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## **Reorganisation of Ethnic Space in the Context of the Challenges of Globalisation**

*Abstract:* In this essay I will analyse selected aspects of the process of arranging traditional space in the face of the challenges of modernity. Progressive globalisation, cultural changes, social transformations—all these processes have influenced the ways local communities manage their territory. I will mainly deal with the phenomenon of reterritorialisation, focus on how identification with territory is reinforced in local communities. I will show how cultural legacy, characteristic of a given region, shapes particular versions of locality and globalisation. The role of ethnicity in these processes is of special interest. Is ethnic identification still taken into account in social strategies embedded in the processes of globalisation? In the first part I argue that modernity introduces irreversible changes to the character of existing and ethnically defined space. The second part includes arguments supporting the thesis about the necessity of adjusting to modern strategies of region management, which must entail partially giving up territorial identity protection. In spite of this, in the process of ethnic construction of a region, space seems to constitute a social framework which determines points of reference for collective action and conceptualisation of new reality.

*Keywords:* Lemkowszczyzna, ethnic identity, social space, region, globalization.

### **Why are Old patterns of Space Organisation So Important in the Struggle with Challenges brought about by Globalisation?**

The analysis of the phenomenon of reterritorialisation is related to a selected region in south-eastern Poland<sup>1</sup>. Before the 1940s, Lemkowszczyzna had been a relatively ethnically coherent space, inhabited mainly by Lemkos and Poles. It was at this time that the processes of migration commenced, which subsequently led to the break-up of the Lemko community. First the Lemkos left for Ukraine and, in 1947, as a result of ‘Operation Wisła’, they were deported to the western parts of the country, into the

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<sup>1</sup> The research to which I refer in the text are diverse. On the one hand, there are general comments on the subject of the mentioned ethnic group, which are the results of the dozen or so years of anthropological observations I conducted in Lemkowszczyzna. On the other hand, I refer to specific materials collected in my last research projects, realised in selected Lemko areas from 2006–2008; ‘Space management. Globalisation. Ethnicity. Power’ (grant MSWiN 1H02E03828) and ‘Reconstituting Democracy in Europe, RECON’ (Sixth PR). The main emphasis in the research was placed on matters of civic involvement and contemporary ethnic territory management strategies. The research was conducted in the western part of the traditional Lemko territory from Gorlice to Wysowa. Together with a team, I conducted in-depth interviews, both with the local leaders as well as the territory’s inhabitants. These issues were partly discussed in: Bukowski, Lubaś, Nowak - ‘Zarządzanie przestrzenią. Globalizacja, etniczność, władza’ [Management of the Space. Globalisation, Ethnicity, Power] (2006). Moreover, I used research and reviews of Andrzej Bukowski’s project, which was dedicated to the region of Małopolska (Bukowski 2004, 2006).

so-called “recovered territories.” Consequently, Lemkowszczyzna as an ethnically coherent whole ceased to exist. Abandoned villages became overgrown with weeds, churches were in a state of collapse and all signs of the ethnic domination of this group began to disappear. New settlers arrived and violated the rules of space management. With time, the Lemko territory started to change its appearance and functions as a result of this new situation. However the 1990s saw the beginning of ethnic revival of communities which had so far been pushed aside to the margins of social life, and this was accompanied by ongoing social changes in Europe. Increased activity of minority groups could also be noticed in this region. After returning sporadically and accidentally for several years, the Lemkos were starting more or less consciously to reconstruct their community identity, long considered to have perished. Churches were rebuilt, the Lemko language was reintroduced into school curricula and a festival of culture entitled ‘Watra’, a sign of the group’s rebirth and revitalisation of space, was established. Space reconstruction was attributed a special social meaning, which went significantly beyond mere functions of buildings or places (Nowak 2000).

The territory in question<sup>2</sup> is characterised by historically established meanings, which requires that these be taken into account in development plans for this area. Social actors who take decisions about this region always face a dilemma: to continue or break with existing patterns of development of the particular space. Space is thus mainly a carrier of tradition which new settlers regard as a kind of material in the context of suggested strategies towards new appropriation of space. Between the inherited space, existing frames and a new project there is a social process of mediation taking place. The basic challenge is how to fill this construct with concrete content, making use of the institutional and cultural resources which are a creation of the past and which comprise patterns, norms, meanings and symbols. The choice of strategies and plans for spatial development requires the social actors to face up to mechanisms and consequences of progressive globalisation. One of them is the phenomenon of ‘shrinking’ of the world, which makes territorial borders more penetrable and the formerly isolated social space more open and accessible. These phenomena lead to considerable weakening of the position and possibility of controlling the territories previously under the surveillance of state administration or ethnic and national groups, for instance. Globalisation also transforms time and spatial frames of social relations. It introduces new ways of shaping and experiencing social reality, intensifies worldwide social relations by building links between geographically isolated places, and at the same time contributes to transformation of all local communities (Giddens 1990: 64). Under the conditions of globalisation social relations and bonds become to a greater extent independent of the place where one is staying. In other words: place—shaped in a historical process, specifically organised and interpreted social space—ceases to be the only element, or even an important one in determining our action and social images (Kempny 1999). Both anthropologists and sociologists stress that processes of globalisation contribute substantially to the denaturalisation of rela-

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<sup>2</sup> When I write about Lemkowszczyzna in general, I mean its wide, historical and ethnographic borders. However, examples from research and observations of specific spatial organisation strategies concern only its western part (from Gorlice to Wysowa).

tions between culture, society and territory. We can speak of a process of progressive deterritorialisation, which on the one hand means the cultural homogenisation of space—places and areas becoming more and more alike in a cultural sense—and on the other hand free movement of particular as well as universal cultural transmissions over territorial borders (Appadurai 1996; Tomlinson 1999). Another important term in this context is “glocalisation,” which means at least a two-way process consisting of particularisation of cultural contents present in global circulation, or dissemination of transmissions of an initially limited scope.

Nevertheless, it is difficult to agree with the thesis about the atrophy of the relationship between culture and territory. As a matter of fact, the processes of globalisation are definitely changing the nature of this relationship, but it seems that the emergence of channels of cultural transmission, social networks of connections and interdependencies (crossing the borders of societies, regions and states) is probably leading to the appearance of new ways of creating the feeling of a cultural bond with a given territory (Featherstone 1995: 95).

Space is here regarded as a multifaceted phenomenon, as it is there, according to one anthropologist, where our whole life is realised. Space

is also the evidence of the authority, has a great symbolic and semiotic load, is subject to shaping and aesthetic interpretation, a sensory perceived part of inner identity and provides context for reflective and unreflective practices (Edensor 2004: 89).

The case of space reconstruction we are looking at takes place on a territory which had quite distinct symbolic borders. This territory was reserved for the ethnic group in possession of historical legitimacy to hold control over this fragment of space. Territorial bonds determined by particular features and cultural qualities of an ethnic, ethnographic, moral or religious nature were predominant. I have said before that space is a historical creation of activities and practices of individuals, groups and society institutions. To put it simply, space determines social action, but it is also determined by these groups; it is closely connected with values, images, symbols and narrations of particular social groups.

### **Reorganisation of Space**

Let us focus on what the introduction of space development strategies making the use of old ethnic patterns looks like in the case of the Lemko group in question. Naturally, the thing of key importance is the way functions and significance of territory and repetition of cultural patterns are understood when space is appropriated. Territory determines borders of political authority to consolidate and reproduce cultural, religious, economic or social structures. It generates exchange, facilitates communication, plays an important role in terms of access to social capital and has an essential meaning in processes of innovation and education. Territory constitutes a basis for social and cultural identification, and provides symbols, places and mythology which are used to build collective representations and solidarity. It defines the levels in the

process of constructing collective identity and of social mobilisation. Culture generates a particular way of thinking about space, characteristic of a group for which each area, place, object in space have clearly defined, symbolically saturated contents. What is currently available for the inhabitants of this region comes from the past and has already been defined. Culture is not only an inherited code from the past through which the present is defined, but it is also a reservoir of meanings which may be useful in building new strategies. It offers a set of references, which a community might use to construct an image of its place in the future, but which above all are used to communicate and integrate around new meanings and symbols. Culture might also be a form of mental escape from reality into mythological times of a “golden age.” This semantically marked-up space then becomes a testimony of bygone times of glory and prosperity. And although those days are reminisced about with nostalgia, it does not influence the actions undertaken at present. Interminable ‘digesting’ of the past and focusing on memory might hinder the introduction of new organisational patterns into the community’s life. Apparently, this is what we can observe in Lemkowszczyzna. On the one hand, the motif of sticking to the past is strong; on the other we can notice attempts to adopt the best patterns from the past into efficient space development and identity revival.

Speaking of the phenomenon of the present day Lemko restitution, though, we cannot treat this community as a coherent semantic concept. Compulsory migration shattered this community, and progressive modernisation together with processes of globalisation wrought havoc on this space. Currently it appears as a conglomeration of various places, areas and signs with progressive deterritorialisation destroying its spatial identity. We can observe fragmentation of tradition and weakened surveillance of the community over its historical territory because of disappearing symbolic borders. Its new appearance is resultant of two conditions connected with the attitude towards space. The first condition is a sense of continuity and stabilisation reinforced by collective memory, as the Lemkos reminisce about their ancestors, religion and, of course, their territory. The second condition is related to the rearrangements in the ethnic borderland: diffusion, migrations, progressive globalisation.

Drawing on my observations, I can conclude that as a result of expulsions in Lemkowszczyzna all social bonds—family, neighbourly and territorial—were shattered. It is a rarity in this region to find rooted families, which are the best source of social activity patterns, which understand the region best. In their place there appeared numerous ‘alien’ actors, who settled down in Lemkowszczyzna in the 1950s and beyond, bringing different cultural resources with them, and though the indigenous inhabitants do not deny them the right to settle there, they still treat them as outlanders. Finally, we deal with cases of “new others,” who have chosen this area for a temporary or permanent settlement as a result of a recent fad. The emergence of these so-called ‘glocal’ social actors has sparked more and more noticeable conflicts, breaking out against the background of different perceptions of social space between the aforementioned category, the Lemkos and a number of inhabitants of these areas who are not tied to it by ethnic sentiment. I am using the term glocal actors to refer to local folk culture lovers visiting the area, artists, writers, vagabonds who

have willingly settled there since the 1980s because of the region's unique scenery and culture. I would also place in the same category the owners of holiday cabins and land temporarily living in Lemkowszczyzna—wealthy, overworked people from big cities who want their holiday chalets, which resemble traditional houses of the area, to provide a break and rest from the tumult of the metropolis. It is especially interesting to observe the relations between the newcomers and people who lived in Lemkowszczyzna. Research indicates that both these groups have different attitudes towards social space, for instance towards the connection of the village to communication routes, the way the land is used, the significance of certain places in the area. It can also be noticed that the 'new strangers' buy land in the region, especially in its most picturesque parts, and therefore influence or control the connection of these places with the external world. That means each type of family living there may hold a different image of their space and their activity within it, and additionally each of them may have a different level of civilisation competences necessary for developing space. In such a situation we might not expect the emergence of a coherent concept of how the territory should be managed. There may be a situation where accord prevails as to the necessity of development in the area by modern patterns, but doubts appear when it comes to symbolic marking.

It seems that all inhabitants would like to see this region significantly remodelled and more attractive, which would mean to each of them new work positions and a decrease in unemployment. The use of ethnicity or tradition does not seem to be a contentious issue; the new strangers are more likely to use it, if only for stylisation. Destruction of social structure, which has not been reconstructed in a natural way, the leadership model in this multicultural area, weakness of self-government and state institutions and lack of crystallised informal structures are the main reasons for problems in the region. We may talk about a helplessness syndrome on the part of the average inhabitant of this region towards changing reality. The great majority cede their civic rights to their patrons, who have real power to influence the changes in their surroundings and the rules of how space is organised. The inhabitants of this region often emphasise that this is the responsibility of ethnic leaders and organisations and local authorities. This helplessness can be partly attributed to wrong civic education in the times of the Polish People's Republic, faith in the welfare state and its institutions and disbelief in individuals' own abilities, rights and privileges. It seems to me that it may also be attributed to the lack of a sense of full subjecthood.

Nowadays the villages in Lemkowszczyzna reflect the clash of numerous strategies of space organisation. We can find places of provincial character, such as Uście Gorlickie, villages where elements characteristic of the city completely break the image; Hańczowa with its typical blocks of flats, or the even more bizarre in terms of architecture Wysowa, where space organisation and architecture are entirely confusing to a visitor. On the hills surrounding this resort there are sanatorium buildings with an outlandish appearance characteristic of bygone times, and next to them modern guesthouses, hotels and holiday cabins are built. In the centre are blocks of flats and public utility buildings. When we add to this list Orthodox churches, cemeteries, shrines and a Lemko-style inn, we are left with a feeling of total spatial confusion.

A common phenomenon is the sight of modern buildings neighbouring old cottages which should have been pulled down long ago, but for a lot of people they still constitute an important link with the old and familiar space. In the aforementioned Wysowa the effects of the search for new directions in the development and economy of the village can be seen. The advantages of environment and ecology induce the establishment of agrotourist farms with the necessary infrastructure. Modern buildings, well-maintained as befits the city suburbs, are surrounded with ski lifts, horse studs and other facilities attracting tourists. This new and chaotic space development basically eliminates the ethnic factor, or reduces it to a merely pragmatic or sentimental function. The leaders often notice that the group is losing control over the territory. An inevitable consequence of these processes is the necessity for the ethnic group to introduce new plans of space management, marking out new symbolic borders, which will efficiently serve their social purpose. They will be considered by the members of the ethnic community as something real, impassable in principle, or passable under certain conditions. Not only do borders define the beginning and the end of ethnic space, but they should also impose spatial order. Communication opportunities in a given area depend on the kind of borders. It seems that those who are familiar with the symbolic code in force will be able to cross these borders. Naturally, getting around is easiest for the members of the community who build these borders. It is of great importance for the community to what extent these borders are tight and if the group is in control of its territory. Analysing the findings of my research from the past few years I am inclined to say that symbolic borders of the community have been crossed by strangers and have to be redefined by the Lemko community. The ethnic territory helped the community sustain its identity and redefine it after the trauma of expulsion, but no longer fulfils its function in the times of rapid changes. Fragmentised space does not constitute an effective shield protecting the community any more.

For a long time now, as I have mentioned before, the way villages are developed has been changing. Although Lemkos still live in traditional cottages in some places, this is not a manifestation of attachment to tradition, but most frequently poverty and the impossibility of modernising buildings. The way of land cultivation has changed, there are more farm machines now, and animal breeding has almost completely been given up. Young people decide to abandon villages in search of attractive jobs, and even if they decide to settle here, they introduce new order and habits. Preserving old customs and conforming to old rules used to be considered a manifestation of cultivation of tradition, but now it is thought backward and parochial. More and more frequently the elements of the old Lemko world develop folk features and strange worlds use ethnic elements for stylisation. The village of Łosie and its vicinity, the bygone pride of Lemkos land, is becoming a region with modern development, conforming to timid attempts at making this part of Lemkowszczyzna a recreation area with the special use of a newly-built water reservoir. The new dam in Klimkówka village made this place an attractive region for tourists, where the gradual emergence of buildings is completely changing the old scenery. Perhaps a few years ago no one would have thought that sailing boats or tourists camping by the reservoir might appear. There is

even a change in the nature of tourism, which has so far been dominated by walking tours. A new type of tourists has appeared—they are not only backpacking, but also driving cars dragging sailing boats behind from all corners of Poland.

### **Regional Strategies**

The process of reterritorialisation in Lemkos region described in this article can also be analysed in a wider context. What I have in mind is activation of strategies for construction of regional identity. An increased interest in regionalism has been conspicuous in Western Europe since the 1980s. The proponents of enforcing this strategy emphasised an emerging opportunity to dynamise social processes through including socio-economic territorial resources in the processes of Europeanisation and globalisation. The perception of the region as solely a state administrative unit started to sink into oblivion. The project provided for the regions in terms of competences, making it possible for them to function alternatively by taking over some socio-economic tasks so far performed by central institutions. Some proposals went even further, emphasising the possibility of gaining almost full independence by the regions included in international/global movement of goods, people or ideas. The cultural contents, strongly connected with regional identity, were almost entirely put aside, which was understandable in the context of the hypotheses disseminated at the time about progressive decrease in the significance of nation-states. In Poland the issue of such activation of regions appeared together with the debate about membership in the European Union. An opportunity to develop backward and provincial areas was evident. However, if regions with distinct identity and subjecthood have stood a chance to bring their strategies into effect, then in other cases we can only speak of the state delegating some rights without the necessary financial and political support. These regions struggle with numerous problems, but from our perspective the main drawback of this project is the lack of coherent ideology legitimating their existence (Keating 1998).

Paradoxically, this is the moment in which a chance to restore the meaning of locality becomes conspicuous. Progressive globalisation, which I mentioned earlier, leads to a sense of social disintegration and a lack of points of reference which could facilitate the undertaking of necessary social actions. The institutional and organisational frames reinforcing the feeling of belonging to a particular territory have been undermined. The mechanisms which set collective activity in motion have been weakened. One can also notice a lack of interpretation frames of social reality, which are responsible for the creation of the image of social order. In this context individuals and groups have to seek in their immediate surroundings resources which will help them define their position in the face of progressive globalisation. The structures of the local world, namely local socio-economic systems, small enterprises or the networks of European regions, seem to offer such a possibility. It seems that we will be observing—and sometimes such processes are already happening—reinterpretation of territorial identities based on some cultural, ethnic or traditional resources.

In the south-eastern part of Poland regional elites undertook some actions aimed at defining regions understood in such a way. There are two alternative projects, enforced with different effects. The first refers to the historical region of Małopolska<sup>3</sup>. As a result of self-government reform dating back to the late 1990s, this region was granted voivodeship status, which greatly facilitated the commencement of work leading to the construction of the Małopolska regional identity. New institutions, a new administrative system and state support were supposed to ensure this project's success. The alternative project for regional identification is connected with the revival of the idea of historical Galicia. This project is not supported by means of institutional or administrative prerogatives which could facilitate the region's management, but it does have a distinct mythology, supported with sentiment, legitimating the project's existence. The legacy of Galicia mainly relies on civic and economic traditions, but what is more important for the project analysed here is the perennially alive idea of multiculturalism. The Galician myth is ideally designed to build the region's distinction, but it does have some important limitations in the form of administrative and legal barriers (see Bukowski 2004, 2006; Gąsior-Niemiec 2006).

It is not my aim to evaluate these projects, but I would like to share a comment on the likelihood of putting them into effect in the area in question. In the context of reconstruction of spatial identity, both projects have to include suggestions for Lemkowszczyzna. This territory has a good starting position in both cases, but there is a lot of doubt as to whether they could be incorporated into these strategies of space development. Let us focus on the possibilities of making use of the cultural legacy of the ethnic group. Basically, Lemkowszczyzna is just one of the many territories defined for the leaders and elites conceptualising this region<sup>4</sup>. Regional strategies have to take into account not only national interests, the regional policy of the European Union, and challenges of globalisation, but also the needs of other ethnic groups. 'Lemko-ness' does not seem to play an important role in these projects. Just the opposite, it is attributed a rather marginal role, which results from its ethnic character, distinguishing it from other local communities, as well as a minor socio-economic significance. The Małopolska project seems to focus mainly on the realisation of the strategy of using economic and productive resources, on which field Lemkowszczyzna does not have much to offer. The Galicia project, theoretically more appealing to the Lemkos, does not have such clearly defined goals which would be conducive to faster development of the region, thus making the project less attractive to the inhabitants of the region. There is, however, a pool of resources which enables Lemkowszczyzna to take part in both projects. I mean by this a colourful set of cultural and symbolic resources, which, if included in the project, would give hope for dynamisation and revival of the region. I have already stated that ethnicity does have its place in the progressive

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<sup>3</sup> When I write about Małopolska and Lemkowszczyzna in the context of regional strategy, I mean their borders as they are popularly understood, and I do not enter into deliberations on their administrative borders.

<sup>4</sup> It is worth noticing that from now on, the notion of elites and leaders refers to people and groups creating regional strategies, which usually have nothing in common with the ethnic leaders within the Lemko society. And while we are about it—I believe that it is exactly this lack of translation of regional projects to the level of ethnic or local leaders that makes the projects so difficult to implement.



globalisation process. Making use of this advantage could become a driving force for further development. Tendencies to commercialise ethnicity go well in line with prospects for promoting tourism in the region. A good example here may be the development of the village of Wysowa. As a matter of fact, I have said that this place proves progressive semantic reduction of ethnic space, but there must be some costs of the ongoing changes incurred. Conferring to the rules of globalised tourism, Lemkos who advocate folk culture might make the region an attractive place for present-day tourists. Social actors, often outside the region, benefit from the popularisation of ethnic cultures and invest in the region, attracting more and more tourists in this way. Developing accommodation facilities, and above all the agrotourism farms which are popular here, become the area's strong point. Other advantages are related to the appealing mountainous scenery, which attracts numerous tourists. Far-sighted investors are developing networks of ski lifts in order to encourage winter-sports lovers to pay a visit to the region. Another popular activity is horse riding. A far-reaching plan seems to be a development project of a reservoir for people who appreciate water sports. If we add to the list ethnic scenery embellished with picturesque Orthodox churches and shrines, which provide the space with additional meaning, we can see that the tourist appeal of the area is attractive enough for the region to have a strategy of revitalisation.

How do regionalisms make use of the cultural potential of local communities? From the perspective of recent years it has appeared that economic and technological changes did not weaken the significance of the region, but only altered the nature of the territorial system of bonds and cooperation. The advocates of the new strategy for the region use the fact that the spatial production character of the region gave way to the socio-cultural virtues of the area, endogenic innovation potential and abilities to compete for external investment. In this way the region takes on the meaning as functional space on one hand and cultural space, a correlation of collective identification, on the other. This strategy is based on an attempt to create a new formula based on regional identification. By this I mean identification going far beyond traditionally conceived ethnic space. Leaders propose ethnographically and ethnically distinct spaces to be embedded in an area much wider and based on a new type of bonds. It is not the distinctness of values that constitutes a condition for regional identity, but the fact that these particular values may be used as frames for defining and realising social or economic aims. Space, as an important element of economic strategies, determining options for potential competition and cooperation and defining development opportunities and barriers of the community, derives the status of a basic element of regional identity. New regional identity is not only going to be inscribed in the existing cultural frames, but rather to function as a mechanism of conscious and creative reference to tradition in order to mobilise collective action in the face of changing economic and political conditions. Contemporary regions are a creation of social mobilisation and political leadership. It is the regional elites that are beginning to play an important role in contemporary regionalism. Their ambition, skills and interests are becoming an important element of the reactivation of territorial identities. The new institutional setting encourages integration in a regional system

and activities of an international scope. Regional identity activated in socio-economic mobilisation processes is becoming an important condition of competitiveness of the region in the post-industrial world. Now what counts is permanent and sustainable development in a given territory, as only this can ensure attractiveness of the region in the network of economic and social bonds.

The role of culture and legacy of the past might be seen on the one hand as a catalyst of transformation, but on the other it may hinder the realisation of the regional project. The existing culture might become a basis for new socio-economic bonds or it may force the leaders to capitulate in the face of rigid and resistant rules, which effectively protect tradition, but at the same time obstruct innovative types of development strategies. The regional project provides for the creation of a more attractive construction to the global world—a regional identity. In this context the Lemko culture would be a resource for new references to space. Moreover, its symbols, meanings, past practices constitute material for constructing new meanings and practices in a new context. The most important role at the stage of putting such a project into practice will be played by symbols, which transfer individual feelings and meanings to the ground of collective action (Bukowski 2006). Another question is whether the inhabitants find this project important or possess necessary competences. It seems that limited knowledge of the project among the inhabitants may turn out to be a serious barrier to further development.

The construction of a region is a process which takes place in two dimensions concurrently: institutional and cultural. The institutional process of integration proceeds relatively smoothly, which is most conspicuous in the case of Małopolska, where activity of the leaders produces first results, mainly in the sphere of investments. On the other hand, local authorities, though effective in their attempts to gain investments for the region, have not yet attributed a high symbolic rank to the process of regional integration. The cultural element, which was supposed to be the basis for the creation of new identities, has not been successfully enforced so far. It seems that incapability of symbolic expression of institutional processes and impossibility to make them culturally objective result from the fact that cultural identity in the Małopolska region is still saturated with patterns characteristic of ethnic cultures, where relations rely mainly on differences or hierarchy and symbolic superiority. This fact might affect the institutional process, which is bound to assume technocratic shape in order to take into consideration particular functioning of cultural space (Bukowski 2004, 2006). The inhabitants of the region do not understand the assumptions underlying these strategies and consequently do not identify themselves with the project of regional identity but rather reside in well-established, familiar frames of ethnic or local identification. In Lemkowszczyzna no one treats a broader and thus more blurred conception of Małopolska identity seriously. People are mainly interested in investments and new work posts and not in abstract regional projects. They do not disregard the changing socio-economic conditions, notice environmental transformation and new social actors, who co-decide about space reorganisation. They perceive these changes differently and we may doubt if they relate to them. The Galicia project appears even more intangible to them as it gives an impression of being a projection of dreams of intel-

lectuals and social leaders', who would like this forgotten world to be remembered. The inclusion of Lemkowszczyzna in the project has a symbolic character and does not entail any concrete action which would appeal to the inhabitants. An attempt at further intensification of endeavours to join the institutional and cultural spheres is indispensable. The lack of far-reaching visions of development, drawing on the silent consensus over what the region is and what it could be in the future; visions which would trigger off animated discussion among leaders and inhabitants, just like it happens in some other regions in Poland, suggests that elements of cultural tradition and spatial identity do not function on a regional scale. Unless the inhabitants participate consciously in the realisation of these projects, they will remain only theoretical constructs.

Lemkowszczyzna, without the support of regional authorities, has a much smaller chance of a space reorganisation of the kind which could be successful. The lack of external investments in the area does not allow even for the best projects to be enforced. The question is to what extent the project of the authorities and elites to build regional identity would foster collective action. Will the inhabitants of the region approve of the proposed model of collective identification? Are these development prospects attractive enough for ethnic cultures and local communities to regard them as worthy of realisation, even if this would happen at the expense of weakening symbolic borders and their identity? The experiences of other regions prove that strategies of social organisation can be effective and useful when confronted with progressive globalisation.

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