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## IN THE SPACE OF „DISPLACED BORDERLAND”. A FEW REFLECTIONS ON THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN POLISH AND UKRAINIAN IMMIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES

### INTRODUCTION

This article focuses on the issue of relations between immigrant groups in the pluralistic American society. The main problem tackled in the paper can be narrowed down to the question: whether and how is the system of social relationships between different ethnic groups transferred into a migration situation? The presented overview of issues concerning the relations between specific diaspora groups is an attempt to synthetically discuss the results of research I have conducted<sup>1</sup>. Due to the limits to scale and scope of this article, I focus only on selected key research findings: some of them I discuss in more detail, others more generally.

In social sciences the question of ethnic relations has very extensive traditions going back to the beginnings of the Chicago School's activity. The topical literature includes a long list of works. However, it does not mean that all important issues relevant to the topic of ethnic relations have been researched and described. This relates in particular to ethnic relations which emerged as a result of a few waves of mass migration which created European diasporas in the pluralistic society of the United States. Research conducted to date has focused mostly on the transformations of ethnicity, ethnic mobilization,

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<sup>1</sup> The study was financially supported by a grant from the Kosciuszko Foundation and the Shevchenko Scientific Society. The research was conducted in 2007–2008 among Polish and Ukrainian immigrants in New York City.

the similarity of social situations and interests of groups which came into contact, as well as on minority-majority relations.

Problems stemming from common European cultural and national heritage have been researched and analyzed to a much lesser extent. In the analyses of relationships between different groups with varied immigrant backgrounds carried out to date, specifically in the analyses of relations between Polish immigrant communities and other groups present in the US, only Polish-Jewish<sup>2</sup> and Polish-German<sup>3</sup> relations have been described as relations to a large extent transferred from the European context. Although the need to conduct such research has been emphasized by Paul Magosci<sup>4</sup> at the end of the 70s, and in the 90s once again emphasized by Janusz Mucha<sup>5</sup>, as of now, it has not been carried out.

The subject of my research are the relations between Polish and Ukrainian immigrants in the United States. Its main aim is to provide an answer to the question whether and to what extent their interethnic relations are transferred into a diaspora situation?

To describe the nature of relations between Polish and Ukrainian immigrants I have decided to introduce the term “**displaced borderland**”. This concept is based on the assumption that contacts and relations between these groups in the American society are very often determined by these groups’ European experience and heritage. It also stipulates that these relations, as the relations in Europe, are multilevel and multi-dimensional, as is typical of an ethnic borderland situation, where an interchange of cultures and societies always takes place.

The basic theoretical framework for the analysis are sociological theories of ethnicity and ethnic relations. From among the numerous existing conceptualizations of ethnic relations<sup>6</sup> I chose the perspective according to which ethnic relations are defined very broadly as a type of social relations, namely the entirety of relations and interactions between members of ethnic groups

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<sup>2</sup> See: Andrzej Kapiszewski, *Asymilacja i konflikt. Z problematyki stosunków etnicznych w Stanach Zjednoczonych Ameryki*, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Kraków 1984.

<sup>3</sup> See: Dorota Praszalowicz, *Stosunki polsko-niemieckie na obczyźnie. Polscy i niemieccy imigranci w Milwaukee, Wisconsin (USA) 1860-1920*, Universitas, Kraków 1999.

<sup>4</sup> Paul R. Magosci (ed.), *The Ukrainian Experience in the United States. a Symposium*, Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, Harvard University, Massachusetts 1979, pp. 11-13.

<sup>5</sup> Janusz Mucha, *Codziennosc i odswietnosc: Polonia w South Bend*, Oficyna Naukowa, Warszawa 1996, p. 231.

<sup>6</sup> The paradigm of ethnic relations analysis includes three dominant theoretical models describing and explaining relations between different ethnic groups: those of assimilation, amalgamation (the melting pot model) and cultural pluralism (accommodation).

as well as between the ethnic groups themselves<sup>7</sup>. According to this approach ethnic relations can occur in various spheres and on various levels of social life; they differ in their character, degree of intensity, intimacy, and degree of institutionalization.

Ethnic relations thus understood cover a vast richness of forms of mutual references and interactions. These may include: mutual help, dialogue, conflict, competition, relations between employee and employer or customer and seller, collaboration between institutions and states, being superficial and loose acquaintances, as well as deep relations of friendship and marriage. Potential problems here include ethnic conflicts and group antagonisms, ethnic group action, as well as problems related to individualized attitudes of ethnic group members, the lack of contacts and mutual or one-sided avoidance, institutional creation of intra-group relations, loose relations defining varied personal life situations, etc.

The empirical basis for analysis of issues related to relations between Polish and Ukrainian immigrants in the United States is formed by findings of research conducted in the community of Polish and Ukrainian immigrants in the United States. Detailed research covered the area of New York which since the end of nineteenth century has been the location of the largest concentrations of Ukrainian immigrants and also one of the largest concentrations of Polish immigrants<sup>8</sup>. In order to reveal the character and mechanisms shaping Polish-

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<sup>7</sup> Edward C. McDonagh, *Ethnic Relations in the United States*, Appleton Century Crafts, New York 1953, p. 11; Ewa Nowicka, *Przyczynek do teorii etnicznych mniejszości* [in:] Hieronim Kubiak, Andrzej K. Paluch (ed.), *Założenia teorii Założenia teorii asymilacji*, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wrocław 1980, pp. 108-116; Janusz Mucha, *Stosunki etniczne we współczesnej myśli socjologicznej*, PWN, Warszawa 2006, p. 261.

<sup>8</sup> According to US Census Data 2000 New York City has the main concentration of members of the Polish diaspora. The data indicate that 213. 447 persons of Polish ancestry reside here. 210. 421 persons of Polish ancestry are living in Chicago. It is worth noting that the main metropolitan area of concentrations of Persons of Polish ancestry is Chicago Metropolitan Area, where approximately 9.3% of the Polish population in the United States resides. Detroit, MI (5.4%), Philadelphia, PA (3.2%) and New York, NY are all areas home to large Polish populations, where almost 3% of Poles live. In the case of Ukrainian immigrants New York Metropolitan Area is the main place of the concentrations of group. US Census Data indicate that in New York Metropolitan Area resides today almost 18% (160.090) members of Ukrainian diaspora in the United States (only in New York City theirs number represents about 7.6% of total group). The other center of concentrations of persons of Ukrainian ancestry in the USA are: Philadelphia Metropolitan Area (60.209 persons; 6.7% of total group) and Chicago Metropolitan Area (46.127 persons; 5.1% of total group); see more: J.C. Booza *A Profile of Polish Americans: Data from the 2000 U.S. Census*, *Polish American Studies*, 2007 no. 1, p. 65; *Census 2000 Demographic Profile Highlights, Selected Population Group: Polish (142-143) and Census 2000 Summary File 4 (SF4), Metropolitan Statistical Areas, Ancestry: Polish (142-143) Census 2000 Summary Files*, <http://factfinder.census.gov/>

Ukrainian relations in diaspora a variety of research procedures have been applied. Both qualitative and quantitative methods have been used, and these included: a) desk research (based on US Census Data and other immigrant statistics<sup>9</sup>); b) content analysis of ethnic press, archive materials, documents and other emigrant publications<sup>10</sup>; c) individual in-depth interviews with ethnic leaders and ordinary members of ethnic communities (I conducted 55 interviews, including 5 interviews with mixed married couples), and also d) participant observation.

In the analysis, I focused both on macro- and micro-social determinants of mutual relations. I discussed various elements of interethnic relations, including: the spheres of cooperation, conflict areas, daily interactions, ethnic distance, mutual perceptions as well as spatial relations. The research confirmed that the relations between Polish and Ukrainian immigrants are mostly transferred into the diaspora situation and they are determined by the situation of both groups in Europe. It has been observed that what “happens” between members of the researched groups in European conditions, particularly in the Polish-Ukrainian borderland, also “happens” in diaspora at the same time. This transfer is observed in many aspects of intra-group relations. Observations conducted in the course of the research and the collected empirical material allow the identification of at least a few of them. They are presented in the next part of this article.

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servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?\_program=DEC&\_submenuId=datasets\_1&\_lang=en (date of access: 25.04.2008); Persons of Ukrainian Ancestry by Metropolitan Areas and Ukrainian Spoken at Home: United States 2000; Center for Demographic and Socioeconomic Research of Ukrainians in the US, Shevchenko Scientific Society, <http://www.inform-devisions.com/ukrstat-4/table1.iface> (date of access: 20.12.2009)

<sup>9</sup> Including, but not limited to: in the Yearbook of Immigration Statistics, made available by the New York Department of City Planning and the Center for Demographic and Socioeconomic Research of Ukrainians in the US. The entire article utilized the 2000 US Census. At the time of submission, data from the 2010 Census was not yet available.

<sup>10</sup> The collected empirical material originates from the following institutions: The Polish Institute of Arts and Science; Shevchenko Scientific Society; New York Public Library; The Immigration History Research Center of University of Minnesota; Library of Columbia University, The Pilsudski Institute of America, The Polish Veterans Army Association in New York City; The Ukrainian American Coordinating Council St. George Ukrainian Catholic Church in New York; Ukrainian Orthodox Church; St. Stanislaus Polish Roman Catholic Church in New York; Hoover Institution Archive, Stanford University.

## THE MAIN ASPECTS OF POLISH-UKRAINIAN RELATIONS IN DIASPORA

### 1. SIMILARITY OF IMMIGRATION HISTORIES

Certain similarities can be observed between Polish and Ukrainian migrations to the US. From the very beginning of the Polish and Ukrainian migration movements, which started in the nineteenth century, we can speak about chain migration of these two ethnic groups<sup>11</sup>. What is more, in the second half of the twentieth century (in the communist period) a significant number of Ukrainians emigrated from the territory of the People's Republic of Poland (it is assessed that 38,000 people with Ukrainian background came to the USA between 1960 and 1990. Only slightly more than half of them originated from Ukraine. Others came from Poland (approx. 13%), Germany or Canada<sup>12</sup>).

Even today, in the fourth stage of emigration, mutual imitation of migratory behaviours can be observed to a considerable extent between the two groups. An example of this tendency is the story of one Ukrainian immigrant, who decided to emigrate to the US under the influence of his Polish friends<sup>13</sup>. Migration processes of both studied groups were and still are generated by similar push factors:

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<sup>11</sup> Multicultural flows originated mostly from borderland areas. For instance, based on Polish estimates, more than 325,000 Poles and slightly under 300,000 Ruthenians/Ukrainians departed Galicia, the area where both researched groups co-existed. In the topical literature it is emphasised that these migrations were of chain character which suggests that the representatives of these nationalities migrated together, passing on information about the conditions in the destination country to each other, using mutual co-dependencies. Similar assumptions are confirmed in the Ukrainian literature by Julian Baczynskij who claimed that Ukrainians departed to the US in the footsteps of their Polish and Jewish neighbours.

See: Dorota Praszalowicz, Andrzej A. Zięba, Krzysztof Makowski, *Mechanizmy zamorskich migracji łańcuchowych w XIX wieku: Polacy, Niemcy, Żydzi, Rusini. Zarys problemu*, Księgarnia Akademicka, Kraków 2004, pp. 126, 129-146; Andrzej Pilch, *Migracja zarobkowa z Galicji w XIX i XX wieku (do 1918 roku)*, *Przegląd Polonijny*, 1975 nr. pp. 5-15; Julian Baczynskij, *Ukraińska imigracja w Spoluczonych Sztatach Ameryki*, Lwiv 1914, Kijów 1994, pp. 56; Emily Greene Balch, *Our Slavic Fellow Citizens*, Arno Press, New York 1969, pp. 120-145.

<sup>12</sup> See: *Some Characteristic of Persons of Ukrainian Ancestry, United States 1980-2007*, Center for Demographic and Socioeconomic Research of Ukrainians in the US, Shevchenko Scientific Society, <http://www.inform-devisions.com/ukrstat-1/table1.iface> (20.12.2009); Oleh Wolowyna, *Immigration and Language of Ukrainians in the United States*, *The Ukrainian Weekly*.

12.10.2003 [online] [http://www.ukweekly.com/old/archive/2003/410319.shtml?200m\\_high=ukrainian+immigration+waves](http://www.ukweekly.com/old/archive/2003/410319.shtml?200m_high=ukrainian+immigration+waves) (20.12.2009)

<sup>13</sup> The following statement suggests this tendency: 'History is like that again, when I arrived for the first time in 1991, I worked with young Poles (...) and when I talked to them, I knew that it is not easy in Poland with economics (sic). Ukraine, when it got its independence, it had much bigger problems than Poland, because Poland had had its borders, its language. In Ukraine there is

mostly political and economic. Moreover, both groups have similar experience in the American society as regards the transformation of social mobility patterns and ethnic organization. Generally speaking, both Poles and Ukrainians occupy a similar (middle) position in the stratification system of the American society<sup>14</sup>. Both groups also have a similar organizational structure<sup>15</sup>.

## 2. SPATIAL RELATIONS – SIMILARITY OF SETTLEMENT PATTERNS OF POLISH AND UKRAINIAN IMMIGRANTS

Sociological literature emphasizes that spatial proximity facilitates the establishment of specific social relations. Some researchers emphasize that geographical space is a natural aspect of the creation of social relations, as it affects the concentrations and divisions of groups and their communication<sup>16</sup>. Where there is co-presence of members of specific ethnic groups in physical space, the proximity of their existence not only increases the likelihood of interethnic interactions, but also sets the minimal level of the intensity of intergroup interactions above zero. Life in proximity, or next to each other, makes the lack of interaction impossible, and it is unimportant whether these contacts are superficial and temporary, or more intimate and permanent. In many cases, regular spatial interaction affects the shaping

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a problem with the borders, a problem with the language, a problem with economics (...) and this is why I decided to emigrate. Poles helped me with that...<sup>7</sup>

<sup>14</sup> American census data suggests that the described tendency is true. It also indicates that the social and occupational structures of the Polish and Ukrainian diaspora communities are comparable to correspondent structures of other European ethnic groups and the entire American society. See: Profile of Selected Economic Characteristic: 2000, Special Tabulations (STP-159), People Born in Poland, People Born in Ukraine, <http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/foreign/datatables.html> (10.01.2009)

U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 4 (SF4), Matrices: HCT66, HCT52, PCT130, PCT113, PCT86, PCT64, PCT3, PCT4, PCT26, PCT35, PCT43, PCT85, [http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DTSUBJECTSHOWTABLES?\\_ts=286774506906](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DTSUBJECTSHOWTABLES?_ts=286774506906) (10.01.2009)

<sup>15</sup> In both researched groups the processes of building institutional completeness and group autonomy were similar; referring to mutual examples and experiences has affected the shape of comparative internal structures of the Polish and Ukrainian diasporas. As L. Wynar observes, the current structure of the Ukrainian ethnic community in the US is shaped by the following ethnic institutions and organizations: a) umbrella organizations, b) political institutions, c) educational institutions, d) self-help and insurance institutions, e) recreation and veteran organizations, f) cultural institutions, g) science and industry organizations, h) religious organizations, and i) media institutions. The organizational structure of the Polish community is similar.

See: Lubomyr Wynar, *Ethnic Press. The Ukrainian Press in the United States: Past and Present Development*, *Ethnic Forum*, 1985 no 1-2, p. 81.

<sup>16</sup> See: Krzysztof Frysztański, *Polonia w dużym mieście amerykańskim. Studium przemian podspołeczności polonijnej w Buffalo*, Ossolineum, Wrocław 1986, p. 45.

of social bounds, including bounds based on neighborly co-existence. In addition, as the key representative of the Chicago School Robert Ezra Park has noted, ‘social relations are inevitably correlated with spatial relations. Physical distance is, or seems to be, the indicator of social distance’<sup>17</sup>. In the topical literature, it is accepted that a high degree of spacial segregation of ethnic groups may confirm the existence of intra-group distance, dislike or even group discrimination<sup>18</sup>, whilst spatial proximity creates opportunities for different forms of social contact and therefore increases the likelihood of establishing specific intergroup relations.

My research has shown that spatial proximity is characteristic of Polish and Ukrainian immigrants in the US. General observations of the settlement patterns of Polish and Ukrainian ethnic groups indicate that they tend to be concentrated in the same areas of the US: mainly in the north-east and in the sunbelt, in Florida and California (as shown on Map 1). The main urban centers, where immigrants from both groups settle are: New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia. Such a paradigm of spacial layout has emerged over one hundred years ago. This regularity was observed in the beginning of the twentieth century by J. Baczynskyj who wrote that “the paradigm of the layout of the Ukrainian community overlaps entirely with the corresponding Polish, Slovakian, and Hungarian paradigms. And indeed in the beginning of the previous century it would be difficult to find a Ukrainian community in the US which would function at a large distance from Polish concentrations. Also today, despite a large degree of dispersal across the entire US, these communities are characterized by spacial proximity. They have also created their own ethnic communities close to each other. For example in Chicago next to the famous “Polish Triangle” there is the Ukrainian center called “Ukrainian Village”. A similar situation occurs in Detroit, Cleveland, in Allentown, Pennsylvania and in New York’s East Village. This tendency is confirmed by my respondents:

*“Whenever you visit any town, anywhere, if you want to find a polish neighborhood you need to look for the Ukrainian first.”*

*„My parents came here in 1912, I mean to Chicago, because somebody from our village said it’s a good place to live. We used to call it ‘ Little Warsaw’” because there was so many Polish people living there. It was a really mixed community. We all lived in one house. In the house next to ours lived a Polish guy - his daughter*

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<sup>17</sup> I cite Richard Alba, Victor Nee, Assimilaion [in:] Mary C. Waters, Reed Ueada (ed.), *The New Americans. A Guide to Immigration since 1965*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA. 2007, p. 125.

<sup>18</sup> In the Polish topical literature this phenomenon has been described by Grzegorz Babinski, see: Grzegorz Babiński, *Analiza przestrzenna w badaniach przemian zbiorowości etnicznych: teoria, metody, zastosowania*, Przegląd Polonijny, 1979 no3, pp. 7-12.

*and my sister became best friends. There was also a Norwegian guy living in this area; older Slovak man - he didn't have any kids and I remember him being quite unpleasant. The area surrounding St. Nicholas Church was inhabited mainly by Polish, Ukrainians and Slovaks. So, there was a Greek-catholic church there and next to it Polish St. Helen church and Slovak church-Secret Heart. Polish community was the biggest there- we used to call it „Polish Broadway.”*

A detailed analysis of the residential patterns of both groups in the area of New York also confirms this tendency. Based on the census data from census tracts in Brooklyn and Manhattan, I have defined the degree of mutual ethnic segregation and concentration of the two groups. In the analysis, I considered only those census tracts, where the number of members of each group is more than 100 people<sup>19</sup>. As a result, I found 90 mixed Polish-Ukrainian tracts (as shown on Map 2). The majority of them are in Brooklyn's Sheepshead Bay, Brighton Beach, Midwood and Bensonhurst. As regards Manhattan, the majority are in the area of the East Village. The following is an approximate list of mixed tracts presented by districts:

East Village – 7 census tracts, including 2 with the population of each of the two groups exceeding 5% of the whole;

Bensonhurst – 12 census tracts, including 3 with the population of each of the two groups exceeding 5% of the whole;

Brighton Beach – 13 census tracts, including 2 with the population of each of the two groups exceeding 5% of the whole;

Sheepshead Bay – 21 census tracts, including 8 with the population of each of the two groups exceeding 5% of the whole;

Midwood – 12 census tracts, including 3 with the population of each of the two groups exceeding 5% of the whole.

Thus, census data suggests that the level of ethnic segregation between Polish and Ukrainian immigrants is quite low. The two groups tend to settle close to each other, but that interrelation is not as simple, i.e. the places of high concentration of Ukrainians are also the places of medium and low concentration of Poles. As a result of spatial proximity the two groups create their mixed neighborhoods like East Village.

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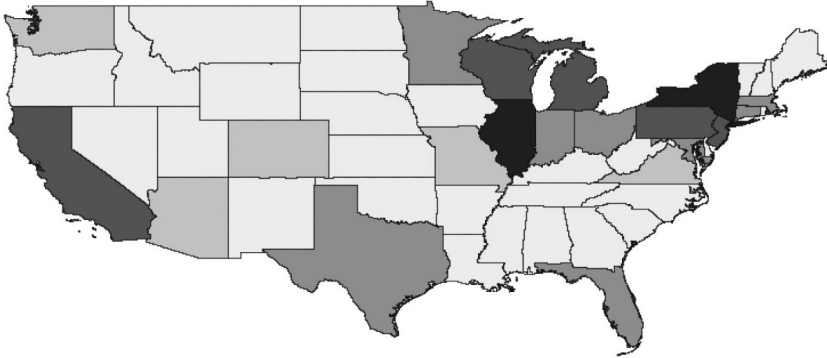
<sup>19</sup> Richard D. Alba, Nancy A. Denton, Shu-yin J. Leung, John R. Logan, *Neighborhood Change under Conditions of Mass Immigration: The New York City Region 1970-1990*, International Migration Review, 1995 no 3, p. 636.



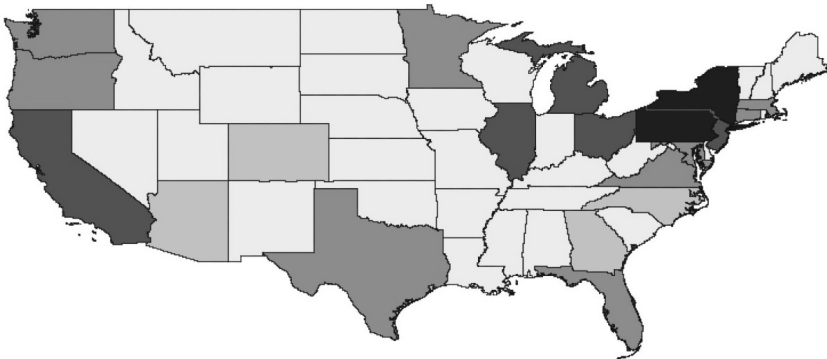
Map 1.

Settlement patterns of Polish and Ukrainian ethnic groups in the USA, 2000.

**Settlement patterns of the Polish ethnic group in the US, 2000.**

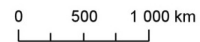
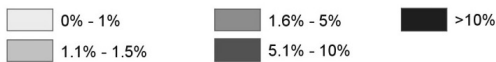


**Settlement patterns of the Ukrainian ethnic group in the US, 2000.**



**Legend**

Population shares of Polish and Ukrainian ethnic groups in the US



Source: U.S Census Data; Census 2000 Summary File 4(SF4) – Ancestry-Polish. Ancestry –Ukrainian <http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DTCharIterationServlet...>(data access: 10.01.2009)

### 3. MIXED POLISH-UKRAINIAN ETHNIC NEIGHBORHOODS AS THE PLACE OF DAILY IMMIGRANT LIFE – A CASE STUDY OF EAST VILLAGE

According to the 2000 US Census Data 1160 people living in East Village had Ukrainian ancestry and 3438 - Polish ancestry<sup>20</sup>.

New statistical US Census data suggests that these numbers are currently: 1299 people of Ukrainian background<sup>21</sup> and 2442 people of Polish background. The Polish-Ukrainian community has formed here in the end of the nineteenth century, in two areas of the East Village (38 and 32 census tract), which stretch from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> St. and from the Third to A Ave. As the spatial range of the area where the Polish-Ukrainian community has formed is not substantial, it can be argued that from the beginning the worlds of these groups have bordered and overlapped. The everyday life of members of the researched ethnic communities happened in the streets, clubs, restaurants, and nearby stores. This area has been the place of residence and work, but most of all, it was the area of intense social life, numerous extra- and intergroup contacts and active exchange of services and information. Based on the research we can describe the nature of the Polish-Ukrainian neighborhood, which in many aspects resembles the Polish-Ukrainian borderland in Europe. This tendency is most visible in the following aspects:

1. The awareness of the presence of the second ethnic group, both in the historical and contemporary perspective – the neighborhood is described as *”the great Slavic ghetto”* and *”the old neighborhood”*.

*„When we moved to this neighborhood it used to be called ”Little Ukraine”. There was lots of Ukrainians living but also many Polish. Whenever we went, everybody knew each other. We have a church, Ukrainian National Home...so it was easier here. I loved this place... There is also the park, Tompkins Square Park, and we walked there with the children...everybody...Ukrainian and Polish; we met in the park...”*

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<sup>20</sup> Source: Persons of any Ukrainian ancestry - Ancestry (Total Ancestries Tallied) - 2000 Census (“Long form”) from Bureau of the Census, US Department of Commerce; Persons of any Polish ancestry - Ancestry (Total Ancestries Tallied) - 2000 Census (“Long form”) from Bureau of the Census, US Department of Commerce, [http://usa.ipums.org/usa-action/selectVariables.do#race\\_eth](http://usa.ipums.org/usa-action/selectVariables.do#race_eth), (10.01.2008)

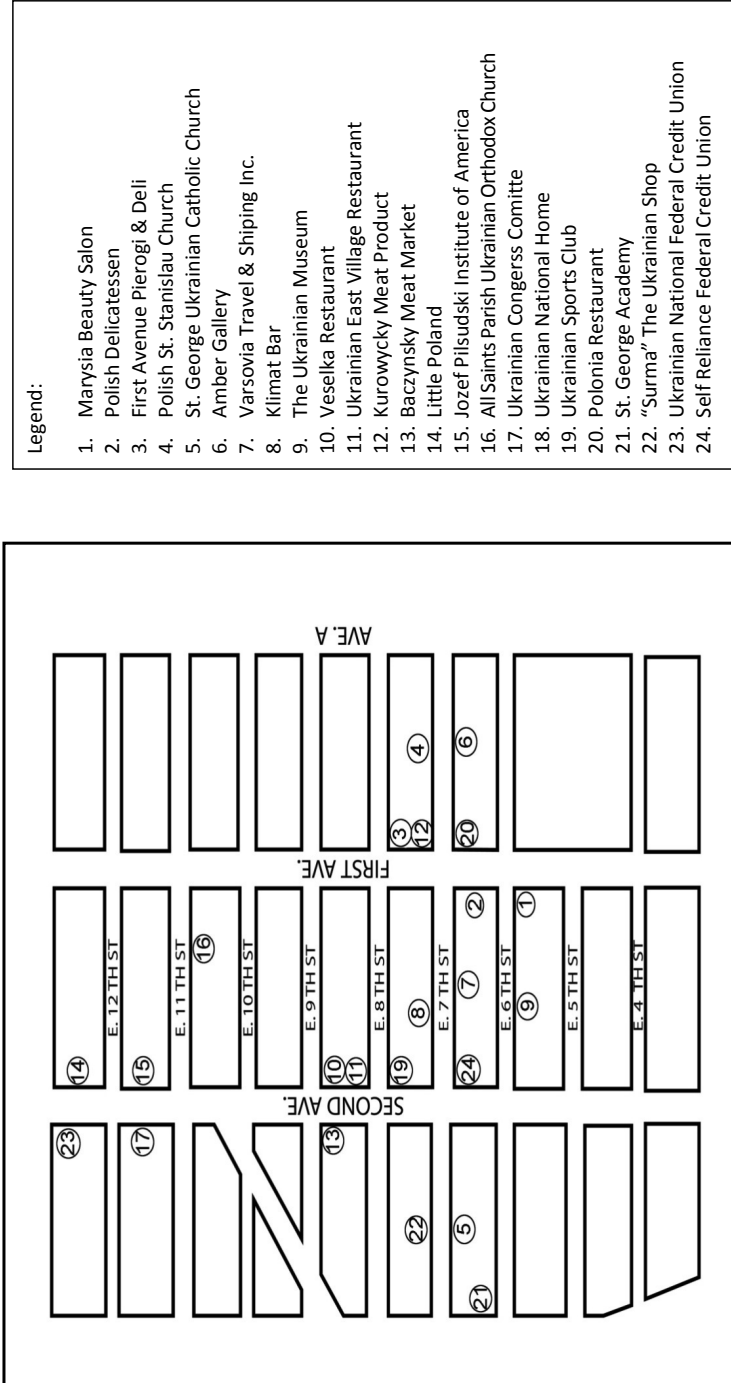
<sup>21</sup> Tabel B04003 Total Ancestry Reported, 2010 American Community Survey, [http://www.ryc.gov/html/dcp/pdf/census/ntas\\_06to10\\_ancestry\\_acs.pdf](http://www.ryc.gov/html/dcp/pdf/census/ntas_06to10_ancestry_acs.pdf) (data access: 5.10.2012).

Map 2.

The distribution of census tracts in Sheepshead Bay in Brooklyn and in the east part of Lower Manhattan



Ethnic institutional infrastructure of Polish and Ukrainian ethnic groups in East Village, 2007



2. Shared use of ethnic institutions – for example 10-20% of pupils in the Ukrainian school are Polish children<sup>22</sup>. The collected testimonies suggest that the main motivation for this participation is the lack of a Polish school in the area, and the similarity of the cultures and the languages. It turns out that both Poles and Ukrainians are very keen to use stores, restaurants, and travel agencies run by members of the other ethnic group. They have also used each other's financial institutions and self-help organizations. One of the respondents, an employee of a Ukrainian self-help organization mentioned the participation of the Polish community in trips to bingo halls and Atlantic City casinos organized by this institution. Another person provided examples of the participation of Polish immigrants in a Ukrainian credit union. Single respondents indicated the membership of people of Ukrainian background in a Polish credit union.

*„They sent their children to us as we understand Polish, just as most of my teachers, so it might have been easier for them here. (...) It would be very difficult for them in an American school while here they get associated very slowly and, as I said, Polish children are very good students”.*

*„There were always Poles living in our neighborhood and now it's the same way as with Ukrainians – they moved, but we still visit Polish shops, Polish cosmetic stores (especially in the 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue), Polish restaurants ... In the 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue there's also a very nice Polish shop; it's very small but I like buying there”.*

3. Cases of joint celebrations of holidays – for example the local religious tradition is for Ukrainian immigrants to participate in the Corpus Christi procession, which takes place in the streets of the Lower East Side. This religious practice is usually a result of private and family links and networks. It could be also interpreted in the categories of traditional permanence, traditions brought into the diaspora. Bringing together people from both denominational communities is a factor integrating the researched groups. A Polish priest has thus described the osmosis of the Polish and Ukrainian religious traditions:

*„As the Easter is concerned, there are also many Ukrainians coming, and you can see that when they bring their food for blessing, their baskets, their embroidered shawls, so they also come to bless their food. There are also Ukrainians, I know these are only single persons, yet there are some, who participate in the Corpus Christi feast”.*

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<sup>22</sup> These numbers were obtained during the individual in-depth interview and may indicate only general tendencies

*„My partner was a friend of a Ukrainian, Orthodox priest. He often came to us; we visited them for the Ukrainian Christmas Eve. They came to us for their Christmas Eve and invited few times to their church...”*

4. Language – similarly to the Polish-Ukrainian borderland, the common language that the two groups use to communicate with each other is Polish. It is worth adding here that the similarity of the Polish and Ukrainian languages facilitates the intensification of intergroup contacts. Research has provided many examples of non-English speaking immigrants using the services of Polish or Ukrainian doctors or solicitors, as they could communicate with them easily.

*„All these who speak Polish so much are Ukrainians who only speak Polish well. As I often ask: „where are you from?” And she says: „well, I’m Ukrainian” ... And there are many who speak Polish so well that you’d never guess...”*

#### 4. THE SPHERE OF DAILY RELATIONS; MUTUAL ATTITUDES AND SOCIAL DISTANCES

As far as the local level is concerned, what is most important is the sphere of daily social interactions between members of the researched communities. In their every-day life, Polish and Ukrainian immigrants are involved in a network of interpersonal relations, of various strength, durability, intimacy, and various degrees of institutionalization. There are instrumental relations, relations expressing the need of affiliation between the partners as well as everyday conflict situations. The main spheres where these relations take place include: the sphere of professional and institutional cooperation, the sphere of neighborly interactions, friendship, family and marriage, as well as short-lived, anonymous relations. This means that Polish and Ukrainian immigrants work together, go to shops, restaurants, travel agencies owned by members of the other group, have fun together and spend their free time in similar ways. The similarity of the two languages is conducive to the intensification of contacts.

*„There are many Poles working in the Ukrainian bank, working in restaurants; there are also Ukrainians working in Polish ones”*

*„There’s Mr. Orutryk on the 2<sup>nd</sup> side, living just in the 3<sup>rd</sup> house from mine; a very, very friendly man. When he mows the grass he also comes to me and mows a bit; he helps to throw the snow away. I have a machine to throw the snow, when I work in my yard I also work in his a bit; a very friendly man, you know...”*

*„When there are feasts then we go to Polish ones and Poles come to ours in Narodny Dom, when there’s a Lemko feast. We often go for feasts in Greenpoint, our comrade always takes us and we go together”.*

*„I’m Ukrainian, a hundred-percent Ukrainian, yet I speak Polish as I grew along with Poles, my brother-in-law is Polish, my best friend is also a Pole: a Polish priest; I always call him for the Christmas or Easter in his parish”.*

*„My husband’s brother is also married to a Pole, our relation is good, we have no problems, they invite us for their Christmas or Easter, as they celebrate Polish ones, while we invite them for ours and I see no problems here”.*

However, daily life abounds also in conflict situations. On the one hand, some conflicts have a purely situational character, with no ethnic or national background. On the other hand, we can find persisting animosities and ethnic conflicts, mostly generated by the memories of the nations’ common difficult history. Some respondents mentioned situations when “discussing Polish and Ukrainian history” during social occasions and festivities caused the atmosphere to go sour. Others admitted that in order to avoid conflict, they steered clear of historical subjects when speaking to representatives of the other ethnic group. I have also observed cases of negative attitudes toward mixed Polish-Ukrainian marriages because of the common history of the two groups.

*„Once I was searching for people for a flat. (...) So I made an announcement and a married couple has come. It turned out they were Ukrainians. Oh Dear, I was truly... (...) It was really shocking! When I thought I’d have to live with Ukrainians, after all I had heard about them from my parents, you know.. This approach of mine to Ukrainians was shaped in my childhood. A very negative approach. Immediately, you know, the whole history (...) so I didn’t agree to rent them and to live with them”.*

My research shows that common history of the two groups is the major factor fuelling intergroup distance. Mutual attitudes and stereotypes were brought from Europe to America. For example, just like in the European borderland, in the American society the attitudes of Ukrainian immigrants toward Poles are more positive, in contrast to the attitudes of Poles towards Ukrainians, which are more negative. This shows that the process of emigration does not lead to such a change in one’s mindset that would result in changing old attitudes. They persist and the new experiences only increase the amount of perceived similarities and give a sense of closeness. In the new world the one who used to be “alien” becomes the one who is “close, familiar and safe”.

*“When you emigrate here then, immediately, you find neighbors. We feel somewhat closer to each other than... Well, having to choose between, for instance, a Black or Puerto Rico, I prefer to live with an Ukrainian”.*

*„Here he’s just the same emigrant as I and... he’s culturally closer”.*

##### 5. INSTITUTIONAL SPHERE OF RELATIONS, DETERMINED BY THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERGROUP RELATIONS IN EUROPE

The transfer of Polish-Ukrainian relations can also be observed at the institutional level. This type of mutual relations has largely been influenced by the development of the situation on the European borderland. At this level, two basic forms of intergroup behavior have been observed: conflict relations and cooperation. Conflicts and intergroup disagreements which exist in the American society have been transplanted from Europe into the diaspora. This means that they have their roots in the old country and internal American factors had no impact on them. The following factors were the main reasons for conflicts between Polish and Ukrainian immigrants: a) conflicts of political interests; b) conflicts over significant group values and c) negative attitudes and stereotypes brought over from Europe. For instance, since World War I until the 80s, there have been conflicts in the diaspora over the ethnic territory in the European borderland<sup>23</sup>. At present, there are tensions over the interpretation of the common dramatic history<sup>24</sup>. These conflicts have been intensified or weakened depending on the state of Polish-Ukrainian relations in Europe. Institutional intergroup cooperation has also been closely connected with the situation of both groups in Europe. There are three main levels of institutional cooperation: political, cultural and scientific. The cooperation was much more intensive, when required by the interest of both groups in Europe. For instance, the period of the most intensive collaboration was the time of communism. During this period both groups in the United States were united in the fight against their common enemy (both groups belonged to the following anti-Communist organizations: Anti Bolshevik Bloc of Nations (ABN), The National Captive Nations Committee (NCNC), The Conference of Americans

<sup>23</sup> Much attention was given to this particular subject by Polish and Ukrainian press in the USA.

<sup>24</sup> This stems from the discrepancies between how both nations interpret certain events in the common history of the two countries. It is quite visible that the vision of history boils down to remembering the wrongs done to one’s own ethnic group. From reading immigrant press publications, it appears that the conflict-inducing aspect of history is further reinforced by projecting the old animosities onto the recent ones. In the narration, we usually see that a very distant past is often mixed with events that took place in the 90s.



of Central and Eastern European Descent (CACEED), Federation of Americans of Central and East European Descent (FACEED) or Central European Federation (CEF). Other examples of intergroup cooperation include: lectures, conferences on Polish-Ukrainian relations, cultural events; for instance in 2007, the Polish-Ukrainian Film Festival took place in Chicago and in New York City, there have been joint poetry evenings. Currently, weakening of the intensity of mutual institutional cooperation can be observed. The following factors seem to be the main reasons for this situation: the processes of acculturation and assimilation as well as a stable situation of the two groups in Europe.

## CONCLUSIONS

By way of summary, allow me to present a brief synthesis of those aspects of the inter-ethnic relations that are transferred into the emigrant situation, and those that are determined by the impact of common processes in the US.

The transfer of relations begins in the following spheres of inter-ethnic contacts:

1. Migration patterns – their similarity and how they changed over time in both ethnic groups in the American society.
2. Spatial distribution - in a number of regions in America, Polish and Ukrainian communities exist next to each other.
3. At the level of mixed Polish-Ukrainian local communities, where daily lives of immigrants take place + a number of experiences and customs are transferred from the original borderland into the diaspora, which can be observed e.g. in: neighborly help, "double" holiday celebrations, mixed marriages, bilingualism in families, common activities and pastimes.
4. As is the case on the Polish-Ukrainian borderland, similarly in the diaspora we can also speak of an increased impact of the Polish culture onto the members of the Ukrainian community.
5. Mutual attitudes and stereotypes are also brought over into the diaspora, and the factor that reinforces mutual distance between the two ethnic groups is their common history.
6. The situation of these two groups in Europe affects the nature and intensity of mutual relations at the institutional level in the sphere of politics, culture and science. It generates inter-ethnic co-operation or antagonism. Moreover, the basic context for inter-ethnic tensions is the historical memory and the common historical events interpreted discrepantly by the two ethnic groups. These conflicts are observed both at the institutional level and in daily lives of the immigrants.

My research has shown that besides these transferred relations, we can also observe new forms of relations which are determined by the influence of the American society. This means that internal American factors also have an impact of the two groups. More precisely, an analysis of the state and evolution of Polish-Ukrainian relations led to the conclusion that in the diaspora we can distinguish three major new situations between the two groups:

1. In the diaspora, in contrast to the European borderland, the Polish-Ukrainian relationships have symmetrical and affiliate (partner) character. This is a result of the lack of socioeconomic differences between these groups in the American society. The position of both groups in the American socioeconomic structure is similar. It is therefore impossible to speak of one group being dominant and the other subordinate.
2. In the diaspora, the importance of religious differences is reduced. This means that the mutual relations are not strongly determined by religious distinctions. I did not observe any religious conflicts between Polish and Ukrainian immigrants and religious factors were not judged as a significant obstacle by mixed marriages.
3. In the diaspora, there is an increased mutual acceptance between the groups and there are reduced group boundaries. This is related not only to the fact of recognizing the similarity and closeness, but also to the processes of acculturation and assimilation that both groups undergo.