistic, oftentimes even racist tendencies in regard to representatives of other religious (ethnic) minorities, and became the integral part of not only religious, but also *national and political* identity of the country. As Elena Hellberg-Hirn, Professor and Senior Researcher of Eastern European Studies in the Academy of Finland, states in her book *Soil and Soul: The Symbolic World of Russianness*, "for both the Orthodox and schismatics the essence of what was holy [and thus eternally important] in Russia was contained in its *true faith.*"[65] In the words of Cherniavsky, Russia was 'Holy Russia' because it was the land of salvation, as expressed in its icons, saints, people, and ruler.[66] At the same time, historical origin of this term also indicates its concrete limits:

[62] Zoe Knox, "Russian Orthodoxy, Russian Nationalism, and Patriarch Aleksii II," Nationalities Papers, Vol.33, No.4, (2005): 533.
[63] Zoe Knox, "Russian Orthodoxy, Russian Nationalism, and Patriarch Aleksii II," Nationalities Papers, Vol.33, No.4, (2005): 533.
[64] Zoe Knox, "Russian Orthodoxy, Russian Nationalism, and Patriarch Aleksii II," Nationalities Papers, Vol.33, No.4, (2005): 533.
[65] Elena Hellberg-Hirn, *Soil and Soul: The Symbolic World of Russianness* (England: Ashgate Publishing, 2000), 101.
[66] Elena Hellberg-Hirn, *Soil and Soul: The Symbolic World of Russianness* (England: Ashgate Publishing, 2000), 101.

> "Holy Russia" was what remained, during the Time of Troubles; after Tsar and State and Church hierarchy were gone, it was the concentrated essence of Russia, visible when the form of Russia was destroyed. Hence, both on the transcendental and concrete levels, "Holy Russia" was an absolute, immutable, because the land of salvation could not change except catastrophically, nor could the Russian essence change without losing itself.
>
> (Cherniavsky 1969: 116)

What this passage implies is the emergence of a popular myth which, according to Hirn, "symbolized a conception of immutability or a function essence,"[67] and precluded all change and, at the same time, required opposition to any type of social or political changes. It is also manifested that 'universal inertia' of the Russian state mechanism was the major obstacle to overcome. Existing in the past which is commonly praised in modern, 21st century Russia, a totally 'new' definition of 'Russianness' was introduced by the concept of 'Holy Russia'—the one where even if a person rejected the 'emperor' or the state, he or she still remained part of the 'Holy Nation.'

Furthermore, despite inherent tensions between 'the myth of the ruler' and 'the myth of the people,' to be of *Rus* still meant to be an *Orthodox*, a Christian—to indicate one's status of 'eternal' belonging to Russian land, while to be of *Rossia* (Russia) was to be of the political state. The difference here is the one of two distinctive 'Russias'—the first one being defined by timeless, almost 'unearthly' belonging to Russia (*Rus*) as to a cultural, non-political, *religious* entity, and the other one (*Rossia*) meaning attachment to a vague political structure. As Cherniavsky points out, "to have a 'Russian soul' meant to be Russian, while the 'Russian soul,' of course, has always been an *Orthodox* one."[68] In Russian culture, the Orthodox Church can thus be seen as an integral part of national identity, and, for that reason, remains an indicator of a person's belonging or (as it happens with migrants of Muslim religious background) estrangement from the 'nation.'

[67] Elena Hellberg-Hirn, *Soil and Soul: The Symbolic World of Russianness* (England: Ashgate Publishing, 2000), 102.
[68] Elena Hellberg-Hirn, *Soil and Soul: The Symbolic World of Russianness* (England: Ashgate Publishing, 2000), 103.

3.5. From Orthodox 'History' to the Post-Communist Present

As James Billington, a long-standing observer of Russian culture and society, has noted, "an understanding of the place of Russian Orthodox in nationalistic interpretations of Russia's trajectory is essential [for appreciation] of both political and public discussions on the country's Soviet and post-Soviet past"[69]. Since the Russian Orthodox Church was one of the only institutions which has never 'betrayed' its people— neither during the Russian Civil War, nor throughout years of lingering Soviet repressions, it remained the grounding part of Russian 'identity.'

At the same time, however, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the position of the Church in Russian society has changed dramatically. Highly visible in its extreme nationalistic rhetoric, myths and imagery, Russian Orthodox Church has virtually separated itself from an image of the only, most 'holiest' and absolute spiritual leader of the country, and, oftentimes, being manipulated and controlled by 'certain' political powers, has lost its traditional, moral independence from the state.[70]

As Aleksandr Vorkhovsky, a foremost authority on religion and nationalism in Russia, has argued, "the ideological tendency against liberalism and modernism in the Orthodox Church could be best described as "Russian Orthodox fundamentalism," rather than nationalism, since it draws on nostalgia for a mythologized past based on the Orthodox monarchy of pre-revolutionary Russia.[71] Given all the complexities of defining both 'fundamentalism' and 'extreme nationalism,' especially in historical circumstances of Eastern Europe, it could be said that though, of course, modern Russian Orthodox Church is definitely manipulating its country's history— trying to bring back the Church's influence over the

[69] Zoe Knox, "Russian Orthodoxy, Russian Nationalism, and Patriarch Aleksii II," Nationalities Papers, Vol.33, No.4, (2005): 534.
[70] The factors that have promoted birh and development of all of these changes will be discussed in the 'second' part of this project.
[71] Zoe Knox, "Russian Orthodoxy, Russian Nationalism, and Patriarch Aleksii II," Nationalities Papers, Vol.33, No.4, (2005): 534.

masses through emphasizing importance and greatness of the pre-communist Russian state and all of the values, traditions and moral beliefs that fall under it, Russian Orthodox Church is still one of the principal 'platforms' of *modern national identity*. The primary question here is 'what exactly has changed in people's perception of religion, the institution of the Church, and, of course, its co-relation with country's political powers[72] that members of the most radical and violent groups such those of the skinhead movement are using religion as one of key means of justification of their crimes?'

Although, officially, "a resurgent marriage"[73] of Russian nationalism and Orthodoxy came to political foreground only in early 1990s, it remained the primary force of national survival of former Slavic republics of the Soviet Union such as Belarus and Ukraine, for example.[74] Paradoxically, it was right after the collapse of the Soviet Union that even most prominent leaders of modern communist party LDPR, like Gennadi Zyuganov, expressed their support for opposition of foreign preachers coming to Russia, and have openly declared the Orthodox Church to be "the state church." In socio-political atmosphere of search for 'Russian identity,' starting from 1990s, importance of Russian Orthodox Church in defining and 'preserving' the cultural and political aspect of 'Russianness', indeed, cannot be denied. As "Russia's great power credibility continued to slip, the problem of deteriorating spiritual and moral values also became increasingly prominent in public discourse,"[75] while lack of national ideology was associated with the decline of both. Today, regardless of where a person stands on the political spectrum, members of both the 'extreme right' and the 'extreme left' seek the rehabilitation of Orthodox 'spirituality' of Russia and view Orthodoxy because

[72] Once again, all of these questions are to be answered in the 'second' part of this project.

[73] Myroslav Tataryn, "Russia and Ukraine: Two Models of Religious Liberty and Two Models for Orthodoxy," *Religion, State and Society*, Vol. 29, No.3 (2001):156.

[74] As many scholars and historians of both Ukraine and Belarus now argue, although Russian, Ukraine and Belarus have shared much common historical, political and religious experience over the past 300 years, religious situation, as it has evolved over the past decade, demonstrates underlying difference: both Ukraine and Belarus have actually had an experience of religious pluralism and tolerance that, nowadays, make demands upon their body politic, whereas such has not been the case in Russia (Tataryn, p156).

[75] Myroslav Tataryn, "Russia and Ukraine: Two Models of Religious Liberty and Two Models for Orthodoxy," *Religion, State and Society*, Vol. 29, No.3 (2001):156.

it serves as a symbol of past national glory, arousing nostalgic feelings of ‘uniqueness’ and power of ‘vseja Rusi’ (‘all Russia’, or ‘Rus’).

As Putin stated it during his visit to the Solovetsky monastery (the Solovki Islands), "without Christianity, without the Orthodox faith and culture which sprang from it, Russia would have hardly existed as a state,"[76] adding that "besides glorifying the Russian people, besides cultivating the national dignity and national pride, our spiritual teachers … taught us to respect other nations," and stressed that those were ancient Orthodox teachings that were ”free of chauvinism or any ideology of nations chosen by God.”[77]

Today, as most Russians seem to share a very large set of common values based upon their common culture and history, in a society such as the one of this country, where Orthodoxy has played vehement role since its inception in 988, and has penetrated all aspects of Russians’ ’self-identification,’ it is perhaps only natural for religious, cultural and political values to be fused in a single cocktail of both the pre- and post-Soviet existence. The very idea of being *culturally* Orthodox, regardless of whether an individual adheres to the Church’s teachings or participates in the life of the Church or not, could be seen as the basic one for growing nationalist aspirations in modern Russian Federation. The fact that, just as majority of the Russian priests, the followers of the Orthodox ’faith’ are usually ethinically Slavic (or ’white’ Russian) population, seems to cause major problem when it comes to drawing connections between ’religion,’ culture and race. In Russia, particularily for members of radical groups such as the skinhead movement, the Orthodox Church is seen as the *symbol of the nation*, which, on itself, is being defined in terms of *race*.

As Svetlana Filonova argued in *Novoye Vremja*, ”the fact that Orthodoxy as a religious teaching has become hostage to politicians and that xenophobia and naitonalism are gathering

[76] Andrei Zolotov, "Ten Years After Coup, Putin Seeks Inspiration From Russia's Christian Roots," *Christianity Today Magazine* (December 27, 2009): 2.
[77] Andrei Zolotov, "Ten Years After Coup, Putin Seeks Inspiration From Russia's Christian Roots," *Christianity Today Magazine* (December 27, 2009): 2.

strenght under the cover of Orthodoxy is only half of the trouble."[78] The real problem is that an imperical ideology is now being hidden under the 'priestly vestments,' and is aquiring the status of inviolability, "becoming an ideology without an opposition or opponents."[79]

Anastasia Mitrofanova, a prominent Russian scholar and researcher of the subject of nationalism and religion, is stating that "modern religious fundamentalism is closely interconnected with nationalism, and aims at reconstructing of Russia as of the leading Orthodox state."[80] Primarily, driven by feelings of "national pride" and contraposition with "the West," it touches on various aspects of Russian "national self-perception," bringing the topics of 'national identity,' 'patriotism' and 'fight against the foreigners' ("chyzhie") for further public attention. Overall, politicization of religion in Russia could be seen as an effective tool of stirring tensions between various ethnic groups, and, at the same time, as the efficient mechanism for providing ideological and emotional ("patriotic") background for various nationalist groups.

[78] Myroslav Tataryn, "Russia and Ukraine: Two Models of Religious Liberty and Two Models for Orthodoxy," *Religion, State and Society*, Vol. 29, No.3 (2001):157.
[79] Myroslav Tataryn, "Russia and Ukraine: Two Models of Religious Liberty and Two Models for Orthodoxy," *Religion, State and Society*, Vol. 29, No.3 (2001):158.
[80] Anastasia Mitrofanova, "Political Orthodoxy: The ways of creating of a new national project," *Political Journal* http://www.religare.ru/2_24912.html, Accessed May 12, 2010.

CHAPTER 4. RELATING MEDIA MODELS TO THE POST-SOVIET REALM: GENERAL CHARACTERISTIC OF "NATIONAL-PATRIOTIC" PRESS

Analysing relationship between limitation of freedom of speech and the degree to which it fits into the 'standardized' Western notion of 'democratic' representation of 'free society,' this chapter will examine various "radical" publications that exist in modern Russian Federation, and will illustrate how (if at all and to what extent) they contribute to the skinhead movement in the country. Specifically, analysis of various forms of hate speech will be made, with special attention being paid to both the sources and subjects of the phenomenon. Finally, this chapter will also touch on the context of leading nationalist media sources, and will discuss both rhetorical and 'practical' feedback that they get from the Russian government.

''In their 1963 classic, Siebert, Peterson and Schramm divided the world's media into four models: libertarian, socially responsible, authoritarian and Soviet."[81] Arguing that the Soviet press model required that the media support the Marxist-Leninist view of reality, they presented a solid theoretical background for interpretation of occuring socio-political events in the post-Soviet Russia. The authoritarian model called for a press completely subservient to the state; the libertarian one supported the notion that opinions should be aired freely, while the social responsibility one held that media should work proactively to include all segments of the society in its coverage.[82] Though all of these models have been debated and, oftentimes, criticised for representing 'ideal' situations, as opposed to actual media systems, they still present versatile expalnation for Russia's media-state relations.

While the 'libertarian' model of analysis of media could be seen as the one applied to the societies mostly driven by trends of consumerism, the 'social responsibility' scheme suggests that "media outlets design their news output to support a civil society and discourage anti-social

[81] Sarah Oates, "The Neo-Soviet Model of the Media," *Europe-Asia Studies Inc*., Vol. 59, No.8 (2007): 1280.
[82] F.S. Siebert, *Four Theories of the Press (*Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963), 61.

behavior."[83] To a certain extent, the latter could be seen as the one representing general 'trends' of the Soviet media that, being engrained into mentality of Russian people, serve as the basis for occuring media-situation in Russia. Turing the mass media into the guardians of public welfare,[84] Russian media serves as a tool for broadcasting only desirable viewpoints of the government in power, not questioning but rather *reporting* the occuring situation in the country. At the same time, howerver, the current Russian system of media representation does not fully fit the 'social responsibility' model for, even if the media believe that the government is hiding the information vital to the public interest, most of the post-Soviet journalists, though seeking for 'truth,' oftentimes simply do not make it public.

Unable to compete with leading, national newspapers, the 'radical nationalist' publications such as the newspaper "Zavtra" ("Tomorrow", editor Alexandr Prokhanov) or the "leftist-nationalistic" newspaper "Duel" (editor Jurij Mukhin) are only the few of hundreds of published sources that promote nationalistic or, as they call themselvs, "patriotic" ideas. For "Zavtra," there are more than 100 000 copies being circulated weekly, attracting multiple audience—from communists to nationalists and fascists, followers of various political ideologies. The newspaper "Duel," the second most popular publication of 'leftist nationalist' groups, is being circulated with 12 000 copies (weekly), and though not fully supported by rightist nationalist groups, "it still attracts all kind of audience with its 'traditional' ideas of the post-Soviet nostalgia, dissatisfaction with current goverment, and antagonism toward the 'foreigners.'[85] As analyst and editor of the *SOVA* Analytical Center, Valerij Lebedev, states, "it is impossible to classify the articles of these (and other nationalist newspapers) into a single ideological category; the general 'subject' of their publications is eclectic."[86] On one hand, these newspapers attract the audience with their 'multi-

[83] R. Negrine, *Politics and Mass Media and Britain* (London: Routledge, 1994), 48.
[84] Sarah Oates, "The Neo-Soviet Model of the Media," *Europe-Asia Studies Inc.*, Vol. 59, No.8 (2007): 1281.
[85] Velerij Lebedev, "The Anti-Semitic Press: What Is It?" *SOVA* Analytical Center, http://xeno.sova-center.ru/1ED6E3B/216049A/216260B, Accessed May 17, 2010.
[86] Velerij Lebedev, "The Anti-Semitic Press: What Is It?" *SOVA* Analytical Center, http://xeno.sova-center.ru/1ED6E3B/216049A/216260B, Accessed May 17, 2010.

sided' definition of certain events and socio-political figures. On the other, due to explicitely nationalist, oftentimes offensive rhetoric, the publications cannot effect the course of eletoral process, for instance, or represent public, influential socio-political figures.

All in all, both "Zavtra," "Duel," and other "patriotic" press could be characterized as the ones that, first of all, manipulate with the *feelings* of their audience. Playing with popular concepts such as 'nostalgia for the Soviet past,' creation of an "image of an enemy" ("образ врага"[87]), and of course, highlighting the antisemitic myths of "the jews destroying the glorious Soviet Union, and overall, holding all financial and political power of modern Russia in their hands,"[88] these publications promote the ideas of pseudo-"patriotism," which, in reality, is nothing but one of the ways of expressing racism and pure, agressive nationalism. Does the government of Russian Federation discern the occuring processes? Of course. I would argue, it is *not* interested in deterring it.

Fig. 3 " Смерть Жидам" or "Death to the Jews" is one of the few most pupular anti-semitic expressions used by nationalist Russian mass media (2008)[89]

[87] The "enemy" being defined, first of all, in *social* and only then in national terms.
[88] I. O. Lavrienko, "About Euro and Jews," Right Resistance, № 1(8), (2002): 2.

4.1. Who is the 'audience?'

For most of Russian nationalist publications, aiming to attract wide spectrum of audience, the topic of anti-semitism is not the primary one, of course. The subjects of 'Soviet nostalgia,' antagonism toward the West,' and, of course, the 'anti-Caucasian' and 'anti-American' tendencies are the most 'unifying' themes of Russian "patriotic" publications. Due to the fact that most of the readers of these publications, such as members of the skinhead movement, are *already* nationalists, and support most of the arguments being made, most of materials of the newspapers are not produced to agitate, but to *support* the already existing "temperature of hatred."[90] As the researcher of *SOVA* illustrates, "there are almost no articles of positive character; most of them could be defined as aggressive and xenophobic, primarily anti-Caucasian and anti-Western, and also anti-semitic."[91] "Наше Отечество" ("Our Motherland") and "Новая Система" ("New System", both published in St Petersburg), "Эра России" ("Era of Russia"), "Русские Ведомости" ("Russian Journal"), "Русская Правда" ("Russian Truth," published in Moscow), "Колокол" ("The Bell," published in Vologda), and "Славянин" ("The Slav", published in Samara), all of these newspapers serve as promoters of nationalist ideas in Russian society, and, though funded primarily by private companies,[92] embody prevalent nationalist trends.

Before this chapter proceeds with discussion of media sources that are being used particularily by members of the skinhead movment, the types of hate speech and the subjects of its aggression will be presented in more detail.

The Types of Hate Speech[93]

[90] Velerij Lebedev, "The Anti-Semitic Press: What Is It?" *SOVA* Analytical Center, http://xeno.sova-center.ru/1ED6E3B/216049A/216260B, Accessed May 17, 2010.
[91] Velerij Lebedev, "The Anti-Semitic Press: What Is It?" *SOVA* Analytical Center, http://xeno.sova-center.ru/1ED6E3B/216049A/216260B, Accessed May 17, 2010.
[92] Galina Kozhevnikova, "Language of enmity and the elections: Federal and Regional levels," SOVA Information-Analytical Center (2008): 4, http://xeno.sova-center.ru/29481C8/91C343B, Accessed May 25, 2010
[93] Galina Kozhevnikova, "Language of enmity and the elections: Federal and Regional levels," SOVA Information-Analytical Center (2008): 6, http://xeno.sova-center.ru/29481C8/91C343B, Accessed May 25, 2010

a) *Harsh*

- *Call for violence*
- *Call for discrimination*
- *Veiled call for violence and discrimination*

b) *Medium*

- *Justification of historical cases of violence and discrimination*
- *Publications and speeches which undermine publicly accepted historical cases of violence and discrimination*
- *Confirmation of criminal acts of a certain ethnic group*
- *Accusation of a certain ethnic group in its ethnic or religious criminality*
- *Accusation of a certain ethnic or religious group's negative influence on the society or the state*
- *Accusation of a certain group's attempts to caputure the power*
- *Deny of citizenship*

c) *Soft*

- *Creation of a negative image of a certain ethnic or religious group*
- *Affirmation of inferiority of a certain ethnic or religious group*
- *Affirmation of moral disadvantagese of certain ethnic or religious group*
- *Mentioning of an ethnic or religious group in an insulting context*
- *Citing of openly racist or xenophobic texts about a certain ethnic or religious group*[94]

The following table presents the study made by the *SOVA* research center on types of hate speech most commonly used in modern Russian media.[95]

Absolute Value

Type	Support	Neutral	Cumulatively	Condemnation	Total
Mentioning of ethnic or religious groups in humiliating context	**80**	**31**	**111**	14	**125**
Claims of moral inferiority	**58**	13	**71**	9	**80**
Creation of a negative image of a group	**28**	12	**40**	6	**46**
Claims regarding a groups' criminal nature	**23**	5	**28**	6	**34**
Claims of a group's inferiority	20	4	**24**	5	**29**
Accusation of negative influence	11	4	15	4	19

[94] Galina Kozhevnikova, "Language of enmity and the elections: Federal and Regional levels," SOVA Information-Analytical Center (2008): 6, http://xeno.sova-center.ru/29481C8/91C343B, Accessed May 25, 2010.
[95] Galina Kozhevnikova, "Language of enmity and the elections: Federal and Regional levels," SOVA Information-Analytical Center (2008): 14, http://xeno.sova-center.ru/29481C8/91C343B, Accessed May 25, 2010.

Call for denial of settlement of a certain group in a particular region	9	4	13	1	14
Call for discrimination	2	3	5	8	13
Veiled call for violence and discrimination	3	3	6	6	12
Deny of citizenship	5	4	9	0	9
Claims of religious or ethnic superiority of a certain group	4	2	6	3	9
Call for violence	0	1	1	8	9
Accusation of a group's attempts of territorial expansion	2	2	4	1	5
Claims of historical crimes of a certain group	2	0	2	2	4
Total	**247**	**88**	**335**	**73**	**408**

Table 1: Types of Racist/Hate Speech (2007)[96]

According to the results of the survey, majority of Russian population are against justification of historical cases of violence and discrimination, expressions that put into question commonly accepted historical cases of violence and discrimination, and quoting of openly racist expressions.[97] The second place in the monitoring is taken by 'claims of moral inferiority,' whith the third beloning to 'creation of a negative image' and the forth one being taken by 'claims regarding the group's criminal nature.' According to the conductors of the survey, the following result has been "usual for Russia during past few years."[98] What remains interesting is the fact that this type of racist (hate) speech became extremely popular not only for traditional Russian newspapers such as "The News" ("Известия"), "Your Day" ("Твой День"), or "Komsomol Truth" ("Комсомольская Правда")[99], but also for members of the leading "United Russia" party and, overall, for high officials of the Russian government.

But before we proceed with the discussion of particular cases of hate speech and evaluate the degree to which they contribute to the skinhead movement in Russia, the 'objects' or targets of hate speech should be presented. According to the study which was made by theh *SOVA* center

[96] Galina Kozhevnikova, "Language of enmity and the elections: Federal and Regional levels," SOVA Information-Analytical Center (2008): 15, http://xeno.sova-center.ru/29481C8/91C343B, Accessed May 25, 2010.
[97] Galina Kozhevnikova, "Language of enmity and the elections: Federal and Regional levels," SOVA Information-Analytical Center (2008): 15, http://xeno.sova-center.ru/29481C8/91C343B, Accessed May 25, 2010.
[98] Galina Kozhevnikova, "Language of enmity and the elections: Federal and Regional levels," SOVA Information-Analytical Center (2008): 17, http://xeno.sova-center.ru/29481C8/91C343B, Accessed May 25, 2010.
[99] Galina Kozhevnikova, "Language of enmity and the elections: Federal and Regional levels," SOVA Information-Analytical Center (2008): 10, http://xeno.sova-center.ru/29481C8/91C343B, Accessed May 25, 2010.

on ”nationalism and xehophobic expressions in Russian media,”[100] (2009), ”Caucasians” remain the primary targets of hate speech in Russia. ”Ethnic” or ”general xehophobia”[101] is being ’substituted’ by antagonism to ”newly emerging religious groups,” with the category of ”Western Europeans” being the ’third’ category in the list of the Russian hate speech.

The following table presents the data on negative expressions used in mass media (labeling certain ethnic groups as the ”foreigners”).

Absolute Datum

Object	Support	Neutral	Summarily	Condemnation	Total
Caucasians in general	**28**	8	**36**	8	**44**
General Ethnic Xenophobia	12	8	20	**21**	**41**
New minority religious groups	**21**	9	**30**	2	**32**
Migrants	15	9	**24**	5	**29**
Other Ethnic Categories	18	5	**23**	4	**27**
Western Europeans	16	4	20	4	**24**
Other Peoples of the Caucasus (not the Chechens, Armenians or Azerbaijani)	13	3	16	5	**21**
The Chechens	13	5	18	2	20
Jews	9	4	13	7	20
Muslims	10	6	16	3	19
Tadzhik	4	6	10	5	15
Russians	12	2	14	1	15
Americans	10	1	11	4	15
Peoples of Asia (of former Soviet Republics, except for the mentioned above)	6	8	14		14
Black	4	5	9	3	12
Azerbaijani	8	1	9	2	11
Ukrainians	3	3	6	5	11
Chinese	8	0	8	0	8
Roma	6	2	8	0	8
Armenians	4	0	4	1	5
General Religious Xenophobia	0	0	0	4	4
Arabs (except the Iraqis)	3	1	4	0	4

[100] Galina Kozhevnikova, ”Language of enmity and the elections: Federal and Regional levels,” SOVA Information-Analytical Center (2008): 10, http://xeno.sova-center.ru/29481C8/91C343B, Accessed May 25, 2010.
[101] Galina Kozhevnikova, ”Language of enmity and the elections: Federal and Regional levels,” SOVA Information-Analytical Center (2008): 19, http://xeno.sova-center.ru/29481C8/91C343B, Accessed May 25, 2010.

Other Religious Categories	0	0	0	2	2
Catholics (and Uniates)	1	1	2	0	2
Orthodox	2	0	2	0	2
Total	**226**	**91**	**317**	**88**	**405**

Percentage Correlation

Table 2: Objects of Hate Speech/Racism

Overall, based on the results presented in this table, it could be said that the subjects of hate speech are switching from general claims addressed to specific groups, preferring expressions abouty specific ethnicity. For instance, as with the category of ”general ethnic xenophobia,” this type of ’unclear’ image of an enemy is extremely useful for propagandists of racist groups such as members of the skinhead movement, who, if needed, can ’narrow down’ vague category of ’ethnicity’ into specific object of hatred (as was with the famous ”Georgian case” of 2006)[102], and then, easily switch back to an abstract ”Caucasian” term. (The argument is being illustrated in the following table).[103]

% (general interviewing/years)	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**
Caucasians (overall)	7,54	8,77	11,7	10	14,67	10,9
Other peoples of the Caucasus…	3,61	4,67	13,14[104]	1,82	13,35	5,19
Turks-meskhitines	0,21	0,57	0,49	0,91	0	0
Azerbaijani	2,34	4,86	2,93	2,27	2,86	2,72
Armenians	1,49	2,00	1,95	1,36	1,9	1,23
Chechens	23,14	5,43	28,8	8,64	10,65	4,94
Total of anti-Caucasian statements	**38,33**	**26,3**	**59,01**	**25**	**43,43**	**24,98**

Table 3: Scheme of Generalization

From this table, it becomes clear that those are the ”Chechens” and ”Georgians” (groups that, according to one of the studies made by members of *SOVA* in 2006, ”were are associated

[102] Alexandr Verkhovskij, *The Price of Hatred: Nationalism in Russia and the Opponency to Rasism-based Crimes (Цена Ненависти: Национализм в России и противодействие расистским преступлениям)*, (Moscow: The Analythical Center „Sova,” 2005), 112.

[103] Galina Kozhevnikova, ”Language of enmity and the elections: Federal and Regional levels,” SOVA Information-Analytical Center (2008): 21, http://xeno.sova-center.ru/29481C8/91C343B, Accessed May 25, 2010.

[104] Including the ”Ingush” people, who were studied as a separate group (in 2003) due to the events in Beslan.

with the term 'peoples of the Caucasus' the most"[105]) who are presented in most general, anonymous terms in Russian society. This could be explained by the fact that general attitude toward Chechnya has changed dramatically during the Putin era, now having more positive than negative implications. The negative statements toward the Amernians and Azerbaijani, however, remained stable, with an overall level of racist, anti-Caucasian statements decreasing dramatically during the Duma and President election campaigns.[106]

Overall, "general ethnic xenophobia" has been occupying leading positions of Russian media during past few years. However, neither the quantitative index, nor the co-relation of overall "total indicators" of anti-Caucasian statements and "total indicators of judgment" of such expressions are stable:

Table 4: Dynamics of indicators of the term "General Ethnic Xenophobia"[107]

	2004	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**
In total	2,34	5,72	3,41	20	15,26	10,1
Summarily	1,91	4,64	1,91	12,21	12,38	6,3
Co-relation: Summarily/ Condemnation	68,19/ 31,81	71,67/ 28,33	42,86/ 57, 14	47,73/ 52,27	69,8/ 30,2	48,79/ 51,21

As Galina Kozhevnikova, one of the leaders of the study, states, "this instability of results justifies the assumption about the category of "general ethnic xenophobia"—that it is being used by propagandists and leaders of nationalist movements (such as the skinhead 'group,' for example),[108] in order to manipulate with the categories depending on circumstances and particular ethnicity of targeted groups. Expressions such as "Protection of the Native People" ("Защита

[105] Galina Kozhevnikova, "Language of enmity and the elections: Federal and Regional levels," SOVA Information-Analytical Center, (2008): 21, http://xeno.sova-center.ru/29481C8/91C343B, Accessed May 25, 2010.
[106] Galina Kozhevnikova, "Language of enmity and the elections: Federal and Regional levels," SOVA Information-Analytical Center, (2008): 21, http://xeno.sova-center.ru/29481C8/91C343B, Accessed May 25, 2010.
[107] Galina Kozhevnikova, "Language of enmity and the elections: Federal and Regional levels," SOVA Information-Analytical Center (2008): 21, http://xeno.sova-center.ru/29481C8/91C343B, Accessed May 25, 2010.
[108] Galina Kozhevnikova, "Language of enmity and the elections: Federal and Regional levels," SOVA Information-Analytical Center, (2008): 21, http://xeno.sova-center.ru/29481C8/91C343B, Accessed May 25, 2010.

коренного населения"), or ”Russia for Russians” ("Россия для русских") are only the few slogans that are being commonly used by promoters of racist norms in Russian society. According to the studies mentioned above, generalization of ethnic groups into a single, ’vague’ category of ”others” or ”foreigners” is one of the most effective sources of xenophobic manipulations in Russia, and is being used by both the governmental and private media units.

4.2. Of the Post-Soviet ’Awakening?’—Responses of the Government

Taking into consideration all of the communist, hypotactic past of Eastern Europe, or simply, the constant interference of the party into all aspects of the Soviet society, another question of ’ownership of media,’ “like private ownership of land or business,”[109] comes into place. Despite the fact that, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, new Russian government has gerenally rejected ”elaborate, staged productions from Soviet times,”[110] it became clear that the audience still needed a sense of authority from its leaders—and that the Soviet tradition and ’visual history’ were still the important parts of Russian society. As analyst Schudson would argue, this phenomenon of the post-Soviet realm should not be surprising for, as he says, ”it is impossible to separate ’news’ from culture; what journalists produce and reproduce is not information—if there is such thing; it is what is recongised or accepted as public knowledge given certain political structures and traditions.”[111]

Since indeed, even today, Russians overwhelmingly reject the idea of ’objectivity’ of their mass media,[112] they perceive media as means of a political game where its ’players’ are being ”deployed in the service of their financial and political patrons.”[113] Given the general mediatic

[109] John Dowing, “Internationalizing Media Theory: Transition, Power, Culture. Reflection on Media in Russia, Poland and Hungary,” *SAGE Publications*, (1996): 64.
[110] Sarah Oates, “The Neo-Soviet Model of the Media,” *Europe-Asia Studies Inc*., Vol. 59, No.8 (2007): 1284.
[111] M. Schudson, *The Power of News* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 31.
[112] M. Schudson, *The Power of News* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 32.
[113] Sarah Oates, “The Neo-Soviet Model of the Media,” *Europe-Asia Studies Inc*., Vol. 59, No.8 (2007):1285.

condition of the post-communist Russia—massive public discontent over the economic, social and political instability, or the increasingly restive military, KGB and government hierarchy (the situation specifically relevant to early- and mid 1990s), the primary reaction to such chaos—"stricter control over the media"—could be seen as the 'natural way'[114] of resovling the situation. Although a lot of analysts have initially labelled Russia as the 'developing democracy,' even today it has *not* developed democratic institutions. Rather, as Oates argues, "there is the apparance of democratic institutions in form, including media outlets, elections, parliament and a popularly elected President, but [still] these institutions lack democratic interaction."[115] As famous murder of *Novaya Gazeta* reporter and Chechen war correspondent Anna Politkovskaya in 2006 has proven it, any attempts to challenge the government on key issues such as corruption, bribery or (considerably, the most dangerous one) the progress on war in Chechnya is not only 'not tolerated,' but may also cause the media-reporters their physical health or even lives. As being suggested by a focus-group participant in Ulyanovsk in her comment regarding the current media-situation in Russian Federation, it is getting more and more difficult to separate financial and political interests from media interests in the country.[116] As a result, it can be really arduous to identify the 'moment' when financial aspect of the case is overriding media freedom, and the vice versa.

However, if being compared to the era of 1990s, it could be said that a significant, progressive narrowing of media liberty has occuring after the election of Vladimir Putin (March of 2000). With numerous less high-profile attacks on the media, some scandelous cases such as the forced change in ownership of NTV channel (in 2001), or privatization of almost all of the most popular channels by the state, freedom of media-expression became synonymous to 'loss of a job' or even murder. Moreover, though television remains the dominant outlet of Russian

[114] Here, by the expression 'Russian way" I mean the traditionally harsh, oftentimes coercive means of elimination of any types of opposition or "obstacles" that may emerge on the way of the government in power.
[115] Sarah Oates, "The Neo-Soviet Model of the Media," *Europe-Asia Studies Inc*., Vol. 59, No.8 (2007): 1285.
[116] Sarah Oates, "The Neo-Soviet Model of the Media," *Europe-Asia Studies Inc*., Vol. 59, No.8 (2007): 1285.

society, internet becomes an increasingly popular source of obtaining information. Though, of course, Russian government does not have means of controlling the 'global network,' most of the most popular news web-sources also remain thoroughly 'filtered' and checked by the state. Overall, being underdeveloped in terms of telecommunications infrastructure and personal income of Russian citizens, financial ability of Russians to buy extra media services remains extremely low if being compared to that of the West. Also, both national newspapers and satellite television are often extremely expensive and many people are simply unable to afford this 'luxury of the urban centers.'

Though, officially, majority of the parties of Russian government do not support xenophobic expressions in media, most powerful nationalist parties like Liberal-Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR—Либерально-демократическая партия России (ЛДПР) oftentimes operate using openly racist rhetoric. Officially composed of 300 000 members, the LDPR has its own newspaper called "LDPR" (editor Victor Kulibin), which not only promotes anti-semitic, anti-Caucasian ideas, but also calls for physical eradication of "non-Russians" from the country, using famous expression of Vladimir Zherinovskij'—"what is good for Russians is good for all Russia."[117]

As Sergei Zassorin states in his article "Modern Russian Nationalism on Television and Radio as a Reflection of Political Discourse," "overall, for the Russian radical right, the political solution lies in totalitarian statism. Its programmes stress the protectionist function of the state in the form of legally guaranteed privileges for the Russian majority, ethnically proportional in all government bodies and public offices, and the restoration of an imperial unitary state with its traditional, prerevulutionaly administrative units.[118] Furthermore, as modern civic nationalism has been appropriated by Russian centrist political groups that are now predominantly associated with

[117] I. Ignatiev, "Russian political parties and anti-semitism," *SOVA* Analytical Center, http://xeno.sova-center.ru/1ED6E3B/216049A/2161854, Accessed May 27, 2010.
[118] Sergei Zassorin, "Modern Russian Nationalism on Television and Radio as a Reflection of Political Disourse," *SAGE Publications*, (2007):7.

the United Russia (Единая Россия) party, and also with various smaller parties remaining in the same political spectrum (such as the People's Party (Народная Партия), the Party of Russian Revival (Партия Российского Возрождения—founded by Gennadij Seleznev, the former Chairman of the State Duma), or the Party of Life (Партия Жизни—founded by Sergei Mironov, the chairman of the Council Federation),[119] one should not expect high degree of 'anti-nationalistic' opponency from the Russian government. The concerted efforts of nationalist groups to appeal to public opinion via the mass media are significant facet of the ideological competition[120] which has been taking place in Russian Federation since the collapse of the Soviet Union. It was during the post-Soviet transition that *'the nation of readers has turned into the nation of viewers,'* and, I would argue, is still being caught between two 'enemy camps'—the one of radical nationalists such as Dugin, and that of xenophobic, agressive anti-semits such as Vladimir Zhirinovskij. Within the context of endless Chechen conflict, the threat of new terrorist attacks in Russian cities, and complicated realtions with Former Soviet Union states and suspicions of the West, one might predict the increase of nationalist discourse in the propaganda of various media sources and party blocks, not only the traditionally chauvinist ones.[121] Whether or not Medvedev's government will censor such racist expressions, or nationalist slogans and remarks will continue to increase in Russian radio, television and newspapers remains one of the primary questions yet to be answered in the foreseeable future. Meanwhile, as law-enforcement authorities of the state claim to 'restrain' nationalistic movements in the country, new generations of children and teenagers are being raised up hearing racist, violent rhetoric from television, internet and newspapers. Within this social framework, growth in numbers of the participants of

[119] Sergei Zassorin, "Modern Russian Nationalism on Television and Radio as a Reflection of Political Disourse," *SAGE Publications*, (2007):8.
[120] Sergei Zassorin, "Modern Russian Nationalism on Television and Radio as a Reflection of Political Disourse," *SAGE Publications*, (2007):12.
[121] Sergei Zassorin, "Modern Russian Nationalism on Television and Radio as a Reflection of Political Disourse," *SAGE Publications*, (2007):28.

the skinhead movement, and the intensity and frequency of their hate-crimes, should not be surprising.

CONCLUSIONS

The Skinhead Movement: the 'Mirror' of Socio-Political Flaws of Russian Federation

Since 1990s, the skinhead groups of St Petersburg, Moscow, and other smaller cities of Russian Federation have been trying to overcome their marginal status. Invigorated by powerful neo-fascist organizations such as *The Slavic Union*, newspapers like "Zavtra" or "Duel," or the rhetoric of politicians like Vladimir Zhirinovskij, the skinhead movement has not received adequate attention in the post-Soviet Russia. With the psychology of the so-called "front-generation,"[122] members of the skinhead movement could be portrayed as individuals who see themselves as "warriors who have experienced the heightened sensory awareness of the [imaginary] battlefield and are faced with the prospect of aimless [for them] boredom of civilian life."[123] The 'offsprings' of perestroika, financial and political crisis of the 1990s, the phenomenon of modern skinhead movement has embraced the flaws of socio-political system of the post-Soviet Russian state, in all of its ethical and practical means.

Though, in general terms, the Russian skinhead movement's backlash reaction is as racist and xenophobic as most manifestations of the extreme right in Western Europe and in the USA,[124] the image of a 'Russia's enemy'—of a non-Russian, generally, the representative of the Caucasian, Asian or Jewish ethnic group, "blamed for deliberately ruining the Russian economy through speculation, embezzlement and mafia activities, and for trying to turn Russian into a colony of the West,"[125] is in fact the notably 'Russian' one. Derived from Western, *foreign* philosophy of 1960s-1970s England and the United States, it aims at eradicating all forms of

[122] Marlene Laurelle, *Russian Nationalism and the National Reassertion of Russia* (Routledge, 2009), 113.
[123] Marlene Laurelle, *Russian Nationalism and the National Reassertion of Russia* (Routledge, 2009), 113.
[124] Chris Chulos, *The Fall of an Empire, the Birth of a Nation: National Identities in Russia* (USA: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2000), 129.
[125] Chris Chulos, *The Fall of an Empire, the Birth of a Nation: National Identities in Russia* (USA: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2000), 129.

”foreign presence” in the country. It cultivates ’Russianness’ and, at the same time, serves as an example of Russia’s ’westernisation.’

Despite the fact that, according to the reports of the *SOVA* research center, since year of 2003, considerable positive changes have been made in terms of judicial and law-enforcement authorities’ reponse to the skinhead actions (with general frequency of the skinhead attacks on foreigners decreasing rapidly, and the overall processing of the ’hate-crimes’ court cases being accelerated and brought into public by various media sources),[126] the overall political and social (public) attitude toward racist attacks of the skinhead groups in Russian Federation is far from being ’adequate.’

As one of the primary findings of this project, I would like to argue that it is due to ’cultural specificity’ of Russian Federation—primarily, lack of democratic continuum (as of the deeply engrained socio-political tradition), and, of an equal importance, the prevailing culture of the ’unwritten laws’ strongly determining social behavior that the phenomenon of the skinhead movement remains such an apparent occurence in Russian Federation.

Since, overall, *social*, ’people’s’ definition, interpretation and application of the rule of law has always been different from that of the official (state) one, vital amalgamation of written and practical aspects of justice in ’Slavic’ society has virtually never occurred. Disenchanted by slippages of the Tsars, the communist system, and later on, the Gorbachev’s perestroika reforms, the Russian society has established its own, the so-called ”humane” (”человечный”) form of social directorate—the scheme of a ’personal’ rather than a fully law-obedient governance.

As one of the most prominent Russian philosophers of the 20th century, Nicolai Aleksandrovich Berdyaev, has stated in his work “About Slavery and Freedom of a Human Being,” “Russia is the most anarchistic country in the world. It is the most apolitical nation which

[126] Alexandr Verkhovskij, The *Price of Hatred: Nationalism in Russia and the Opponency to Rasism-based Crimes (Цена Ненависти: Национализм в России и противодействие расистским преступлениям)*, (Moscow: The Analythical Center „Sova,” 2005), 142.

could never arrange its own land."[127] Though not without exaggeration, this statement could be seen as the one reflecting general tendencies of Russian socio-political nature. Though, of course, with 97 national (ethinic) groups living on Russain territory,[128] and thousands of migrants coming to cities like Moscow or St Petersburg every single day it would be naive to assume that all of them represent danger to Russia's unity and 'national identity,' it still appears that "even highly educated and socially advanced groups with different levels of education remain prone to racism and xenophobia."[129] As the results of the polling of Russian fund "Public Opinion" illustrate, "58% of Russian population believe that "the skinheads are real power," while 21% are convinced that "they are useful because they do what the police are incapable of doing."[130] Whether 'true' or not, these statements denote a cogent fact about the Russian society: the future for evolution and radication of 'Western,' democratic principles in modern Russian state remains *open*. As in other societies all over the globe, similar tendencies of economic polarisation, social Darwinism, inequality, speculation, corruption, the organised crime, and the rightist backlash movements have all been, to a certain degree, the 'pre-condition' for process of globalization. Today, for the first time in its history, existing as *a nation-state* and *not* as an empire, the Russian Federation is given a chance to flip the 'imperial' page of its history and to move on to non-violent, amicable means of socio-political and cultural existence. Here, the phenomenon of the skinhead movement is an evident *obstacle*.

[127] Nikolai Berdyaev, *About Slavery and Freedom of a Human Being* («О рабстве и свободе человека»), (AST Publishers, 2004), 12.
[128] Helene Carrere d'Encausse, *The Nationality Question in the Soviet Union and Russia* (Norway: Scandinavian University Press, 1995), 56.
[129] Marlene Laurelle, *Russian Nationalism and the National Reassertion of Russia* (Routledge, 2009), 152.
[130] Nadezhda Kevorkova, "Skinheads in Russia," Gazeta, (2006): 4, http://www.gzt.ru/society/2006/10/26/210007.html, Accessed March 24, 2010.

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Interview: Held in Ukraine, on April 18, 2010, with one of the members of the skinhead movement in Keiv.

Question: If you were asked to define who 'Russian' or 'Ukrainian' is, what would your answer be, and what grounds would you base your opinion on?

Answer: It does not matter…Russian or Ukrainian…This is, first of all, a person who was born in these countries; a person who is ethnically Slavic; the one who speaks the language, who is born into this culture, who has our mentality…

Question: So, what is more important for you—ethnicity (Slavic or not) or knowledge of the culture?

Answer: This comes as one for me. But, if you ask me to distinguish, I would say ethnicity. This is how we distinguish who is 'our' ("nash", "наш") and who is not. It is crucial nowadays to preserve our heritage, our past and present…I believe it should be done, first of all, through preservation of our race.

Question: Can a person be Russian or Ukrainian even if he or she does not speak the language? If he or she has left the country long time ago, for example, but is still ethnically "Slavic"?

Answer: Yes, of course. I just think that these people do not care about our country that much any more. They are changed; they lean toward the West, they are different people, probably.

Question: Thank you. And what do you think are the major problems of Ukrainian or Russian societies nowadays?

Answer: Economy…political system overall. People do not have a say in what is going on. It is as if we exist into two different, parallel worlds. People come, people leave...and they just do not care. Our job is to change this. If the government cannot solve the problem, we will do it ourselves.

Question: And what is the biggest problem?

Answer: There are a lot of them. Lack of job is one of the most serious ones right now. Poverty. There are those who come and steal the opportunity to simply own a piece of bread[131] from ordinary people, from *our* people…And then there are those hundreds of oligarchs...

[131] The expression "to own a piece of bread" is a synonym for earning money.

Question: Who are those who, as you say, "come and steal?"

Answer: Well, the Caucasians, Chinese…Mostly Caucasians in Ukraine…All markets are full of them…They are everywhere. They are already rich and they come to get more and more from us…

Question: As time goes by, do you think integration of these people into the mainstream Ukrainian or Russian society as one of the possible options of solving the problem? (Let us assume that the person is willing to).

Answer: I am confident that this is not the solution. If we have that many problems already, if our own people suffer, we should care about them first. Let those "priezzhie" ("newcomers" or "foreigners") go where they came from…

[Other parts of the discussion were not recorded word by word. The general theme and answers of the interview, though, are presented in the section above].[132]

[132] Original interview was conducted in Russian. Its text will be given in the "glossary/interview" section of this project.

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