

# Conference Entry Form

Conference entry form for participants of the 3rd international conference "Interdisciplinary Cultural Group Research: Youth Subcultures, Worldviews and Lifestyles".

**Name \***

Jānis Daugavietis

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**Job Title \***

researcher

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**Company or Organization \***

Department of Theatre, Music and Cinema Art, Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art -  
University of Latvia

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**Contry \***

Latvia

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**Short bio**

Born in the 70-ies, in Soviet Latvia. Obsession with independent music inevitably led me to the involvement in local DIY music scene. With friends in 1991 we established long running repetition base, recording studio and label called Tornis. After active years in music I re-entered University of Latvia where got PhD in sociology in 2015. Currently employed as researcher at Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art (University of Latvia, Rīga).

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Email \*

Janis.Daugavietis@lulfmi.lv

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Proposal Title \*

Soviet time born Latvian punk: social origins and object of protest

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**Abstract (500 words). Abstracts will be published on the website before the conference. \***

Previous research on beginnings of Latvian punk, which was mostly done in fields of journalism and punk activism, indicates that first Latvian punks appeared in early 80-ies, but the first punk bands - in the first half of the same decade. This rises the first question: why punk came so late? Comparing with Estonia and Russia or with some Central European socialist countries, it was late (Troitsky 1988, Trubetsky 2009, Haas 2001). Comparing with some other Soviet Republics or some 3rd World Countries the first wave of Latvian punks cannot be labeled as late. There are some explanations why Latvian youth were behind the Estonians in adoption of punk style. Most popular is Estonia's closeness to the capitalistic Finland. They were better informed about newest trends in the 'free world' because they get better access to the Finland's broadcasting, including TV, and mass media, and to understand the communication was easier because of similar languages. Other explanation of lagging Latvian punk scene, and not only the punk, the same can be said about whole Latvian rock, is more conservative and strict local cultural policy.

Second question asks about the social origins of first soviet Latvia's punks. There are two prevailing lines in explanation of the birth of subcultures, including punk. The first is original Birmingham subcultural theory, which talks about relations of youth class and resistance through the style and rituals (Hebdige 1979). More modern approach to the analysis of subcultures brings so called post-subcultural theory, stating that youth involvement in different taste cultures or subcultural groups are matter of individual choice, not determined by the factual class affiliation (Bennett 1999; Muggleton 2000).

If we are investigating early Latvian punk, we can detect both aspects and motivations, but also new factors emerges. Significant part of the first Latvian punks were strongly connected with the art school circuits. It might be said that these middle class kids were better informed about current cultural trends in the West and just appropriated punk style as a sign of distinction. At the same time actual resistance in soviet-time Latvian punk was always apparent. Arguing with the political regime the main battlefield was so called national question. Ethnic Latvian punks expressed their national oppression turning to the right, in direction of nationalism. This was one of the main reasons why they adopted swastika and nazi imagery. This also initially lead to the separation of newly forming punk scene into two: Latvian singing and Russian singing. This again contest the notion of style as purely aesthetic value.

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## Session type

Presentation

Panel

Workshop

## Panel Title

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## Short Panel Description

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## Planned Presenters (3-4 people)

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