The Authentic Village and the Modern City: The Space-Time of Class Identities in Urban Western Ukraine

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Abstract: In Ukraine, the nation is intimately rooted in the rural; however, this same rurality can also be viewed as a hindrance to the future of the nation. The relationship between rural and urban spaces, therefore, complicates notions of Ukrainian identity, and can have lasting repercussions, such as in how Ukrainian teenagers view themselves as members of a wider, global community, and in their views of the opportunities and possible life trajectories available to them as members of the Ukrainian nation. Drawing upon analysis of interviews with 8th and 9th graders in two public schools in L'viv, I argue that the incorporation of the rural as a site for creating and sustaining a Ukrainian identity differs among urban teenagers in western Ukraine due to socioeconomic class. While both working and middle class teenagers view the Ukrainian nation as borne of a rural pastoral, they construct different paradigms of the rural and its relationship to the urban spaces in which they live. Those of the middle class see rural spaces as "lost in time," places that have been unaffected by the rest of modern society. In contrast, the working class views rural spaces and the people that inhabit them, as valuable in sustaining authentic Ukrainian culture, which they see as threatened by the anonymity of modern urban life.

Keywords: teenagers, socioeconomic class, rural places, identity, Ukraine

Introduction

With increasing migration, the divisions between rural and urban spaces are becoming both more pronounced and more ambiguous, complicating territorial bases of the nation-state. City-dwellers separated by huge distances find they often have more in common with each other than those living in nearby rural areas. At the same time, migration brings many rural residents to the city, where they assimilate to and transform the existing urban landscape, as seen in the recent mass movements of villagers into the major cities in Vietnam, China, and India.

In Ukraine, the nation is intimately rooted in the rural, however, this same rurality can also be viewed as a hindrance to the future of the nation. On the one hand, rural places are nostalgically seen as where the Ukrainian nation began, and where the language and culture is most authentic. However, the emerging middle class in Ukrainian is striving to become equal members in the global community, something they view as hindered by an obsolete, rural-based worldview that denies their claims of a cosmopolitan Ukrainian identity. The relationship between rural and urban spaces, therefore, complicates notions of Ukrainian identity, and can have lasting repercussions, such as in how Ukrainian teenagers view themselves as members of a wider, global community, and in their views of the opportunities and possible life trajectories available to them as members of the Ukrainian nation.

Western Ukrainian teenagers' perceptions of rural and urban places include notions of temporality that are associated with each kind of space and the inhabitants of each space. Competing discourses of the Ukrainian nation can be better understood by examining how debates over the role of the village reflect underlying notions of temporal and spatial meaning, which help shape how young people come to define who they are and who they hope to become. I propose that the incorporation of the rural as a site for creating and sustaining a Ukrainian

identity differs among urban teenagers in western Ukraine due to socioeconomic class. While both working and middle class teenagers view the Ukrainian nation as borne of a rural pastoral, they construct different paradigms of the rural and its relationship to the urban spaces in which they live. Those of the middle class see rural spaces as "lost in time," places that have been unaffected by the rest of modern society. In contrast, the working class views rural spaces and the people that inhabit them, as valuable in sustaining authentic Ukrainian culture, which they see as threatened by the anonymity of modern urban life.

I apply a chronotopic lens of analysis to show how these different paradigms of the rural and urban are connected to different understandings of Ukrainian identity, history, and the aspirations of the Ukrainian nation. Bringing together literature on nation-building and the role of place in national identity, I first present the dichotomy of the rural and the urban in representations of the nation in western Ukraine. After discussing what these urban teenagers learn about village life at school and at home, I present and analyze their views about rural people and places.

Place and Identity

Nations are often defined in relation to the geographic territories they inhabit or are believed to have a right to inhabit; territory is a central characteristic in the imagining of the nation (Anderson 1991 [1983]; Armstrong 1982; Barth 1969; Gellner 1983) and one's membership within it. Globalization, however, challenges the territoriality of the nation-state as migration, the internet, and other transnational movements allow communities to span across physical spaces. Post-national studies often focus on reinterpretations of place as a basis for state authority (Appadurai 1996; Benhabib 2001). Recent movements towards increasing state regulation–such as restricting the flow of information in China, French policies that result in high unemployment among Afro-French youth, Germany's denial of citizenship to Turkish Muslims, and ongoing territorial conflicts between ethnic groups—challenge the primacy of territorialization (Soysal 1994; Ong 1999).Though membership within a nation can be more global and virtual due to various forms of communication, the idea of the homeland remains important for both diaspora groups and those living in the home country.

People, and youth in particular, use place as an additional characteristic of identity, situating themselves in relation to others by drawing upon notions of place at different levels of meaning (cf. Dimitriadis 2001; Ferguson 1999; Low 2003; Rodman 2003). For example, scholars have shown how people from the former East Germany define their identities through their current relations with the unified German state (Davidson 2007); and how Uzbekis view their level of empowerment in the economic system as linked to their physical location in urban or rural areas (Liu 2005). In the postsocialist world, shifts in political borders have led to reexaminations of one's own place. For many this includes a growing feeling of living in a liminal space that is economically "stuck" while neighboring places continue to move towards prosperity. Such sentiments have been found among those living along both the European Union-Ukrainian border (Blank 2004, Dickinson 1999) and along the eastern Ukrainian-Russian border (Zhurzhenko 2010). For others living in rural border regions, life is not only frozen, but is also so lacking that it is, in essence, "empty" due migration elsewhere (Dzenovska 2011). Young people are not immune to the role that public discourses about place can have on their social identities, as "[their] narratives of identity often reflect public narratives which construct hierarchies of places" (Vanderbeck and Dunkley 2003: 242). In Poland, young people often describe

themselves as located "between" places, recirculating discourses of a West-East dichotomy within which Poles are no longer "East" but not yet "West" enough (Galbraith 2004).

Much of the literature on place describes a type of "socially valued" modern urban and the stigmatized historic "rustic," where "the urban-identified can confidently assume the cultural value of their situation while the rural-identified must struggle to gain recognition" (Creed and Ching 1997: 4) although "almost any inhabited place can be experienced as either rural or urban" (13). The link between the urban and social progress often leads rural areas to be seen as "backward" and, therefore, unimportant. Gerald Creed and Barbara Ching make a claim for the persistence of rural identifications as a form of resistance to social and economic inequalities; at the same time they argue that these rural identifications can also work to reaffirm the rustic's lower position in society. Valuing the rural to cope with the increasing gap between socioeconomic classes may also be occurring among the working class in western Ukraine, as well as other parts of the postsocialist world. The increasingly different experiences afforded by socioeconomic class result in competing identities of Ukrainian-ness, identities linked to spatiotemporal tropes of the urban and the rural, which are used to mark a variety of differences in individuals' broader social positions, including those that distinguish between members of the same peer group.

Working Class and Middle Class Teenagers in L'viv

The emergence of a middle class in places like Ukraine is relatively recent. It has been argued that this class looks towards western, primarily American, images of middle class life—such as home ownership, the two-car household, and ownership of the latest array of technological gadgets—as something to achieve and emulate (Patico 2005, 2008). While I went to Ukraine to examine issues of language, I found that socioeconomic class identities are under transition in Ukraine. Many people, including the teenagers and teachers I spoke with, still held to the idea that "everyone is equal" even when classed-based differences were evident.

I conducted my research with eighth and ninth graders in three homeroom classes at two secondary schools in the city of L'viv, an urban center of 700,000 about forty-five miles from the Polish border. Schools are significant sites for observing nation-building efforts, from the textbooks used (Korostelina 2010; Popson 2001) to the ways in which larger political events, such as the 2004 Orange Revolution, are experienced at the level of the everyday by the nation's youngest generation (Fournier 2007).

Alhough the young people did not explicitly express class identities, I defined students based on the characteristics of their school, as well as on parental characteristics. The schools were selected as representatives of working class and middle class neighborhood public schools, which I have named Taras Shevchenko Secondary School[1] and Ivan Franko Secondary School[2], respectively. School characteristics included administration-identified student and family demographics, the location and history of the neighborhood, and the types of businesses, transportation, architectural, and other visible indicators of neighborhood wealth. The socioeconomic class of each student was determined based on a demographic survey of parental educational achievement, current employment, and residency and travel histories, as well as later observations of prestige items such as a family car, home internet, or brand-name school clothes, or experiences like family vacations to foreign countries.

The data I draw upon here is taken from individual and group interviews with teenage girls about "the village," their impressions of rural places, and their plans for the future when

they touch on urban and rural dichotomies; interviews with parents and teachers on similar issues; observations of rural images at both schools; and public discourses about and representations of rural life in Ukraine. Lastly, my analysis of this data includes discourse analysis of the interviews, revealing the identities that emerge within these interactions.

Rural-Urban Dichotomy in Western Ukraine

The Ukrainian nation is viewed as essentially pastoral, with many Ukrainians believing that the soul of the nation and its people reside within the hospitality and industriousness represented in images of traditional rural life. Since independence, the government has worked to define itself within this framework of the nation-state while simultaneously making inclusive reforms in order to become accepted by the multiethnic states in the west. Like other former socialist regions (Galbraith 2004; Verdery 1996) the Ukrainian government attempts to walk the line between promoting the Ukrainian nation and its language and protecting the rights of minority nations within its territory.[3] The aim is to become authentically Ukrainian—basing authority in the Ukrainian language and culture—without becoming the oppressors of other minorities who suffered along with Ukrainians under foreign rule.

If the state is to be built upon one nation, what should that nation look like? Language is an often debated requirement of Ukrainian identity (Arel 1995; Bilaniuk 2005; Shulman 2001), one that is regionally defined. In both the villages and cities in western regions of the country, it is believed that any ethnic Ukrainian should be able to speak Ukrainian regardless of education, social class, or residence. However, in eastern regions, especially in those cities where Russian is the norm, few ethnic Ukrainians speak the language and those who do are often from the poorer, surrounding rural villages. Though Ukrainians in the eastern regions admit that it would be nice to speak their "mother tongue" (*ridna mova*),[4] the language's association with an uneducated, provincial rustic does little to motivate them to actually do so.[5] In western regions of Ukraine, where speaking Ukrainian is an essential part of holding the ethnic identity, "the village" remains a valued image as the idyllic birthplace of the nation and its language. What is in contention, however, is whether rural spaces continue to be where "the soul of the nation" resides and whether the village is still relevant to the imagining of the modern Ukrainian nation. I suggest that the current ambiguity over how to "be Ukrainian" involves competing notions of authenticity and anonymity (Woolard 2008) that map onto chronotopes of "the village."

Rural Life

When Ukrainian teenagers talk about rural places, they either speak of places in the countryside where the wealthy have summer homes (*dachy*) or, much more frequently, the remote places where year-round residents live (*khaty*), raise chickens, plant and harvest crops, and sometimes sell their excess milk, eggs, and produce at local markets.

A drive on any highway spanning the countryside that lies between cities can reveal the typical Ukrainian village. Among the vast underdeveloped fields elderly women tend plants, slicing through weeds with a hand scythe. To passersby, they will sell fresh milk, unpasteurized and still warm from the cow, in reused two-liter bottles. At times, cows graze along the roadside and a local farmer steers his horse-driven cart down the road, its original wooden wheels having been replaced with car tires. The number of buildings in the village is few, and it is often difficult to determine which are still being used due to a general aura of agelessness. While there is

transportation out of the village, usually by train or bus, only local residents know their schedules.

The ebb and flow of life in rural areas is dependent upon long-scaled events, such as the rising and setting of the sun and the seasonal farming chores, rather than on any specific time defined by the hands of a watch or the date on a calendar. Life is quiet, simple, and generally predicable. Few people live year-round in villages, especially in those rural communities composed primarily of summer vacation homes. Those whose sole residence is the village come to resemble the village itself: together they grow weathered along with the village's roads and buildings. Their clothing may be store-bought, but much of their life is tied to their homesteads: they raise chickens for eggs and meat, cows for milk and cheese; they grow potatoes, dill, carrots, buckwheat, apples and other staples, primarily for consumption but also as a source of income when cash is needed.

Similar to those in rural Hungary (Lampland 1995), village homes in Ukraine have a distinct style that display both a local village identity and the economic resources of their owners. Their gingerbread house trim, which drips from rooftop eaves, door jams, and window frames, along with the tole painted designs on both the interior and exterior walls, are more reminiscent of the 18th and 19th century buildings in Ukraine's outdoor folklore museums than their contemporaries on the outskirts of cities. No matter how small the community, every village has at least one public building, usually a white-washed, metal-domed church situated on the highest hill so that it can be seen from anywhere in the village.

Despite its natural beauty, rural areas in Ukraine are home to a number of social problems, just like rural areas elsewhere. Fueled by rampant unemployment and limited educational opportunities, alcoholism, poverty, and domestic violence abound. As the population of many rural communities dwindles, these problems worsen, leading local schools to close and consolidate with neighboring communities as there are fewer and fewer children to attend them. Teachers described village students as better behaved and more dedicated than their urban peers. However, these children have fewer opportunities for bettering their lives through schooling. They are restricted by the few resources available at their schools as well as by seasonal farming obligations. When they reach adulthood, those who can leave, do.

For those villagers who move to the city, like the majority of the parents of students at Taras Shevchenko, the village retains a prominent place in their lives. They return to the village to celebrate family events—births, deaths, weddings, and occasionally for the birthdays of village relatives—and those holidays, religious or national, that are traditionally spent with one's family, such as Christmas and Mid-Summer's eve (Ivan Kupalo). These events usually last more than a day, and include dancing, singing, food, and drink. In addition, many children are sent back to the village during the summer where they spend their time exploring the countryside and attending village dance clubs—town halls transformed by disco lights and pop music, and are the sole form of entertainment outside of summer festivals.

These trips work to maintain connections between urban and rural kin, and for urbanites to fulfill familial obligations en masse since they are unable to do so on a daily basis. Villagers provide housing, food, and entertainment while their urban relatives contribute their labor (helping with the planting and harvesting), with their finances (paying for some celebration expenses), and give gifts that are expensive and/or difficult for their rural kin to acquire. However, after urban relatives have lived in the city for a few decades and rural relatives pass away, these connections and obligations lessen. Urbanites' relationship to rural areas changes

once contact between them has been broken, transforming the rural from a place of family connections to one of summer *dachy* and an alternative to vacationing along the Black Sea.

Media Images of the Rural

Rural Ukrainian life is depicted in both Ukrainian and, more often, in Russian mass media. The Ukrainian villager ubiquitous in the Russian comedy is a drunkard, uneducated, and coarse; as the jester character, he vacillates between the role as the unsuccessful and unseemly schemer, and that of the dim-witted yet sympathetic oaf. In both roles, his speech is a marked vernacular which contributes to his hilarity. The traits of village characters exaggerate the perceived differences between rural and urban spaces, framing rural people and the places they inhabit as inferior and deficient and, therefore, the appropriate butt of jokes.

The village is presented as deficient in the news as well. As newscasts are often centered on sensational events, the village is often the site of a lack of jobs, a lack of education, and a lack of modern conveniences and sensibilities. It is a place where men are alcoholics, young women are single mothers or marry in their teens, and people are so poor and politically naive that they sell their votes to put food on their tables. When more positive stories are shown from rural places, they include an element of the strange such as the birth of a two-headed calf, a living giant who has trouble finding shoes that fit his enormous feet, or a fluff piece on the home village of a Ukrainian-American astronaut or other famous figure. On the other hand, there exists an idyllic pastoral from which the Ukrainian nation is said to have arisen.

Many films of Soviet and post-Soviet Ukrainian cinema idealize rural life such as *Zemlja* ("Earth," 1930) and *Ivan* (1932) by Oleksandr Dovzhenko; *Tini zabutykh predkiv* ("Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors," 1965) by Sergei Parajanov; *Annychka* (1968) and *Propala hramota* ("The Lost Letter," 1972) by Borys Ivchenko; *Neskorenyj* ("The Undefeated," 2000) by Oles Yanchuk; and *Mamay* (2003) by Oles Sanin. The villages in these films are filled with radiant, hardworking, and honest people often threatened by industrialization, warfare, or the abuse of power held by petty bureaucrats. The daily struggles of family life in the village are also central to Ukrainian epics (Kononenko 1990) such as the story of the Cossack warrior, *Taras Bul'ba*. While there are conflicts between villagers and villagers suffer despair and death, their innate faith in God, the land, and their community helps them endure these hardships. Repeated viewings of these films and retellings of these tales reinforce the perception that Ukrainians are, at heart, rural people who have learned to survive invasion and oppression because of the tenacity passed down to them from earlier, village-based generations.

The Rural at School

Rural images that are linked to the nation are also prevalent at school, even at public schools in a large urban city such as L'viv. However, the ways in which village life is presented to students is related to how these young people perceive the value and role of the rural in their daily lives.

At the working class secondary school, Taras Shevchenko, the village is both the glorified birthplace of the Ukrainian nation and the place where Ukrainian values and traditions are reproduced from generation to generation. In both explicit and implicit ways, the students at Taras Shevchenko are shown a rural that is located in a distant, timeless past as well as in the living present.

Mrs. Stadnyk, the homeroom teacher of the class I observed and one of the school's Ukrainian language and literature teachers, had several depictions of idyllic rural life in her classroom. On the walls there are four paintings, one for each season of the year, which depict the typical activities that occur in villages, including mid-winter celebrations and the sowing and reaping of wheat. The stylized villagers are shown wearing traditional Ukrainian shirts, white with red and black cross-stitching, tall black boots, with thin-mustached men and women with flowers in their braided hair. In the hallway outside of her classroom, the school has a mini-museum to the "Shakespeare" of Ukrainian literature, Taras Shevchenko, a former serf who became an artist and poet with the help of a benefactor.

This wing of the school has framed copies of Shevchenko's drawings hanging on the walls, and two long, enclosed cases holding copies of his poetry and other writings, a photograph of students from the school standing beside Shevchenko's tombstone, and a small container holding dirt gathered from his resting place. Covering the entire wall at the end of the hallway is a mural, which was painted by a local artist at the request of the school. Sitting on a hillside overlooking wide green pastures and a slow-moving river is Shevchenko. He holds open a book, presumably reading aloud or teaching the group of villagers that surround him, each dressed in traditional Ukrainian clothing. Rather than depicting Shevchenko in the typical dress of a 19th century educated urbanite, he is shown wearing long white robes with a mandarin collar which make him seen modern (in cut of clothing) as well as rural (in simplicity and color of clothing).

There are many other images that hark to an idealized rural past at Mrs. Stadnyk's school. In the main hallway that leads from the school's entrance to the two wings where the classrooms are located, another hand-painted mural spans the length of the corridor. This monumental mural depicts the national hymn, a description of the Ukrainian flag, the quotations surrounded by a variety of symbols of Ukrainian culture. Among them are elaborately decorated eggs that also form rolling hills, and a border designed to resemble traditional cross-stitching.

On holidays and other important days, students are asked to wear their cross-stitched shirts to school to mark the importance of the occasion. This happens at several times throughout the year, such as on the first day of school, when Mrs. Stadnyk's students presented their Ukrainian literature and history reports to the other classes in their grade, and when they participated in a school-wide assembly on the dangers of drugs and the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

In a tour during my first day at Taras Shevchenko, the school's principal pointed out these images and symbols of traditional Ukrainian culture and claimed that their presence was aimed at instilling in students a sense of pride for their nation and country. The principal asserted that, although they may not notice these images, the daily exposure to them—of walking by them, standing in the hallways near them during breaks or while waiting for classes to begin—gave students the opportunity, however brief, to stop and look at them, and to ponder their meaning within the school environment.

Taras Shevchenko also has a special club, the Traditional Ukrainian Cooking Club, whose members are allowed to miss lessons for special occasions. On one fall day, the girls in this club were asked to demonstrate the preparation of *varenyky*, traditional Ukrainian dumplings stuffed with savory or sweet fillings, to a group of visiting foreign educators. This event was framed as one way in which the school was actively working to prevent the loss of traditional, rural-based Ukrainian culture.

The girls all wore matching head scarves and aprons, both printed with cross-stitched patterns but in non-traditional colors of pink and purple. A supervising teacher demonstrated, to

the room full of visitors and the other students who were allowed to attend the event, how *varenyky* should be shaped—emphasizing how past generations were able to do this in their hands and without the rolling pins and tables the girls were using—, what kinds of fillings were appropriate and for which course of a meal, and which sauces should be served along with each type of filled *varenyky*. As the girls shaped the dumplings, the teacher explained how mothers were no longer making *varenyky* by hand. She explained that they did not have the time for such a labor-intensive meal, so, unfortunately, they were serving their families inferior frozen ones, if they served them at all. The teacher asserted that these girls, through the Cooking Club, were learning how to prepare traditional Ukrainian dishes that their mothers did not know to, or did not have the time to, teach them on their own. By learning how to cook *varenyky*, *pilmeny*, *hlubsi*, and other dishes, these girls would be preserving an essential part of their Ukrainian identity.

In these ways, rural places come to be associated with a kind of purity that spans different temporalities. For the working class teenagers at Taras Shevchenko, the historic village is the origin of the nation and its language; contemporary rural spaces retain this quality, their villagers being "truer" Ukrainians because of their upholding traditional practices and values; they have not forgotten how to make *varenyky* and their lives are intimately tied to the land. By placing a past rural alongside more contemporary milieu, the school creates an expectation that the traditions and values of rural life should be remembered, upheld, and incorporated into its students' lives, and, ideally, become a part of their identities. Valuing the village, however, may also work to help the working class school community to cope with growing socioeconomic class disparities between their class and that of the emerging middle class.

In contrast, extending images and symbols of traditional Ukrainian life into students' daily lives does not occur at Ivan Franko, the middle class secondary school located in a historically intellectual neighborhood and minutes from the city center. Here, rural places are only linked to the founding of the nation and have little bearing on students' lives on any regular basis. While the school is over 150 years old, much older than Taras Shevchenko, the building and school curriculum have adapted over time, currently highlighting the political independence of the nation-state over the beginnings of the nation itself. First, the artwork adorning the walls at Ivan Franko suggests a Soviet aesthetic. One three-dimensional piece, its colors faded from time, depicts the process of evolution and includes images of stars, dinosaurs, and various flora and fauna. On the outside of the building, by the main doors, is a large glass mosaic that forms a column of abstract flowers. In the central hallway, the Declarations of Independence of 1918 and 1991 are painted on the wall in a Soviet artistic style. Other decorations throughout the school are student-made, such as the class art projects having in the main hallway, and the school-sanctioned graffiti wall, dedicated to the city's 750th anniversary, which shows various depictions of L'viv, drawings of the city's famous lions, and the skyline of the city center as viewed from its scenic viewpoint atop the hill at High Castle.

The rural is most evident on two occasions, both of which are ritually important at most schools in L'viv. On the first day of school, held on September 1st every year, regardless of whether the day falls on a weekday or on the weekend, entering fifth graders are marched from their former primary school to Ivan Franko, their new school. All of the fifth graders are expected to wear either uniforms or a cross-stitched shirt and dark pants and skirts; those older students who are selected to make speeches, lead the fifth graders, or otherwise play a part in the ceremony also wear cross-stitched shirts to mark the event as a celebration of the Ukrainian nation. The second annual event is the Christmas pageant, when every class performs their

variation of the same play, in costume and at times with singing. The play explains the conversion of the Slavs to Christianity, and involves a foreign king with his knights, the local ruling Cossack tribes, and local (yet exotic and untrustworthy) gypsy and Jewish characters.

Through visual representations, artwork, and special events at their school, teenagers of both the working and middle classes are presented with a view of the rural that is directly connected to a distant past where the Ukrainian nation emerged. However, working class schools like Taras Shevchenko can also actively portray rural spaces as alive and contemporary, reinforcing the value of many working class families' continued direct experiences with villagers and village life, as will be discussed in the next section. For their middle class peers, however, the village is only depicted as a place of history; rural places should only be drawn upon when celebrating the creation of the nation, but not in envisioning its future. Not only do the media and educational institutions affect young people's understandings of the rural, but so do their own experiences of these places and those who reside there.

Family Experiences of the Rural

The emphasis on the Ukrainian nation's rural character is also linked to the familial connections and practices that teenagers of different socioeconomic classes learn from and experience with their families. Many Ukrainians of both the working and middle class continue to visit rural areas even after having moved to the city, visiting familial villages a few times a year for religious and national holidays (Wanner 1998), such as Christmas, Easter, and Mid-Summer's eve. However, they have very different reasons for returning to the village. While the working class returns for a variety of benefits, for the middle class, the journey back to the village is often seen as an unwanted, and therefore sporadic, obligation.

For the working class, the rural is seen as a simpler, safer and peaceful community, similar to the British imagining of the countryside as a rural idyll (Valentine 1997). These families regularly spend time in the village helping their relatives with the farm work, sending children to live in the village with their grandparents during the summer. Their visits vary by season and are dependent upon the weather and the chores that need to be done; they make fewer visits in the winter and more frequent ones in the spring and summer during the peak planting and harvesting months.

The majority of working class parents in Mrs. Stadnyk's class were born in a village and moved to the city as young adults for schooling or work, getting married and starting their own families there. In the following excerpt, some working class girls explain how their families' migration to the city was the result of the poor conditions of village life under the Soviet system.

EAP: Why don't they live in the village now?
Katja: It just that wasn't that good then.
Larysa: The conditions.
Katja: It's possible to live there in the village now. Now they're starting some kinds; it's possible.First, the school here was better to learn at then, It was for schooling, well, and later on, like, they started working.
Olha: Maybe there was work in the city, but there wasn't any in the village.
Alina: They have work in the village, but there's a lot here in L'viv.
Larysa: But you need to live.
Katja: Yeah, yeah and there was just more. They gave out housing then. The

government gave out housing.

Larysa: They stood in line.

Katja: Yeah, then they gave us housing here, and already, like, my Mom had already been born. Then my Mom came here, and, well, I was born in L'viv.

Larysa: Me too.

Alina: And it's the same with me too. The village is a village. It's completely different there.

Katja: I'm really sorry that I wasn't born in the village, it's a shame.

These girls describe rural areas as no longer deprived, yet they once were at one point in the past. They frame the village as a place that had few opportunities when their parents were young and before the girls themselves had been born. Their parents had "need[ed] to live" and, as "the government gave out housing" in the city in an effort to spur urban resettlement and industrialization, it was logical that they would leave the village. In the intervening years, however, life in the village has improved, so much so that girls like Katja feel a sense of nostalgia for a village childhood they did not have. Katja holds some regret that her parents had to move for better opportunities; it was the right choice for them and their future families.

Working class teens like Katja also tend to visit familial villages more often than their middle-class peers and, as a consequence, have more exposure to, and positive experiences of, village life. Many of their families are expected to contribute their time and labor to their village relatives who are often the teens' grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. This dependence, however, goes both ways. Due to the continuing economic instabilities, working class families are also dependent upon the village plots they help sow and reap. By helping their poorer rural relatives, they are also entitled to the fruits, vegetables, eggs, and dairy products produced on the family farm. Rather than spend money on these goods in the city market, they harvest their "free food" when the crops are ready.

While these working class urban teenagers, the children of rural-raised parents, do not fully embrace a rural identification, they seem to challenge the urban-rural hierarchy. By presenting certain characteristics of rural spaces as superior to urban spaces—such as its clean air, fresh produce, and friendly and caring people—these teenagers construct a culturally valued rustic that is difficult to imagine (cf. Creed and Ching 1997). These teenagers value a past that has persisted into the present; the traditions of village life have adapted over time, yet at their cores they have remain unchanged. These young people construct identities that are at once contemporary and traditional, and are lived within both rural and urban spaces. Villages are places where one learns how to be authentically Ukrainian, as they are spaces that are imbued with cultural knowledge and traditional values.

The Wisdom of the Rural

Keith Basso (1996) examines how specific places can become concrete sites of cultural knowledge. Among the Western Apache, the act of hearing a place's name conjures up an image of the physical place, the narrative associated with that particular place, and the lesson to be learned from the actions of the protagonist in the narrative. By speaking its name, a place is transformed into a site of an historical event and a permanent reminder of the event on the

landscape for those who know its story. For the Apache, places can convey social lessons and link the past, present, and future.

Few perceive place in the same way as the Apache, however, places can become sites of cultural knowledge when national identities are at play. While rural areas are widely-known to be places with high rates of unemployment, alcoholism, and poverty, western Ukrainian teenagers also see them as spaces of authentic Ukrainian values free from the insecurities and facelessness of the city. Katja, the only child of a village-born, working class family, explains one of the reasons she likes her familial village.

> **Katja:** You can dress in normal clothes, for example, clothing with some little stain or that went out of style. If you go to the vegetable garden or the forest, then it doesn't make a difference how you're dressed, everyone looks at your character, *like* if a person has a good character, she'll have a lot of friends...

For Katja, rural people are not focused on judging people based on superficial details, such as the cleanliness or style of a person's clothing, details that city people over-emphasize. Instead these villagers seek to know a person's "character," which Katja claims can be determined, for instance, by the number of friends a person has. Gill Valentine's (1997) interviews with village parents in the English countryside make similar claims about the values and practices of villagers. These English parents claim that the rural way of living can teach children to be less concerned with fashion and other markers of social class, which consume the lives of many urban youth.

Katja and her friends, whose village-born parents moved to L'viv as young adults in search of an education and/or employment, also enjoy the relative freedom they experience when they are visiting their familial villages.

> **Larysa:** I like that I can hang out all day long, maybe.
> **Alina:** In the morning, you can go on your own.
> **Larysa:** And be on your own until dinner.
> **Alina:** My friends are there, more well-mannered ones. People a lot more well-mannered, but here
> **Katja:** Yeah, there are a lot of more well-mannered people.
> **Alina:** More cultured ones.
> **Katja:** There are more people, you know, friendlier ones. Like if a misfortune comes to someone, every time they help out.
> **Alina:** They're here, but
> **Katja:** There are few here. There's also a lot of good people, but you don't often find those like there. Everyone on the village, everyone knows that in good time, they can help you. Primarily, it's good to relax there.

Larysa, Alina, and Katja see the village as a place of freedom and autonomy that does not exist in the city. In the village, they can "hang out all day and all night", "do want [they] want"; it is "so much easier" to experience this kind of freedom in the village. While parents restrict their movements when they are in L'viv, requiring details about where, when, and with whom they spend their free time, in the village these restrictions are temporarily lifted. The village is a safe

community filled with known people who are friendly and helpful, things one cannot find in the uncaring, anonymous city.

In her description of villagers, Katja includes a certain understanding of community associated with these rural places. People there are "good" because they look after one another, help out others in need, and they are friendlier than those who live in the city. People are known to each other and so they are accountable to others. In her father's familial village Solja, their classmate, says she is known as "Ivan's daughter;" while all of the villagers may not know her name, they all recognize her face. The anonymity of the city does not exist in the village.

In the village, a person can be seen as a unique individual who is known by others and has a place in the local community. Another benefit of rural life is the ability to live off of the land, and not need to rely on a steady cash flow. In the following excerpt, Katja and her friends discuss how the village has "everything", especially for those who are financially strapped. Katja claims that money is a necessity of life in the city, but "everything's there in the village" since people can grow a variety of foods in their rural fields without the need for hard currency.

> **Katja:** ...Look, here you have to go to the outdoor market to buy eggs
> **Larysa:** You have to buy milk here.
> **Alina:** But there, you know, it's fresh, warm
> ((The girls repeat "fresh" several times, along with variations of "yum"))
> **Alina:** It's really good to have
> **Katja:** More on your own. It's really *great* in the summer. You don't need to go to the market to buy *klubni ku*. Whoever has *klubni ku*, they go to the garden on their own, pick it and eat it
> **Alina:** Or cherries, or apples
> **Katja:** Apples, buckwheat. Everything's there in the village, but here, you need to buy it. Whoever doesn't have money can't live here, but they can live in the village.
> **Alina:** You know, there's *potatoes*
> ((Girls repeat rural dialect variations and standard form of "potatoes"))
> ((laughter))
> **Katja:** *In short,* it's *great* to live in the village.
> **Larysa:** For me too
> **Alina:** For me too
> **Katja:** It's more beneficial to live there...

Katja and her friends describe the village as a place where all of the kinds of food people need can be grown or raised on one's own land, without the use of money. For them, this consists of "everything" that a person needs to live. However, there is no mention of the other necessities of life which cannot simply be grown; products that require processing or manufacturing, such as fabric for clothing or shoes, are absent. In a way, the world of the village is presented in contrast to the city along lines of bare subsistence level living. The "great"ness of the village is most significant to those people who struggle to feed themselves and the modern necessities of the city are luxuries when one can barely stave-off daily hunger.

The underlying image here is of desperation, a level of poverty that is satiated by the food grown in rural fields, which would be difficult to reproduce in the city. These working class teenagers continue to insist that rural areas are "great," not only because these places can provide

for people faced with such poverty. Rather, in their view, a person has more freedom and control over her fate than those living in urban places. In the village, people are "more on their own," able to work as much or as little as they want, and reap the products of their labor rather than be reliant on external factors such as store prices. This kind of "freedom to do" as one wishes, however, is not seen as a "freedom from" local obligations. In other words, for the working class, rural spaces give people freedoms that go beyond those found in urban spaces—such as the ability to grow one's own food and set one's own work day—without eroding people's responsibilities towards other people, like helping those in need.

The 19th Century Village in a 21st Century Ukraine

In contrast to those of the working class, middle class families in L'viv are more likely to have resided in the city for multiple generations.[6] They are not dependent on the goods grown on familial farmlands to make ends meet. Instead, their financial resources make it easier for them to buy their groceries at the farmers' markets around the city, or at one of the European supermarkets. If they spend time in rural areas, it is mostly in a non-familial "vacation village" filled with summer homes and few yearlong residents.

Unlike Katja and her working class friends, middle class teenagers do not view rural spaces and people as having a superior character to those living in cities. For them, the village is an important part of their identity, albeit in name more than in practice. Though a Ukrainian should be, if not needs to be, linked to a rural place, this does not mean that a person needs to ever visit this place, let alone retain village connections. At Ivan Franko, a teacher in her early 30s lamented the fact that she did not have a village to travel to since her family had lived in the city for several generations. Echoing her teacher, Ljuba made a point to emphasis her link to a village.

> **Ljuba:** In general, I have a village but, in general, I don't remember where it is or when I was there the last time. I had a grandmother—she's not alive now—in Volyns'ka oblast, in the city of XX. It's not really a village but it's not in the center of town. Mostly, I spent very little time there, three weeks, sometimes two.

For Ljuba, it is important to trace herself back to a village, or as close to a village as she can, even though she has no other connection to the place and she has never visited it in recent memory. Middle class teens say that they would not go to a village unless they had to—their parents often share this sentiment—because the city in which they live provides them with all of the things the village might provide. As Ljuba elaborates,

> **Ljuba:** <u>You go</u> there to the supermarket <u>on your</u> <u>own</u>, and <u>buy yourself</u> the <u>same</u> kind of potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers. But in the village there are (full miles) of vegetable gardens there they dig up (*sadiat'cho, odiat', chy nuit'*). And in the village, they work so much more, but in L'viv, XXXX ready-made.

The "same potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers" can be found in the supermarkets and farmers' markets throughout the city; there is no need to "work so much more" in a field when everything

can be bought at the local market. For Ljuba and those like her, it does not make sense to live in a village unless a person had no other choice.

While it is important for these middle class teenagers to trace their ancestral lineage to a particular rural place, this connection to the rural goes little further and does not influence their everyday lives. Furthermore, the village has no place in modern life; it is both a place that links people to the past and a place that *is* the past. For Ljuba and her friends, the passage of time in the village lags behind that of the city. In contrast to the working class, this slower flow of time is not something to be embraced. Rather, it is indicative of a lack of modernity.

> **Natalija:** I was in the village but *everything's* so sad, so boring, *everything's* like every year. ...well, that's it and it's just boring, well, there's old women, old men, it's just not interesting, there's no one that I don't know in the village, that's why it's boring.

Natalija's description evokes an image of the rural as moving so slowly through time that a casual observer would not notice any movement at all. The village never progresses, but remains the same from year to year. Along with this imperceptible movement of time come feelings of sadness and boredom which Natalija sees as inherent to village life. In a similar way, her classmate Ljuba describes rural spaces as located two centuries behind the city in which she lives.

> **Ljuba:** Look, it's like the 21st century. But in the village, the quality is, I don't know, 19th century. In the village, for example, there are families with no water lines. There are, well, no gas hook-ups, sometimes it's like this, well, there's no electricity. In general, there are a lot of villages like this, if there's no real electricity, and in the village people know only this.

For Ljuba, the village does not lead to more freedoms. Rather, it lacks basic day-to-day conveniences such as water and electricity, or the ability to go grocery shopping rather than needing to tend fields. In this way, Ljuba explicitly places rural spaces in another world from her own, removed in space and time, and which requires a whole other set of daily practices. Those who live in such places "know only" how to live without running water and electricity. According to her, the normality of these basic necessities is as foreign to these villagers as the absence of them would be for Ljuba and other city dwellers.

The middle class teenagers frame the contrasts between rural and urban life more in terms of a temporal difference rather than within the traditional and moral framework drawn by their working class peers. The village is not just a different place; it is also a different time. The nostalgia associated with rural places, then, can only be experienced in short bursts, as a type of modern urban "quaintness" that even permeates some of Katja's depictions of the rural. For urbanites, to remain in the village when one can leave becomes a nonsensical decision. Furthermore, the desire to move back to the village, which Katja claims is her ultimate goal, is inconceivable for middle class teenagers like Ljuba and Natalija.

The Modern and Immoral City

In addition to having first-hand experiences of village life, which gives them a more nuanced perspective of rurality, working class teenagers also find notions of the rural made relevant to their urban lives. By drawing upon traditions and moral values that are associated with rural spaces, the middle class can critique the norms and practices of the city, and create a space in which the village and their identifications with the village reign supreme.

In the following section, Katja and her friends tell a story about a girl in their neighborhood who was the victim of a hit-and-run during the summer break. A young man, under the influence of alcohol, drove on the wrong side of the street and hit a group of three teenagers, killing one of the girls.

> **Katja:** They told me he was totally driving on the wrong side of the road, like he saw that they were walking in the road, he didn't come back to this side, and he killed her... he's free now, and these policemen work but don't do anything. *Yeah*, his dear parents didn't say where he was, he must not be at home, and he didn't tell *anyone and all*. They found his car in the courtyard by my place, *well*, *well*, right by me, in another courtyard near me they found this car. He bought a new car and *wanted* to test it out, but they said, *like*, that, *yeah*, he *wanted* to celebrate, that he bought a new car. *Like*, he drove it drunk, and he hit people.

They find problems with the city police: "these policemen work but don't do anything" even though "they already know who it was" who hit the group of teenagers when they were walking. Katja and her friends also find fault with urban motorists in general, and with the lack of road safety measures in L'viv more broadly: "There are a lot of accidents now. If a policeman stood on every corner, they ((drivers)) would be afraid to drive through red lights at people".

Granted, villages have fewer motorists, poorer roads, and small police forces, if they have any at all. However, Katja claims that rural places are safer for pedestrians.

> **Katj**a: The street is so wide there ((on the main street by her home in L'viv)). Cars get up to full speed right there, and they sprint out on their own, and there's a lot of traffic there. It's so dangerous to cross the street... People who go somewhere in the village or whatever, for example, how I walk in the village, I go across at this stop sign, and there you probably can't just cross. You have to wait until it's your turn. It's safe to cross the street with the stoplight. But there's no stoplight here ((near her home in L'viv)) although everyone knows that there's a lot of people ((wanting to cross the street)), but the stoplights don't work.

According to Katja, pedestrians can easily obey the rules of the road in the village, waiting for their turn at stop signs and crossing the road with the flow of traffic. The complexity of the city—its multi-lane streets and cross-streets, its stoplights, stop signs, and traffic cops—makes it a more, rather than a less, dangerous place to live.

In her discussion of city traffic and urban drivers, Katja also claims that urbanites have a lack of "normal" values, which include respect for the elderly.

> **Katja:** Normal values have to give regard to older people. Now, there are the kind of youth that, *like*.. No one has any respect for older people, for their own language. Even when you go on the mini-bus and sit somewhere, young people. For example, a man rides and an older woman with a cane hardly ever sits. A lot of people, even he doesn't stand up, he turns towards the window, and looks out, unconcerned with other people. And he thinks, let others stand up for her. She painfully stands, maybe bent over to one side; she has problems with her legs that's why she walks with a cane. Well, it's hard for her to stand. None of us young people, we don't get up, and some stand, but some, *like*, look at her, *like*, out of the corner of our eyes, and we don't care. But, *like*, I stand up, and there are others different from me. There are those who are raised with manners and those who weren't taught manners, we don't care, they don't stand, then she keeps standing...and there's *nothing* like it anymore.

On the public transportation in the city, young people and others similarly do not give their elders the respect they deserve. Katja describes a common occurrence: an old woman rides a city bus but there are no available seats; instead of someone giving up their seat to her, she is forced to stand despite the obvious difficulty it poses for her. The few people who were "raised with manners", like Katja, are the only ones who give up their places, while the majority of the rest avoid eye contact and otherwise display a lack of concern for the old woman. In this way, Katja implies that basic manners requires people to have concern for others; if more passengers had been "taught manners," if they could empathize with the elderly, then perhaps they would also be willing to stand instead of "turning towards the window, looking out, unconcerned with other people."

Katja does not explicitly frame the acquisition of manners as connected to either a city or a village life, nevertheless, her view that villagers are "friendly" and "more cultured" than urbanites seems to be echoed here in her evaluation of public transport riders. As rural people are concerned with the welfare of others, so should city people. There is also a temporal aspect in her words. So few people show respect for the elderly that "there's nothing like it anymore" except for the few people who are like Katja. The depiction of city life shown in these accounts of traffic problems and the behaviors of people on public transportation suggest a form of nostalgia for a simpler life, where people cared for each other: pedestrians could place their faith in motorists and old women could expect to find a seat on the city bus.

The village itself is seen by these girls as a cohesive organism; through the act of living in a village community, people learn how to work together to solve problems and learn how to depend upon others. The problems Katja and her friends associate with the urban landscape—like the lack of concern for others evident in their narratives of the car accident and the typical treatment of the elderly on public transportation—are viewed by these girls as inevitabilities. The expanse and anonymity provided by urban spaces allows people, both the drunk driver and the passengers on the bus, to shirk their responsibilities to other people.

In another vein, Katja's views can also be seen as critiquing the problems that stem from increasing class inequalities. In the village, there are few cars as most people equally cannot afford them. For those villagers who can afford to purchase a car, they are often called upon to use this luxury to help others, such as in driving a sick neighbor to the hospital or offering to

transport goods to a city market. In a way, a villager's car is both a personal possession and a public good. A village motorist who refuses to help his neighbors risks damaging the other social relationships he relies upon. As Katja's comments imply, however, urbanites with cars do not risk such community censure in cities, and so they are able to act immorally towards other people. They see their ability to afford expensive cars as justifying their sense of superiority over others and their attitude that both they and their cars are more valuable than the lives of pedestrians. In Katja's opinion, policemen are accomplices to motorists' disobedience towards the rules of the road, as they do not patrol the streets or investigate road crimes to the extent that they should. For working class teenagers like Katja, valuing the village is both a way of re-affirming their rural experiences and coping with their resentment over growing economic disparities.

Nostalgia as a Response to the Present

The need for every Ukrainian to "have" a village to call their own allows people to feel a sense of nostalgia for the pastoral, both for the middle class who vacation in a rented village cabin and for the working class who travel back to the village of their childhood. Svetlana Boym (2001) sees the past as another place, not just another time. The yearning for a place linked to the past, however, is not only about recreating the past, but also recreating the stability associated with this past. The teenagers born in the city to both village- and city-born parents learn to feel nostalgia for a time they never experienced, yet do so in different ways.

For working class teens like Katja, the village represents a simpler lifestyle but not necessarily one "stuck" in the past. Time there does not need to move as fast as in the city. Rural places have roads, youth clubs, and many events, just like urban areas, only on a smaller scale. Some villages might lack a general store but every village is unique. In describing what they do in the village, Katja and her friends speak of wandering the village all day, going to the local dance club, spending time outdoors, attending summer weddings, and going to village gatherings for youth to get together such as the midsummer's Ivan Kupalo celebration.

Katja presents the village as a place very much situated at the same point in time as the city, shifting only in the events marked along this timeline. Urbanites mark a variety of events on a daily basis that lead them to hurry and concentrate too much on their own business, such as getting to work or school on time, making time to go shopping, or paying the bills. Villagers, on the other hand, mark events over a longer period. Their lives are defined by week-long religious celebrations based on seasonal changes, agricultural seasons for planting and reaping, and everyday chores completed when they need to be done regardless of the hour. Working class teenagers hold nostalgia for this simpler "past" rural life at the same time as they balance the village and city aspects of their identities.

Their middle class peers, on the other hand, look towards a time in the future when Ukraine can join the rest of the modern world rather than idealizing a centuries removed rural. As one graduate student friend said, "Ukraine is like Poland 15, 20 years ago. We hope we can become like Poland. Maybe not like the rest of Europe, but I think we can become like Poland." There is a view that Ukraine's progress is being halted by the past, and those who wish to go back to the Soviet times; this usually attributed to the oldest generation and the more rural areas in the eastern parts of the country. Drawing from her own experience as a tourist, Ksenja claims that Ukrainians are becoming equal to other nations, as evidenced in the increasing numbers of non-ethnic Ukrainian language learners.

Vika: Already young people now always try to speak more in Ukrainian.
Ksenja: Ukrainian is more, well, in Ukraine, Ukrainian is becoming fashionable.
Vika: And what else? When you go abroad, Russians will be there. They aren't respectful. They treat people badly. Those who come from Russia, though some people are really nice and friendly. In a word, well, they don't behave very well among themselves. But they respect Ukrainians there in Egypt, Turkey.
Ksenja: Yeah, there, there is
Vika: There is restraint.
Ksenja: And in Egypt, in Turkey, they really like Ukrainian there. Well, those I spoke with when I visited Egypt, they all want to learn Ukrainian. A lot of people there know some words, they can say something

According to these teenage girls, as those who work in the tourist industry begin to interact with Ukrainians they are seeing how friendly Ukrainians are in comparison to other nationalities. The evidence that Ukrainian as a language is "becoming fashionable" is that other nationalities want to learn it. It is possible, of course, that Ksenja spoke with other Ukrainians, such as those working in the tourist industries of Egypt and Turkey, rather than non-Ukrainian locals. However, her perspective that Ukrainian is being valued outside of the country shows Ksenja to see this as a positive sign for middle-class urbanites like herself. Just as the tourist industry learned Russian to interact with its Russian visitors, so it is becoming the same with Ukrainian. By placing Ukrainian on par with Russian, a global language, Ksenja is also equating the resources and standard of living of Ukrainian tourists with their Russian counterparts.

In addition, these middle class teenagers present a generational contrast. Ukrainians are becoming "fashionable" along with their language because the younger generation is actively working to speak it. Vika does not separate this group of young people; rather, their generation as a whole is spurring a change in the international perspective on Ukrainians. The village may be the "past" of the city, but beyond the borders of Ukraine, these two locales merge. According to these teenage girls, the tourist industry and young people are pulling Ukraine out of Russia's past and into its present, if not future.

Discussion

Chronotopes of the village illuminate the different ways in which these teenagers make sense of local community values and their own relationships to these values. Both the working and middle classes view the village as "the past in the present," where rural spaces move slower, following a different flow of time. Middle class teenagers see this as a problem, blaming rural people for their lack of modern ideas and as one reason that Ukraine has not developed at the same pace as its European neighbors. On the other hand, the working class teenagers see this as an essential value of rural living, a slower pace that instills in people a sense of reflection and concern for others that all but disappears in a crowded, hurried urban life.

The multiple meanings of the village suggest that engagements with space/time create particular kinds of people. Villagers are "good people" in the eyes of the working class because of the slow pace, gradual changes, and consistent environment of village life. Helping out others, who are usually well-known neighbors, becomes natural. The slow pace encourages deeper

relations between people, in contrast to the "uncaring" city people who hurry about dealing with the complexities of their own lives with little concern for those around them.

But through the middle class perspective, this slow pace breeds laziness. The unstructured village time makes alcoholism and unemployment the norm. For them, villagers must rely on each other in order to survive; they have no choice but to do so. Kindness is not authentic, but a matter of survival.

> **Solja:** Well, of course, if there's a lot to do. He ((her father)) takes Mom with him. They bring food for the workers if a lot of people come and, in other words, for us it's necessary ((to go to the village)). If it ((the family's farmland)) just lies there, it'll be 'oh-ho-ho' too.

As Solja's statement shows, not all rural people are as selfless and eager to help as her classmates like Katja might think. For her family, working the familial lands is a way of preventing their village relatives from being shamed or gossiped about; visiting is a way to fulfill their familial obligations. If an urban family still has close ties with village relatives, and decides to not maintain them, they will be viewed poorly in the eyes of those still living in the familial village. If the land does not get sowed or reaped at the appropriate time, there will be talk throughout the rural community about the problems and tensions between the rural and urban relatives in the family. For Solja, the familial village is not always better than the city.

Working class teenagers view their futures as tied to L'viv, which might explain their lack of interest in foreign languages, their belief that Russian can be learned through experience rather than formalized schooling, and their rejection of rural dialects. As they will likely live and work in this dominant Ukrainian language environment their whole lives, they know from their parents' experiences that communication with Russian speakers can be successful without fluency, and foreign languages are only required if one is forced to emigrate. They will have more interaction with speakers of rural dialects or variations of "mixed" Ukrainian and Russian speech than they will with non-Ukrainian, non-Russian speaking foreigners. In a way, valuing the rural is a way for these young people to cope with their lack of educational and employment opportunities, and decreasing social position in comparison to their middle class peers.

These views also extend to their perceptions of urban places in Ukraine, and to other countries in contrast to Ukraine. As the working class teenagers are bound to the city in which they were born, they are also tied to their familial villages through their frequent visits. Middle class teenagers, on the other hand, look towards the cosmopolitanism and modernity of urban spaces. In other words, there are two orientations at play here, one which looks at Ukrainian identity as belonging and thriving in smaller, exclusive, authentic communities, and the other that seeks a wider, more inclusive yet anonymous understanding of the nation.

These orientations have the potential to affect future relations both between rural and urban spaces within the country and between "rural" and "urban" countries more globally. Just as middle class students value the city over the village, finding the former a site of opportunity and the latter a place far removed in both space and time from their current position, they also seem to find Europe as a place of opportunity in contrast with a "backwards" Ukraine, held back from modern development due to its economic, political, and social "impoverishment. And as the working class continues to find value in rural places, they also seek to continue to value Ukraine despite its perceived lack when compared to the U.S. and other western countries. While their middle class counterparts turn towards the "urban," be it cities in Ukraine or the "city of

Europe," working class teenagers prefer to spend part of their time in the rural spaces of Ukraine and in the "village of Ukraine."

Conclusion

Nation-building processes that are grounded in a rural identity have their limits. As this chapter has shown, western Ukrainian teenagers learn that the public sphere values the pastoral, but rural places themselves have variable meanings for these young people due to their socioeconomic position, family obligations to rural relatives, and these teenagers' first-hand experiences with villagers and village life.

The idea of the Ukrainian nation as born from a pristine rustic seems to be persisting at least in the more nationalistic western regions. However, the temporal placement of the village in the distant past discourages middle class teenagers from incorporating this pastoral image into their goals of becoming European. For them, the rural—its places, practices, and people—have no place in urban life or the cosmopolitan future they seek. The working classes, however, question whether becoming "European" is the best goal for Ukraine. Just as city life means giving up the close community bonds found in the village, becoming more like Europe may also involve transforming all of Ukraine into one "city," potentially becoming devoid of compassion and personal accountability to others.

Young people of different socioeconomic classes view the village and the city, and the relationship between these places, in different ways. For those of the working class, viewing rural spaces as holding more cultural knowledge and moral values is a way for them to deal with the increasing economic disparities and inequalities they experience in their daily urban lives. For their middle class peers, however, the village is only important in that it is central to being a part of the past and present Ukrainian nation—having a village of one's own solidifies one's claim of a Ukrainian identity as its most basic, as proof of Ukrainian ancestry—but rural spaces are not where the future of the Ukrainian nation lies.

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[1] Most of the roughly five hundred students in grades five through eleven at the working class school, Taras Shevchenko, live in 1950s Soviet-era, cement block housing A few students live in the detached homes along a dirt path that retains vestiges of its former village status, or in relatively newer apartment buildings. Many of their parents are in factory or construction jobs, or work as salespeople, nurses, or teachers. Few are working in the areas for which they were educated or trained, and some are periodically unemployed or underemployed.

[2] The middle class school, Ivan Franko is a much smaller secondary school, located in a region of the city historically associated with the city's intellectual elite, within walking distance of the city center. It is located along a major trolley line, and is across the street from a former Soviet-era stadium, which has fallen into disrepair. Its student body of roughly two hundred and fifty 5th through 11th graders is primarily middle class, either the children of professionals like doctors and dentists, or of the emerging class of businessmen and salesmen. Though unemployment and underemployment affect these families too, more of them are financially secure enough to vacation abroad, sometimes accompanied by their children.

[3] The classification of Russian ethnics has been continually under contention as many disagree that they need the same protection as other state minorities.

[4] One's *ridna mova*, or "native language," is often interpreted in Ukraine as the language of one's ethnic group, or their "mother tongue," rather than as one's first or primary language.

[5] One of the major city's newspapers, *L'vivska Hazeta*, presented an interest article on a Russian-speaking Ukrainian in an eastern part of the country. The article's primary goal seemed to be to show western Ukrainians that there are co-ethnics in the east who are actively learning Ukrainian as a symbol of their commitment to the nation. However, the numerous obstacles the man faced, such as the ridicule of his co-workers and the lack of Ukrainian language materials, also showed how difficult it is to for those like him to successfully learn and use the language in such a Russian-dominant environment due to its persisting stigmatization.

[6] In a demographic survey, some of these high school students wrote-in that they were born in the city of L'viv, rather than merely in the L'viv oblast. Two hundred first-year university students in a variety of majors were given a similar survey, and several made the same distinction, writing "in the city of L'viv" as their answer to "in which oblast were you born?"

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