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# Love, Peace and Rock 'n' Roll

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## on Gorky Street: The

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### 'Emotional Style' of the Soviet

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### Hippie Community

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#### Abstract

*Soviet hippies were in many ways a paradoxical phenomenon. They imitated an ideal that was shaped by American realities in a Soviet world. They were anti-Soviet, yet they professed an apolitical life style. This article proposes that rather than looking at the Soviet hippies with ideology in mind it is more fruitful to consider them an emotional community whose 'emotional style' differed from the Soviet mainstream and ultimately proved a formidable challenge to the Soviet system. The article investigates several exterior markers of Soviet hippie culture, which formed and reflected the 'emotional style' of the Soviet hippies such as their creed of love and peace, their enjoyment of rock music and the significance of hippie fashion. Drawing on interviews with contemporary witnesses from the Soviet hippie scene particular attention is given to the new rhetoric hippies employed to describe emotions particular to their style of life, to the way the practice of these emotions differed from the official Soviet emotional codex and to the nexus that linked the vocabulary and practice of emotions with specific items, sites, rituals and attributes. The article concludes that, while Soviet hippies remained a subculture, their style, including their 'emotional style' proved very durable and capable of expansion into the mainstream, ultimately surviving the Soviet system and its emotional norms.*

When did a Soviet hippie become a hippie? The answer to this simple question is not as easy as it seems. Was it when a person looked like a hippie and dressed like a hippie? But hair takes time to grow and colourful clothing could be hard to come by in a world that encouraged sober dress and produced clothing according to need not demand. Or was it when a person got arrested for the first time by the Komsomol brigade on Gorky Street and was recorded in the folder labelled HIPI? But what if the Komsomol, who did not even know how to spell hippie, made a mistake? Why should hostile outsiders have the authority of definition? Or was it when a person

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adopted the hippie creed of love and peace and freedom? But what exactly was the hippie creed? How was it possible to know the ins and outs of hippie ideology in a country that was shut off from most information about the West? Was there a right and wrong way to be a hippie?

Sergei Moskalev, one of the most influential Moscow hippies, asserted that one became a hippie through the selection of one's peers: 'In general a person starts to be a hippie, when he meets other hippies and they take him in. They say: 'Come and sit with us.'<sup>1</sup> Eva Brashman, a pioneer of hipness in Riga, also stressed the communitarian aspect of hippie self-identity: 'If he is one of ours . . . this is already more a feeling . . . if you meet a stranger, you know immediately – is he family or not family.'<sup>2</sup> Vladimir Soldatov in contrast emphasised the personal, internal experience that made him a hippie: 'To be a hippie is an "inner condition". And how can one explain this inner condition? Love. In love. In the world of love. I love people. Even though they are not very good, I love them. I love you.'<sup>3</sup> Vladimir Teplishev defined 'hippiedom' (*khippovost'*) as the 'very live necessity to cut the social, umbilical cord. This means pain and loss, but it is liberation and joy.'<sup>4</sup> While coming from different angles, the testimony given by these Soviet hippies is clear. To become a hippie is mainly an emotional process. You are a hippie when you feel like a hippie, and when the hippie community feels you are one of them. It might hurt. But it will give you an unparalleled sense of freedom. You will find love.

Instead of understanding the Soviet hippies as an expression of political or cultural opposition (even though they could be that too), it might be fruitful to look at them as an emotional community and try to decipher the 'emotional style' that created and reflected this community.<sup>5</sup> Barbara Rosenwein has enshrined 'emotional communities' firmly into the historical lexicon, defining them as 'groups in which people adhere to the same norms of emotional expression and value – or devalue – the same or related emotions.'<sup>6</sup> Hence emotional communities are governed by certain 'emotional regimes', which William Reddy defined as 'normative orders for emotions.'<sup>7</sup> At any given time and place several emotional regimes may be competing – and at times – contradicting each other. Recent scholarship has tended to understand emotions as performative processes, both influenced by and influencing their social, cultural, spatial and linguistic environment.<sup>8</sup> The term 'emotional style' is taken from Benno Gammerl's pioneering work and aims to analyse emotions with their full contextualisation in mind: practice, setting, place and relationship

<sup>1</sup> Interview Sergei Moskalev, Moscow, 24 April 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Interview Eva Brashman, Rundule, 5 Aug. 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Interview Vladimir Soldatov, Moscow, 30 May 2009.

<sup>4</sup> 'Kniga', personal archive Tatiana Teplisheva.

<sup>5</sup> Benno Gammerl, 'Emotional Styles – Concepts and Challenges', *Rethinking History: the Journal of Theory and Practice*, 16, 2 (2012), 161–75.

<sup>6</sup> Barbara Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), 2.

<sup>7</sup> William Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 124.

<sup>8</sup> Jan Plamper, *Geschichte und Gefühle: Grundlagen der Emotionsgeschichte* (Munich: Siedler, 2012), 313–19.

to other systems of 'emotional style'.<sup>9</sup> He relies heavily on the work of Monique Scheer, who theorised the different components of practising emotions. For Scheer, emotions are not external entities, but exist because people mobilize, name and communicate emotions, thus creating a subjective practice that connects their interior world with their exterior environment. Emotions hence depend in their meaning on the people who practise them rather than constituting an objective 'outside'.<sup>10</sup> Gammerl incorporates Scheer's insights into his theoretical framework, but develops it further to give room for the application of concepts such as emotionally loaded spaces, the qualifying character of certain settings, the meaning of accompanying attributes, ritual, historical context, etc. For him the practice of emotions is dependent on a myriad factors, all of which work together to construct a certain 'emotional style'.<sup>11</sup> Most interestingly from the point of view of a historian of alternative cultures, he conceptualises 'emotional style' as a form of 'culture', highlighting thus the parallels between alternative 'emotional styles' and subcultural practices, both of which interact on a variety of levels with a dominant system, simultaneously negating, aping, challenging and manipulating it.

This article is at the crossroads of three themes: the history of emotions, the analysis of late socialism and the reconstruction and examination of the world of the Soviet hippie community.<sup>12</sup> It will explore how Soviet hippies chose to express and identify themselves via a rhetoric of privileging emotional experiences over other markers of selfhood. It will demonstrate how the backbones of hippie culture – music, dress and habitat – were linked to an idea of supremacy of emotions over thought. In the process it will highlight the intense entanglement and mutual fertilisation between the hippies' championing of emotions, the practices that both inspired and expressed these emotions, and the linguistic, spatial and artistic accessories created and fashioned precisely to express and elicit the emotions prized by the hippies. The 'emotional style' of the Soviet hippies was thus formed by bouncing off, challenging, adopting and borrowing from the dominant, official 'emotional style' of late socialism, defining itself against it, yet also unable to shake off its omnipresent influence. It did not exist outside their general habitat of late socialism, but reflected messages created by the Soviet 'authoritative discourse' or, to use the terms coined by Dick Hebdidge for

<sup>9</sup> Gammerl, 'Emotional Styles', 161–75.

<sup>10</sup> Monique Scheer, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (and Is That What Makes Them Have a History)? A Bourdieuan Approach to Understanding Emotion', *History and Theory* 51 (2012), 193–220.

<sup>11</sup> See several articles in a special issue of *Rethinking History* edited by Benno Gammerl: Andreas Reckwitz, 'Affective Spaces: A Praxeological Outlook', *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice*, 16, 2 (2012), 241–58; Mark Seymour, 'Emotional Arenas: From Provincial Circus to National Courtroom in Late Nineteenth Century Italy', *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice*, 16, 2 (2012), 177–197.

<sup>12</sup> There has not been as much coverage of the history of emotions in the Russian and Soviet context. The notable exceptions are two important collections: Jan Plamper, Shammy Shakhadat, Mark Ellie, eds, *Rossiskaia Imperiia Chustv: Podkhody k kul'turnoi Istorii Emotsii* (Moscow: DHI, 2010); Mark Shteinberg and Valeria Sobol, *Interpreting Emotions in Russia and Eastern Europe* (DeKalb, Ill.: Illinois University Press, 2011) and a *Slavic Review* Special Issue 'Emotional Turn: Feelings in Russian History and Culture', *Slavic Review*, 68, 2 (2009).

his deliberations on subculture, their 'parent culture'.<sup>13</sup> Hippie 'emotional practices' constantly interacted with and responded to the pressures of the very world they wanted to escape. Their newly (and subversively) constructed 'emotional spaces' were shared, bordered and invaded by the hegemonic space that was the late Soviet Union, creating hybrid new sites of emotion. They borrowed and manipulated emotional vocabulary and practices that existed in the wider world and made them their own. In the process Soviet hippies radically challenged the dominant 'emotional regime'. Soviet hippies altered Soviet conventions regulating emotional experience. They refused to fill all their emotions with ulterior purpose. They emphasised aspects of practising emotions that violated Soviet good manners. They used the rhetoric of emotionally felt difference to create a separate physical and ideological identity.

As such hippie 'emotional style' is reminiscent of the late socialist worlds described by Alexei Yurchak in his *Everything Was Forever Until It Was No More*. Yurchak labels the forms of 'real', 'lived' socialism created by the alienated members of the last Soviet generation as '*vnye*' or 'deterritorialised' from the official discourse. The emptied, formalistic nature of the official discourse allows its purely performative practice, leaving room for filling it with new content and meaning.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, one could argue that the official 'emotional style' of the late Soviet Union was considered so empty of true meaning that the hippies could use its practices, rituals and spaces to create a new 'style'. Yet, while Yurchak is adamant that the new hybrid discourse of his subjects (some of whom were indeed close or at least sympathetic to the hippie movement) is not in opposition to the official discourse, this article will argue that hippie 'emotional style' became more than a 'deterritorialised' milieu. Rather its very celebration of the 'vagueness' and 'non-directiveness' of emotions (and hence the celebration of the very essence of emotions) broke new ground in relation to prevailing Soviet norms. Soviet hippies readily welcomed the homologue array of hippie attributes such as ecstatic consumption of music, colourful dress, eccentric living arrangements, experimental drug usage and so on, searching for a certain 'feel' of life. In the process they challenged both the word-centric nature of public culture as well as the Soviet norms on 'how', 'when' and 'why' to feel.<sup>15</sup> The expansion of hippie style into ever more areas of daily life, the creation of more and more spaces linked and filled with emotional practices and the adoption of this style – at least partially – by a larger and larger segment of the young population meant that hippie 'emotional style' was soon considered a form of opposition and even protest by hippies and authorities alike. And one that was not without larger consequences. As Jan Plamper has noted, one of the big questions for the history of emotions is to

<sup>13</sup>Dick Hebdidge, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (London: Methuen, 1979).

<sup>14</sup>Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press: 2006), 126–57.

<sup>15</sup>On the regulation of emotions in Russia/Soviet Union see Catriona Kelly, 'Pravo na emotsii, pravil'nye emotsii: Upravleni chuvstvami v Rossii posle epokhi prosveshcheniia', in Plamper et al., eds, *Imperiia Chuvstv*, 51–77. See also Sheila Fitzpatrick, 'Happiness and Toska: An Essay in the History of Emotions in Pre-War Soviet Russia', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 50, 3 (2004), 358–71.

explain the causality of change in emotional regimes.<sup>16</sup> The role of subaltern, non-hegemonic 'emotional styles' is crucial to this kind of deliberation, as is the question of agency within a structural framework. A closer look at how a non-conformist group in a society that discouraged pluralism constructed a separate 'emotional style', will illuminate some of the mechanisms that cause change – not least, because in the long run the 'emotional style' of the hippies out-manoeuvred and outlasted that of its Soviet parent community.

The Soviet hippie community is an almost completely blank spot on the map of Soviet history – despite the fact that it existed for roughly two decades, included several thousand people and left a rich legacy in terms of music, art and life-style.<sup>17</sup> It came into existence in several places simultaneously around 1967/68, most notably in Moscow and larger cities in the Baltic States. They emerged partly from the so-called *Beatlomania* (Beatles fans), partly from beatnik-style youths and partly they were made up of privileged youngsters, who had access to information from the West. They studied the pictures and descriptions that were at their disposal – including a number in the Soviet press – and strove to imitate what they knew of the hippies in London, New York and San Francisco. While initially largely left alone by the authorities, from 1971 onwards the Soviet regime used a variety of strategies to eliminate the phenomenon, yet without ever using full force. Hippies found themselves expelled from workplaces and educational institutions. They were frequently 'arrested' by Komsomol patrols and in severe cases they found themselves forcibly committed to psychiatric hospitals, where they were treated for 'schizophrenia'. Many less committed hippies left the active circuit. Those who were willing to drop out from Soviet society – meaning to live without a fixed place of work, risking arrest and forced psychiatric treatment and travelling extensively along established hippie routes – founded the *sistema* – an all-Union wide network of hippies and other

<sup>16</sup>Jan Plamper, 'Introduction to Special Issue "Emotional Turn? Feelings in Russian and Soviet History"', *Slavic Review*, 68, 2 (2009), 230.

<sup>17</sup>Most of what is known about the Soviet hippies is generated by themselves, especially on their webforum hippy.ru and domikhippy.ru. A few Western and Russian scholars have looked at parts of the hippie community, especially at its later incarnation in the 1980s. See John Bushnell, *Moscow Graffiti: Language and Subculture* (Boston, Mass.: Unwin, 1990), 117–24. Tat'iana Shchepanskaia, *Sistema: Teksty i traditsii subkul'tury* (Moscow: OGI, 2004). Aleksandr Zapesotskii, Aleksandr Fain, *Eta neponiatnaia molodezh': Problemy neformal'nykh molodezhnykh ob'edinenii* (Moscow, Profizdat, 1990). M. Rozin, 'The Psychology of Soviet Hippies', *Soviet Sociology*, 29, 1 (1999), 44–72. A cursory mention can be found in Hilary Pilkington, *Russia's Youth and its Culture: A Nation's Constructors and Constructed* (London: Routledge, 1994). They have also been analysed in their local context: William Risch, *The Ukrainian West: Culture and the Fate of Empire in Soviet Lviv* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2011), 237–46. Mark Swede, 'All You Need is Lovebeads: Latvia's Hippies Undress for Success', in Susan Reid and David Crowley, *Style and Socialism: Modernity and Material Culture in Post-War Eastern Europe* (Oxford: Berg, 2000), 189–208. Sergei Zhuk, *Rock and Roll in the Rocket City: The West, Identity and Ideology in Soviet Dnepropetrovsk 1960–1985* (Washington DC: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010). In addition there is a smattering of memoirs published in East and West, which feature hippies or are written by former and current hippies. Andrea Lee, *Russian Journal* (New York: Faber, 1979), 90–100; Artemy Troitsky, *Back in the USSR: The True Story of Rock in Russian* (London: Omnibus, 1987), 20–3; Vasilii Bariantsev, *My – Khippi* (Moscow: P&F, 2004); Mata Hari, *Puding iz Pomoshki: Khippi kak oni est'* (Moscow: Forum, 2008); Aleksandr Dvorkin, *Moia Amerika* (Moscow: Khristianskaia Biblioteka, 2014).

non-conformists, who had their own rituals, meetings places and economic survival system. The Soviet hippie movement survived a number of periods of increased repression – most notably during the Moscow Olympics – and was still going strong by the time the Soviet Union collapsed. They did not fare well economically in the years after socialism. Their *sistema* and movement was almost forgotten until social media gave them new ways to connect and new forums to commemorate their history.

Most of my sources for this article are drawn from interviews I conducted, along with a smattering of memoirs and official documents.<sup>18</sup> These are excellent sources for writing the history of emotions, since respondents usually not only speak about their emotions, but often express emotions in the process of remembering. However, as Jan Plamper has pointed out, it is here that potential pitfalls lurk, since such direct reference can lead to taking the described emotions unquestionably at face value or forgetting the significant chronological gap that has usually passed between the experience of emotion and its memory.<sup>19</sup> Just like any other source emotional statements require interpretation and personal judgment. I have analysed the answers of interviewees both with the view of putting their testimony about emotions into proper, contemporary context, for example the wider implications of a particular term of emotional expression at a certain time at a certain place among certain people, and with regard to evaluating their words in the light of their experiences since the event they recount. Someone who emigrated from Russia in the 1970s to Israel or America employs a different vocabulary and normative system from someone who remained in the country and lived through Perestroika and the upheaval of the 1990s. However, many emotions important to the Soviet hippie movement are bound up with a certain vocabulary specific to time and place and often only used by former hippies when recounting these times. The very language hence provides additional clues to how emotional practices depended on and interacted with their contemporary habitus, thus once again underlining the invaluable information that can be gained from the spoken word. The interviews are used both as a corpus of sources with emphasis on identifying trends, repetition of key terms and ideas and common parlance and as individual texts which are read beyond their literal meaning.

### **All you need is love**

The very essence of the hippie creed stresses the emotion of love as the axis around which all life should revolve. Each hippie community had its own understanding of what ‘love’ should mean. In the West the idea of love as an antithesis to war – and hence coupled with peace – was central to the ideological foundations of

<sup>18</sup>Contact with my correspondents was by a mixture of following the established hippie networks and extensive searching on the internet. Much effort has been made to interview hippies both from the big cities as well as the provinces, men as well as women and people of different networks. I have concentrated mainly on hippies active in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s. All interviews were conducted as loosely structured life interviews, which asked questions pertaining both to life before and after a correspondents’ time as a hippie.

<sup>19</sup>Plamper, *Gefühle*, 49, 342.

the movement. Behind the Iron Curtain there was more nominal lip service to the anti-war aspect of 'love' – certainly people did protest against Vietnam and later events in Latin America, but it smacked too much of official propaganda ever to serve as a viable vehicle of Soviet hippie identity.<sup>20</sup> For Soviet hippies 'love' was considered the opposite to 'normal' Soviet interpersonal relations. The propagation and practising of true, pure, uncalculated love became the distinguishing factor of the hippie community. 'Love' meant stepping out of the career mill of late socialism, which required bending one's mind and speech to suit the official party-political requirements. It meant living in a way that was uncompromisingly different in a society that was seen as compromising and compromised. It was the term the hippies had chosen to rally their 'emotional community' and it was the emotion under whose umbrella they found shelter and purpose. The banner of love and peace (which were used together so frequently as to become almost indistinguishable in the hippie mind), while vague, created a sense of unity and, as will be shown, a homology of self-defining practices.

Love was both reassuringly spiritual and comfortably vague. Vladimir Soldatov's testimony demonstrates how embracing love alleviated the burden of battling with complex questions of identity for the Soviet hippies, while at the same time still fulfilling the Soviet ideal of serving a higher purpose: 'You understand, if love explains everything, then everything is explained easily.'<sup>21</sup> Such a view is in striking contrast to the usual method of Soviet analysis. Soviet self-portrayal consisted of endless autobiographical facts. The Soviet hippies choose to dispense with all personal information in favour of a community of 'love'. Often they did not even know each other's first let alone last names. They knew each other 'by love'. Hippies often contrast the feeling they had for each other with the greyness and immorality of the Soviet world. The young Aleksandr Dvorkin, now the Orthodox church's official representative on questions of sects and sectarianism, described his youthful attraction to the hippies: 'This small group of people seemed to me – and not only to me – like some semi-godly order – a brotherhood of love and freedom in the midst of a dying communist ideology, dullness and culture of informing.'<sup>22</sup> Tatiana Ivanov observed her hippie brother's path with interest, but sceptical distance, and describes how this credo of love was indeed very seductive, not only in words but also in practice:

In the beginning I, of course, liked this creative atmosphere, when you enter a different life – when we met at other people's – everybody is a brother to you. Everybody treats you like a king. Like a relative – that is understood. But even more – like a king. They put you the whole time on a pedestal . . . with this admiration, this warmth. I love you, as you are . . . They warmed each other with their love.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup>The Soviet hippies even organised an anti-Vietnam demonstration in 1971, which got crushed by the authorities. However, in general these topics were occupied by the official press and hence not very attractive to the hippies. Later Afghanistan became a bit more of a focal point, but anti-war issues were never as central to the Soviet hippies as they were to their Western peers.

<sup>21</sup>Interview Soldatov.

<sup>22</sup>Dvorkin, *Moia Amerika*, 65.

<sup>23</sup>Interview Tatiana Ivanova, Moscow, 11 Sept. 2011.

One cannot help but consider this in context with the previous generation – the children of the Thaw – who felt the need to find a definition for themselves and their environment through debate and discussion. The young Thaw generation's protest was searching, reformist and discursive.<sup>24</sup> It wanted to find definite answers, often within the socialist framework that had socialised them. As one contemporary put it, it was very earnest:

Nobody worked or ate, we talked and talked, smoked and smoked, to the point of passing out. What had happened to our country? How had we allowed it to happen? Would the new cult of sincerity change us?<sup>25</sup>

The hippie movement, at least partially, grew out of this time of intensive discussing and searching for a more viable Soviet future. Its rejection of direct political involvement in favour of practising love in all its forms was not an antithesis but rather a variant of the 'cult of sincerity'. The hippies too searched for a better future. Yet rather than their words, they wanted their emotions to be sincere.

Indeed many early hippies came of age at the tail end of the reform years and many hippie careers started in the cafes and meeting spots of the Soviet beatnik generation.<sup>26</sup> Smoke-filled discussions were still very much at the centre of hippie life, as was the idea that they had to make sense of themselves, the world around them and their place in it. Yet, they felt that their new way of life had taken them on a different path to the one trodden by either their elder peers or their parents. Boris Grebenshikov was among the Leningrad youth who discovered first the Beatles and then the ideals of the Western hippies in the late 1960s. He put both of his discoveries to creative use, founding the Leningrad rock group Aquarium, and eventually becoming the idol and voice of a whole generation of people living on the edge of Soviet society – the legendary 'generation of yard and store workers':<sup>27</sup>

When I was a child, about ten years old, I looked at my parents and their friends with admiration: they were strong, beautiful and intelligent people. But, just a few years later, I suddenly began to see . . . that they were not getting any happier, and even more so, they were ever tormented by never-ending doubts . . . I understood that I wanted something different, that I was born for something completely different . . . I knew with absolute certainty that there was something different out there . . . and when I heard rock' n' roll in general and the Beatles in particular, I knew that help had arrived – a different existence, which defined exactly what I *felt* [italic added].<sup>28</sup>

<sup>24</sup> See, e.g., the discussions in Vladislav Zubok, *Zhivago's Children: The Last Russian Intelligentsia* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2009); Denis Kozlov, *The Readers of Novyi Mir: Coming to Terms with the Stalinist Past* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2013); Ludmilla Alexeyeva, *The Thaw Generation* (Boston, Mass.: Little Brown, 1990).

<sup>25</sup> Cited in Anna von Bremzen, *Mastering the Art of Soviet Cooking* (New York: Crown, 2013), 128.

<sup>26</sup> Interviews William Brui, London, 16 Oct. 2011; Andris Grinbergs, Riga, 9 April 2009.

<sup>27</sup> One of the most famous songs by Boris Grebenshikov and the group Aquarium was titled *Pokolenie Dvornikov i Storozhei*. The term became instantly the byword of a generation who felt marginalised and out of place.

<sup>28</sup> 'Boris Grebenshikov: "I no longer owe anything to any anyone"'. 27 Nov. 2003 [http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/russian/entertainment/newsid\\_3242000/3242122.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/russian/entertainment/newsid_3242000/3242122.stm) (last visited 2 March 2014). [Author's emphasis]

His Moscow contemporary Sasha Lipnitskii also chose to describe his generation's new world of rock and hippiedom and its concomitant dedication to love in terms of binaries of rational politics and abstract emotions. He juxtaposes political engagement with an aesthetic, spiritual lifestyle – and hence implicitly rational debate with vague feelings.

I, for example, was more socially active, more interested in politics – I talked, for example, about my reaction to the invasion of Czechoslovakia. But the majority were interested in the hippies only as a lifestyle – see, how beautiful! I want to say beautiful in the spiritual sense. Make love, not war. Flower-power, clothes, desire not to live like one's parents . . . That was all not so easy.<sup>29</sup>

The distinction between these two different modes of life – beauty versus politics – was hardly as absolute as either Grebenshikov or Lipnitski portray it. In a world that was shaped by the Bolshevik project with its demand for a total transformation of society, nobody – least of all people who professed to shun politics – could be apolitical. The hippie re-definition of the emotion of love as a forgiving, tolerant, individual and absolute force – and consequently the redefinition of societal and human relations – put the Soviet hippies into the position of a Davidesque challenger to the established order: small, but aiming at the very essence of the Soviet behemoth, precisely because Soviet ideology also believed in community and equality. Indeed, it soon became clear that the hippies did not only redefine for themselves the understanding of love and its societal significance. They soon were busy building up a whole universe of emotional practices and markers, which also partly imitated, partly challenged, yet ultimately subverted the dominant emotional style.

### Feel the music

The rock soundtrack that accompanied, shaped and was created by the hippie community gave rise to a plethora of emotional experiences in sites and settings that created and reflected these emotions. It fostered emotionally charged rituals and practices, which in turn fed back into the mysticism that surrounded the experience of rock music. In short, rock music was essential to creating and developing the hippies' emotional style.

In one of the rare documents – titled *Canon* – issued by the Soviet hippie community itself, the Moscow hippies Guru and Sergei Shutov tried to capture the all-encompassing role of rock music in creating hippie self-identity and life-style. Rock for them transcended music. It was a set of emotional associations:

Rock is not an art form . . . We have not found it. It found us. Rock is born of the ritual emission of the urban biomass, panic and pleasure (*kaif*), love and aggression. Rock is the non-existing language of the chief. The hippie himself . . . a word. His world . . . a citation of this language.<sup>30</sup>

For Guru and his fellow hippies listening to (and making) music was not merely an activity. It was an emotional experience that united them and made them what they

<sup>29</sup> Interview Aleksandr Lipnitskii, Moscow, 2 July 2011.

<sup>30</sup> Guru i Sergei Shutov, 'Kanon', <http://hippy.ru/f31.htm> (last visited 20 March 2014).

were. They felt in its power, but also devised means to create and enhance its power. The *Canon* continues with a list of places, practices and instances that exemplify the emotional power of rock:

Cool clothes embroidered with hallucinatory plants and insects. Surrealist frescos and collages in underground apartments. Fragments of film without beginning or end . . . Psychedelic paintings in notebooks and exhibitions. Peace signs, painted in doorways, telephone boxes and lifts. All kinds of jewellery, amulets and talismans. Anonymous flyers handed from hand to hand. Legends and tales, disseminated orally . . . The wonderful slang of the urban underground. The tiring hitch-hiking from Moscow to Peter via Tashkent . . . Long meditations high in the mountains and in deserted metro stations.<sup>31</sup>

Translated into academic terms Guru was outlining the idea of emotional style, a sense that the hippie attachment to their music was more than just an emotion. It was part of a universe, which consisted of the interaction and linking of various emotionally charged practices, sites and actors, weaving a dense net of experience, which privileged and sponsored a certain 'feel'.

The explosive arrival of Western rock and pop on the Soviet scene from the mid 1960s onwards radically changed Soviet youth culture. The new music that came from the West was powerful, not despite the fact that it was in a language, foreign and largely incomprehensible to most, but because of it. Often young people only understood fragments of the songs they loved, but these fragments assumed the function of shorthand descriptions that stood for whole sentiments of life. The Beatles were almost on every one's lips, but some favoured the more raw and aggressive expression of the Rolling Stones.<sup>32</sup> No matter what they chose, however, music was designed to evoke and create a certain personal mood, a sense of independence and difference. Feeling music became a celebrated emotional experience that could be done alone, but was more often enjoyed collectively, engendering not only pleasure in the music, a sense of togetherness with fellow listeners and bodily responses of, for instance, relaxation or energisation, but also the emergence of new, different norms of how to respond to these emotional experiences. While the youth of the Thaw era still had to tie its emotional experience to something as tangible, intellectual and concrete as a poem or a bard song (and hence to something that was accepted by Soviet norms as spiritually worthy), hippies and other lovers of Western music were much more prepared to accept their emotional experiences as primordial, less reflected and evoking sensuality without rational purpose. Il'ia Smirnov, who in the 1990s was one of the first Russian authors to chronicle the history of Russian rock, emphasised the fact that the rise of the English language cover song in the late 1960s and early 1970s stood in stark contrast, if not in opposition, to the wordiness of the preceding decade: 'What the quality of texts was concerned, the audience paid as little attention to that as to the disappearance of the rattling of a movie projector. Music – that was a ritual, a conversation. This was the social and aesthetic essence of

<sup>31</sup> 'Kanon'.

<sup>32</sup> Interview Azazello, Moscow, Moscow, 28 Oct. 2011; Aleksei Frumkin, interviewed by telephone, 5 June 2013.

rock music of those years; the textual meaningfulness of the bards remained alien to the rockers.<sup>33</sup>

Baske, the singer of the wildly popular cover band *Rubinovala Ataka* or *Rubiny* (who by his own account would rather be dead than sing in Russian), recalls how singing in English was so important, that they phonetically wrote down the texts they heard on the radio or on records without much knowledge of the language.<sup>34</sup> He is echoed by Andrei Makarevich, lead singer of the band *Mashina Vremeni*, who hand-made a special Beatles songbook, with texts as he had heard and understood them from the radio and circulating tapes.<sup>35</sup> Rick Pogossian sang the Beatles 'We can work it out', thinking it was a song about work. For all them what mattered most was the sound of their texts not their content.<sup>36</sup> In other words, young people valued the poetic function of the English texts, rather than their content. Alexei Yurchak has described how ironically the same was true for the 'hypernormalised' texts of the authoritative discourse, which were understood by late Soviet people as impressive performances but made little literal sense.<sup>37</sup> Yet, while official texts were understood to be hollow and hence resonated only as poetics, the non-comprehension of the English song texts promised rather than disappointed. Behind the unknown words young rock fans suspected deep meaning. At the very least, English was the language of the unknown world on the other side of the Iron Curtain. Iurii Fokin, a drummer with various Moscow bands including Stas Namin's 'Tsveti', described the English language songs of the time as instilling a 'sense of freedom'.<sup>38</sup> In many ways the English language 'named' the emotional practice of listening to the music. It became a cypher for a certain feeling that was inextricably bound up with the English sound. Russian, in contrast, was the tool of the system, parents and the past. Singing in and listening to English was literally an escape away from a language that seemed used and spent – and was only too familiar and comprehensible – into a world that was new and undefined and therefore open to being loaded with emotional meaning. William Brui remembers how he first tuned his radio to an English station: 'I understood nothing – and yet it seemed to me that the language was my own. The music simply carried me away.'<sup>39</sup>

For Brui, artist and hippie in 1960s Leningrad, there was a logical line from listening to Western music to becoming a hippie. (Interestingly Il'ia Smirnov traces the connection the other way around, arguing that hippie ideology fostered the epoch of Western music worship which broke with the Russian tradition of the primacy of the word, thus demonstrating that 'feeling the music' was a circular conversation

<sup>33</sup> Il'ia Smirnov, *Vremia Kolokol'chikov* (Moscow: Unknown, 1994), 10.

<sup>34</sup> Interview Baske, Moscow, 16 July 2010.

<sup>35</sup> Interview with Sergei Makarevich in Maxim Kapitanovskii's documentary film 'Po vsem prozhu povinit' Bitlz', 2006.

<sup>36</sup> Interview Rick Pogossian, Navato, 1 March 2014.

<sup>37</sup> Yurchak, *Everything*, 78–9.

<sup>38</sup> Interview Iurii Fokin, San Francisco, 24 Sept. 2012.

<sup>39</sup> Interview Brui.

between hippie identity and practices of emotion.<sup>40</sup>) Brui's musical experience evoked an emotion that had to find expression in a wider field, which could homologically complete the feeling this new style of music had elicited. In Brui's words: 'This sort of happened instinctively. Through radio. Through music. Music carries a huge amount of information. It carries a "feeling" of information (*chustvo informatsii*).'<sup>41</sup> Excerpts from Western songs – especially Beatles songs – soon became guiding life slogans for hippie youth. The *knishka*, a little pocket book carried around by many hippies, in which ad hoc drawings and thoughts were scribbled down, usually contained a great many of these quotes in either English or in rudimentary translation, designed to serve as reminders of the emotion they had engendered when heard in their musical context.<sup>42</sup> This contextualising and enhancing of the musical experience extended into multiple directions, involving art as well as ritual, space as well as actions. The feel of music was to be reflected on the pages of the hippie notebook as well as in their surroundings. The hippie (or at least semi-hippie) commune Yellow Submarine in Leningrad aimed to capture the momentary emotions experienced when listening to the Beatles by decorating their kitchen in flaming red strawberries on yellow, alluding to a song in their namesake album *Yellow Submarine*. In addition they hung self-made posters on the walls, which in pictures and words evoked and also invoked further musical experiences. Tellingly some of the quotes such as 'Nothing to get hung about' (another quote from 'Strawberry Fields') were rendered ad verbatim into Russian (*Nichego sebe nakhadka*), which only made sense to those in the know.<sup>43</sup> The bond that was created by music and the emotion it engendered was thus extended and reinforced through a variety of mechanisms, creating an ever more tightly knit community, which communicated its identity in increasingly exclusive cyphers. Or in other words it was a community that was busily building up its own distinctive emotional style, linking emotions with practices, sites and people in a tightly knit net of identifying markers.

The emotional experience of music, then, was at the heart of the quest for making this emotion the basis for a wider set of connected values and feelings. Yet music was inextricably linked to many other associations – visual, textual, spiritual. As Kolia Vasin, put it in an interview with Artemy Troitsky: 'The day after I first saw the cover of Abbey Road, I took off my shoes and went walking around Leningrad barefoot. That was my challenge, my attempt at self-expression.'<sup>44</sup> Andris Grinbergs confirmed this self-ascription of hippie culture as an extended emotional experience

<sup>40</sup> Smirnov, *Vremia*, 26

<sup>41</sup> Interview Brui.

<sup>42</sup> See, e.g., the notebooks by Azazello (personal archive Azazello) and interview Azazello.

<sup>43</sup> The posters of the Yellow Submarine are in the private archive of Feliks and Marina Vinogradov, for explanation on 'feel' see author's interview with Vinogradovs, St Petersburg, 8 June 2009.

<sup>44</sup> Troitsky, *Back in the USSR*, 23. Kolia Vasin devoted the rest of his life to worshipping the Beatles and presides these days over a shrine to the group in St Petersburg. In the process he was instrumental in creating the vivid cultural underground that existed in Leningrad in the 1970s and 80s. On the huge impact of the Beatles on Soviet youth culture also see Lesley Woodhead, *How the Beatles Rocked the Kremlin: The Untold Story of a Noisy Revolution* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013).

when he described his reaction to the wildly popular musical *Jesus Christ Superstar*, stressing once again the primacy of 'feeling' over 'thought':

No, I did not think anything. This was an impulse from somewhere. It was more from the inside. When we heard *Jesus Christ Superstar*, I wanted to live through everything that had happened to him.<sup>45</sup>

One did not have to be spiritually minded to experience the new music from the West on a metaphysical – or indeed very physical – level. In the West frantic fans fainted at Beatles concerts. In the East youth had to rely on DIY to create the addictive reverberation of rock. Moscow's hippie crowd craved the physicality of the emotional experience of music. Aleksandr Zaborovskii, one of Moscow's earliest adherents to the new hippie crowd, who hung out in a subway connecting the Hotel *Rossia* with Red Square, explains the attraction of the new meeting place. Here they would play and sing Beatles songs:

We assembled every evening in this *truba*, not in order to collect money, but there were simply good acoustics . . . The Beatles were one of the first groups who started to use reverberation and such effects such as echo and fusion (*dileri*). And already later, in the 80s, we would say: the sound engineer has to make the artists' echo and fusion. But in the tunnel there was natural reverberation.<sup>46</sup>

Guru's hippie *Canon* of a much later time (1982) agreed with Zaborovskii's emphasis on the physical aspect of rock-induced emotion:

The main thing about rock – resonance. If the very first rasping chord of the guitar – so far not song or melody or playing – evoked a wave of wild pleasure (*kaif*) and the world is changing – that is rock.<sup>47</sup>

Yet pronounced physical experience – and especially unbridled physical experience – was not foreseen by Soviet norms governing the enjoyment of music. Music, like any pleasure, was to induce a spiritual state that was conducive to furthering the Soviet project in whatever form. The Soviet state had more than once expressed its disdain for those who lived solely for pleasure.<sup>48</sup> The rock crowd's preoccupation with the physical side of the emotional experience of music underlined how far their idea of 'how to feel' music had deviated from the official norm. It quasi negated the educational importance of music – or at least severely qualified what this education should be all about.

By contrast rock music was instrumental in achieving that hippie 'feel': a sense of 'time-wasting', hanging around and discussion about non-Soviet things that embodied the antidote to Soviet life. Music fostered other practices and rituals, which

<sup>45</sup> Interview Grinbergs.

<sup>46</sup> Interview Alekandr Zaborovskii, Moscow, 14 July 2010.

<sup>47</sup> 'Kanon'.

<sup>48</sup> Numerous campaigns testify to this. In the 1920s flappers and foxtrotters were reviled, while in the 1940s and 50s *stiliagi* and their love for jazz, fashion and dancing were criticised. Ann Gorsuch, *Youth in Revolutionary Russia: Enthusiasts, Bohemians, Delinquents* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000); Juliane Fürst, *Stalin's Last Generation: Soviet Post-War Youth and the Emergence of Mature Socialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), Chapter 6.

in turn made the music and the arenas in which it took place more meaningful. Andrei Makarevich, leader of the band *Mashina Vremeni*, recalls from his early hippie/*Beatloman* days:

For hours after school my friends used to sit at my place, listen to music, and fight in wild detail. Who sings what song – Lennon or McCartney, or is it the Beatles or is it not the Beatles? Because a great number of recordings just came to us by chance – you recorded it from some sort of guy and the devil knew what was on it.<sup>49</sup>

Aleksei Romanov, who later joined the ensemble *Mashina Vremeni* and was host to another legendary hippie apartment in the centre of Moscow, added his observations from a time when *Mashina* was still covering the Beatles and singing in English. While he speaks of live performances and Makarevich of private gatherings, their essential message is the same: it was not words that mattered but the ‘feel’ generated by the music and its rendering.

And one of these evenings, *Mashina* played in our institute . . . They played something from Sergeant Pepper. And in general it evoked a great feeling. Then, in my opinion, it was not so important how a group played, what was important was that they played.<sup>50</sup>

By the turn of the decade semi-professional bands such as *Rubinovala Ataka* (*Rubiny*), *Vtoroe Dikhanie* and *Mashina Vremeni* played institutes of higher education up and down the country. Their audiences were not only hippies but students, young workers, interested youths – even, as the band leader Baske confessed, the Komsomol central committee. The prim youth officials hired his band *Rubiny* for one of their dances, demanding the Stones rather than Soviet Estrada.<sup>51</sup>

Vasilii Boriantsev (alias Vasia Long) recalled in his memoir another evening with the *Rubiny*, showcasing the new vocabulary developed to describe the ‘feel’ that was to be got from rock ‘n’ roll. Vasilii had two British guests in tow. He observed with satisfaction:

The *Rubiny* sang totally great (*na redkost’ z dorovo*). The simple composition of two guitars and a drum gave such a full rhythm and blues that one did not have to be ashamed for Russia (spelt *Raseia*) in front of all of Great Britain, and certainly not in front of the handful of long-haired students, who, judging by their visible exultation, had already forgotten where they were long ago – in the Moscow Institute of Transport Engineers or at some night club near Piccadilly Square. Our good mood (*kaif*) was only interrupted when the institute officials, deciding to demonstrate their power, turned off the light and demanded the music be turned down. Ratskela declared into the microphone that “they were not going to play less loud, since we are not able to do so”. Overall, after about an hour, when everybody, including the officials, were drunk, the organisers disappeared . . . and brilliant, heartfelt (*ot vsego dushi*) rock ‘n’ roll began.<sup>52</sup>

Baske himself used a similarly new and emotionally evocative vocabulary in an interview with the author, describing another scandalous night of their musical heyday:

<sup>49</sup>Mikhail Margolis, *Zatiazhnoi povorot: Istoriia Gruppy Mashina Vremeni* (St Petersburg: 2009), 21.

<sup>50</sup>Margolis, *Zatiazhnoi*, 25.

<sup>51</sup>Interview Baske.

<sup>52</sup>Boriantsev, *My Khippi*, 9.

We played at the Plekhanov Institute, and Volodiia Gitaris-Trotskevich had only just bought a reverberation and acoustic machine, and we were just capable of giving a sound an echo. We were playing Hendrix – and people were wild in their enchantment and, of course, immediately the authorities came. They thought it was going to be a quiet dance evening – and here screaming and bawling (*orevo*), ecstasy, super (*klassno*)! And everything was trembling – even more super.<sup>53</sup>

These accounts nicely illustrate two points. First of all, they showcase the clash between official emotional style and that practised and propagated by rock-loving youth (even though, as told by Baske, officials could also be rock lovers). When emotions run too high, finding expression in a new emotional style, the authorities try to switch them off – literally by pulling the plug on what they correctly identify as the emotive: loud, beating music in a foreign language. Second Baske and Long's words illustrate what Monique Scheer has called the practice of 'naming' emotions. Long and Baske clearly tap into a new way of speaking in order to convey the emotions they felt. Their understanding of music as an emotional experience that was both physical as well as mental is apparent in the frequent usage of terms such as ecstasy, *zdorovo* (literally healthy, but used as a high accolade) and most importantly *kaif*. *Kaif* denotes both a general good mood, usually induced by stimulants such as music, girls or alcohol, and the tools for this state itself, namely drugs and alcohol.<sup>54</sup> It is interesting to note that it neatly replaces other terms for the sentiment of joy (*veselyi*, *radostnyi*, *chastlivyi*), which were pillars of official lexica and had strong associations with Stalinism (Life has become more joyous; Thank you Comrade Stalin for our happy childhoods). Hippies believed they experienced joy differently. They needed a different term. The non-Russian-sounding *kaif* was just right, especially since the English 'happy' is difficult to pronounce for Russian speakers (as is of course 'hippie'). The word's double function as creator as well as reflection of an emotion demonstrates an interesting degree of self-awareness. The naming of a new emotional sensation created not only a framework of how to experience certain emotions but also gave guidance on how to create them. Like many other aspects of hippie culture the term – and the emotion – *kaif* soon went beyond the hippie community. By the 1980s *kaif* had become an integral part of general youth slang, denoting a truer kind of enjoyment than that provided by the state.<sup>55</sup>

### Feel the style

Words, however, were a secondary commodity of the hippies. In the foreground stood non-verbal markers. One of the pillars of hippie identity was their physical appearance: their long and flowing hair, their flared trousers, colourful blouses and shirts, their ribbons and peace signs. Just like music, however, hippie fashion did not

<sup>53</sup> Interview Baske.

<sup>54</sup> F. E. Rozhanskii, *Sleng Khippie* (Paris–St Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo Evropeiskogo Doma, 1992).

<sup>55</sup> As demonstrated by Nancy Traver's book *Kife*, which honoured the ubiquity of the word among Soviet youth by making it the book's title. Nancy Traver, *Kife: The Lives and Dreams of Soviet Youth* (New York: St. Martin's, 1989).

simply convey messages – it was meant to visualise, convey and produce emotions. It, too, was supposed to conform and create a ‘feel’, which was in harmony with the hippie creed of love and peace. Soviet hippies spoke of their clothing as they did of their music – in a mixture of rapture and association:

It was simply production of art. . . . There was a person – Azazello, a Moscow hippie. He and his wife did simply ravishing things; they were specialists in leather. They made love with leather in their back . . . and then there was Kiss – he too came here as a guest. He also showed his art. I had some tapestry material (гобелен) – and he made some astonishing trousers for me, with some really pretty appliqués. People simply made their own stuff – and an architecture [of clothes] came about<sup>56</sup>

The hippies’ way of connecting directly or indirectly their dress with their personal world-view was, of course, not entirely new. Clothes have always made people feel a certain way. Yet the hippies elevated dress to one of their purveyors of collective emotional experience and hence one of the driving forces of their new ‘emotional style’, which shunned intellectualism but favoured a different kind of protest. One of the forerunners of Riga’s hippie culture Andris Grinbergs describes both why he left the intellectual bohemia of Riga’s Beatnik meeting spot, the legendary café Kaza, behind, but also why visual difference mattered to him and his fellow hippies:

Their life [referring to the people in the Kaza] was less visual and more intellectual. I was more visual . . . I thought it [Grinbergs’ fashion] would make life more fun . . . in this grey and closed world of ours. It would have been freer. And yet it was a form of protest, how you went out onto the street . . . Because as an idea there was not much more than ‘All we need is love’. There was nothing more.<sup>57</sup>

Visual difference was more than just a means to brighten the world. Aesthetic self-representation to the outside was the embodiment of a conglomerate of feelings – articulated not in words but through style and in the emotional practice of style. ‘The way we dress elevates us from the rest. It makes us better’, one of Moscow’s hippie leaders, Ofelia, admonished her followers for whom she tailored the most eye-catching clothing in all of Moscow.<sup>58</sup> Her message to the world was encapsulated in her most spectacular piece: a flag for hippies, which sported a multitude of hippie symbols. In the top left corner the words love and peace set out the hippie creed. A butterfly, a clover leaf and arrows in circles complement a heart and the peace sign. While there were other Russian and English inscriptions on the flag, it is clear that the meaning of it did not rest in its words or even in its detail. It was a message of hippie identity written, painted, sewed and stitched on a piece of fabric. It was meant to convey the ideals of the hippies, yet it was also meant to encapsulate and communicate the emotions that made up ‘being a hippie’. Its colourful, quilted fabric recalled the flowing dresses and shirts of the hippies and was meant to evoke the ‘ease of living’ to which the hippie community aspired and which it conjured as one of its life principles. Its usage of English paid homage to the Soviet hippies’ Western idols

<sup>56</sup> Interview Aleksandr Rappaport, St Petersburg, 2 June 2010.

<sup>57</sup> Interview Grinbergs.

<sup>58</sup> Interview Sergei Bol’shakov, Moscow, 8 March 2012.

and peers but also emphasised again that it was not intellectual understanding of the world the Soviet hippies desired. English, along with the peace sign, was a symbol of a 'feel'. The Russian text rooted the flag in its Soviet reality and the pressures that came with the reality – including those that were applied to the flag itself, which was confiscated several times by the KGB. Its message of 'hippies of all countries unite' played on one of the emotional messages of the Bolsheviks, who had widely utilised 'The Internationale' as a song of mobilisation and protest, thus once again both borrowing and manipulating the officially endorsed 'emotional style'.

The flag could not be divorced from the people who made it and those who were represented by it. Ofelia insisted that on the days of the exhibition she and her group (named *Volosy* or Hair in reference to the Western musical) would be dressed in their hippie finest.<sup>59</sup> They were not to be separated from the pieces of their creation. They would mingle with the visitors of the exhibition, making themselves a piece of art. Being a hippie was being art. Twenty years later Volodia Teplishev, better known as Tsen Baptist, would write a book in longhand, in which he painstakingly detailed how to tailor hippie clothing and accessories, together with an explanation of what meaning was embedded in every single detail. Nothing was supposed to be random in the hippie look. Everything was to translate into higher meaning.<sup>60</sup> Ultimately, hippie art was supposed to make hippie emotions visible and communicative. For Ofelia and her group the exhibition, and in particular the hippie flag, were thus more than artefacts. They were reflection and creators of their emotional style. Yet the exhibition and its many difficulties also created a new set of emotional associations that bound together those who had a hand in its staging. The frenzy of nights spent tailoring new versions of the flag and the subsequent panicked exit of some of Hair's members to a hide-out in the Crimea cemented the exhibition, and in particular its flag, as an emotional marker in hippie history.<sup>61</sup>

It has become apparent that hippie styling was not a fashion statement (at least not for most, and not in the early years), but the expression of an emotion derived from 'being a hippie', which in turn rested to no small extent on 'looking like a hippie'. Hippie style aimed to achieve a homology between all facets of life, making the ideas of love and peace the nexus that determined the way one looked, acted and spoke – thus reinforcing both new collective norms as well as demonstrating to the outside world a unity of thought, life and feeling. Hippie style as emotional style aimed for a *Gesamtkunstwerk* of feelings, beliefs and practices, which would be inherently coherent and distinctive from other styles. No one was more articulate about this non-verbal practice of both self-identification and outside communication than Tsen Baptist, Moscow hippie, 'ecumen',<sup>62</sup> and celebrated tailor of Moscow's flower children. For him clothes did not only express the difference between hippies

<sup>59</sup>Sergei Batovrin, 'Kuda idet zhernov Egipetskogo Kalendaria: Bespechnoe Puteshstvie s gruppoi "Volosy"', private archive Sergei Batovrin. Interview Sergei Batovrin, New York, 24/25 May 2011.

<sup>60</sup>Tsen Baptist, 'Kniga'.

<sup>61</sup>Interviews Roman Osipov, Moscow, 10 Sept. 2009; Frumkin, Bol'shakov.

<sup>62</sup>He created an ecumenical church/community in Moscow, to which many hippies belonged.

and the rest of society. It bestowed this difference. In an interview shortly before his death he recalls an episode of his early hippie years:

There stood a train worker – dirty clothes, suitcase with his tools. I remember well that he had a scar on his forehead – sign of past traumas. The worker stood and looked at me and suddenly says in a hostile voice: ‘You, daddy’s boy, should be hanged by your beard!’. The whole wagon heard it. Some started to giggle with *Schadenfreude*. First I bristled, but then I remembered: I am different. I am in my different clothes. And hence I talked to him differently.<sup>63</sup>

The idea of working on oneself to be a better person was nothing new to the Soviet Union and indeed was deeply engrained in the very foundations of the Bolshevik project. But the vehicle for such self-improvement had always been rational thought, acceptance of the science of Marxism–Leninism and verbal self-evaluation and self-critique. It is no coincidence that Jochen Hellbeck used diaries to trace and analyse Soviet self-fashioning in the 1930s.<sup>64</sup> The hippies in contrast left a dearth of written evidence – a few poems and a few autobiographical novels and a handful of samizdat publications.<sup>65</sup> The *stiliagi* had mounted the first serious fashion challenge to Soviet proscribed identity in the late 1940s and 50s. They too had brought about a homology between their dandy-like outfits, their love for American jazz and their cosmopolitan outlook. Yet they did not link their outer markers explicitly to their inner condition, even though, of course, they too had their own emotional codes, which prescribed coolness rather than unfettered feeling.<sup>66</sup> In the late 1960s the hippies started to develop their fashion of ‘flower power’ into a multi-faceted and far-reaching emotional practice. Feliks Vinogradov, hippie and commune founder in late 1970s Leningrad, describes the emotional nexus that linked his dress style with his dreams and convictions: ‘Everything was linked in our minds. Therefore jeans were associated with freedom and freedom with the United States.’<sup>67</sup> His vision of the United States was by his own admission not a very defined one, but again was more a feeling of admiration, longing and desire that had chosen the fabled *Shtati* as its geographical, but ultimately imaginary, locus. Style and emotion were in constant dialogue in the hippie universe, sometimes unconsciously and sometimes more deliberate. For Ofelia the way she and her group dressed elevated them from the grey masses they despised. Their extravagant and colourful style – and the offence it could induce – created and reinforced their emotional satisfaction with

<sup>63</sup>Live Journal entry Caps\_Lo, ‘Pamiati Volodi Dzen-Baptitsa...’, 27 Feb. 2009. [http://caps\\_lo.livejournal.com/38876.html](http://caps_lo.livejournal.com/38876.html) (last visited, 13 Sept. 2013).

<sup>64</sup>Jochen Hellbeck, *Revolution on My Mind: Writing a Diary under Stalin* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006). On Bolshevik self-improvement see also Igal Halfin, *From Darkness to Light: Class, Consciousness and Salvation in Revolutionary Russia* (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh University Press, 2000).

<sup>65</sup>The author is aware of a few diaries that were written, but none have been published. Many hippies wrote poetry, just as the generation before did. Very little of that poetry survived unfortunately. See Interviews Senia Seniavkin (Skorpion), Moscow, 1 July 2010; Soldatov. There are a few samizdat items in private archives (Teplisheva, Aleksei Egorov, Misha Bombin).

<sup>66</sup>Fürst, *Stalin’s Last Generation*, 208–35; Mark Edele, ‘Strange Young Men in Stalin’s Moscow: The Birth and Life of the Stiliagi, 1945–1953’, *Jahrbücher für die Geschichte Osteuropas*, 50 (2002), 37–61; R. Kirsanov, ‘Stiliagi: Zapadnaia Moda v SSSR 40–50-kh godov’, *Rodina*, 8 (1998), 72–5.

<sup>67</sup>Interview Vinogradov.

their difference to the point that Ofelia did not tolerate people in her vicinity who were not dressed to her standard of style.<sup>68</sup> Their lack of proper communication of difference threatened to destabilise the 'feel' of the group and hence the emotional community they had built up around their sense of distinction.<sup>69</sup>

The artist Andris Grinbergs' first hippie action was a 'happening' in the cathedral square (Doma laukums) in Riga, where he and his fellow hippies handed flowers to those passing by and offered to paint flowers on the cheeks of those who would let them. Inherent in this action was an emotional experience made visible: the feeling of what it meant to be a flower child. They were children, and hence free of the hesitations and shame of the adult world, and at the same time they were offspring of one of nature's most delicate yet most visible products. It was supposed to be the visual representation of an emotion of peacefulness and vulnerability, yet at the same time signal visible difference and non-conformism. Grinbergs confessed to another twist:

And these flowers, this is nature. I tell you, these flowers. I went in the morning to the cemetery. I collected them from the dead and gave them to the living. [Question: Did you plan this specifically?]. No, I needed to. Because the dead have so many pretty flowers, better we live with them today, before they have not yet died. There is a lot of romanticism in there. A lot of revolutionary protest.<sup>70</sup>

As is apparent in Grinbergs' words hippies always strove to extend their emotional experience into a wider universe. Love was expressed through the donation of flowers in line with the hippie self-identity as beautiful, but vulnerable, creatures – and this love was to be fixated in the design of the hippie clothing. It is no coincidence that it was another eminent tailor/artist, Tsen Baptist, who in his samizdat publication on the hippies emphasised the parallels between hippies and more fragile creatures of nature: 'We were careless and free, like butterflies and flowers on a sunny field', he asserted in his introduction to his commemorative pamphlet *Alternativy*.<sup>71</sup> In Moscow the hippies chose 1 June, the Soviet holiday in honour of the defence of the rights of children as the day when they would enact this ritual. Their timing reflected once again their sense of themselves as innocent, vulnerable, universally beautiful – made in the image of children. The handing out of flowers was hence essentially an act of engendering emotions for self-identifying and self-gratifying purposes. Yet Grinbergs is right to draw attention to its revolutionary and protest qualities. Soviet society was built on a cult of strength and heroism, especially after the Great Patriotic War. Moreover, the state claimed a monopoly on who was to be celebrated and when. Collective self-celebration – especially of an ideal far from the Soviet hero with his masculine and warrior traits – was at odds with both the regime and the societal mainstream. In Grinbergs' case the transfer of flowers from the dead to the living turned convention on its head, while his 'happening' at the Doma laukums created an environment that was deeply non-Soviet – spontaneous, silly, colourful,

<sup>68</sup> Interviews Natasha Kurshak, Amsterdam, 29 March 2012; Bol'shakov.

<sup>69</sup> Interview Kurshak.

<sup>70</sup> Interview Grinbergs.

<sup>71</sup> Tsen Baptist, 'Alternativy', private archive Teplisheva.

uninhibited, fostering alternative collectives, Western-inspired and emotionally alien to official culture. Tsen Baptists takes it a step further. He likens hippie existence to a permanent carnival, a voluntary acceptance of insanity (yet he did not know the works of Bakhtin when he wrote his book):

Clothes in the carnival are simply eclectic. A unique, kaleidoscopic style of all times and people. Everything that was undesirable from the viewpoint of general society was put on oneself: fur, old rags, chains, fancy jewellery, moth-ridden never fashionable things, mechanical and electronic items. All was mixed up: male and female, winter and summer. Textiles and iron, theatrical and mournful, colourful and drab. In one word: the emphatic destruction of all laws of taste and tradition in society – something crazy, orgy-like – a protest against the seriousness accepted by society at large.<sup>72</sup>

### Feel the protest: a conclusion

As has become apparent, the Soviet hippies' insistence on making the experience and practice of emotions central to their lifestyle and identity frequently put them at least in a parallel, if not an opposing, universe to the emotional regime propagated by official Soviet culture. The celebration of emotions for emotions' sake, the interpretation of love as a value on its own, the creation of alternative physical and metaphysical spheres through 'emotionally practising' music and fashion (and by a small community through drugs, which are not discussed in this article) all stood in contrast to the highly regulated emotional practices sanctioned by Soviet official culture. Emotions in both their positive and negative form (for example love and hate) were encouraged in the Soviet emotional canon, but in a strictly defined framework. Emotions were expected to serve a higher end and they were expected to be practised with restraint and self-control.<sup>73</sup> The fact that one of the hippies' creeds was a belief in unrestrained and unfettered emotions was only the beginning of why the emotional community and regime of the hippies was threatening to the incumbent regime.

It is interesting to note that this challenge and its political implications was not one that was intended or even noted by all – or even the majority – of Soviet hippies. Indeed, as mentioned before, Soviet hippies often prided themselves on their apolitical nature – precisely because in their minds they privileged 'feel' over

<sup>72</sup>Tsen Baptist, 'Kniga'.

<sup>73</sup>There is a yet very little literature on Soviet emotions. The exceptions are Kelly, 'Pravo', 51–77; Fitzpatrick, 'Happiness and Toska', 358–71. Both make a case of an emotional regime that counselled restraint. Karen Petrone comes to similar conclusions when discussing norms and practices of the Soviet 1930s, especially the Stalinist stipulation to be 'joyful'. Karen Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous, Comrades: Celebrations in the Times of Stalin* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 2000). For the Thaw, Emily Lygo touches on the concept of melancholy in poetry. Emily Lygo, *Poetry in Leningrad 1953–1975: The Thaw Generation* (New York, P. Lang, 2010). Denis Kozlov and Polly Jones discuss officially prescribed emotional restraint in their works on Thaw literary culture and destalinisation. Denis Kozlov, *The Readers of Novyi Mir: Coming to Terms with the Stalinist Past* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2013); Polly Jones, *Myth, Memory and Trauma: Rethinking the Stalinist Past in the Soviet Union* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 2013).

'argument'.<sup>74</sup> While they thus largely evaded the question of how exactly their political convictions differed from the Soviet regime (this debate was one hogged by the Thaw generation), they were very much aware that they wanted to 'feel' differently from the norm (and this included the general public as well as Soviet officials). Their 'feel' included all four modes of emotional practice identified by Monique Scheer. They mobilised, named, communicated and regulated emotions.<sup>75</sup> As has been demonstrated, 'feeling differently' worked best when supported by its own lexicon, situated in its own places and practised according to its own traditions and rituals. The Soviet hippies wanted to have a different emotional universe – and indeed they wanted to create a different world. They wanted to feel differently by looking different from the 'grey masses'. They tried to relate to each other and to the world in a different way. They wanted their actions and their feelings to be free from traditional constraints. In short they wanted nothing less but to be round, when society around them was 'square' (a prominent hippie slang term for conformist people). In this respect they were no different from their Western peers.<sup>76</sup> Yet in the Soviet Union this countercultural shift had different connotations from that in the West. Of course, Soviet hippies also protested against war, consumerism and materialism and the coldness of modern interpersonal relations through championing love, unfettered enjoyment and a new morality. But more than anything their protest was directed against the specific nature of the Soviet regime. Their 'emotional style' followed the global countercultural model, but really it responded to the realities of Soviet life, its rules and rulers. Even though they claimed apoliticalness and despite their creed of love, the hippies hated Soviet life. They hated it with the same refusal to explain their motivation, as they practised their emotion of love. As one Irkutsk hippie described it in his memoirs:

The main thing was – the non-acceptance of Soviet life (*sovka*), which could be expressed in different ways. If you dress differently, it means you are one of ours. If you curse Soviet power – you are one of ours. If you smoke dope – you are one of us. If you search for God – you are one of us. If you try to think independently, in your own way – then even more so you are one of us.<sup>77</sup>

Yet, of course, the relationship between the 'emotional style' of the hippies and the Soviet regime is more complex than mere opposition. It is useful here to return once again to the theoretical underpinnings of the concept of 'emotional style', as developed by Gammerl, in order to understand how the Soviet hippies not

<sup>74</sup>Most hippies recognised themselves as anti-Soviet, but, true to their socialist upbringing, they only considered the spoken or written word as capable of carrying 'politics'. There were exceptions, of course. In later years Iura Diversant created a Samizdat journal called 'Svoboda' (freedom). Misha Bombin was involved with Latvian human right activists. In 1989 a protest was staged at the Gogol monument in Moscow to demand free speech. In general, however, hippies were reluctant to get involved in what they defined as 'politics'.

<sup>75</sup>Scheer, 'Emotions', 193.

<sup>76</sup>Timothy Miller, *The Hippies and American Values* (Knoxville, Tenn.: University of Tennessee Press, 2011).

<sup>77</sup><http://baikalpress.ru/kopeika/2011/36/010001.html> (last visited 1 Oct. 2013). The list of expressions of disdain, dislike of and, in some cases, rage against Soviet life is endless and has come up in almost every single one of the interviews I conducted.

only consistently enlarged the scope and arena of their ‘emotional style’, but also how this style increasingly slipped into and undermined the emotional mainstream in significant ways. Gammerl considers ‘emotional style’ as akin to a subculture, which at the same time feeds off and chips away at its ‘parent culture’.<sup>78</sup> The particular emotional style of the Soviet hippies could only come about in late Soviet surroundings. It needed the frustration, ennui and hollowness that beset the period of *zastoi* (stagnation) to build up an efficient and alluring rhetoric of emotional intensity. It needed the emotional vacuum that was created by the extremely performative character of late socialism in order to fill it with a rhetoric of ‘truer’ emotions. It needed the politicised Soviet emotional regime to make the promise of unfettered emotions through apolitical factors such as music, dress and style so enticing. It used spaces and practices of the mainstream, but manipulated and altered them for the hippies’ own needs. But just as a subculture often infiltrates the mainstream to the point of ceasing to be subcultural, hippie ‘emotional style’ was highly successful in setting up a parallel universe that was frequented and adopted by more and more people, far beyond the small hippie community. Hippie fashion, vocabulary, sites and practices all became part of a wider alternative youth culture. While the small band of hippies organised in the *sistema* (the self-proclaimed, loose network of Soviet hippies) always remained a subculture, much of its style, and certainly its quest for ‘truer’, more unfettered and less-interfered-with emotional experiences, arguably went mainstream.<sup>79</sup> Ultimately the expansion of hippie ‘emotional style’ tells a story of a change of emotional regimes – and a story of the decline of the Soviet project in the 1970s and 80s.

All of this happened against the background of the decline of what had once been the most prominent form of cultural and political dissent in the Soviet Union – the reformist and revolutionary activism of the Soviet intelligentsia.<sup>80</sup> Coming of age in late Stalinism, buoyed by Khrushchev’s revelations and reforms and the seductive nature of communist basic texts and fighting through years of recurring thaws and freezes, this group had been the most vocal and most visible of all forms of dissent in the post-war years. Indeed, some of its latest representatives overlapped with some of the early hippies, who looked for meaning in their literary circles and actions. Yet the new young generation of non-conformists soon left the battlefields of their predecessors, choosing a life away from precisely the intellectual dissent so favoured by the ‘Thaw generation’. Of course, neither group ever excluded the other, and in later years some hippies did return to classical dissident activity. But by championing emotions in word and deed, Soviet hippies presented themselves as both against the regime – political, emotional and moral – and against the long entrenched notion and practice of dissent held by the Soviet intelligentsia. Hence they changed not only the system they lived in, but also the very nature of its opposition.

<sup>78</sup> Gammerl, ‘Emotional Styles’, 162.

<sup>79</sup> See on this development among others James Riordan, *Soviet Youth Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1989); Zhuk, *Rock and Roll*; Yurchak, *Everything*; Pilkington, *Russia’s Youth*.

<sup>80</sup> Zubok, *Zhivago’s Children*, 297–334.

### **Amour, paix et rock' n' roll à la rue Gorki: Le 'Style émotionnel' de la communauté hippie soviétique**

Les hippies soviétiques constituaient à bien des égards un phénomène paradoxal. Ils imitaient en effet dans un monde soviétique un idéal façonné par des réalités américaines. Ils étaient antisoviétiques mais affichaient un style de vie apolitique. Cet article avance que plutôt que d'interpréter les hippies soviétiques en termes d'idéologie, il est plus porteur de les considérer comme une communauté émotionnelle dont le 'style émotionnel' diffèrait du courant dominant en Union soviétique et constituait en fin de compte un énorme défi pour le système soviétique. Cet article examine ainsi plusieurs marqueurs externes de la culture hippie soviétique qui constituaient et exprimaient le 'style émotionnel' des hippies soviétiques, notamment leur credo d'amour et de paix, leur goût pour la musique rock et l'importance de la mode hippie. Sur la base d'entretiens avec des témoins contemporains de la scène hippie soviétique, il s'intéresse particulièrement à la nouvelle rhétorique que les hippies utilisaient pour décrire des émotions spécifiques à leur style de vie, à la manière dont la pratique de ces émotions diffèrait du code émotionnel soviétique officiel et aux liens étroits qui reliaient le vocabulaire et la pratique des émotions avec des objets, des endroits, des rituels et des attributs spécifiques. L'auteur conclut que si les hippies soviétiques sont restés une subculture, leur style, et notamment leur 'style émotionnel', s'est avéré très durable et capable de se transmettre au courant dominant pour finalement survivre au système soviétique et à ses normes émotionnelles.

### **Love, Peace und Rock 'n' Roll auf der Gorkistraße: Der 'emotionaler Stil' der sowjetischen Hippiegemeinschaft**

Sowjetische Hippies stellten in vieler Hinsicht ein Paradox dar. Sie imitierten ein Phänomen, das von amerikanischen Verhältnissen geprägt war in einer sowjetischen Umgebung. Sie waren ohne Zweifel anti-sowjetisch, aber definierten sich als unpolitisch. Dieser Artikel argumentiert, dass, anstatt sowjetische Hippies unter ideologischen Aspekten zu betrachten, es sinnvoller ist, sie als eine 'emotionale Gemeinschaft' zu begreifen, deren 'emotionaler Stil' sich von dem allgemein gültigen unterschied, und der letztendlich für die Sowjetunion zu einer ernstzunehmenden Herausforderung wurde. Hierfür werden verschiedene externe Merkmale der sowjetischen Hippiekultur, die diesen emotionalen Stil sowohl reflektieren als auch kreierten, wie z. B. das Bekenntnis zu Love and Peace, Engagement in der Rockmusikszene und Signifikanz der Hippiemode, im Hinblick auf ihre emotionale Bedeutung analysiert. Der Artikel stützt sich hauptsächlich auf Interviews mit Zeitzeugen aus der sowjetischen Hippieszene. Besondere Aufmerksamkeit gilt dem neuen Hippievokabular, das das Lebensgefühl der Hippieszene ausdrückte, der Praxis neu definierter Emotionen und dem Nexus zwischen Rhetorik und Praxis von Gefühlen, den Stätten ihrer Ausübung, ihrer Ritualisierung und Attribute. Dieser Artikel kommt zu dem Schluss, dass, obwohl die sowjetischen Hippies eine Subkultur blieben, ihr 'Stil', eingeschlossen ihres 'emotionalen Stiles' sich als sehr dauerhaft bewies und bis in die Hauptkultur hinein expandierte. Letztendlich überlebte der Hippie Stil die Sowjetunion und ihre emotionalen Normen.