

PUNX AND SKINS UNITED: ONE LAW FOR US ONE LAW FOR THEM

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In this article I discuss the lifestyle of subcultures called skinheads, punks and hardcore fans in two German cities.¹ I analyse how normative structures (including ideology), social structure and economy of a subculture are interlinked. My aim is to show that what is understood as a 'youth subculture' is more than a way of dressing, enjoying music and building groups that follow their own norms. A 'subculture' is also a social group with their own economic practices and social habits based on an anti-state ideology and inner solidarity. Moreover, such groups often generate their own rules that may differ in important ways from state rules, without, however, rejecting all norms and values of mainstream society. In this article I argue that looking at how they establish and maintain their own semiautonomous structures (S. Moore 1973) within the state society, provides important insights into subcultures that have thus far have been largely ignored. Interesting is that the members of subcultures often operate at the margins of legality and illegality (or semi-legality). At the same time people involved in subcultures often have an ambivalent relationship with state law. It is not unusual for various members of a subculture to take different positions in the degree to which they ignore, reject, or circumvent official state regulation.

'Subcultures' is a key term in a broad field of research in cultural and social studies. Since the 1970s, the concept of subculture has been related to the study of

¹ This study was supported by the Max Planck-Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle/Saale and the Estonian Literary Museum in Tartu/Estonia. I am grateful for the comments of Keebet von Benda-Beckmann, Franz von Benda-Beckmann and the anonymous reviewer, which helped to improve this paper further.

youth especially in connection with music, style and leisure. In 1986 a book was published by the researchers of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS), *Resistance Through Rituals* (Hall and Jefferson 1986) that summed up the research on several post-Second World War British working class subcultures. CCCS studied working class subcultures using a post-Marxist approach and incorporating the concept of hegemony from Gramsci (1999) and Althusser (1971). This work, and several following studies (Willis 1978; Hebdidge 1979; McRobbie 1980), represents the first attempt to connect music and style-driven youth cultures with social theory. The CCCS view was that working class subcultures appeared as resistance to the mainstream dominant culture. The subcultures established their own identity creating their own subcultural style (Hebdidge 1979). Style is embodied in several features like taste, values or activities (P. Willis 1990). It is notable that earlier CCCS researchers did not discuss music and the importance of music for the subcultures, and only a few scholars paid attention to it (Brake 1985; Weinstein 2000).

The subcultural theory of the CCCS has been widely criticised and also developed further by several other scholars. Since the early 1990s different concepts have been developed as alternatives to subculture. Terms like ‘neo-tribe’ (Bennett 1999), ‘post-subculture’ (Muggleton 2000), and ‘scene’ (Harris 2000; Shank 1994; Straw 1991) initiated discussions. All approaches have their own distinctive contents but common to them all was their distance from the theory of class-based resistance (e.g. Jackson 2002). A subculture was seen as a group with fluid borders where people changed their identities, moving from subculture to subculture. This was in direct criticism of the classic CCCS theory that expected subcultures to have clearly defined group boundaries, and the concept of ‘us’ and ‘them’ (see Brake 1985; e.g. Bennet 2002: 133; cf. Hall 1994). The concept of the ‘scene’ (e.g. S. Cohen 1999) also allows us to study a more varied range of practices that do not require face-to-face contact, another important postulate in the classic subcultural theory (e.g. Williams 2006; Hodkinson 2002). In time the variety of groups and issues in youth studies expanded so that Bennett argued: “Youth culture is a massive umbrella” (Bennett 2002: 133). Scholars now look at the symbols that create a common identity among adherents of different music styles. Also discussed are terms like ‘leisure’, ‘entertainment’, ‘ethnicity’ or ‘gender’ within the youth scene (Cawelti 1990; Chye and Konk 1996; Connell and Gibson 2003; Dörfel 1996; Friedman and Weiner 1999; Frith 1981; Fuller 1998; Yurchak 1999). There are also many works that assume that music can create and affect identity and communication among music-interested youth, and that such communication within the groups can be based on the system of shared cultural

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conventions and social norms. However, they fail to deliver convincing empirical proof of this hypothesis (Maxwell 2003). Other important questions in studies on youth subcultures are the cultural meaning of consumption, how patterns of consumption express group identity (Chaney 1994; P. Willis 1990), and how much they are produced by the music business in order to market music (e.g. Attali 1985).

These cultures and groups were biotopes where “a new template for new forms of identity is produced” (Cushman 1995: 91). However, whether ‘scene’, ‘tribe’ or ‘post-subculture’, the focus of the studies seemed to be on youth. This position has been recently questioned by many scholars (e.g. Hesmondhalgh 2005) who argue that although the dominant mass of music-related fan cultures can be described as ‘youth’ there are in any subculture enough people who, when ageing, just cannot ‘let go’ (Weinstein 2000). Less discussed than the ‘ageing youth’ (Bennet 2006: 221) are the activities of subcultures outside the consumption or production of music. We do not know what hip-hoppers, metal fans, punks etc. do when they do not listen to, consume or produce music or buy or prepare clothes, how they live their ‘every-day’. Are they in this different from ‘normal’ people? Have the everyday practices of music fans some special accent? The economy of subcultures is an unstudied terrain and even those works which claim to focus on the subcultural economy, deal with cultural practices (e.g. Böse 2005). The aim of this article is to discuss precisely this aspect of the subcultures.

The approach of cultural studies researchers seems to me problematic because they fail to address several issues that are also important to an understanding of the existence and inner dynamics of subcultures. In this article I discuss legal pluralism, i.e. the different laws the punk rock subculture deals with. I am especially interested in how the subcultural understanding of social norms exists within the state law and is expressed in semi-legal economic practices. Subcultures are also social groups whose members are engaged in far more spheres of economy than only the music business. Networks within the subculture link people of different professions and, as I will show, do so in a reciprocal way.

Reciprocity was discussed already by the founder of social anthropology – Bronislaw Malinowski (Malinowski 1978, 1921). The *kula* circle in Melanesia included also reciprocal exchange among different islands and archipelagos. Marcel Mauss (1990) interpreted Malinowski’s data in *The Gift* and showed that such relationships were based on the relations of obligations, that is, receiving a gift incurs the obligation to reciprocate. The latter work was influential in

launching the structuralism and exchange theory of Lévi-Strauss (1996) who saw reciprocal relationships as structured transactions and interpreted gift giving and reciprocity as one system. Marshall Sahlins (1972) distinguishes three types of reciprocity, generalised, balanced and negative, where the nature of reciprocity depends on social proximity. According to Polanyi et al. (1971), reciprocity and redistribution are practised in pre-industrial society whereas industrial society is dominated by impersonal mechanisms of the market economy.

In the wider anthropological literature, reciprocity was often connected with hunters, gatherers, agriculturalists or cattle breeders, people who lived (at least partly) outside of the market economy. There are plenty of studies which discuss the nature of reciprocity in such societies, whereas most of them show that reciprocal strategies are based on kinship networks (Ventsel 2005; Humphrey 1998; Morrison and Schwartz 2003; L. Marshall 1961; Barnard 1993; Bodenhorn 1993; Cashdan 1983; Kaneff 2002; Ziker 2002b; Smith 2002). Very often it is even difficult to distinguish network studies from the reciprocity studies. Radcliffe-Brown defined networks as the set of social relations within concrete reality (1968: 190). The role of informal networks is as a 'shock absorber', monitoring resource use and access to goods and various services (Scott 1976: 27). In the anthropological literature network analysis has linked the topic with reciprocity and made much use of the 'reciprocity networks' (Lomnitz 1977: 209). According to Laughlin (1974), when analysing networks in the context of reciprocity flexibility appears as an important quality of those networks. He argues that the nature of cooperation within the network is determined by the lower limit of 'production output'. Casimir (1992: 12) discussed whether hunters and herders cooperation is 'altruistic' or 'selfish'. Pryor and Graburn (1980) argue that reciprocity is often an obligation and not so 'altruistic' as it might seem to be at first sight. Marshall is one of the researchers that show how group pressure forces a person to share (L. Marshall 1961). In the hunter and herder studies, reciprocity and cooperation is often connected to resource management (e.g. Taylor 1996). Barnard raises questions about the nature of sharing and reciprocity in different economic systems like hunting or herding societies. The nature of reciprocity is often related with the terms of 'obligations' and 'rights'. Max Gluckman (1965), when discussing Barotse hierarchal networks, demonstrated that all persons involved in these networks have strictly defined rights and obligations toward other people.

Current anthropological literature on networks and reciprocity is not limited to kingdoms, hunters, gatherers or cattle breeders. Anthropologists have studied state

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societies where reciprocal networks have developed to compensate structures of a weak state or to create an alternative to state institutions. One view in African studies is that informal networks are 'economically perverse networks' that promote corruption and criminality (Meagher 2006: 555). Meagher discusses moral qualities of the network and argues that the basis for cooperation is a set of loyalties to get credits and other economic benefits (Meagher 2006: 571). In his study on Nigeria, networks fill the gap that the weak state leaves but without the state support their effective functioning is limited. Some powerful forces turn the social capital of the network into political capital and use it for their own interest. In the case of the Latin-American *compadrazgo*, the network was created vertically, uniting several classes and establishing reciprocal relationships between different social layers (Romanucci-Ross 1973). In post-Socialist studies, informal kinship-based networks as an alternative to state structures are often the object of the study. In many transition societies, reciprocal networks were the most efficient structures for gaining access to resources. In the Mongolian case, Sneath shows how such networks create a system of 'social relations of obligations' to provide access to resources in the post-Socialist transition economy (Sneath 1993: 205). Kaneff (2002) discusses the urban-rural reciprocal cooperation in the situation where the state is viewed as an enemy. Smith (2002) shows in post-Socialist Russia that reciprocity is dependent on traditions, social norms and historical development. Non-commodified exchange plays a great role. Rational choice or decisions do not prevail exclusively. Ssorin-Chaikov (2000) shows that in post-Socialist Siberia trade and reciprocal friendship can be complementary strategies in some cases. As network analysis from many regions shows, transfer of information, distribution of resources and change of services is crucial for the existence of networks of a different nature (J. Cohen 1999; Goody 1973; Lomnitz and Pérez-Lizaur 1989; Ssorin-Chaikov 2000). Below I shall show that this is also the case in the punk rock subculture. Even the fact that in many studied networks reciprocity is linked to the ideology of (often extended and fictive) kinship, has parallels in the world of subcultures (cf. Bird-David 1995; Godelier 1975; Goody 1973; Nuttall 1992; Schweitzer 2000; Ziker 2002a, 2002b).

In this paper I shall explore the ideology, rules and practices of the punk rock subculture. I shall look at how much we can speak about a distinct ideology of the subculture and to which extent this is reflected in people's activities and behaviour. The question I pose is, can we speak about the existence of an alternative notion of law when analysing the networks of subcultures? Because of the importance of economic activities, social relations in punk rock groups are multi-layered, and in general it is possible to speak about 'multi-stranded' structure with a consciously

high ‘redundancy’ (alternative channels if one channel fails) that covers several economic sectors with an eye on having alternative access to resources (Mitchell 1969, 1974). As in every network, even in the most egalitarian or ‘anarchic’ society, punk rock subculture has some group hierarchy (cf. Pospisil 1973: 544-545). These “more influential spectators” (Peters 1972: 151, cited Yngvesson and Mather 1983: 70) - I will call them below ‘anchor persons’ - had economically significant positions affecting the redistribution occurring in the network. However, the question is whether this means that a subculture makes and follows its own laws that are different from the state law? If the subculture has its own laws, to what extent do these laws determine people’s practice and how great is the role played by state law by affecting the strategies of people involved in the subculture? To answer these questions I will use the concept of the ‘semiautonomous social field’ used by S. Moore (1973) and look at what the concept contributes to understanding the behaviour of members of a subculture, or the character of the network. Before I start the analysis I introduce these subcultures.

Punk Rock People

In the centre of my study in this article are punk rock related groups who refer to themselves as punks, skinheads and hardcore fans. Here I shall give a short overview of the nature of such groups.

Skinheads are one of the most controversial youth cultures post-War Europe has given birth to. It is generally agreed that skinheads are part of a chain of youth cultures which British working class urban youth have produced. As with all such youth groups, it is difficult to tell the exact date when skinheads appeared, but it was in the first half or middle of the 1960s. Many skinheads themselves consider the year 1969 as the peak of their subcultural history where the distinct style of their culture crystallised (G. Marshall 1993). Skinheads followed another youth culture called ‘mods’. The early skinheads – as mods used to be – were young working class girls and boys who loved everything exclusive. They wore stylish tailor-made suits and listened to what was in those days very exclusive music, American soul and Jamaican ska, rocksteady and early reggae. Hair was short but not shaved entirely as is a habit in current times. They were also known for their passion for football which made them, contrary to earlier British youth cultures, local patriots. In the early 1970s the skinhead cult slowly faded out to make a comeback at the end of the decade with the appearance of punk. This is also the

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time of the splitting of this scene. One division among skinheads today is musical: there are adherents of ska and soul music, called traditional skinheads, and of streetpunk music, called Oi!-skinheads. Another split is political, because the skinhead scene is divided between right wing and left wing followers having between these groups so called apolitical skinheads.²

Punk is another development in the line of youth cultures. It is still a matter of discussion whether it started in America or Great Britain. On the whole, punk poses itself ideologically against the conformity of society and supports individuality. Another important fact in the punk ideology is the anti-state and anti-consumption attitude. As in most youth cultures, music plays an important role in

² Inside the skinhead scene since the early 1980s politics has been an important issue. The wide public do not realise how many political factions the skinhead scene contains. There are ultra-right wing militant and well organized groups like Hammerskins or Blood and Honour. As a rule, among skinheads most right-wing supporters in main European countries are loose friendship-based groups that can be mobilized by parties and other political organizations for some short-term actions but who have little interest in continuous affiliation with any political group. Looking at right-wing skinhead websites, their great interest lies in music and their main platform for socializing are concerts of racist, nationalist, etc. rock bands. Left wing skinhead factions include also several groups of Trotskyist, anti-fascist, anarchist, communist, socialist etc. profile. In my opinion, these groups are more firmly tied to various left-wing organizations but are also active in organizing concerts. Left-wing skinheads are distributed more in countries that have traditions of left-wing working class movements like Spain, Italy, England or Germany. Right-wing skinheads are very active in the Eastern European countries but also in Sweden, Holland and Belgium. The so-called apolitical skinheads mainly avoid political manifestations and show their permanent interest only in music, socializing and clothing. Apolitical skinheads usually communicate with both left and right wing factions whereas there is sharp enmity between political ends within the scene (extending to violent confrontations). However, discussions about who is the 'real' skinhead and who is the 'traitor' are usual in skinhead fanzines i.e. skinzines and web-forums. The interested reader should use the keyword 'skinhead' for a search of skinhead internet sites and will easily find hundreds of them. In the late 1980s a skinhead movement appeared in New York that spread quickly all over the world. This movement was called SHARP (Skinheads Against Racist Prejudices) and their aim was to distance themselves from right-wing influences in the skinhead culture.

punk culture. Punk music is a fast and energetic form of rock and, contrary to public opinion, not always primitive. There is a wide-spread punk scene all over the world and adherents of this culture are often also engaged in various social, cultural and political projects which tend to be ideologically left wing and so called 'grass roots', meaning focused on needs of the 'average working people'.

Both skinhead and punk scenes developed in Germany in the early 1980s. There was no big time difference between capitalist West and socialist East Germany because music and images were imported from West to East via radio waves and TV and by visiting relatives. The difference between East and West in the punk circles was more ideological. Whereas in West Germany punk tended to be a left wing social movement with an artistic touch, in East Germany it was more directly anti-state and anti-system. Among the skinheads, until the 1990s right wing culture with their slogans, music and politics dominated the German skinhead scene. But since the beginning of the 1990s in Germany there appeared more traditional and non-racist oriented factions so that today the skinhead scene contains all kinds of politics and music, including black music and radical anarchist left wing politics. In both punk and skinhead scenes, there are factions that communicate tightly with each other, partly due to the same musical preferences that make people visit the same concerts and pubs. The slogan 'Punx and skins united' is used to describe this friendship and, as I will show in this paper, there can be coexistence of skins and punks in one social environment. In the subcultural world, there are of course more aspects and variations when talking about punks and skinheads but detailed cultural analysis is not important for this article. Politically 'united' skinheads and punks - my informants - share left-wing ideas, sporting often anarchist slogans and colours (black and red) to demonstrate their anti-state position and opposition to the right wing.

The music that is related to my research is called streetpunk and hardcore. Streetpunk is heavy version of punk rock. The split in punk rock took place at the end of the 1970s when some punk bands began playing a faster and harder version of punk rock. Because of the 'street lyrics' about the 'street life', struggles of working class youth, football, violence, etc. this music became known as 'streetpunk' or 'Oi!'. Some bands to mention are The Oppressed, UK Subs, Sham 69, Argy Bargy, in Germany Oxymoron, Trinkerkohorte, Loikemie, Lokalmatadore. One offshoot of the streetpunk music is so called hardcore which developed in the USA in the early 1980s. This music is much faster, louder and harder. Some of the best known bands are Agnostic Front, Bad Brains, Dead Kennedys, Circle Jerks, Black Flag and Vision. Common features in streetpunk

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and hardcore music are certain topics that are always repeated in the lyrics. One very obvious position in these music styles is that bands take a clear anti-state and anti-police stance. Song titles like “One Law For Us Another Law For Them”, “ACAB (All Coppers Are Bastards)” (both by The 4Skins), “Police Oppression” (Angelic Upstarts) or “Government Out” (The Oppressed) need no clarification and are not a rare way of handling this topic. Another important issue in lyrics of streetpunk and hardcore bands is the stress on solidarity and a sense of unity among their audience (“If the kids are united”, Sham 69, “Boys On the Dock”, Dropkick Murphys, “Call to Arms” Sick Of It All). Addressing their audience with songs that contain this message, bands also urge people to be proud of their lower or working class heritage that distinguishes them from petite bourgeoisie and sometimes even makes them objects of dislike and hate (“Faces from below”, Oxymoron; “Crucified” Agnostic Front, “Romantic Street Bully Boy” Subway Thugs) (see also Mader 1996, 1999; G. Marshall 1993; O'Hara 1995). This approach is reflected also in numerous underground non-commercial journals vernacularly called ‘fanzines’. Fanzines are a very important medium in the punk and skinhead scene, because they not only inform readers about new records, upcoming concerts and bands but in columns and articles also discuss social and political issues from the point of view of the underground. In such articles and columns writers, as a rule, take a very ‘grass roots’ and anti-commerce position, criticising often both state institutions and middle class people for the attempt to produce a coherent mass society without individuality where all people have to follow the same norms (Fischer 2006; Grenzel 2006; NZO 2006; Vasco 2006). One aim of my research was to explore how this ideology is reflected in the life of skinheads and punks, adherents of punk and the underground music based scene, whom I will call ‘punk rock’ people.

In cultural studies youth punk was regarded as a ‘classic example of the youth subculture’ (Bennet 2006). The punk subculture was seen in the period of CCCS as an answer to the unemployment that forced young people to establish their own ‘style’ (Brake 1985; Street 1986). Since then, punk has been studied from the perspective of authenticity or ‘realness’ (Fox 1987) or as a field of cultural production (R. Moore 2007). There are also comparative studies of the punk cultures in different countries (O’Connor 2002). Most works deal with the ideology of punk or the symbols it uses, but there are studies on gender and so forth (Leblanc 2001). Some scholars come to very obscure interpretations, as does Stratton (2007) who demonstrates that British and US punk movements were an expression of the shock of the Holocaust among the second generation post-Second World War Jews. There are also several non-scientific works written by people

who were deeply involved in the punk subculture that are appreciated by scholars or other 'outsiders' (Mader 1996; O'Hara 1995).

The skinhead subculture has received less attention (Yong and Craig 1997: 176). The classic article of Mike Brake (1974) about the English skinheads not only describes the skinhead style but also discusses their controversial ideology. Clarke (1976), in the true CCCS style, sees skinheads as a working class youth attempt to recover a working class community that was destroyed through industrialisation. Walker's (1980) study on the second generation London skinheads, Burr (1984) on the drug consumption of London skins and D. Moore (1990) on Australian skinhead and alcohol consumption are some of these few works that analyse different aspects of the skinhead subculture. Yong and Craig (1997) continue this research, analysing the controversial ideology of Canadian skinheads who proclaim that they are not Nazis but have quite radical racist views. In short, those few scholars who have studied skinheads seem to have been more focused on parts of the subculture that are usually classified as (neo-)Nazi skinheads in different countries (e.g. Baron 1997; Campbell 2006; Christensen 1994; J. Moore 1993; Perho 2000). In Germany, the sociologist Klaus Farin has written a few books about the skinhead subculture in Germany where he covers different political and musical taste groups among German skinheads (e.g. Farin 1996; Farin and Seidl-Pielen 2002). The edited volume of Farin, *Die Skins. Mythos und Realität (The Skins. Myth and Reality)* (Farin 2001), brings together different scholars who discuss topics like the right wing rock music or skinheads in the mass media. Probably because of the right-wing violence in the 1990s, also in Germany skinheads are mostly interpreted in the context of right-wing culture (Antifaschistisches Autorenkollektiv 1996; Gisteren 1996; Virchow 2007) and there are only a few scholars who discuss the German skinhead culture in its ideological, political, stylistic and musical variety (El-Nawab 2001). Beside that, there are a few books by former skinheads, which are widely known among the adherents of the subculture and are often cited by scholars as representations of the 'insider view' (G. Marshall 1993; Watson 2008).

Hardcore, as the American subgenre of punk, is actively studied in its homeland. There is an impressive monograph about the straight edge (i.e. vegetarian, no alcohol, no drugs, no smoking ideology) hardcore fans by Ross Haenfler (2006). Here he analyses the ideological struggles, changes and developments of the 'clean living youth'. Straight edge seems to have attracted the interest of many scholars. In the spirit of Muggleton, Wood (2003) looks at the 'fluid identity' of straight edgers. Gender is the focus by Mullaney (2007), and Williams (2006) (using

Hodkinson 2002) discusses straight edge as the ‘scene’ that is connected by the common media – the internet. Veganism and straight edge in other countries also attract scholars, like the work on Swedish straight edgers by Larsson et. al. (2003). However, the main focus of this subculture seems to be on the American scene. Authors like Susan Willis (1993) discuss the ‘American style’ of the hardcore subculture in comparison with the earlier British-focused subculture studies. Ward (1996) discusses the controversial masculinity of the New York bands in the 1980s and 1990s. Most studies of the fans of hardcore music deal with the ideologies, norms and cultural practices of the adherents, having again little interest what happens outside of this sphere.

General Context

This study was conducted in two German cities: X, a medium size university city not far from the German capital Berlin, and Y, a satellite suburb of Berlin. Until the reunion of Germany, both cities belonged to the GDR and all my informants grew up in Socialist Germany. In the beginning of the 1990s, the alternative scene in both cities boomed. Squats (illegally inhabited living houses) mushroomed in both cities and were a platform for alternative clubs and bars. The contact between the two cities had started before those years because travelling to concerts and visiting friends was already practised in the time of the GDR (Horschig 2005; Löser 2005; Westhusen 2005). However, the travelling intensified after reunification because the number of concerts and other social events increased. So almost all contacts between X and Y which are relevant in my study, developed after the reunification of the Germans.

The alternative scene in the GDR had an extreme anti-state ideology and this continued after the collapse of Socialism (Galenza and Havemeister 2005; Westhusen 2005). Those in the alternative scene saw themselves as living outside the state law and structures, and what I witnessed in 1994 and 1995 showed that squats in East German towns were for many years a world on their own successfully avoiding contact with the German state. Over time alongside the strengthening of the state’s control over the space (i.e. the restitution of property), squats as independent communes vanished. However, the ideology which I shall discuss below is rooted in this period. The anti-state ideology of the punk rock scene still defines the legitimating foundations of the social norms of the subculture. Norms, procedures and concepts of the punk rock subculture (supported and legitimised by the ideology) can be referred to as ‘legal systems’ that “do not

derive their legitimacy from the state” (F. and K. von Benda-Beckmann 2000: 23-24) but from their opposition to it.

The attempt to create an ideological and economic niche and minimise contact with formal mainstream society is easily noticeable in the German punk rock scene. The studied punk rock people are not only people with their own musical taste, dress code and other cultural traits but also a social group we can discuss in terms of legal pluralism. Griffiths defines legal pluralism as the “presence of multiple legal orders within a social group” (J. Griffiths 1985: 217). As in other studies of legal pluralism, in the case of punk rock people the focus is on how “different legal mechanisms pertain to the same situation” (Benda-Beckmann 2002: 60, quoting Vanderlinden 1971: 20). Beside the state laws that all people living in Germany have to follow to a certain extent, punk rock people have established and follow their own norms. The purpose of these norms is “maintenance of the dominant social relations within a social formation” (Snyder 1985: 269). The ‘other law’ of the studied punk rock people keeps the scene coherent and channels people’s action. As I showed, norms of punk rock people are taken seriously within the scene and there exists a setting of mutual obligations that people also follow. Left over from the early 1990s are numerous alternative clubs and pubs in many German cities (including X and Y) that still carry the legacy of the squat world. Many of these places are former squats or established by people who come from the early squatter scene. The town of X has four alternative clubs that all function as communes where people, who lived in these houses, also run clubs. All those clubs are located on the first floor or in the basement of the building while people live on the other floors. These clubs have, beside the concert venue, also a bar room where people meet almost every day to hang out and drink beer. Each of these clubs has its own group of regular customers, who, although they go to other places for concerts, prefer to meet their friends in their ‘own’ venue. Y has many alternative bars but only two clubs, probably because Berlin is easy to reach and for concerts people go there. The outlook and furniture of alternative clubs in Y is similar to those I saw in X and do not differ from what everyone can see in other German cities. The alternative clubs not only organise punk concerts but also host metal, rock, hip-hop, reggae and many other different events. However, such clubs are musically dominated by punk rock events, and so also punk rock people are their main regular customers.

Most of my interviewees are male working class persons who dominate the alternative punk rock scene in X and Y. These people started their working career in the 1990s. As they told me, they have always combined their working life with

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the scene life i.e. visiting concerts at weekends or after the work, spending a lot of time with friends. Also for many years they have bought records and invested a significant part of their income in punk and skinhead clothes. Persons standing in the centre of this study are all construction workers of different profiles and specialisations. Central to my study are two construction workers – a 30 year old officially unemployed Oskar in the town Y, and a worker in a small construction enterprise Lauri in X. Other people who participated in this study are car and bicycle mechanics, tattoo artists, computer specialists, hairdressers, social workers or (especially women) workers in pubs and bars. Beside the fact that my informants are friends and a quite coherent age group (between 28 and 35), another common feature is that a great number (approximately half of the people involved in this study) are officially unemployed and receive social security money from the state. Others complement their legal income with illegal work either on construction sites, behind the bar in pubs, or in other places. Over time, I discovered that people who socialise actively at concerts and pubs have also established networks of friends involved in punk rock that were in nature extremely economic.

The main focus of this article is on people who are regular visitors of two clubs. In X it is a venue I call PIG and in Y a place I will call Arkadia. Both places are typical German alternative places, covered with graffiti and containing rather robust furniture. PIG and Arkadia are well known in German alternative music circuits, especially in the eastern part of the country. In Germany a club must register musical events at the city council and receive a license for each event. PIG used to have a very active concert life five years ago but because neighbours constantly complained about the noise, getting licenses for concerts became difficult and these events were rare during my fieldwork period (about one concert every three months). However, licensed and non-licensed concerts in PIG draw big crowds although the venue tended to book ‘small’ bands. Arkadia, located in a backyard in the middle of a quite industrial area, has less of a problem with neighbours and there are weekly at least three concerts of different music genres where also famous or ‘big’ bands play. In and around PIG and Arkadia exist many small groups of friends, who describe themselves as networks. These people come to PIG and Arkadia often, even during the week, to spend evenings with their friends, so that both clubs (or their bars) are regular meeting places for dozens of people. As I will show below, these meetings are not only important in terms of socialising but also in making and maintaining economic contacts. In the course of rounds of beer, information about available jobs is exchanged and often negotiations take place to recruit people for forthcoming jobs.

Regulars of PIG and Arkadia have formed several friendship groups that meet once a week on a certain day, a habit that in Germany is called *Stammtisch*. The *Stammtisch* groups in alternative clubs are ‘close-knit intensive’ relations, which build ‘clusters’ in ‘cross linked’ bigger social networks (Mitchell 1969: 287-289). In practice this means that none of the studied network groups has a closed isolated character, i.e. people communicate with other regular visitors, are on good terms with them, and of necessity transfer jobs and services to persons outside their own immediate social networks. It is usual for one person to be affiliated to more than one group, which means that he comes to a number of *Stammtische* in the week. Especially in X but to a lesser extent in Y, cooperation and solidarity seemed to exist throughout this generation of people despite their varying musical preferences. Punk is not the only music culture that views itself as underground. In X, communication is active with older leading persons of the local hip-hop scene, and also with some adherents of techno and reggae music. My informants explained to me that this is due to the common biography and to professional contacts. Punk rock people and hip-hoppers aged over 30 are people who started the alternative life in X in the early 1990s. “Those days punks went to hip-hop parties and next day gangsters [hip-hoppers] came to the punk concert”, Oskar, one of my main interviewees, told me.

Not unimportant for communication between people from different scenes is their distance from the state and their semi-legality – illegal hip-hop events and techno parties were organised during my fieldwork period. Another subject, who works in PIG, explained to me: “I still know the older hip-hoppers. We were together in the anti-fascist political scene. It was at the beginning of the 1990s. And we listened to each other’s music. Only later both scenes became bigger and grew apart. But we still see each other with old friends.” Ill, another informant from X, said to me: “Music is not always important. I have a friend who listens to techno. So what! He is an excellent carpenter, and when he needs my help, he often calls me.” Because of the history of PIG, which is the oldest working alternative pub in X, it was the meeting point for many people who started to visit it in the early 1990s. Visiting PIG later meant maintaining contact with old friends.

People who were my informants in Arkadia tended to socialise more with people who shared their own musical tastes. To a certain extent, I observed friendships with people in other rock-music based scenes. For example, skinheads socialised not only with punks but also with fans of gothic music or metal. However, I did not notice many active contacts with hip-hoppers or other so-called club music

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scene people. The reason is the vicinity to Berlin which had big scenes for many musical styles. Close contact with one music scene in Berlin means also regularly attending concerts in the capital, and personal contacts to other music scenes have been, according to my punk rock informants, always less active in Y than in towns where scenes are 'mixed'. In Y punk rock cluster groups already in the early 1990s had tense relations with other punk rock based groups in Berlin and to a lesser extent in small towns outside Y.

A common feature of both towns was that regulars of the same club saw each other as friends and often spent time together. In summer, people often travel to big alternative music festivals, or hold barbecues in parks, or rent a summer house on the Northern German coast. This way, it is not unusual to gather 15-25 people for the purpose of spending time together. In the winter, most PIG or Arkadia regulars meet at big birthday parties that gather dozens of people. Both clubs are also bases for amateur football teams. Several regulars of PIG have established a football team that struggles its way through the town's league. Every year Arkadia organises a football championship where participating teams are usually groups of friends coming from Y and even Berlin. For that event, volunteers gather a team that has new players almost every year. This championship is always brought to a close with a concert and a barrel of free beer.

Travel to other German cities, especially those in Eastern Germany, is still very common. In most cases visits to friends are linked with attendance at concerts, thus continuing the tradition of active communication with friends in other cities which I mentioned above. It is believed that different clubs have their own atmosphere, and even when the same bands play, their concerts in different places have a different 'feeling'. For that reason it is not unusual for people to drive to a concert in some other town despite the fact that the band which is playing also may play in the hometown.

Methods

My punk interest dates back to 1986. At that time, I attended punk concerts regularly in my native Tallinn, Estonia. After moving to Germany, my involvement with that culture continued. I became affiliated with the German skinhead and football fan scene in Berlin. Many informants who contributed to this study I had known years before my field research. Other people I contacted via my friends or met at concerts and bars. In every case we had common friends, so they

were able to check my background (which some of them did) before talking to me about their economic activities. From the beginning of the fieldwork, I made clear to everybody I talked to that I was engaged in an academic study that was financed by a research institute. This explanation was accepted without any complications. This was surprising, because negative attitudes toward ‘the state’, ‘scholars’ and ‘students’ are very high in the German punk rock scene. Up until the study I was not aware of the economic networks I shall discuss in this paper. For my informants, the issue of informal, semi-legal economic activities was very delicate. For example, my attempts to include students as field assistants met with extremely negative reaction and I had to give up the idea. People were reluctant to speak to persons they did not know personally. However, in my case it was never a problem to discuss semi-legal economic activities with my informants. The only condition, that almost all subjects stressed, was that the identities of the people involved in this study should remain hidden, and from my side I promised to protect their identities. Some of my informants expressed their interest in such a study. As one of them said: “The scene changes with every year. It is good that someone documents it!”

This research could be described as “insider research” (Hodkinson 2005: 136) in which I was able to gain trust and participation through my own “cultural competence” (Hodkinson 2005: 138) in the German hardcore, street punk and skinhead scene. However, I tried to keep a distance between the research topic and the people involved. This was not very difficult because when looking at the economy of the punk rock people, I was not involved in these networks. Moreover, as I show below, these networks were established through face-to-face contacts over years and were very local. I was a foreigner who was quite new in the region and did not have more than ten years’ involvement in local life, whereas my informants had much more.

The fieldwork for this study was conducted in three months from September 2007 to the beginning of December 2007. I formally interviewed seven people at their homes or favoured bars, and one interview took place in a record shop. However, most of the information I collected was gathered through conversations and participant observation. Because of the high mobility of punk rock people, I travelled with them between the towns of X and Y. This fieldwork involved visits to several concerts in various German cities. Before and after the concerts we visited underground pubs and had discussions about the music and the nature of the underground music business. In trains or cars, we had countless conversations about the punk ideology and the way punk rock people make their living. I

followed my informants to some of their work sites and helped with simple tasks that I could carry out, like cleaning floors after the construction work. At the end of my research, I toured Eastern Europe with some underground hardcore bands. This tour was very helpful, and not only because of our discussions in the tour bus. I was also able to see how the international underground music network works in practice and it gave me some valuable insights into the functioning of trust- and solidarity-based underground structures.

This is Punk Rock

One phrase I heard many times during my interviews was “This or that is punk rock.” or “This or that is not punk rock” ‘Punk rock’ itself is a non-codified quality marker for many things like bands, events, locations but also a description of lifestyle and attitude. The other meaning of the ‘punk rock’ was a group with shared social norms, a way of behaving connected to specific cultural and economic interests. Lauri said to me once: “I work hard but I have to go to concerts at weekends. This is what punk rock is!” When I asked “What precisely do you mean by it?”, he said: “Punk rock is going to clubs and meeting people. This is important because this way you make your contacts.” Similar was Oskar’s explanation: “Punk rock is... You know people, you have the same tattooist, we go to the same events. And there you make contacts! You go to punk rock concerts to make contacts. And later... people know each other, they respect each other. And so you can find jobs!” By visiting concerts with people, I noticed how important for them it was ‘to meet people’ in clubs and how often people went to bars because they had “to make and maintain connections” as Lauri said it. Ill’s point of view describes well how music and economic cooperation belong together: “Music plays an important role [in our lives]. Because at concerts you also make acquaintances with people who either do other jobs than you or can be useful for your business, plus you can find out information about people and what they do. And you have a nice balance between this and entertainment. It is so, that you do not meet people through a cup of coffee but through a few pints of beer.” The importance of socialising at concerts went so far that people often met at concerts to discuss their economic affairs during the breaks between bands or to withdraw into the barroom for quick discussions. Illustrative of this was the response of one of my interviewees before one punk concert in X: “I have to go to this concert, M. comes there and it could be that he has some job for me!”

This proved that punk rock fans are not just music fans who share a love of

common bands but that they have transformed into a socio-economic group. The thin line between music culture and economy became observable when I spent time with people and participated in their chat. It was not uncommon in discussions for people to mix different topics like music, football and work. In practice this meant jumping without any introduction from topic to topic just to return to the initial theme in a few minutes. So, when people were discussing some work-related topic, no-one wondered when someone said suddenly “But the concert on Friday was really good!” and after discussing in a few sentences this event, people turned to discuss their work again, only to jump to discuss the last football game after a few minutes. Talking about music, concerts, bands, records, interviews in fanzines takes up much of the punk rock people’s communication time.

More than in discussions, the tie between music and economy expressed itself also by the fact that most of my subjects (and also people outside the network studied) invested a lot of time and financial resources in the music. A large part of their time was spent on attending concerts and driving to concerts outside their immediate home town. This passion for music was for many people one marker of their identity, something that distinguished punk rock people from other mainstream, ‘average’ people. As one person said who works in PIG “When I meet my relatives at family celebrations, they always wonder and cannot understand how I can live this life already at an adult age. For them, constantly going to concerts is stupid and not comprehensible.” Beside time, money was invested in the music and dress. In the age of free (but illegal) internet music downloads, punk rock people spend much money and time buying records. This does not exclude downloading, but all people I know constantly bought officially released CDs and vinyl records. The increases in record prices did not interrupt this practice but increased the amount of time that people spent on looking for records. It meant regular visits to supermarkets to seek cheap CDs in low price boxes and hours behind the computer trying to buy second hand records and cheap stylish clothes in internet shops like eBay.

To sum up this section, money was needed to keep the underground culture alive. At the same time socialising at concerts and scene bars also gave the possibility of access to jobs and these locations were where economic contacts were made and maintained. I argue that it shows how equally important are music, sport and work for people and how all spheres were interlinked for the punk rock people.

Networks and Reciprocity

One object of focus in this paper is the nature of networks among the punk rock groups, and their modes of functioning, carrying and maintaining social norms and the coherence of the group. The structure of the groups studied may look simple at first sight but on closer inspection they show substantial “organisational complexity” (cf. Yngvesson and Mather 1983). I show below that punk rock networks are based on multiplex social relations and have a system of values and norms. In this section I examine rules and relations in a punk rock network. The ‘common sense’ of the scene was linked to certain ways of ‘appropriate’ behaviour and included ‘common sense terms’, or obligations and expectations of the social relationship (Mitchell 1974: 283-284). As will be shown below, the common norms and ‘right’ behaviour were important in maintaining the reciprocal nature of punk rock networks, and that demonstrates again that social relations in subcultures do have similarities to networks from other regions and settings (Golte and Norma 1987; McIllwain 1999; Meagher 2006; Simich 2003; Woodburn 1982, 1998)

If you work honestly you can go to shite!

Analysing networks in organised crime, McIllwain (1999) stated that the basis of activity in organised crime was ‘human relations’. He used the analytical categories developed by Wasserman and Faust (1994) of ‘actor’, ‘relational tie’ (relations between two people) and ‘relations’ to describe these ‘human relations’. In these subsections I demonstrate how ‘human relations’ were established within the punk rock network and which of them were social relations between single individuals and which were relations inside the group as whole.

As an example I use concrete networks from towns X and Y that have grown together into one structure (see Table 3 below, p. 71). This network was established over a number of years and reached its final form (in so far as we can speak of completeness in network building) a few years ago. One person, Kalle, moved from X to Y a few years ago. After doing different odd jobs for many years, he finally decided to open a bar that would combine an alternative ambience with petit bourgeois comfort. For that, he hired people he knew were skilled construction workers. But, because he was short of money, Kalle preferred to hire people illegally for smaller pay. Furthermore, because he knew many punk rock people from X and Y and was on good terms with them, he managed to get much

work done for a *Freundespreis* i.e. for extremely low pay as a friendship service. The nature of these services I will discuss below, but what is important here is that Kalle later failed to recognise the obligation this kind of cooperation imposes and ended up in conflict with many of the people who helped to build his bar.

However, during the building and styling of the bar, many punk rock people from X and Y, who came to the building site through personal acquaintance with Kalle and did not know the other workers, became friends through their common musical interests and social habits. After the day's work punk rockers from both X and Y spent time in Y alternative pubs, especially in the famous alternative club Arkadia, Y's counterpart of PIG. Kalle's right-hand man in building the bar was 30-years-old Oskar, one of my main informants, who established a friendship with Lauri. Lauri, 28 years old, not only lived in the house of the Arkadia but also organised concerts in the venue and was responsible for the management of the Arkadia club bar. The Arkadia became famous for its punk and ska concerts and a well known club in the German alternative rock-scene that year. From the beginning of their work on the construction of Kalle's bar, people started to travel between X and Y at weekends, so that punk rock people of Y made friends with X people and vice versa. But this friendship and visiting was not only to spend time together. After a while the relationship acquired more and more economic features, so that leisure became connected to the transfer of jobs, goods and services.

Because construction workers are at the centre of this study there is a need to tell more about illegality in the construction business. The business is highly specialised. Very few of the people on construction sites are able to do more than two or three jobs. Painting walls and ceilings is considered one speciality whereas laying tubes or installing toilets is another skill that has to be learned over a long time. So therefore, to finish a site – be it a house or just an apartment – one often needs more than one specialist. This is also the reason why construction workers knew each other within a town where they lived. They were colleagues who met each other in various construction sites, sometimes even recruited each other to complete building projects or advised their bosses to hire certain skilled specialists with a good reputation. As I found out, there was intensive communication between construction workers continuing beyond their working time and this communication created a lot of informal contacts. These informal relations between construction workers helped the formation of illegal working teams, recruited among colleagues, to complete illegal out-of-hours jobs that in Germany are generally referred to as '*Schwarzarbeit*' or 'black (illegal) labour'.

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In the autumn of 2006 there was a building boom in Germany. The reason was not only that many landowners wished to finish reparations or construction of their property before the winter started but, as my informants told me, a lot of property developers and landowners wanted to finish their projects before January 2007 when a new tax law increased the *Mehrwertsteuer* (VAT) and made building more expensive. Therefore, it became usual for construction workers with necessary skills to work illegally on various sites after their official working day. And this applied not only to employed construction workers, who did illegal night shifts to earn some extra money, but also to those who were officially on the dole. To my question, why one needs to do it a skinhead from Y, Lauri, said to me: “If you work honestly you can go to shite! (*Wenn du ehrlich arbeiten gehst, kannst du kacken gehen!*)”, explaining to me that legal work was enough to satisfy his primary needs but money for travelling, hobbies and leisure he got from illegal work.

Another additional source of income in illegal construction work was the stealing of building materials on the official job site for use on the illegal construction site. The customer usually had to pay a previously agreed amount of money for both the construction materials and work time, so that by using stolen material the workers earned some additional money. Here also cooperation between workers was needed. It was not in every construction site that all the construction materials needed were available. Therefore workers communicated with each other with the aim of supplying each other with construction materials. I was present when Lauri got a phone call asking him to ‘obtain’ (*besorgen*) 1.5 metres of a particular type of pipeline, and Lauri promised to have it by the next evening. In case it was impossible for workers on the site to steal the needed parts and other material people in need would be were informed of the location and amount of needed goods and these items were stolen at night.³ Such ‘transfers’ between colleagues usually took place without money being involved and were understood as ‘friendship services’ which the other person had to return when his help was needed. There was one ironic aspect of the theft of materials: as many of my informants told me, construction firm bosses were very well aware of it, and the cost of theft was calculated into the work estimate. In Germany, 20% of the price

³ The other side of the coin that I heard consisted of stories about how workers who were responsible for completing a job by a deadline, had to spend nights on the site shortly before it was finished because if material and equipment had been stolen it would have taken too long to replace them.

of every smaller building site, be it an apartment or a house, covers the possible theft of construction materials by workers and is paid by the customer.

Within this network that linked most construction workers of a town, it was not only building materials that were transferred. Of the same importance as the circulation of construction materials, was the transmission of jobs. As mentioned above, construction work was highly specialized and to renovate a flat or house there was a need for workers of various profiles. Therefore a person who was illegally hired would contact his colleagues with the needed skills and ask them to accompany him in completing the task. I met in Y and X persons who were central figures in such job transfers. They had built up reputations as reliable, good quality workers, and were constantly contacted by various private people and also by enterprises for construction work tasks. Such key figures knew a lot of colleagues by their skills and they put together teams for particular projects. Because it might happen that a particular specialist was not available for a certain job, these key persons had to know many people, so as to have other options. According to my observations, Lauri in Y and Oskar in X were such key persons whom I may call - to borrow a term from Mitchell (1974: 283) - 'anchor persons'. Their good reputation was well known and the cell phone numbers of Oskar and Lauri circulated around the town among people wishing to rebuild, renovate or complete their flats, houses, offices and shop venues.

In their engagement with illegal construction jobs, there were also differences between Lauri and Oskar, representing the differences between employed and unemployed workers. Lauri worked officially for a small construction firm, which meant access to building materials, but also that his time to do illegal jobs was very limited, consisting only of the times in working days after work hours and the weekends. Beside that, Lauri had to watch out not to turn up to such illegal work projects in his company working clothes (which carried the company logo) and not to use his company's van when there was a danger of being caught. As he told me, illegal construction work was pursued not only by the tax office but also by competing firms.

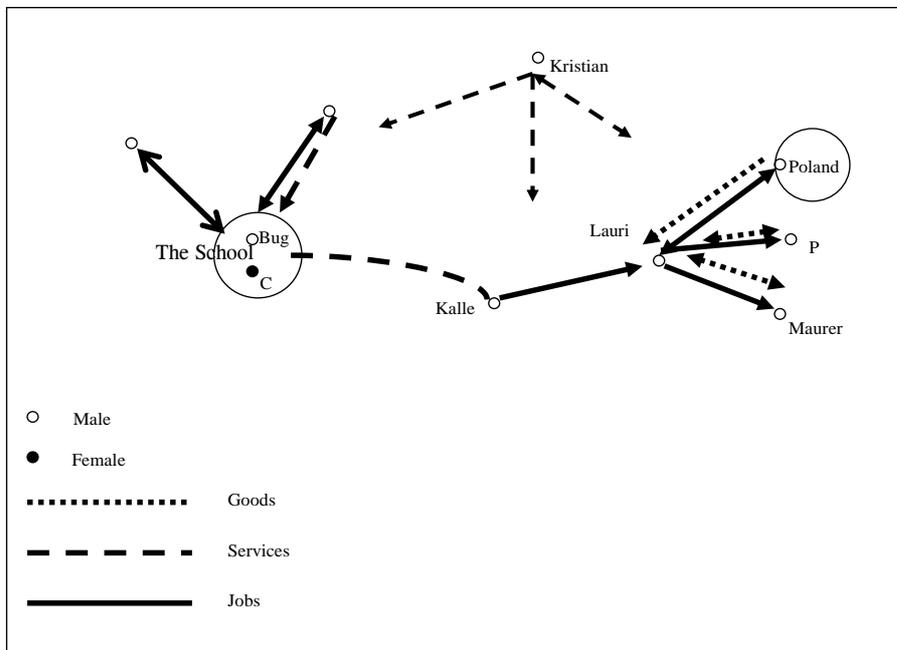
The following story of an event that happened some time in August 2006 illustrates very well the harsh competition in the German small-scale building business. Lauri helped his colleague to finish a private house at the outskirts of Y. The colleague turned up in his company's van and Lauri parked his private car behind it. People from a competing construction company, who had suspected that this house was going to be renovated illegally, took pictures of Lauri's colleague's van and

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reported the event to the *Innung* (guild). The colleague got into trouble with his own boss and had to compensate him for the stolen building material. He kept secret the fact that he was not building the house alone. Because Lauri's car was parked behind the van, the photographer did not have a picture of its number plates and Lauri's involvement remained undiscovered. The background to the story was that the competing company had made an offer to the landowner for the rebuilding of his house. According to Lauri, their offer was as cheap as it was possible to make for legal building work. But the offer was turned down, and when work began on the house the other firm knew that it must be an illegal job.

Lauri knew many construction workers in Y, mainly skinheads, who were part of his work and materials transfer network (see Table 1). Beside work, they also met

Table 1



at weekends when they went to concerts or football matches. I met most of these guys one weekend at the house of one of them, a sturdy and heavy built guy I will call Maurer. Maurer was a brick-layer and had recently bought a house which all

his friends helped to renovate. They were taking a break in the work and were discussing the latest punk-concert. Lauri dropped in with me to ask them if someone would be interested in a weekend illegal job at someone's flat. Most of such jobs he got were passed to him by a Polish worker, who at this time also lived in Y and earned money from legal and illegal construction activity. It was rumoured that the Polish guy was building a house in Poland with the money he earned. Here, to counter the stereotype about the generally racist nature of skinheads, I note that Lauri once said to me: "This Polish guy is a top fellow! He does splendid work and constantly offers me jobs. And he never cheats, you can always trust him!"

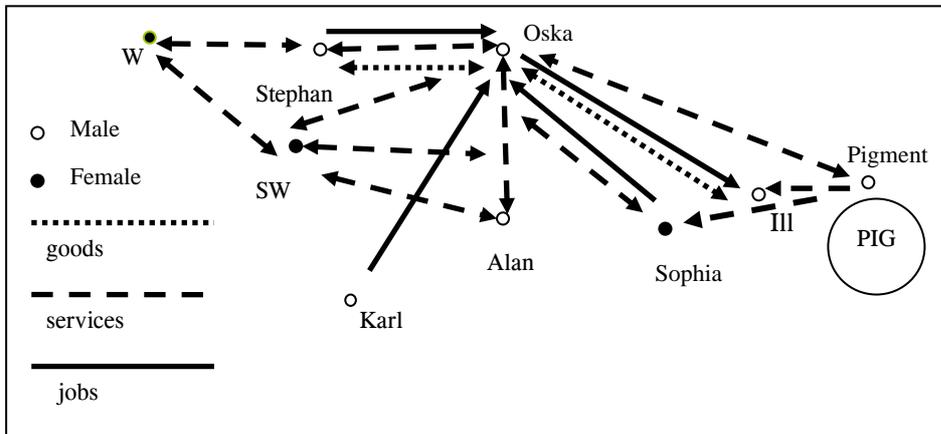
At the time when Lauri was officially employed by a firm Oskar in X was officially unemployed and received about €620 monthly from the state as social security money. When doing illegal work Lauri risked losing his job, and Oskar losing his state pay-check. Nevertheless, he worked a lot and in good months earned some €2000 extra. Oskar's customers were often private people, who wanted to renovate new flats or rebuild their private houses and were eager to do it illegally i.e. at minimal cost. Years before Oskar had worked for small firms and some ten years ago he had even had his own small construction enterprise, but that went broke when one customer refused to pay.⁴ Oskar earned his illegal income also doing legal jobs. Especially people such as lawyers who renovated their offices often needed bills of costs and documents of paid wages to set off against their tax liabilities. Sometimes even private customers needed a bill, and for that purpose Oskar had many friends who worked legally and were able to produce bills. Here Oskar had developed various strategies to maintain his unemployed status. For instance, he had a friend Stephan who sometimes needed him as a skilled painter. Oskar often worked for Stephan and Stephan fixed the records to hide Oskar's identity. In other cases some friend signed a receipt under his own name, Oskar received the payment and paid his friend the tax money due on the sum. This strategy worked well and Oskar had never any problems getting an official bill or receipt when needed.

⁴ This is a long and sad story but, according to many of my informants, rather typical for the construction business. The customer who placed the order for the work declared himself bankrupt and avoided payment. Because the house which Oskar worked on was registered on the name of his wife, there was no chance of getting money for the work and after a long legal process the worker remained unpaid.

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Oskar like Lauri had many friends he could hire for various construction jobs (see Table 2). Most of these friends I knew from PIG and they met regularly in the pub. In this sense, it is possible to say that PIG and Arkadia functioned as illegal job offices where people met when they needed a job or skilled labour. Because of his years of engagement as a construction worker and a business owner, Oskar knew most of the important construction material wholesalers in X and was able to buy construction materials at a cheaper price. This was also one reason for his popularity among customers, because his services were not only of good quality but he was not too expensive to hire. Over the years, Oskar became an illegal entrepreneur who was highly valued among customers and also appreciated as an employer among his punk rock friends, with a reputation of one who offered jobs with good pay.

Table 2



One of such friends was Ill, a man in his 40s, who was always dressed very stylishly. Ill often worked with Oskar and Stephan (whom I will introduce below). Sometimes, when Oskar had other jobs, he was replaced by Stephan (See Table 2). Ill was also a painter and specialized in building inner rooms, as did Oskar, but was considered not as skilled as Oskar. Nevertheless, he was engaged whenever there was enough work and he worked regularly with Oskar and Stephan. Unnecessary to stress, Ill was also officially unemployed. As Oskar explained to

me, Ill was a good construction worker but not as committed to his work as was sometimes necessary. It happened often that when there was a need to do long overtime hours (because the work had to be completed) or for night shifts (very common in supermarkets where almost all repairs are done outside opening hours), Ill protested and refused to work.

When Ill was not able to accompany Oskar, then for smaller jobs Oskar used the help of Karl. Oskar and Karl knew each other well and played in one band. Despite that friendship, Oskar was quite sceptical about Karl's working skills and even more about his working ethics. Karl was someone, as Oskar explained to me, who worked for a few days when he was in need of money. Then he disappeared to use that money for partying. Therefore Karl was considered by Oskar and Stephan as unreliable and his help was asked only when there were short-time jobs that required many workers.

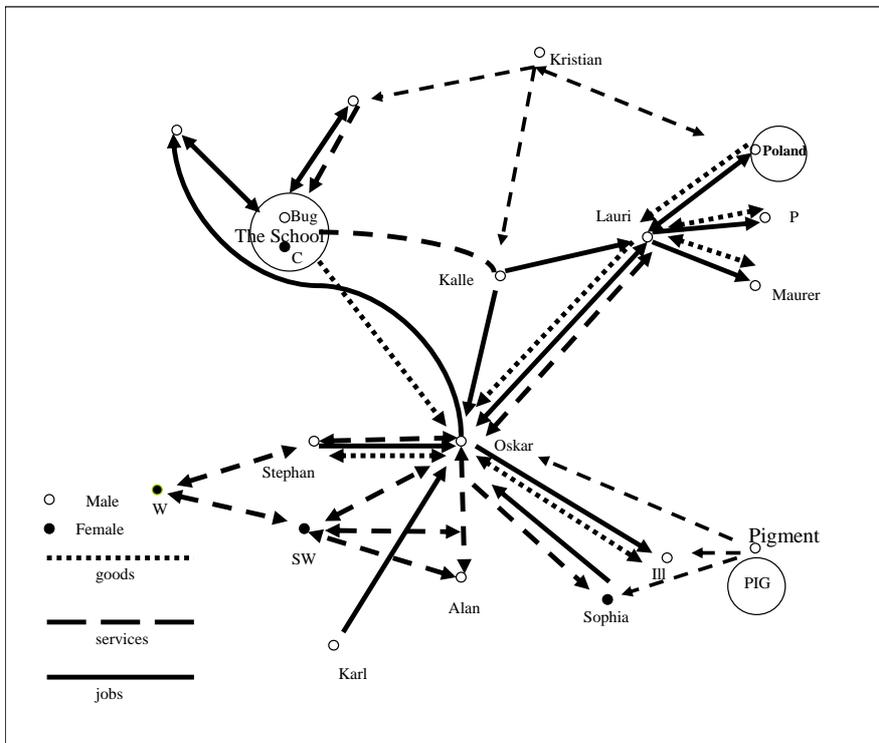
Another interesting person in the network was Stephan. He was the only one in the network who was not a punk rocker and had no relation to the others through music and the subculture. As mentioned above, Stephan was a small scale entrepreneur and Oskar knew him from having worked in Stephan's company years before. Stephan enjoyed huge respect among the punk rock scene around the PIG, because he was a 'nice lad' who occasionally dropped in to the PIG for parties and was on good terms with the alternative people. Oskar and other construction workers respected Stephan also because of his extraordinarily sophisticated professional skills. It was rumoured that Stephan was one of the few who 'was able to do all construction jobs'. Oskar and Stephan had a special relationship. Stephan not only provided Oskar with jobs and produced fake receipts for him. Stephan also functioned as an informal bank account for Oskar. The money that Oskar earned by working for Stephan remained in Stephan's bank account and when Oskar was very short of money, he called Stephan and asked for a few hundred euros. In this way Oskar always had some spare money, even when other sources, such as the state social security money and income from other illegal jobs, were exhausted. Oskar, on his side, was the best and most trusted worker in Stephan's team and was able to work (and sometimes this was needed) 16 and more hours without his work losing its high quality. He was able to handle other workers and lead the work when Stephan was away. Beside that, Stephan was always sure that working for him was Oskar's priority and that he would be available at almost all times when he was needed.

Ever since Oskar and Lauri met, they had travelled between Y and X combining

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weekend visits with illegal jobs. Often Oskar needed some material from Lauri or Lauri needed Oskar as a skilled professional. The usual pattern for such visits was to arrive in the evening of a Friday to go to the pub or to a concert (or both) with friends from another town and then to have a working shift on Saturday, to continue partying on Saturday evening, and to leave for the home town on Sunday. These kinds of visits combined leisure with work, which was very welcome to them both because it meant the travel costs were covered. As Oskar explained me: “This kind of work in Y is like a short holiday. You do not have costs of accommodation, you know well what is going on in the town. This (Y) is like a second home.” Such visits did not occur too often but once every two months each of them would drive over either from Y to X or from X to Y.

Table 3



Reciprocal relations between friends in the network were indeed very multiplex. The transmission of jobs and goods was not the only cooperation that took place in the punk rock network. Reciprocity included also numerous small favours. It goes without saying that Oskar and his friends helped each other by fixing their private flats when there were repairs to be done, and the lending of tools and vehicles was also quite common among friends in X. Helping each other was also common in Y when someone needed some pipeline installed in his private flat or other skilled works to be done, but in Y people tended also to use their company vans or tools for illegal jobs. These types of small favours seemed to be spontaneous without anybody making a record. However, over time I discovered that this delayed exchange also had rules, namely, that you should not exploit your friends too much without reciprocating. Very characteristic was a case with Oskar's cooker. Oskar said to me before he planned to ask Stephan's help to install his new cooker: "But it means I have to work one day for free." The ideology of reciprocity behind the whole network was that services and favours both in and outside immediate construction work were treated as equal and in the same category. Also the actors had to observe a certain balance of favours and counter-favours, or as Oskar expressed it: "You cannot take without giving!" So, doing favours could be a long term investment. When I asked Lauri why he was helping Maurer to build Maurer's new house, he replied: "One day I will have my own house and then Maurer will help me to renovate it."

You do not count everything in money

In the previous subsection I showed that the core of the studied punk rock network was construction workers and construction work. However, the entire picture was more complex. There were more people involved and they were not necessarily construction workers. There is no need and not enough space to characterize all the people involved in this network. In this subsection I shall give a brief overview of some persons and their relations to other people.

The nearest friend of Oskar lived in the same house only one floor higher. His name was Alan and he was a tattoo artist well known throughout Germany. This meant that he was good and it was difficult to book a time with him. Alan was a quite exceptional figure in the alternative scene of X. He was quiet and had more or less only two interests in this world – his work as a tattoo artist and his python which lived in his flat in a huge aquarium. Years ago, when Alan moved into the

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house, Oskar helped him to renovate his new flat and build the aquarium (which had to be of special strong glass and with automatic heating installed). Oskar worked on the flat many nights and weekends and with the completion of the apartment the reciprocal relationship between the two was established. Alan paid for Oskar's work with free tattoos and decorated his right arm and shoulder. Further, their cooperation continued with small but important services. Oskar as a very mobile person, who was constantly in other cities either for work or concerts, often needed someone to walk his dog. Now, with Alan as a neighbour, he did not have to think about it any more. Alan on his side needed Oskar's help and advice for bureaucratic occasions, such as when he had to communicate with the landowner or other formal institutions. There were always small favours Oskar and Alan exchanged without even thinking any more about whose turn it was to return a favour. Oskar explained it to me: "You do not count everything in money. We are friends. Of course, you could do it. For example, if I were to hire someone to walk my dog, it would cost me some €10 each time. And now I save the money. Alan takes care of my dog, keeps an eye on my flat and so forth. I help him. This is mutual respect!"

Oskar also had people like hair dressers, computer specialists or doctors among his friends. Therefore when he needed their services, he only had to call them and make an appointment. It was not unusual that someone came to visit in the evening and alongside the chat and beer also fixed some computer problems or cut Oskar's hair. Oskar's part in the relationship was to provide his skills and contacts when needed. For example, Oskar knew many construction material wholesalers and was able to get paint and other items at cheaper rates than average customers. This was very well known among his friends and therefore Oskar's help was often used. To organise such visits was very simple via cell phone calls and at *Stammtisch* in the PIG.

It was very interesting to observe how the reciprocal social network functioned between X and Y. I have mentioned the exchange of building materials and job opportunities. Beside providing jobs for Lauri, the Polish colleague also smuggled cigarettes to Germany. This was very dangerous, to judge how the business with cigarettes took place. We drove to his house late at night and parked a van in front of it. With lights switched off and cigarette tops covered with our palms, we waited for Lauri who had sneaked into the house to return half an hour later with a fully loaded black plastic bag. Then we turned the lights on and disappeared as fast as we could. These cigarettes were sold in the Arkadia and other punk pubs of Y to Lauri's friends. Some of these cigarettes travelled down to X, where Oskar

either consumed them himself or traded them further with a small profit. Another commodity that travelled from Y to X was diesel fuel. Whenever Oskar was in Y, he stayed in a house that was commonly known as The School where he had a friend C. C was an ex-girlfriend of Kalle, but she and Oskar had known each other for a long time, when C had lived in L (a bigger town than X only half an hour's driving distance from X. L was famous for its concert scene and often visited by people from X). Both used to visit the same clubs for concerts. Then C moved to Y but the friendship between Oskar and C continued. The School was a huge apartment building in the centre of the city, not far away from the old town. It was a squat more than a decade after the German reunion and after my fieldwork it existed as a legalised commune with a rental contract from the city council.⁵ The School was inhabited by a mixture of punks, bikers and hardcore fans. One of the inhabitants, Bug, was a free rider biker (i.e. he did not belong to any biker club) who worked illegally as a Harley Davidson mechanic in various motorcycle shops. Bug had many friends who were also active in the car, van or motorcycle repair business. One of his friends had access to cheap stolen fuel and this fuel was sold among close friends. Oskar had the possibility of buying this fuel for 50 cents a litre whereas official price at petrol station was approximately €1.5. Bug's contacts were also used for repairing cars and vans. Many people from both Y and X drove their vehicles to Y where they were fixed illegally for cheaper prices in various legal and illegal repair shops. Characteristic of this exchange was that people claimed the whole process to be 'non-commercial'. As was the case with cigarettes, people who sold fuel or fixed friends' vehicles convinced me that all these practices were pure 'friendship services' which meant that no-one made a huge profit. It was viewed as a possibility of saving money to keep living costs low.

I wish to mention a few other people to show that punk rock networks were socially heterogeneous rather than limited to a working class background. A good example here is Kristian. He had lived a long time in X where he studied

⁵ This fate is rather typical for German squats. In the end of the 1990s most squats were either closed by police or became legal collectively governed institutions that had collective contracts with the local city council. The general meeting of inhabitants was responsible for paying the rent and communicating with the municipal institutions. The internal affairs of such communes were also subject to the decisionmaking power of the general meeting. For instance, in most houses a new inhabitant had permission to move in only when all the people living in the house approved.

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medicine. In X he became involved in the independent record label business and released many punk records. He was originally from a small town Z near Y and after his studies he returned there to work as a surgeon. In Z he continued to go to punk concerts and was still engaged in the independent record business. He had many patients among the punk rock people of Y, and they whenever possible had themselves treated by Kristian. Because the prices for medical treatment in Germany and centrally fixed, Kristian was not able to make the treatment much cheaper but he was definitely the doctor who was able to help when someone needed a *Krankenschein* – a document that one needs to prove to one's employer that one is ill and cannot turn up for work. Kristian also enjoyed great respect in X, where he had many friends whom he visited regularly. Another, more atypical person in the network was a woman called Sophia. She had a house just outside X, where she lived with her boyfriend. Sophia was a well known customer of the PIG and had been part of the scene since the beginning of the 1990s. When I met her she was already a well established IT-specialist working for several companies as a web designer and computer specialist. She often hired Oskar to make repairs in her house. Sophia also used Oskar's help to buy cheaper paint and other construction materials from the wholesalers. For that favour she helped Oskar and other people to fix their computers and to develop web-sites for clubs and record labels.

Gender and sexual relations

As is obvious from the map of the network, the discussed punkrock network contained fewer women than men (as was also the case with other networks). In terms of job transfer, women did not play important roles in this network. The reason was that in both towns there are fewer possibilities for women to be engaged in profitable illegal jobs which might contribute significantly to the circulation of goods. Normal female work belonged dominantly to spheres where there was, with a few exceptions, little chance to earn illegally significant sums of money.

The hairdresser W sometimes did jobs without giving receipts and avoided paying taxes in this way. Also many women worked occasionally illegally in pubs but such illegal pub jobs were only short time engagements, whereas in long time working relations employers demanded legality. Moreover, the favours and services women were in a position to offer were not something their friends (whether male or female) needed frequently. This does not mean that women had

much smaller incomes. Computer technician Sophia earned enough money to build a house (and hire Oskar for few weeks), and she helped people to fix their computers, but her professional skills were not essential for the economy of the network. Apart from offering construction jobs to Oskar and few others for a few weeks, Sophia was unable to provide significant and constant job opportunities.

All this does not mean that the social position of women in punkrock networks was lower than that of men. In everyday communication men showed towards women the same respect as towards their male friends. The female presence was important to keep the scene coherent and 'punkrock'. They helped in organising parties and other social events (taking care of the food, distributing flyers, cooking for small and symbolic pay or decorating venues), and because of their assistance men kept their outlook 'punkrock'. Their skills were important in maintaining the economic autonomy of the network.

However, many of the women complained to me in private interviews that "men still have more rights", meaning that promiscuity by men was generally more tolerated. As in every scene, there was plenty of gossip in the punkrock pubs, and one favoured topic of gossip was other people's relationships. Here I observed a difference in gender relations within and outside networks. While sexual affairs within the scene were object of general interest and gossip, social networks seemed to be extremely 'asexual'. As far as strictly social relations in networks was concerned, sexual relations did not play any role. I had the impression that people avoided dating within the network and rather dated people from 'outside'. As a matter of fact, in the network presented here there were only two couples in which both parties were equally members of the network. Usually boy- or girlfriends of network members were quickly accepted by the rest of the network, but did not achieve (nor seek) the position of 'full' members. The boy- and girlfriends had their own close friends and socially preferred to focus on these friends. Within a small scene, where people met each other constantly and knew each other well, this did not mean isolated friendship groups. More often it meant that in pubs at the end of the day members of groups stood on different sides of the snooker table chatting with friends. It was widely accepted that couples would go to different concerts or parties, because "one sometimes needs a distance". Important for friendship-forming groups was also the fact that musical preferences of couples did not always totally overlap. As Oskar explained me: "I go to the concert to have fun with my friends. When your girlfriend cannot enjoy the music and be there on her own, she has no reason to be there, and I do not want to babysit her." Instead of that, people preferred to meet their own friends

independently of their sex. “You know, in this circle... it has nothing to do with a person’s sex (*Geschlecht* or sex in the biological sense). I decide who is my friend and that has nothing to do with the sex.” said Maurer firmly. I suppose that this ‘asexuality’ of social relations had one explanation – social relations were more important than personal sexual relations, and people did not want to risk spoiling social relations when dating or an attempt to date failed.

Family Ideology

The network as presented above looks like any other reciprocal economic network which exists on the border of illegality. From a purely economic point of view, punk rock networks were also an ‘economy of affection’ where multi-stranded relations, long time loyalties, and risk reduction strategies were important in keeping the whole structure intact (cf. Meagher 2006: 571; Mitchell 1974: 283). My argument is that it is not the way this network (and other similar underground scene networks) functions which is important, for informality and trust relationships exist also inside formal structures (cf. Macaulay 1963), but how participants explain their behaviour and actions. At the beginning of the paper I wrote that the starting point for my research was to observe how much the behaviour and everyday life of punk rock adherents reflect the ideology of solidarity and anti-state positioning which is carried by the music and underground press. When conducting interviews with people belonging to the punk rock networks I asked everybody why they preferred to turn to friends and seek support and help among them. Beside the usual reasons like ‘it is cheaper’ or ‘I trust these people’, I also often encountered one further expressed reason: ‘This way we support each other and the money remains in the family’.

What made this network special was not its economic reciprocity, based on trust and cost calculations, but the ideology of the ‘family’, the conscious attempt to keep incoming resources within the network. In many cases, people’s economic choices were not ‘rational’ in that they preferred to support their friends when it would perhaps have been easier to go to the doctor closer at hand, or to obtain the same service faster from an ‘alien’ company. Below I want to discuss which ideological factors made punk rock people distance themselves from average consumers’ “interpersonal comparability of utility” (Arrow 1963: 11-12). The reciprocal moral support and solidarity, propagated by bands and fanzines (e.g. Jahn 2006; Luegner 2005/2006; NZO 2006), has developed into the practice of economic support. This was the reason why my informants in Y took a one-hour

drive to visit Kristian instead of looking for a doctor in their vicinity. Over the years the system of favours and counter-favours has lost its clear order and in many cases people ceased to observe whose turn it was to repay favours. Economic practice developed in to a kind of delayed-return system of favours where people helped each other and expected them to return the help when needed (Woodburn 1998). Oskar said to me: “You don’t count the favours someone owes you or you owe somebody. You just support people.” Following Mitchell (1974: 183-284), we may say that the common sense of such a punk rock ‘family’ contained a strong ideology of obligations and expectations in their social relationships. The economic calculations beyond the family ideology were that such obligations would be repaid in the not very far future. “The money always remains in the same circles. And I mean by this that when you know people, you can always find further jobs. I make for him [some punk rock friend] a low price but he brings the next customer to me and then I can take the full price” was also Karl’s explanation.

The notion of the ‘family’ was very widespread among my informants and everyday support was interpreted through this prism. Ideologically it leans on the street punk and hardcore music concept of ‘unity’ and ‘brotherhood’. Most of my informants became friends in the 1990s in the squatter period. It was the time when the young and vital underground scene presented a radical anti-state position. Solidarity with people who share the same life-style and ideology is the backbone of the alternative scene these days. The density of the network (Mitchell 1969: 12) was high i.e. these contacts were maintained over 15 years, even when people’s lives took different directions – some became white collar officials, others blue collar workers.

A very important feature of the ‘unity’ and ‘brotherhood’ was the attempt to keep social relations egalitarian. Indeed, there was no clear hierarchy in studied ‘family’ networks, no clear position of ‘culture carriers’ (Evan 1963: 68). However, I noticed that in each network there were one or several ‘anchor persons’ who ‘activated social links’ (Mitchell 1974: 286). This did not only mean that this person was able to engage people for available jobs. The ‘anchor person’ was very much in the centre of the multi-stranded relations and was able to control and support the ‘social redundancy’ of the network. The notion of ‘social redundancy’ of personal networks proposed by Frankenberg (1966: 278ff) means that in “multi-channel routes alternative channels are available if any one channel should fail” (Mitchell 1969: 23). In the case of the punk rock network it meant that the ‘anchor person’ was able to contact different people with different professional profiles

and, when someone was not available, he most likely knew someone else with the needed qualities.

Here again the position of the 'anchor person' did not only mean the advantage of having easier access to resources. This position meant also obligations toward people whom the 'anchor person' drew into the work distribution process. Oskar, who was one 'anchor person' in my studied network in X, had a strong sense of responsibility toward his friends who worked with him for Stephan or elsewhere. It was one evening, after he has been ill for weeks and was absolutely sour because he could not work, when he said: "Now when I lie in bed, other people cannot work as well. Some of them have family, you know!" The sense of responsibility was not limited to words. In 2001, when I met Oskar, he was working hard to pay off debts. When I asked him what kind of debts these were, he told me that had he hired many friends to rebuild a huge house. The salary they expected was thousands of German marks. But, as was not unusual to the building trade, the landowner refused to pay. Since Oskar had promised high pay to friends, he felt that he was obliged to pay them the money. To fulfil his promise, he worked many years and managed to get rid of the debt within five years. When I asked him, why he did so because he had no obligation to pay from his own pocket since no-one received money from the landowner, he replied: "I promised the money to the people. It was no way back for me!"

The leading position in the network was not only connected to economic activity but often involved additional 'subcultural' engagement. In the scene language, these people were 'important'. An 'important' person in a scene with a relatively un-institutionalised hierarchy is not easy to define. However, in X and Y there were certain people who were known in, and beyond the town. Being 'important' was not limited to having professional skills. Such 'important' persons were respected in the local alternative scene and were leading figures in it. As a rule, to acquire such a reputation one had to be linked with the music (people from famous bands, record shop owners, record label people, journalists, promoters, club owners) or scene-specific clothes (shop owners, designers, clothes designers). This is what Thornton defines as the 'subcultural capital' (1995). To be an 'anchor person' meant having, among others, subcultural capital i.e. one had to have been a long time in the scene and to know many other 'important' people. Oskar has played in many punk rock bands in 15 years and, as a construction worker, has contributed much to the well-being of alternative clubs and pubs in X. He has renovated them many times and 'organised' building materials to fix club kitchens, toilets and concert halls. All that together made him an 'important' person in the X

music scene. The same was the case with Lauri in Y. He was a skilled and respected worker and his friends knew this. Beside that, Lauri was one person behind a popular alternative club, he organised concerts, and he knew many bands and concert organisers personally. A combination of ‘important’ person’s ‘qualities’ and ‘achievements’ (W. Moore 1963: 15), both as a central figure in the economic transfer and resource management and as a leading member of the scene, made the position of the ‘anchor person’ more ‘total’ (Mitchell 1969: 12).

Sanctioning reciprocity

Reciprocity played an important role in the punk rock networks, and according to the logic of reciprocity there was a concept of the ‘accepted and permitted’ but also ‘ruled out’ behaviour (Pospisil 1973: 546). Failing to understand the rule of balanced favours could have serious consequences. For instance many people who helped to build Kalle’s bar avoid him now. Their explanation was that Kalle forgot they built his bar ‘more or less for free’ i.e. took minimal pay from him, whereas Kalle always charged the full price when they went to his new bar. Two years after the bar was opened, Kalle wanted to make repairs and asked the same people to come to help him. “I told him, I have no time,” was Lauri’s comment on that discussion. “I will absolutely never again work for him.” The avoidance of a person could be a serious problem because Kalle spent a very long time looking for workers. Due to the fact that he was known in Y’s alternative scene, his bad reputation followed him. There is no clear concept of punishment among the punk rock people. In general, the end of the trust relationship meant also the withdrawal of other people and silent social isolation. Avoidance of a wrongdoer could mean not inviting him to parties. In other cases it also meant not including him in work teams. It happened to a person, N, who constantly refused to lend his tools to other people. I was present in PIG, when Oskar asked him for a drill and N. only smiled and said “I do not have to lend it, do I?” Oskar was very upset afterwards and never called him to offer jobs. Within a few weeks, Oskar’s friends slowly but continuously began to limit their contacts with N who was no longer invited to parties and other social events. Via withdrawal, the people in the punk rock network activate its multiplex links to “bring pressure on someone” (Mitchell 1974: 283). However, much as I tried to locate more similar cases of conflicts, I was unsuccessful. I would finish this subsection with the words of Oskar when we discussed the issue. It could be from a textbook of social anthropology: “The lack of conflicts shows that our network is close knit and stable. It is good though!”

Ideology of the Independence and the Anti-State Stance

One aspect of the family ideology of the punk rock people was the attempt to be as independent from the state and state structures as possible. This independence was sought not only culturally but also in economic terms. One remark of Ill in reply to the question, why was it necessary in the first place to hire friends, was: “Then the money remains in the same circles (*Es bleibt halt immer in dem gleichen Kreis das Geld!*)”. And to my question, how important was the transfer of jobs in the network, Oskar answered: “This is the most important thing. [...] For not to be dependent on the state money or not to be in too close contact with the state is good when the money will be distributed among your own people.” However, the influx of money to the economy of the network was necessary and I show that this was earned through jobs with ‘outside’ people where illegal income again was preferred to legal. In this light the avoidance of taxes becomes not only economic strategy but also a political statement.

I admit that looking at the strategy and ideology of independence, the punk rock networks are very ambivalent. Ideologically representing an anti-consumer position, people still wanted to earn money in order to consume not only music and clothes but also to buy cars, furniture and other commodities. In contrast to the rhetoric of independence, punk rock people did not always give up their legal jobs, and if they did, they usually accepted social security payments. On the other hand, an analysis of the strategies of two persons who were fully ‘independent’ among my informants, demonstrates that if the maximum independence was financially feasible, there was a possibility that people would choose it. These two independent persons I will call Bug and Pigment. Bug was a motor cycle mechanic in Y I mentioned earlier. He earned his income by fixing Harley Davidson motor cycles at his own garage or working illegally at a certain motor cycle repair shop. He told me that he had no intention to register as an unemployed person because “now my life is easier. When you are officially unemployed, they send you to training and get on your nerves.” Bug was very proud that he did not even have a registered address (which every person living in Germany must have) and on his ID the address was ‘city of Y’. Another person who could afford to minimize his contacts with the state structures was Pigment in X. He lived in the house of the club PIG, was responsible for booking bands and earned money as an IT-technician. From his room, he made websites for companies and programmed their computers. Although Pigment had a registered address, he had no intention of registering himself in the unemployment office. The money he earned with his

IT job was enough to live on and the rent in PIG was extremely low. Pigment had an extreme anti-state attitude and in interviews he often expressed his hostility to state structures, arguing that his withdrawal was first of all politically motivated: “This is not my state! I have not grown up in BRD (German Federal Republic, West Germany)! This state, it wants to brainwash people to make them all similar. No interest in it!”

Despite the anti-state rhetoric, the practice of most punk rock people was very complex. The punk rock scene was dominated by the state law (i.e. the state law defined the situation, to cite A. Griffiths 2002: 289) that was strong enough to make people to pay attention to its existence. My subjects, of course, followed many rules starting with the traffic regulations. Although they violated many state laws, nevertheless punk rock people avoided being directly criminal: they did not practice and support the idea of murder, robbery, brutal violence and so forth. Moreover, in many other aspects the punk rock people followed norms and values of the mainstream society but they had developed ways to justify such behaviour in terms of their ideology of independence. The controversy became especially obvious when it came to owning property.

Above I mentioned Maurer of Y, who has just bought a house and renovated it with the help of friends. He was an exception in the sense that he and Kristian were the only ones in the region of Y to own a property. However, plans to buy a house or a flat were not unusual among my interviewees and only lack of capital hindered people. I know that Lauri was saving money to have a house one day and Oskar was very near to buying a house where he lived and this plan did not come true only because the owner sold it to another buyer. When I asked Oskar what was the difference between him and a certain middle class petit bourgeois teacher whom he criticised constantly in interviews, he replied:

No, this is totally different. The house, you need it so as not to pay money to some landowner but to invest it into your own property and into your house.... For example, when I build my own house and install solar energy there, I save a lot of money that I would otherwise pay to the state or its institutions like the energy company. Because I can produce energy for myself. Of course, you have to pay certain taxes, but these taxes (like the land tax and the property tax) you pay anyway, only otherwise you pay these taxes via your landowner. You cannot avoid paying all taxes, but it will be less and you do not have to feed

some landowner. When you have your own house, you can put such money into it and you know where it goes to.

Soon after, Oskar installed an oven (that he heated with wood he took from construction sites' trash bins) asserting: "I do not intend to pay money to this nazi-state". I asked how the oven was connected to the state and he explained that the energy company belonged to the state and by using central heating one also finances state structures. When I discussed the topic with Ill and asked the same question about the difference between owning property as an average petit bourgeois citizen or a punk rocker, he insisted that "this is not the same, because we live differently". On further questioning as to where the difference was, he came back to patterns of consumption, saying that "the practice of consuming (*Konsumverhalten*) is different." A punk rocker does not invest so much money in trendy clothes or fashionable items but spends more money in going to concerts or buying music (both records and equipment to make and listen to music).

Anders (2005) shows in his study of corruption among the civil servants of Malawi how they used state structures and institutions to their own ends. However, in many cases corruption meant using state resources without directly breaking laws, so for example bosses sent their loyal clerks on well-paid business trips (Anders 2005: 208-209). Using legal methods to profit from the state was widespread among punk rock people too. Similar to that shown in Anders' study was also the tension of the punk rock people when ignoring their own informal norms, when it came to personal hedonism (cf. Anders 2005: 213, 213f). Despite the anti-state and anti-consumerist rhetoric, I did not meet many people who were consistent in their attempts to reach the maximum independence from the state, its institutions or bourgeois society in general. There were only two people among my informants who were able to finance themselves from illegal income without receiving state social security funding. This did not mean that their consumption pattern was radically different from others' but that they were able to finance their lives without doing legal jobs or receiving money from the state. These two examples demonstrate that the ideology of the punk rock people was less anti-consumerist than anti-state and that maintaining certain living standards was more important than strict independence from the state. Punk rock people knew state laws and regulations, and they were able to make use of them if they needed to.

Age Cohort and Recruitment

In this subsection I discuss the formation of the punk rock networks and show that interests in music alone were not enough to become a recognised member of the network. As mentioned above, persons in the studied network formed quite coherent age groups between 28 and 35. Both in X and Y, the majority were locals who had known each other for a long time. Nevertheless, there were always people who ‘have appeared just a few years ago’. One such person was the female hairdresser W. She was a 30-year-old woman who a few years previously had moved around in the gothic scene. Then, two years before W changed her style and scene and became a rockabilly and punk rock adherent. When I studied the scene, she was already well integrated into the PIG regulars group and recognised as a full member of the scene. This meant that she was never excluded from any party and always had the possibility of going with other PIG regulars, as a member of the group, to outside concerts. She exchanged her favours (cutting people’s hair) for the support and help other friends were able to offer and used the help when it was needed to repair her flat and car or fix her computer. As the others, she also earned her living herself, was a very committed music fan and shared the same social norms as the rest of the group.

Comparing her position with Stephan’s, it was in many aspects similar but also different. Stephan was the only member of the network who did not share with others the love of punk rock. In his case, his attitude and professional skills were what counted. Stephen did not hesitate to engage with illegal jobs, he also offered illegal jobs to others or made it possible to legalise illegal jobs by signing receipts. Despite the fact that he occasionally turned up to PIG, he never participated in other music-related free time activities like going to concerts or talking about the music. What linked him to the punk rock people was the trust relationship. All of my informants who had been working with him had the opinion that Stephan was extremely trustworthy. Or as Oskar expressed it: “So, we met each other through work. And it became a trust relationship, that we help each other when there is need for support, either in financial or work cases.” Stephan, like the Polish worker in Y, was integrated into the network – and this was also the expression my interviewees used – due to their similar approach to loyalty and support and the same attitude to the violation of state norms. All three persons had quite different backgrounds in terms of the socialisation via music – W shared a love of the generally dominant music and participated in music-linked activities, Stephan did not listen to the punk rock but sometimes participated in social events, and the Polish worker never showed up to social events yet hosted skinheads of Y in his

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kitchen. Common to all three were their positive qualities according to working class ethics – these people earned their living with their work and they were good in their professions. These qualities made all three accepted in the punk rock network.

However, such non-music-involved persons, like Stephan and the Polish man, were a minority in the studied groups. This shows that music and socialisation over music is important for the integration of the punk rock people. Music as involving a social space (clubs, bars) and social activity (spending time together) brought the majority of people together and gave them a group identity. Nevertheless, the integration of Stephan and the Polish man shows that socialising in the music-related space did not mean that music was the only criterion for the friendship. ‘Connectedness’ and ‘anchorage’ (Mitchell 1969, 1974) in the group was based on communication and active socialisation. New members were incorporated via socialising and only in this way were they able to move from the status of a friend of one person in the network, to that of a member of the network. For instance, during my fieldwork period one young lady Karen began to date a man who had no previous social connections to the studied group. Her new boyfriend U, who was an engineer from Bavaria, Southern Germany and was musically into 1980s hard rock, was very soon welcomed at common parties and meetings in PIG. After he had advised a few people how to make their tax declarations and to navigate other minor bureaucracy-linked processes, he became one of ‘us’ and experienced no distance. U was one of the few exceptions, being incorporated into the network via his girlfriend, when boy- and girlfriends usually maintained a distance from the active core of the punk rock networks. His acceptance, however, proves that boy- and girlfriends were not necessarily singled out when they wished to participate in the social life of the network.

I think that it was important for the inner-group solidarity and acceptance of social norms that all studied groups were coherent in terms of age. This even went so far that non-punk rockers of the same age were often preferred to punk rock people of a different age. Most of my informants believed that their own and the younger generation had significantly different social values. This becomes obvious in their criticism of the younger generation or ‘youth of today’. Basically there were two aspects in the lives of the younger generation that caused distance and misunderstanding among my informants: the greater consumerism of young people, and their changed attitude to the state and their peers. As one person said, working in PIG:

Young people come to a concert and then moan that a €5 entrance fee is too expensive for three bands. It's just that they expect everything for free. They don't realise that it is really cheap for three good bands and that this way they support the [underground] culture.

Oskar explained to me in many interviews that young people get 'everything' too easily:

When we were young, everything was DIY (do it yourself). If you wanted to see a band then you either put on the show or you had to drive to the city where they played. Nowadays the youth just wait until someone comes and gives them the concert on the silver platter.

On another occasion Oskar told me:

For them [youth] everything is here. We had to look for clothes and music. And therefore young people just consume. You don't have to have new pants every month or have the latest computer when you can do your work on an older model. But the youth, they need the newest model to play their computer games and here you have consumer conflict (*Konsumkonflikt*) because every time [when a new game comes out] you need a new standard [of equipment]. And because of the consumption, the solidarity (*Zusammenhalt*) is lower. Sure you have exceptions and I don't want to generalise, but ... young people get bored of one style and then buy new clothes and new music, only very few remain [in the punk rock scene] longer than five-six years.

As much as the consumer-oriented world view, the lack of solidarity and clear anti-state position made older punk rockers upset. Said Karl:

Today youngsters sometimes sit on cars parked in front of clubs. It happens that they throw bottles on cars or scratch them with knives. When in older times and you would scratch someone's car in front of the club, you were just dead. But you did not do it, because cars parked in front of the club belong to other people who go to the concerts. And you had respect towards them.

The damaging of other people's cars seemed to be a problem, because this was something that many people complained about. "And when you knock them down for that, they call the cops" added Lauri. Another person, very active in Y as a concert organiser, told me:

Earlier, when did you see that, that when someone got knocked down they ran to the cops? Even in fights with neo-Nazis we never called the police. We hated each other but we hated the state even more. And these days, youngsters as soon as you have a fight and they lose, they call the police and mummy and daddy.

Here my informants drew a connection between consumption and politics, the position represented also by many columnists in the punk rock fanzines (e.g Jahn 2006), claiming that the DIY ethos included also an ideology of opposition to and independence from the state and the market economy. In reality, this ethos also was a borderline, separating generations.

Conclusion: The Semi-Autonomy of a Punk Rock Subculture

The main focus of this paper is on the ideology, rules and practices of the punk rock subculture in East Germany. My interest has been to look at how the punk rock ideology, expressed in music and the underground press, is reflected in the behaviour and economic strategies of the adherents of this subculture. I found that the structure and practices of punk rock groups are complex and operate on different levels of legality and illegality. Many of these practices are possible to understand when we see a subculture not only as people who dress in a particular way and listen to a distinct music but as a group who attempt to establish their own mini-society within a bigger mainstream society. Anders writes about corruption in Malawi that it "must be understood in the context of alternative social and moral norms and parallel orders" (Anders 2005: 87). Similar to 'alternative' norms of institution- and kin-based corruption in Malawi, punk rock as a subculture has its own norms and practices. At the same time the punk rock scene exists within the larger society, is closely connected to it and in many cases is subordinate to dominant state laws.

A paradox in the world of punk rock subculture was that they did not reject the mainstream society completely. As I have shown, the ideology of solidarity and

independence was important for the punk rock people and the anti-state position was strongly emphasised. At the same time, the anti-state stance was not always constant. In many cases people had legal jobs. Even when officially unemployed, punk rock people did not hesitate (with a few exceptions) to use institutions like social welfare to their own advantage. By their strategies, punk rockers often paid attention to state laws. In planning some jobs, they also calculated how to manage paying tax or fulfilling legal requirements to provide receipts. They also avoided being heavily criminal, being involved in robbery or murders. To distinguish themselves from the mainstream petit bourgeois society, punk rock people used an ideology of 'independence' to justify their own consumerism and a certain collaboration with state structures that had power (cf. A. Griffiths 2002: 289).

Despite that, the distance from the institution of the state was important, and one strategy to achieve or maintain it was to establish semi-legal and semi-independent economic structures. When discussing East German punk rock groups, I found useful the concept of the semi-autonomous social field of Moore. She defines the semi-autonomous social field as an entity that has "rule-making capacities, but is set in a larger social matrix which can invade it" (S. Moore 1973: 720). Punk rock people wanted to maintain their scene as a functioning setting of social relations between people who shared the same views and norms. Economic strategies of the punk rock group were aimed at maintaining the existence of the underground scene as an autonomous socio-cultural group as much as possible within the state society. The attempt to avoid the "loss of valued cooperation" (Roberts 1979: 41) not only deterred people from breaking norms of reciprocity but made networks asexual, maintaining friendly relations between all involved persons. The 'rule-making capacity' of the punk rock ideology determined social relations within the group and people's behaviour. The obligation of mutual support was taken seriously and breaking these norms caused exclusion from the group. The purpose of these norms was the "maintenance of dominant social relations within a social group" (Snyder 1985: 269). 'Another law' of the studied punk rock people keeps the scene coherent and channels people's action.

Griffiths defines legal pluralism as "the presence of multiple legal orders within a social group" (J. Griffiths 1985: 217). As in other studies of legal pluralism, in case of the punk rock people the focus is on how "different legal mechanisms pertain in the same situation" (Benda-Beckmann 2002: 60). In this article I show that the legal anthropological perspective provides insights into punk rock networks and subcultures in general that thus far have remained underexplored.

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