

Wild Music: Ideologies of Exoticism in Two Ukrainian Borderlands

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation presents case studies of two distinct Ukrainian borderland groups: the Crimean Tatars of Crimea, and the Hutsuls of the Carpathian Mountains – two human collectivities that are both, today, Ukrainian by citizenship. Both of these groups also embody dominant stereotypes of otherness in Ukraine – Hutsuls as the ideal Herderian romantic folk, and Crimean Tatars as the menacing, mysterious, “oriental” other. This dissertation traces how historical stereotypes of both of these groups as “wild” have shaped and defined their contemporary expressive cultures, specifically addressing how stereotypes of *wildness*—or hegemonic conceptions of “otherness”—manifest on the ground within the communities who bear the stigma of such entrenched histories of exoticism. This ethnographic project focuses on music as a medium for challenging and reinforcing ideologies of exoticism, demonstrating how insiders and outsiders in both cases draw upon indigenous musical tropes to express or subvert stereotypes of “wildness.” By analyzing how music energizes social and political agendas for borderland groups such as the Hutsuls and Crimean Tatars, this project emphasizes the co-presence of *alternate subalterities* within the nation-state, demonstrating the degrees to which a post-socialist, diverse and fractured state such as Ukraine is constructed through imaginings of its internal, peripheral Others.

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Lastly, to Franz Nicolay, *моє котище*, for joining me on this adventure. Can I have the next dance?

Come to your senses for the last time, old world!
Our barbaric lyre is calling you
One final time, to a joyous brotherly feast
To a brotherly feast of labor and of peace!

- Alexander Blok, *The Scythians* (1918)

What a view from the West-North of these regions, when one day the spirit of civilization (*Kultur*) will visit them! The Ukraine will become a new Greece: the beautiful heaven of this people, their merry existence, their musical nature, their fruitful land, and so on, will one day awaken: out of so many little wild peoples, as the Greeks were also once, a mannered (*gesittete*) nation will come to be: their borders will stretch out to the Black Sea and from there through the world. Hungary, these nations, and an area of Poland and Russia will be participants in this new civilization (*Kultur*); from the northwest this spirit will go over Europe, which lies in sleep, and make it serviceable (*dienstbar*) according to the spirit. This all lies ahead, and must one day happen; but how? When? Through whom?

- Johann Gottfried Herder, *Journal meiner Reise im Jahr 1769*

INTRODUCTION

“They Make Beauty Nonetheless”: The Ambivalence of Wildness

On a mild afternoon in April of 2009, my friend Oksana and I went for one of our meandering hikes around Verkhovyna, a storied Hutsul village located less than one hundred kilometers from the Romanian border, nestled in a verdant valley ringed by Carpathian mountain peaks. Oksana, a charismatic woman with irrepressible curiosity and a punk-inflected personal style, often managed to transform our afternoon rambles into meaningful, serendipitous encounters with local villagers. Setting out from her home with a plan to summit a nearby hill, we might end up hitching a ride on the bed of a weathered horse-drawn wagon to some backwoods freshwater spring, drinking *kvas* (a popular fermented drink) or vodka with village musicians, or helping an ancient woman residing in a remote cabin to harvest the fruits in her orchard, then sauntering back down the mountain with sacks full of apples or cherries that she had insisted we take. Over time, as I lived in Verkhovyna collecting materials for this dissertation, our affections grew sisterly, and Oksana, the ethnographer’s dream compadre, introduced me to local ways of seeing the world that I am sure I would not have glimpsed otherwise.

Born in Verkhovyna to a single mother, Oksana was raised as a typical Hutsul girl, immersed in the ritual and social life of her traditional community. As a teenager, eager to leave her small village, she applied for college in Kyiv. She fell in love with the big city, and spent some twenty years living as a bohemian Kyivan in the 1980s and 1990s, palling around with young and hip Ukrainian rockers, artists, and filmmakers as the Soviet regime crumbled. Seizing the new financial opportunities of the post-Soviet climate in the early 1990s, she worked at a job

for a powerful oligarch, a job that bankrolled her cosmopolitan lifestyle and afforded her opportunities to travel internationally—Bulgaria, Tunisia, Germany. In the early 1990s, Oksana had a nationalist awakening. As the Soviet archives opened, she devoured new publications that uncovered a history of repression of Ukrainian intelligentsia, cultural elites, and independent political movements. She made the decision to speak only in Ukrainian, a conviction that alienated many of her Kyivan friends, where Russian was considered the language of the elite and intellectual class. Her social circle teased her about her linguistic and ideological conversion but tolerated her new doctrine as a temporary eccentricity. The phase did not pass. Instead, her sentiments deepened. Over time, the pressure of living in a predominantly Russophone city that called itself the capital of Ukraine began to wear on her, and in 2002, Oksana decided to return to Verkhovyna.

She told herself that her return to the village was temporary — to oversee the installation of modern plumbing at her mother's home. She planned to stay for three months, but soon her stay stretched into a year as her home renovations absorbed her creatively and physically. She began to make elaborate wall mosaics out of small Carpathian stones and sea shells that she collected on vacations in Odesa. She learned to caulk tile and install plumbing. She grew to relish her insider/outsider position in her hometown, jokingly referring to herself as the local *neformalka*, the non-normative villager, with blond spiky hair and combat boots. And in 2004, Oksana got swept up in the presidential campaign of Viktor Yushchenko, becoming the representative of his party to all of the villages in the Verkhovyna region. For months, she canvassed the remote mountain villages in the region, campaigning for the pro-reform presidential candidate. Following the Orange Revolution and Yushchenko's ascent to power, Oksana secured a job working in the local ministry of culture. Disenchanted with the internal politics of the local

administration, she eventually distanced herself from the political establishment and began to work on cultivating tourism to her own, very special, home. After meeting Oksana in the summer of 2008, I came to live with her and her mother in January of 2009, and spent many months of that year observing and taking part in their community’s ritual, musical, and social life.

Back to our springtime hike in 2009: dusk was settling on the Carpathian peaks by the time we returned to *Zhabyevskij Potik*, the narrow dirt road that we would follow home to Verkhovyna. We paused outside of a dilapidated Hutsul wooden farmhouse and Oksana, an avid photo-documentarian, expressed her wish to get closer. None of the inhabitants seemed to be home, but Oksana assured me that it was permissible for us to examine the facade of their home



Entrance to traditional Hutsul home (photo by Oksana Susyak).

because it was an architectural gem, a precious relic — and besides, she quipped, Hutsul codes of hospitality mandate that weary travelers enter. We entered the fenced-in area of the home through a musty wooden gate—purposefully set low so that guests are forced to bow when greeting their hosts—into a typical scene

of rural poverty. Oksana exclaimed, “it’s *so* - Hutsul!” I asked her what she meant. She paused, then mused, “I mean two things at once.” Two seemingly conflicting things. “On the one hand, it’s pride,” she said, “to say that something is ‘*so* Hutsul; on the other hand, it’s a shame that this is the state of things that are ‘*so* Hutsul’ — that it looks so poor from the outside, that you—this *Amerikanka!*—are here witnessing how humbly we live... Both things are true. I feel proud and embarrassed for our people at the same time. Look at the intelligence, the creative design of this

home, and then look at how simply our people must live. They have nothing, but” — she gestured to the ornate metalwork on the neighbor’s roof — “they make beauty nonetheless. The world may think it’s wild [ди́ке]...and maybe it is, we live with nature — but it’s also advanced, it’s *civilization* [цивілізація]!” (field recording, 4/17/2009).¹

Nearly a year earlier, while doing fieldwork in Crimea — a territory of Ukraine that is historically, geographically, and culturally distant from Hutsulshchyna — I flooded my field notebooks with similar observations of discordant yet co-present dualities. In March of 2008, I attended the 50th Anniversary performance of the ensemble *Qaytarma* that took place at the massive concrete structure known as the Ukrainian Theater, located in Lenin Square, Simferopol, on March 21, 2008. The program blended traditional and modern elements, sometimes juxtaposing them in jarring ways, as when a female vocalist in the modest folk costume sang a traditional song with electronic accompaniment as a young dancer popped-and-locked in the spotlight, bling glimmering, stage right. Or, in May of 2008 at a *Qidderlez* gathering—a traditional springtime Muslim holiday celebration that takes place outdoors—I noted the jarring sequence that began with a local Imam who led a prayer, immediately followed on stage by a budding Crimean Tatar diva wearing an ostentatious micro-dress, lip-syncing to her new would-be hit song. In all of these instances, I was led to the question — how is it that such incongruous

¹ Throughout this dissertation, I use the same word as Oksana uses here — “civilization” (цивілізація) as a master trope that is counterposed to the construct of “wildness.” In many instances, however, the Ukrainian term for “culture” (культура, культурність) also surfaces as an indigenous synonym. Given the diffuse resonance of “culture” in the language of anthropology, and the classical use of “civilization” in historical and colonial discourses of progress, I have generally preferred to use the term “civilizing” to label discourses of progress, aspiration, and improvement. The co-valence of the terms “cultured” (*kulturno/a*) and “civilized” (*tsivilizovano/a*) is significant, however. Kate Brown (2004) provides the following definition of “culture” as part of the “civilizing” mission of the USSR towards its internal peasantry in the 1930s: “With the onset of the industrialization drive, the buoyancy of local and village ways became an embarrassment to leaders committed to building a modern, “cultured” society. In the Soviet lexicon, “culture” described a prescribed level of individual consumption, hygiene, and personal comportment” (Brown 2004: 85). These designations — consumption, hygiene, personal comportment — overlap with concepts of the “civilized” individual.

elements can exist co-presently, and what run of circumstances can explain how they have come to coexist?

In her eloquent memoir of traveling through Eastern Europe after the fall of the Iron Curtain, Eva Hoffman acknowledges that her own impulse towards excavating the daily post-socialist realities of Eastern Europeans partly stemmed from an interest in examining and assessing their “otherness”: “Our psyches seem to be so constructed that we need and desire an imagined “other” — either a glimmering, craved, idealized other, or an other that is dark, savage, and threatening” (Hoffman 1993:x). Hoffman lists a number of the stereotypical formations of “otherness” that will thread throughout this dissertation, while underscoring the tendency to conceptualize the self through opposition. Such desire to locate an “other” may be natural, as Hoffman suggests—ultimately, we construct ourselves as social beings socially, and therefore relationally—yet it is also inherently unstable, dependent on what we anchor ourselves against at any given moment. Such instability boosts the potential for limitless — fleeting, entrenched, insignificant, weighty — internal contradictions that comprise the co-present dualities that add dynamic to daily life.

In this dissertation, I conceptualize such co-present dualities from micro to macro levels. Most broadly, this project presents case studies of two distinct borderland groups with distinct identities bound to specific territories: Crimean Tatars living in Crimea, and Hutsuls living in Hutsul’shchyna – two human collectivities that are both, today, Ukrainian by citizenship.²

² Most of Western Ukraine, which had been under the jurisdiction of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (the *Rzeczpospolita*) in the 16th and 17th centuries, with brief occupations by the Prussians and Imperial Russia, a long period under the Hapsburg Empire (from 1772-1918), and the Second Poland Republic (from 1918-1939), did not become incorporated into the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR) until 1939-1941, and again in 1944 (some mountainous regions resisted Soviet rule into the late 1940s) (Czaplicka 2005). Khrushchev transferred Crimea to the status of an autonomous region of the Ukrainian SSR in 1954, as a goodwill gesture of brotherhood between the Russian and Ukrainian peoples on the 300th Anniversary of the Pereislav Treaty that joined the Ukrainian Cossacks with the Imperial Russian crown against the Crimean Tatar khanate and the Ottoman threat (Fisher 1978). Both territories became part of independent Ukraine after the fall of the Soviet Union in August of 1991.

Historical accounts of Ukraine have often circled around challenges to the coherence and validity of modern Ukrainian identity, language and culture (Kappeler and Clayton 2001; Magosci 1996; Reid 2000; Szporluk 1997; Von Hagen 1995; Wilson 2002). As a quintessential borderland — the name “Ukraine” derives from the Slavic phrase *U Kraina*, which literally means “on the border” — Ukraine is today the easternmost border of the European Union, and for centuries before was both a constituent of “Western” Empires (Austro-Hungary, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) and “Eastern” Empires (the Ottoman Empire and, arguably, the Russian Empire). Exacerbating these basic facts of geopolitical flexibility is the fact that, since 1991, Ukraine’s distinct national character has been frequently under attack by pro-Russian or pan-Slavic groups, who levy assaults on the historical justification for an independent Ukrainian nation-state.

Instead of unearthing epistemic truths about the distinctness and authenticity of “Ukrainian-ness,” this project seeks to reorient these challenges towards an in-depth ethnographic account of the musical practices of two unique ethnic groups who share Ukrainian citizenship and have been active supporters of independent Ukraine. By analyzing how music energizes social and political agendas for borderland groups such as the Hutsuls and Crimean Tatars, this project emphasizes the co-presence of *alternate subalterities* within the nation-state, demonstrating the degrees to which the state is constructed through imaginings of its internal Others. Yet despite their common national passports, these two groups have lived out vastly differing histories, with emplaced narratives of ethnogenesis rooted in territories that are geographically distant. They speak different languages, practice different religions, have differently dispersed diasporas, and have cultivated different artistic and musical practices, sourced from distinct poetic and ritual wellsprings. Crimean Tatars, the Turkic-language, Sunni

Muslim minority of the Crimean peninsula, bore the brunt of historical stereotypes that emphasized their ancestry as the “oriental savage” inheritors of Genghis Khan’s barbarism. In the 20th century, they were degraded as Soviet “enemies of the people” and exiled to Central Asia and the Urals, only allowed to return to Crimea in the late 1980s as the Soviet Union began to disintegrate. In contrast, the Hutsuls, the high-mountain dwellers of the southwestern Ukrainian Carpathian Mountains, historically embodied a Herderian, romantic ideal of exoticism, stereotyped as colorful, independent, superstitious, and simple folk—the pet ethnicity of neighboring Polish and Ukrainian urban intelligentsia.

Despite such disparate positions, these two groups share an important stereotype: both have been defined in large part by a dominant history of exoticism that has marked their histories and shaped their contemporary identities. Throughout Ukraine, the otherness of Hutsuls and Crimean Tatars is articulated idiomatically as *wildness* [дикість], a term that manifests variably, often approximating the outmoded anthropological vocabulary of “otherness” as “oriental,” “Eastern,” “savage,” “uncivilized,” “inscrutable,” “folksy,” “primitive,” “natural,” or “quaint” — depending on context. As an introduction to this crucial and polysemic key term, I propose *wildness* as a common gloss for the “exotic” that encompasses colloquial as well as formal (especially in the language of marketing) conceptions of “otherness” in contemporary Ukrainian discourse. This dissertation is concerned with how the formation of such stereotypes of *wildness*—or hegemonic conceptions of “otherness”—manifest on the ground, within the communities who bear the stigma of such entrenched histories of exoticism.

In his travel diaries from 1769, Johann Gottfried Herder expressed his belief that “one day the spirit of civilization (*Kultur*)” would sweep over Ukraine. He predicted that, among other cultural and geographical features, “their musical nature” will make, “out of so many little wild

peoples...a mannered (*gesittete*) nation.” Herder predicted that this renaissance would emanate out from the Black Sea (the territory of the Crimean Tatars) and “from there through the world,” enchanting Europe with its melodious, colorful culture. “The Ukraine will become a new Greece” — a new cradle of civilization — that will “awaken” an industrialized, alienated Europe from its slumber (Herder 1953: 77-79, cited in Wolff 1994: 307). It was Herder’s influential collections of folksongs that fed the German Romantic re-imagining of peasant culture as an embodiment of “national soul.”

Herder conceived of nations of peoples as organic totalities: each ethnically defined *Volk* had its collective personality, unified through a common language and body of customs, folklore, song, myth, and ritual, and formed through a distinct history of interaction with its climate, geography, and natural environment (Ivakhiv 2005b: 203).

This Herderian view of European “primitives” has been reincarnated today by scholars and politicians who advocate “primordialist” views of national culture and identity; such views have had a resurgence in Ukraine and other regions of the former Soviet Union since 1991 (Gumilëv 1990; Ivakhiv 2005b; Plokyh 2011; Tishkov 1997). Within Ukraine and Eastern Europe, the Herderian model of the romantic-national-primitive mapped neatly onto the Hutsuls, who came to embody this stereotype of authenticity for urban intelligentsia who traveled to (and, through their writings, represented) the Carpathian highlanders in the 19th and 20th centuries.

In contrast, the Crimean Tatars represented a different, perhaps more distant, stereotype of “otherness” to the European gaze (Wolff 1994). This stereotype emphasized *orientalist* discourses that mix tropes of sensuousness, terror, incomprehensibility, condescension and desire (Said 1979). Linked to the marauding Mongol Horde and known for violent raids into Slavic territories, it was the bloody Slavic-Tatar historical encounters which first marked the Crimean Tatars as threatening, enigmatic “others.” Once Imperial Russia “tamed the wild field” that was the domain of Crimean Tatars, the Slavic gaze on its colonized people became one of curiosity

and condescension; the Crimean Tatars became the targets of a “civilizing mission” (Sunderland 2004).³ As Imperial Russia asserted its power, Crimea became an illusory laboratory through which internal orientalist discourse took shape — Crimean Tatars became the target of Russia’s own preoccupation with “civilizing” its primitives, and its own insecurities about where it lay on the map of “civilization” (Wolff 1994). These historical developments fed the *orientalist* brand of exoticism that the Soviets exploited in the 20th century — depicting Crimean Tatars as wild and untrustworthy people who deserved to be exiled from their homeland. This *orientalist* stereotype persists, to a large degree, as a dominant image of Crimean Tatars, exacerbated by local Crimean discourses that (falsely) depict the Crimean Tatars as a radicalizing Muslim group with possible inclinations towards terrorism (Uehling 2004).⁴

³ Like many newly colonized peoples, Crimean Tatars were among many groups that Imperial Russia sought to “tame.” Yuri Slezkine has described the process by which settlers in Russia’s Arctic and sub-Arctic regions were regarded as “savages” in need of “civilizing,” and finally as subjects and citizens in the Soviet Union (Slezkine 1992). Stephen Frank has also written about the dynamics of “civilizing” rural Russians, describing evocatively the Russian leadership’s attitude towards its peasants: “Innocent, ignorant yet cunning, conservative, steeped in pagan superstitions, and prone to periodic outbursts of bestial violence, peasants did not possess true culture but clung instead to an age-old, timeless body of quaint customs, traditions, rituals and beliefs that were, beginning in the 1880s, gradually disappearing under the impact of a rapidly changing world” (Frank 1991: 771).

⁴ In Crimea, local Russian-language press often attempts to portray the Crimean Tatar community as radicalizing Muslims (sometimes going so far as to link them to terrorist networks). Within the Crimean Tatar community, debates over the historical and traditional role of Islam in Crimea are widespread. As Turkish missionaries invest in Islamic-oriented educational programs, some Crimean Tatar women have chosen to don the *hijab*, though the majority of Crimean Tatar women do not wear it. While I was living in Crimea in 2008-2009, the issue of the *hijab* became a widely politicized issue, and the subject of many dinnertime debates with my Crimean Tatar host family (one of the women in my host family, an outspoken feminist, was reconciling the fact that a pair of her female friends had recently started to wear the *hijab*). Zeyneb Temnenko provides the following exchange in a 2010 article on the revival of Islam in Crimea: “Q. By the way, now there is a movement unfolding arguing not only that Muslim women always wore the hijab, but that they should be allowed to be photographed for their passports in a hijab. Is there such a problem? A: This is not typical, this is a sect. Look at the jewelry Crimean Tatar women wear - gold, silver, filigree! Who would close all that splendor in a hijab so no none could see it? On the contrary, Crimean Tatar women proudly display their collection of earrings, rings, bracelets. We are proud of our seamstresses, jewelers and goldsmiths. Our girls and women have always worn small *fez*-es, hats, small scarves and shawls. Simply our women don’t dress provocatively, like sometimes happens in some cultures, and this shows our adherence to the Koran. Our government and our people have always been secular, and not religiously fanatic. When we arrived in Uzbekistan, we were struck by the custom of wearing the veil, and the passivity of Uzbek women and how they are closed from society. For us it was wild. Crimean Islam has never been like that. I remember my grandmother. She had a small kerchief, she prayed, she read the Koran, and she would take it off and fold it neatly. She never dressed with her body exposed, but she also was not too closed. Everything was very neat, without excess” (Temnenko 2008).

By addressing the Herderian and orientalist brands of exoticism that the Hutsuls and Crimean Tatars respectively typify, these two case studies illuminate how multiple modes of indigeneity exist in the modern Ukrainian nation-state. Such multiple indigeneities present dual constructions of the multi-cultural citizen-subject (Povinelli 2002), exemplifying a set of co-present dualities that constitute what I term as *alternate subalterities*. Rather than a comparative analysis of two case studies, I conceptualize this project as a contrastive set of examples that, through their distinctiveness, cast into relief some of the breadth and complexity of a persistent binary in Western intellectual thought: the dialectic of “civilization” and “savagery.” By pursuing the liminal and intermediate space of this false binary, we can expose some of the nuance of incongruous or reductive histories, stereotypes, and contemporary socio-political discourses within the bounds of one, quintessentially liminal, modern nation-state — Ukraine (Ellingson 2001; Herzfeld 2005; Taussig 1993; Wolff 1994).

All of this goes to say that duality need not beget neat opposition. Crimean Tatars and Hutsuls demonstrate myriad ways that notions of and reactions to *wildness* manifest, in ways that destabilize (by making multiple) the rigidity of binary perspectives. My interest lies in the space between an axiomatic opposition, especially the historically entrenched, power-inflected, and unarguably reductive frame of savagery/civilization. But I seek to go beyond the deconstruction of this dialectic, which has already been so powerfully challenged by scholars such as Ter Ellingson (2001) – whose historical ethnography of the myth of the noble savage gives my project its backbone – and Michael Taussig’s spiraling, idiosyncratic probe into the colonial history of the mimetic faculty (Taussig 1993). While much recent scholarship in cultural studies and anthropology has dwelled on the constructed nature of social facts such as race, class, and gender, I follow up on the next question: *since we must inhabit this world of discursive social*

constructs, how do these constructs bear down on or motivate individuals in everyday life? In other words, how are the logics and experiences of daily life informed by the slipperiness of co-present dualities?

By probing into the space between the discursive construct of civilization/savagery that has characterized much Western intellectual thought since the European Enlightenment and through the period of colonialism (Wolff 1994), I complicate these two seemingly opposite poles with ethnographically-driven examples that display a range of internal contradictions. Such an approach enhances the fundamentally *particular* nature of the ethnographic enterprise by granting agency to each subject (including me, as the initiator and executant of this work) in the dynamic of producing, receiving, and interpreting information — while allowing the data to hedge off the temptations of tautological conclusions derived from ostensible cultural truths, an inevitable side effect of the “sin of reification” that any act of writing perpetrates (Keil 1994a: 227).

While recent ethnographic practices have allowed for more studies that trace transnational, diasporic, or globalized circuits, projects that juxtapose two distinct groups remain rare. As my precedent in “dialectical ethnomusicology,” I take Charles Keil’s article *People’s Music Comparatively* —which compared the traditions of working class polka culture and urban blues in the U.S.— as my cue that this kind of work can be done, and with illuminating results (Keil 1994c).

Augmenting the peasants and primitives, who are the people most often turned into folk by folklorists, we are all part-time folk in that we share values and consciousness with various groupings whose processes of culture creation are not usually studied by scholars. Singing the unsung, mapping the hidden strategies of daily life, may be a worthy enough goal for folklorists, but without a dialectical sense of class relations and power differentials, “folk,” “folklore,” and “folk music” feel like concepts in search of content, a discipline searching indiscriminately for data (Keil and Feld 1994:197).

Like Keil, I access the inequities of power by asking how exoticized, marginalized groups such as Crimean Tatars and Hutsuls interact with dominant (local, historical, and global) constructions of “the exotic” via musical practices, musical institutions, and musical personalities in both communities - or how non-dominant groups struggle “to keep control of their social identities in music” (1994: 202). By counterposing two unique histories of musical exoticism as manifest within the context of two border regions in one nation-state, this project probes into the ontological dimension of “otherness,” scrutinizing how histories and ideologies of “the exotic” play out *variably* in daily life, and how exoticized groups internalize, reflect and refract ideologies of *wildness* in their expressive, musical, sonic culture.

Wildness and Music

In a 2009 lecture titled “*Acoustemologies*,” Steven Feld observed that “whatever else they are, human histories are histories of listening” (Feld 2009). As the expressive form grounded in the act of listening, musical sound archives information about human experience, just as musical practice (performance, stylistic conventions, recordings, notation) encodes a wealth of knowledge about musicians and listeners in human communities. Since I am an ethnomusicologist by training as well as a performing musician, my way in to both Crimean Tatar and Hutsul communities began through an interest in their compelling musical soundscapes. Arriving at my field sites with an ethnographic project in mind, my interests converged on how contemporary musical soundscapes and musical practices are informed by histories of otherness, since this arose as a common theme in my interactions with musicians. If ethnicity (or *ethnos*, a term I will address later in this chapter) can be defined as a performative dimension of the politics of identity (Meintjes 2003), then a deeper understanding of identity-as-

performance mandates a consideration of the expressive cultural manifestations that feed identity and hold the path outward from marginalization.

In this dissertation, I approach “music” as a constellation of sounds, practices and historically informed conventions that comprise a rich category of human expressive culture.⁵ My analysis of music draws on a diverse set of archival and ethnographic sources of information: anthologies of transcriptions, live and recorded performances, scholarly folklore studies, memory practices, performance aesthetics and conventions, reception, circulation, marketing language, the social identities of consumers, the career trajectories, performances, and personal narratives of musicians, as well as the formal content of musical sound. In the case of both Hutsuls and Crimean Tatars, musicologists have provided systematic and formal analyses of traditional musical repertoires (Kolomyets 2007; Shukhevych 1899/1997; Mierczynski 1965; Aliev 2001; Sherfedinov 1979; Bahynskaya 2003; Izidinova 1995). My approach to music, therefore, does not attempt to remake or extend these impressive collections, and so this dissertation does not contain musical transcriptions in the classic Bartokian sense. Rather, I start from the premise that both of these communities have well documented, if contested, histories of traditional repertoire, and my account privileges the socio-cultural dynamics that constitute debates over practice, repertoire, and convention.

This project embraces two musical trajectories that are often positioned as oppositional. I label these two trajectories by the meta-labels “traditional” and “popular” music. Throughout the dissertation, local musicians apply a variety of terms that fall into these two trajectories; to guide

⁵ In the same lecture cited above, Feld encouraged ethnomusicology to take up projects that address the “acoustemological triangle” formed by ecology, sound, and cosmology. In chapter one, I address the cosmological beliefs of the Hutsuls in depth, though that it not the major theme of this work. In place of “cosmology,” I propose that “stereotype” can also function as a subsidiary branch of the cosmological, especially with regard to the process by which historical stereotypes of otherness become internalized and reflected back by communities - this interest in the “stereotypical” forms a significant corner of the “acoustemological triangle” that defines this work (Feld 2009).

the reader into this forest of terms, I accent the daily and practice-based aspects of these two broad categories: “traditional music” privileges specific locality and historical lineage (and encompasses “folk,” “indigenous” or “people’s” repertoire); “popular music” utilizes modern technologies and sonic references from outside its immediate locality (and can also be referred to as “youth,” “pop,” “cosmopolitan,” or “mass market” music). I emphasize that these two categories are not static: if anything, my examples demonstrate the degree to which “popular” music in both of these communities is deeply informed by local traditional musics while aspiring to audiences and markets beyond their locality.

Both “traditional” and “popular” musics are complicated by the legacy of institutionalized music within the totalitarian culture industry of the former Soviet Union. The category of *narodna muzyka* [in Russian, *narodnaya muzyka*], was explicitly designated by Lenin as the wellspring for Soviet “people’s music.” In the 1930s, Stalin expanded Lenin’s populist ideal to match the Socialist Realist doctrine characterized by the slogan “national in form, socialist in content.” This led to the institutionalization of *narodna muzyka* and the emergence of a “friendship of the peoples” mentality in performance (Frolova-Walker 1998; Tillett 1969).

Narodna muzyka most closely conforms to the Herderian, immutable brand of “folk” music that is celebrated for its link to peasantry, ancientness, cultural authenticity, and often gets touted as a pure symbol of national identity (Rice 2002).⁶ In the USSR, the official counterpart to *narodna muzyka* was *estradna muzyka* — state-sanctioned and strictly regulated “official” entertainment

⁶ A. Ivanytskyj’s textbook on Ukrainian *Narodna muzyka* provides a useful overview of traditional musical genres from various “ethnographic regions of Ukraine” (Ivanytskyj 1999). Ivanytskyj delineates genres of *narodna muzyka* as comprised of i. patriotic songs, ii. work songs (Soviet and pre-), iii. epic songs and historical ballads, iv. love songs, v. wedding music (instrumental and non), vi. instrumental dance music, vii. joking and satirical songs, viii. lullabies and children’s songs, ix. Calendrical/ritual songs (religious and non-religious holidays).

music with its own canon of Soviet pop stars (MacFadyen 2001).⁷ Though *estrada* was the official “popular music” of the Soviet era, underground forms of popular music also circulated widely via *magnitizdat*; since 1991, these formerly taboo underground musics have formed a significant canon of popular music (Daughtry 2009; McMichael 2005; Steiner 2008; Vidić Rasmussen 1996; Yurchak 2008).

Since the fall of the Soviet Union and its regimented culture industry, “popular musics” of all varieties became regulated instead by the independent, national, and global musical marketplaces (including competitions such as the Eurovision Song Contest, local radio stations, televised “reality”-style competitions, and Ukrainian, Polish, Russian and Turkish “world music” labels) (Feld 2000). The resultant breakdown between Soviet “official” and “underground” forms, the retrospective canonizing of Soviet-era underground music (McMichael 2005), and the influx of Anglo-American and European popular musics has powerfully transformed the soundscape of “popular music” in Ukraine, which is today characterized to a large degree by pop/rock experiments in “aesthetic cosmopolitanism,” the merging of local and global influences (Regev 2007).

Indeed, the relevance of music as a post-Soviet commodity reverberates through both Crimean Tatar and Hutsul communities, where musicians deprived of the safety net of Soviet support have been forced to adapt to the mercurial demands of the post-Soviet marketplace. In this commercially-oriented context, “authenticity” has re-emerged as a critical marketing term for some traditional musics that are ostensibly unscathed by civilization; within Ukraine, the

⁷ In addition to *estrada* and *narodna muzyka*, *akademichna muzyka* (literally, “academic music”) was another prominent stream in the Soviet cultural industry, and correlates to what we call contemporary “classical” music in the United States: music composed according to the conventions of Western notation, rooted in the tradition of Western European “classical music” (though, for a period in the USSR, composers of “academic music” were also encouraged to use “mass song” as the basis for new works) (Schwarz 1983). Though the “academic” tradition of musicianship lies outside of my interest in the present project, it remains a vital stream in the contemporary Ukrainian musical soundscape and could make a fascinating extension of this study, especially since both Hutsul and Crimean Tatar motifs have been widely utilized in the compositions of 19th, 20th and 21st century composers.

importance of music that was left untouched by Soviet and previous regimes is evident especially in the marketing language used to promote the recordings of certain Hutsul families (such as the Tafiychuks, addressed in chapter one). Music-as-business, therefore, is a nearly omnipresent (if sometimes latent) theme that weaves throughout this project, that gets expressed through the frustrations or strategic maneuvers of ambitious musicians seeking to satiate the perceived desires of audiences (Stokes 2002, 2004). (And then, there are musicians who seem genuinely ambivalent about music-as-business, as examples in the upcoming chapters will demonstrate.) Whether aspiring towards commercial success, local prestige, quiet respect, or global chart-topping fame, both Crimean Tatar and Hutsul musicians are prominent representatives of their communities. Positioned as voices that challenge, reinvent, preserve and extend musical practices, musicians are therefore uniquely situated to talk back to the histories of exoticism that mark their ethnic identities.

Music has been an enduring site at which conceptions of “otherness” (orientalist, gendered, primitive, class-based) have been articulated, interpreted, and reflected (Aubert 2007; Born 2000; Cusick 2001; Feld 1994; Fox 2004; Qureshi 2001; Solie 1993; Taylor 1997, 2007; Wolff 1994). In Eastern Europe, perhaps no group has embodied the stereotype of “otherness” more than the Roma, whose “fiery skill” and “unbridled musical passion” has sparked all manner of romantic tributes (despite the fact that they are also one of the most stereotypically reviled groups) (Fonseca 1995; Helbig 2005). In 1903, Arthur Symons described the “native wildness” he beheld among Roma musicians in Budapest:

This music, I think, is after all scarcely music; but rather nerves, a suspense, a wheeling of wings around a fixed point. In this mournfulness, this recoil and return, there is a kind of spring and clutch; a native wildness speaks in it, as it speaks in the eyes of these dark animals, with their look of wild beasts eying their keepers. It is a crushed revolt, and it cries out of a storm, and it abandons itself after the lament to an orgy of dancing. It is

tigerish, at once wild and stealthy. And it draws everything into its own net (Symons 1903: 195).⁸

Symons' bombastic and deeply patronizing description of Roma musical wildness is replicated in numerous 19th and 20th century texts that, in the tradition of Herder, extol the freedom and "naturalness" of numerous Eastern European "folk." This is true in both Crimean Tatar and Hutsul cases: archival documents and public memories of traditional life frequently rhapsodize about the centrality of music and song as a key feature of the ritual and social life of both communities. In a 1925 guidebook to Crimea, Arkadij Konchevskij reports, "Until 1921, when entire villages in Crimea were dying from hunger, there were many songs. Specifically, in Crimea the phrase applies: "Song — is the living history of a people" (Konchevskij 1925: 151). In Hutsulshchyna, many Hutsuls reflect nostalgically on the days when "a man would not go into public without at least one *sopilka* (wood flute) hooked into his *cheres* (broad leather belt)" (anon, interview, 4/17/2009).

As two points in the pointillist global map of musical *wildness*, Crimean Tatars and Hutsuls embody two clichés of musical wildness that carry forth into their musical practices,

⁸ Symons' florid description of Gypsy musical wildness touches on many common themes that arise in accounts of the unbridled soulfulness of Hutsuls, their "natural" skill, etc. This is not entirely surprising due to the geographical overlay of Hutsuls and Roma. Symons' description of the Roma instruments — the fiddle and the *czimbalom* — also resembles accounts of Hutsul fiddlers (many of whom are rumored to have a pact with the devil, as I describe in chapter one) and *tsymbaly* (*czimbalom*) players: "The Hungarian gipsies [sic] are the most naturally musical people in the world. Music is their instinctive means of expression; they do not learn it, it comes to them of itself. Go into a roadside tent in Hungary, and you will see a little boy of four stretched naked upon the ground, holding a violin in his arms and dragging his bow across it, trying to make it speak. The leader of a band is usually able to read from notes; the others follow his lead, picking up a whole composition with astonishing rapidity. It is true that they play like men who have never been trained, gaining something in naivete and abandon for what they lose in mechanical precision. The gipsies hold their violin in almost every position but the normal one: against the middle of the chest, on the shoulder near the ear, on the knee. Their fingering is elementary; they use the bow sometimes as a hammer, sometimes as a whip; they pluck at the strings with all their fingers at once, as if they would tear the heart out of the tormented fiddle. And, indeed, it is the heart that cries and sobs, and is happy and exults, in the joyful agonies of the *csárdás*. The time varies, the rhythm fantastically disguised by a prolonged vibration, as it were, of notes humming round a central tone. In its keen intensity and profuse ornamentation, an arabesque of living flame, it is like nothing else in music. And in this unique effect the national instrument, the *czimbalom*, counts for much. The *czimbalom* consists of a framework of wires fixed on a sort of table. The wires are struck by flexible quills, padded at the end, which are held one in each hand. The little soft hammers rise and fall, and flit to and fro with incredible swiftness, in a sort of effervescence of sound" (Symons 1903: 193-4).

strategies, and representations in contemporary Ukraine. Musically, *wildness* functions at once as a token of locality— an icon of territorialized ethnicity and a representation of idealized “nature”— while simultaneously grasping towards more diffuse and universal notions of musical freedom. Often, such discourses about musical *wildness* rely on indigenous terms to explain musical phenomena: in the chapters that follow, I introduce terms such as *folkloryzm*, *sharovarshchynna*, *drayv*, *enerhetyka*, metonyms such as *qaytarma*, and geographical glosses (especially “Eastern music” with regard to Crimean Tatars) as a way to interpret local reflections of musical *wildness*.

To bridge the gap between the local and global meaning of musical wildness, I propose a link between two theoretical concepts that hum in the background of my work. The first is the anthropologist Michael Herzfeld’s (1997, 2005) notion of “cultural intimacy,” the “creative presentation of the self” in a national space (Herzfeld 2005: x), with its co-present duality of shame and pride, or what he terms the “rueful self-recognition” of indigenes in (often overblown) representations of their group (Herzfeld 1997: 42). As a study in musical national intimacy, I extend Herzfeld’s notion to Charles Keil’s ethnomusicological idea of “participatory discrepancies,” the notion that “the power of music” lies in *out-of-timeness* and *out-of-tuneness* (Keil 1994b: 96). In the Hutsul case, non-standard tuning practices and non-tempered conceptions of pitch are examples of “participatory discrepancies”; in the Crimean Tatar case, rhythmic nuance within a system of metrical asymmetry—which I heard occasionally disparaged by non-Crimean Tatars as the musical feature that makes their music impossible to dance to, and therefore, inaccessible—also adheres to Keil’s model. Musical *wildness* may lurk in such participatory discrepancies, the musical idiosyncrasies that may seem “wrong” or “uncultivated” to outsiders but are actually idiomatic and meaningful to locals. The counter-flow to this

phenomenon is that locals consciously practice the participatory discrepancies that they recognize, perhaps at once ruefully and proudly, marks their music as *wild* to outsiders listening in. Of course, wildness operates distinctly in Crimea and Hutsulshchyna, where musical practices and conventions are characterized by distinct participatory discrepancies. I address more of the specific content of musical form and sound with regard to stereotypes of *wildness* in traditional musics in chapter one and two. In the following section, I introduce the dialectic of civilization/barbarism at the meta-level of European intellectual thought before segueing into a discussion of the specific economy of *wildness* in the Ukrainian borderlands inhabited by Crimean Tatars and Hutsuls.

Wildness and Civilization

On March 23, 1772, James Boswell found Samuel Johnson “busy, preparing a fourth edition of his folio Dictionary.” They discussed a certain contemporary neologism that Johnson excluded from the dictionary as improper English: “He would not admit *civilization*, but only *civility*. With great deference to him, I thought *civilization*, from *to civilize*, better in the sense opposed to *barbarity*” (Wolff 1994: 12).

In *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*, Larry Wolff meticulously traces the emergence of the oppositional construct of civilization/barbarism (with specific regard to Europe) through fascinating primary source travel diaries, works of literature, and letters. He analyzes how “civilization” — a newly minted term in the era of the Enlightenment, Johnson’s fourth edition — became further qualified as “European civilization” over time, used to distinguish it from “‘false civilization,’ especially with reference to the ambitions of Peter the Great in Russia” (12).

It was Western Europe that invented Eastern Europe as its complementary other half in the eighteenth century, the age of Enlightenment. It was also the Enlightenment, with its intellectual centers in Western Europe, that cultivated and appropriated to itself the new notion of “civilization,” an eighteenth-century neologism, and civilization discovered its

complements, within the same continent, in shadowed lands of backwardness, even barbarism. Such was the invention of Eastern Europe (Wolff 1994: 4).

The civilizing project of Imperial Russia, then, became defined by its shadowy status, a forgery of “civilization” that lay somewhere between “Europe” and “Asia.” As the French writer Balzac explained from his Parisian perch, “The inhabitants of the Ukraine, Russia, the plains of the Danube, in short, the Slav peoples, are a link between Europe and Asia, between civilization and barbarism” (1994: 13).⁹ Wolff annotates this reference by explaining, “Eastern Europe was located not at the antipode of civilization, not down in the depths of barbarism, but rather on the developmental scale that measured the distance between civilization and barbarism” (1994: 13). This distance between civilization and barbarism, or rather, the *idea* of the distance between civilization and barbarism, is an intellectual concept with far-reaching currency and knotty roots in European intellectual history. In this section, I offer a brief (and by no means comprehensive) review of certain key aspects of the civilization/savagery (or civilization/barbarism) oppositional construct, drawing on a few recurring themes from its staggering and capacious literature, and leading towards the particular (ethnographically-derived and emplaced) discourses of civilization/wildness that frame this project.

Two critical themes that permeate the civilization/barbarism discourse are its teleological and hierarchical aspects. In the seminal text *Marxism and Literature*, Raymond Williams highlighted the implicit hierarchy of the civilization/barbarism dialectic, emphasizing the European Enlightenment concept that fashioned these terms as oppositional:

‘Civilization’ ...expressed two senses which were historically linked: an achieved state, which could be contrasted with ‘barbarism,’ but now also an achieved state of development, which implied historical process and progress. This was the new historical

⁹ As a point of interest, in 1850, Balzac wed Ewelina Hanska near Berdychiv, a town in Ukraine. Hanska previously had been married to an affluent Polish landowner and lived in Kyiv. Their marriage was short-lived; Balzac died five months after they were wed, shortly after the newlyweds had returned to France.

rationality of the Enlightenment, in fact combined with a self-referring celebration of an achieved condition of refinement and order (Williams 1977: 13).

In a review of Hobbes' political history of man's development from barbarism (or savagery, heathenism) to civilization, Kraynak argued that the intractable aura of superiority that marks "civilization" stems from Aristotelian teleologies of progress that emphasized the *evolution* of human civil society from "barbarism" towards "civilization" (1983). Thomas Hobbes, writing in the mid-17th century, underscored the co-constructed aspects of the culturally-constructed antonyms of civilization/savagery — a perspective echoed by Rousseau nearly a century later in his extended meditation on "savage man" in the *Discourse on Inequality* (Rousseau 1775/1984). Despite scholarship that has attempted to disabuse and complicate the linear teleology of barbarism to civilization, a post-Enlightenment version of the Aristotelian teleological narrative of civilization/barbarism, with its twinned concept of the "Noble Savage," has largely overshadowed more nuanced and critical stances of thinkers such as Hobbes and Rousseau (Ellingson 2001).

The relative and oppositional nature of the civilization/barbarism dialectic became the central feature of Said's seminal critique of colonialism and Western modes of representation in *Orientalism* (1979). Said argued that, in the context of Western colonialism, as the national "Self" positioned itself as superior and distant from an oriental "Other," *Orientalism* — the discursive construction of Otherness/Easterness — came to function as the "Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (1979: 3). More than a generation has passed since Said's critique of orientalist discourse gave rise to post-colonial studies that presented diverse challenges to historiography, language, anthropology and other social sciences (Bhabha 1990; Chakrabarty 2000; Chatterjee 1998; Spivak 1988, 1990). In the context of the former Soviet Union, scholars have sought to apply aspects of the post-colonial

paradigm to nation-states such as Ukraine, an endeavor that has launched its own critique of post-colonial and decolonizing processes in the former “Second World” (David Chioni Moore 2001; Strayer 2001; Velychenko 2004). Though not regionally specific, Huggan’s critique of the original post-colonial critique in *The Postcolonial Exotic* sets forth a provocative set of questions about the way forward from post-colonial theory. Huggan argues that post-colonial scholarship has become complicit in the production of an “alterity industry” that trades on tropes of the exotic. He proposes the term “strategic exoticism” to describe the phenomenon by which marginalized voices assert power by manipulating the “alterity industry,” since it fetishizes otherness (Huggan 2001). I take this issue up at length with regard to Crimean Tatar popular music in chapter four of this dissertation.

Ter Ellingson’s probe into the myth of the Noble Savage presents a meta-critique of a critique that raises compelling questions about the established paradigm of civilization/barbarism (Ellingson 2001). Ellingson traces how, in “anthropology, where the myth of the Noble Savage arose in intimate connection with the institutional founding of the discipline, we might well expect that a century-and-a-half-old foundation myth has permeated so deeply into the fabric of the discipline that its influence would be almost impossible to uncover with any degree of precision” (2001: 343).

In French, *sauvage* does not necessarily connote either fierceness or moral degradation; it may simply mean “wild,” as in *fleurs sauvages*, “wildflowers.” The term once carried this kinder and gentler connotation in English as well, although it does so no longer.... Thus we see that not only did writers previously taken as believers in the myth of the Noble Savage use the term “savage” with a simple connotation of wildness, remote from any moral of even human implication, applicable even to the cherry and the “mild” olive, but also this nonpolemic usage continued in English until well into the nineteenth century. Can we rule out the likelihood that this long-standing English usage was finally destroyed only by the transformation of the term into an ideological weapon through the fabrication of the racist anthropological myth of the “Noble Savage”? (2001: 377).

Ellingson's suggestion that the 19th century reincarnation of the "myth of the Noble Savage" contributed to the conflation of "fierceness or moral degradation" with "wildness" to form the concept of the modern "savage" is compelling. As Ellingson points out, Rousseau — to whom the modern "myth of the Noble Savage" has been mistakenly attributed — conceptualized the "savage" (or "man in a state of nature") as "a source of information and ideas to critique aspects of civilized life that less critical writers would prefer to have swept under the rug of progress (Ellingson 2001: 81). Contrary to popular belief, Rousseau did not express blind faith in the march forward of Western European progress, and the stamping out of "primitive man." Rather, by using the *construct* of "primitivism" to call attention to the hypocrisies and corruptions of "civilization," Rousseau was, to some extent, sentimentalizing "wildness" — a theoretical move that resonates with Herder's almost contemporaneous "folk music" collections and anticipates the 19th century Romantic nostalgia premised on the recovery of purity and soulfulness vis-a-vis pristine and uncultivated "folk."

In the 19th century, Romantic nostalgia transformed into a dogma of authenticity that, as Regina Bendix has pointed out, exposed "a peculiar longing, at once modern and antimodern. It is oriented toward the recovery of an essence whose loss has been realized only through modernity, and whose recovery is feasible only through methods and sentiments created in modernity" (Bendix 1997: 8). With the expansion of European interest in their proximal "folk," the relevance of music to the civilization/barbarism discourse took on great symbolism. In ethnomusicology and "folklore studies" — disciplines with their own (often embarrassing) histories of primitivism — the "search for authenticity [became a] fundamentally...emotional and moral quest" (Bendix 1997: 7). Today, such discourses of the "authentic" pervade language about musical experience globally, just as the entrenched paradigm of civilization/barbarism

informs and shapes concepts of musical power and meaning. Rarely, however, do studies in such historical constructs as “authenticity” and “civilization/savagery” allow the “other” to talk back to the pervasive and, at times, troubling myths of exoticism. One of the great privileges of a study that is ethnographic in nature is that it allows such a reversal, affording the opportunity to examine not only how dominant stereotypes function in the world, but also how the stereotyped voice a response. Like Taussig’s (1993) deep meditation on the nature of the mimetic faculty, the returned gaze of the colonized is emboldened through music, as a kinetic and multi-layered medium that interacts variably with such tired paradigms.

In Ukraine, “civilization” and “wildness” are ideas that get voiced casually, positioned close to the tip of the tongue in conversation, uttered as remarks that express anxiety, resignation, or optimism about the future of Ukraine. During my extended stay in Ukraine in 2008-2009, a common theme of many conversations — those concerned with music and those more general — circled around the concept of “Europe.” Often, I was asked to evaluate whether something in Ukraine (a song’s recording quality, the potholes in a road, the flavor of a local beer) adhered to European norms. When I reminded of my U.S. Citizenship, which I felt undermined my ability to evaluate the “European-ness” of a given thing, I was frequently told that “the United States is closer to Europe than Ukraine” — a fact easily contradicted by any map, but figuratively, as I found, arguable. In her study of Bulgarian music, Donna Buchanan (2006) lists a number of ideas of “what European means” to the musicians in her book. One such definition she proposes resonates closely with how I believe many Crimean Tatar and Hutsul Ukrainians conceived of place:

Europe is a geographic descriptive for a “Western” place interpreted as a site of intellectual growth, technological progress, and economic advancement that stands in opposition to a less knowledgeable, technologically and financially inferior “East” (Buchanan 2006: 45).

To Ukrainians who see themselves caught between Europe and Russia, “Europe” is a close synonym to the Enlightenment-era term “civilization” that demarcated East and West at its origin. As some recent scholars have pointed out, the constructed meanings of “civilization” are especially rich in regions that were the battlegrounds of numerous former empires (such as Ukraine), where crusades for particular geopolitical and metaphorical designations of “Europe” and “the East” continue to be waged today (Ivakhiv 2006), and where “civilization” and “Europe” share valence as terms of aspiration and desire (Kuus 2004).

“Civilization” also manifests locally as an oppositional category to “wildness,” a gloss that folds in many terms for the exotic. In contemporary Ukrainian usage, “wildness” can map onto naturalistic metaphors that arise in *jus sanguinis* or primordialist national-political discourse as well as in “Native Faith” and pagan movements that stress a link to wilderness *as social wildness* (Ivakhiv 2005a). In the lexicon of popular music, “wildness” became a hot-button term of Ukrainian popular music following the international success of Ukrainian pop star Ruslana’s Hutsul-inspired album *Wild Dances* (which I address at length in chapter three), and that provoked a furor among many Hutsuls who interpreted her depiction of “wildness” as primitivist slander. “Wildness” also stands in colloquially as *conceptual* “rurality.” A common idiom in Ukraine makes a point of the link between status and place: an individual committing a social *faux pas* will be sneeringly described simply as “*selo*,” which literally means “village” (and in common usage, has no overtly pejorative overtones).

Idiomatically, both wildness and civilization operate as slippery, polysemic terms. I put forward the following list as a preliminary set of oppositional *constructs* as they arise in discourse, emphasizing the constructed, not absolute or inviolable, nature of these pairs:

“Wildness”	“Civilization”
barbaric	
primitive	
savage	
nature	culture
natural	technological
	synthetic
authentic	constructed
	contaminated
real	artificial
immediate	mediated
spontaneous	contingent
unrestrained	controlled
old	new
ancient	contemporary
	modern
	cosmopolitan
innate	learned
	acquired
organic	cultivated
particular	universal
local	global
	“Europe”
	“America” / US
exotic	conventional
	dominant
home	away
	abroad
intimate	alien
East	West

Such a provisional list of the terms that make up exoticist discourse reveals the malleability of tropes such as “civilization” and “wildness,” which are always constructed in relation to equally

elusive tropes of social or geographical identification and perspective. Bakic-Hayden and

Hayden (1995) term this self-perpetuating chain of relative exoticism “nesting orientalisms.”

This powerful metaphor for the relational aspect of “othering” stems out of Said’s classic

discursive formulation of “orientalism” (Bakic-Hayden 1995). Uehling (2004) addresses “nesting

orientalisms” in her study of Crimean Tatar repatriates, noting the

...irony...that while the Tatars were ‘barbarians’ to Slavs, the Slavs were barbarians to the Europeans....The stakes in securing spheres of influence and control within these hierarchies are particularly high....Ultimately, the polarization of civilization and barbarism gave the Europe-Asia division philosophical significance (2004: 26).

Furthermore, while Europeans thought of Slavs as barbarians, urban Slavs gazed upon rural Slavs as relative primitives. Today, many Hutsuls, the idealized Herderian “folk,” reflect back on medieval history and project a threatening brand of wildness onto their Tatar neighbors in Crimea.

This project takes nested orientalisms as a prism of telescoping lenses: from a European gaze onto Ukraine, from Ukrainian urban culture onto the rural, through hierarchic discourses of *wildness* that are naturalized among certain Ukrainian populations (as in the gaze of some Hutsuls onto Crimean Tatars or the reactionary gaze of some Crimean Tatars on Crimean Slavs),¹⁰ down towards localized forms of “othering” in instances as specific as Hutsuls villagers delineating “real” Hutsuls from neighboring Hutsuls who do not qualify as “real.” But these relationships cannot be reduced to a linear schema – for the overlaps, synchronicities, and dissonances revealed when tracing such a chain of nested orientalisms resembles a kaleidoscopic venn diagram at times, more than a sequence of dominoes or a uniform link of chain. Indeed, in pursuing a series of nesting orientalisms to its most local manifestation, this researcher butts her head against one of the foundational quandaries of ethnographic practice: how to extract from

¹⁰ During my fieldwork in Crimea, I heard some Crimean Tatars comment on how the Slavic people that took over Crimean Tatar homes after the 1944 deportation effectively let those homes go to waste — “they got them for free, so why should they care about them? They just drink all day and let it all decay” (anon, 11/19/2008). Such tales contained implicit messages about the regressive state of Slavic or Soviet “civilization” compared with the orderliness of the Crimean Tatars who had inhabited those homes until 1944. One close friend recounted to me how her grandparents’ homestead — which had once had a huge and productive garden, with many head of cattle — had been taken over by “drunks” who “ruined our family home.” When her immediate family returned from exile in Central Asia in the late 1980s, they sought to buy land in the Sala-chyk’ neighborhood of Bakhchisaray where her grandparents had lived. She was distraught to find that there was no electricity or running water in that neighborhood in the late 1980s, and expressed disdain towards local residents for not pursuing such basic improvements. She told me about how she lobbied the Bakhchisaray city administration to bring electricity, telephone lines, and other amenities into that neighborhood, and how her neighbors today continue to abuse their property (interview, anon., 11/19/2008).

extremely localized, individual experience, how to assemble specifics into an allegorical, generalizable narrative. This dilemma sparks up and down such a series, at the narrowest, most proximal levels of “othering” as well as at the widest analytical nodes.

Originally, Bakic-Hayden applied the theory of “nesting orientalisms” to explain the positioning of the Balkans along a spectrum of “Eastern-ness,” concluding that the “terms of definition of such a dichotomous [East/West] model eventually establish conditions for its own contradiction” (Bakic-Hayden 1995: 918). This internal contradiction mounts a substantial challenge to essentialist theories of ethnic or national origins, and the self-determining traits that are believed to predict the fate of peoples. In this study, I conceive of “nesting orientalisms” not as a strictly hierarchical model to explain how “otherness” is constructed, but rather as a multi-dimensional model. In the following discussion of stereotype and otherness, I introduce the metaphor of the *matryoshka* doll to aid the reader in conceptualizing how “otherness” is constructed relationally, and how stereotype functions in representation — internal and external — of exoticized groups such as the Hutsuls and Crimean Tatars.

The Matryoshka Metaphor and Stereotype

A folk culture may forcefully put forward its popular or official image, perhaps in a hyperbolized form that arrests the corrosive influence of a negative stereotype by turning it back upon its creator; or that image can be transformed into a kind of parody of itself, and beyond that into an icon or effigy, a center around which cultural self-awareness can form. But the image itself, as an element in a social vocabulary, cannot be expunged, any more than we can expunge our names and still function socially. If stereotypes are not in some sense identity itself, they are the coupling through which personality and society conjoin to produce identity.

- Robert Cantwell, *Ethnomimesis* (1993: 157)

The matryoshka doll—those colorful painted nesting dolls associated with Russia and Ukraine—serve as a useful metaphor to physicalize the idea of “nesting orientalisms.” Ertl and Hibberd, the authors of a book titled *The Art of the Russian Matryoshka*, call attention to the fact that the matryoshka dolls contain “symbols within symbols” (Ertl 2003). Indeed. As an aesthetic commodity and token of tourism, the matryoshka functions either as a highbrow collector’s item or inescapable item of kitsch in the post-Soviet universe. As a diasporic object, the dolls are laden with nostalgic overtones (Boym 2001). As a historical object, the matryoshka’s iconic link to place is a pose, a small deceit, since the original model for the matryoshka was imported from Japan in the 1890s, and consisted of five nested pieces that depicted a Japanese monk (2003: 5-8); it was only following the display of Russian matryoshki at the *fin-de-siècle* Parisian World Fair exhibition that the matryoshka became associated with Russia. As demand for the dolls rose in the early 20th century, their forms diversified and the subjects they portrayed expanded to include political figures, fairy tales, and peasant families (2003: 10). During the Soviet era, matryoshka creativity stagnated, but blossomed again during *glasnost*, when the iconic “Gorby doll”—which depicted all of the Soviet leaders nested inside—brought political satire into the late Soviet marketplace. To many Ukrainians, the matryoshka represents a Russian import, yet today they populate the street stalls of craft bazaars in every Ukrainian city and town, painted with every imaginable series of characters: classic Disney cartoon characters, American presidents, figures from Slavic folk tales, the Beatles, high art re-conceptualizations of the form.

The matryoshka contains multitudes, literally. Traditionally, nesting dolls are associated with symbols of motherhood and fertility, even childbirth, as each doll opens to give way to another, smaller doll. (In Russian and Ukrainian, the name *matryoshka* even evokes the word for mother (*Mat*’) though Ertl and Hibbert claim that the name for the dolls originated from the

female name Matryona, which was common in rural 19th century Russia (2003: xi)). This shape-shifting quality of the matryoshka doll lends it the metaphorical flexibility that I wish to highlight in applying it to the theoretical concept of “nesting orientalism.” Though a “chain of orientalism” is a useful metaphor for conceptualizing linear relations of otherness (imagine, as a simple construction, the link from “Europe” → “Eastern Europe” → “Ukraine”), the matryoshka metaphor expands to “nesting orientalism” that are reflexive, intimate. Imagine the nested dolls of the matryoshka laid out in a line, sloping down from the biggest to the smallest doll. This is a linear relationship, comparable to a chain of links that diminish in size. Then imagine each doll nested back inside its relatively bigger, hollowed-out doll as a representation of self-identifications: as a basic example, an individual could hypothetically conceive of himself in categories starting from the smallest doll as the most intimate, personal (most physically evident yet most hidden) “self” → “indigenous” → “Crimean Tatar” → “Ukrainian” → “European” → “cosmopolitan.” Carved from wood to resemble the broad contours of a female figure, *matryoshki* are physical objects; in my metaphorical application, each doll represents an ideological construct, one in a series of nesting orientalism, discursive constructs (such as “civilization” or “The West” or “Ukrainian” or any trope that references “identity”) that are inherently emergent, contingent, and constructed (Hall 1990): they are stereotypes.

In *Ethnomimesis*, Robert Cantwell provides great insights on social function of stereotypes as well as the internal contradictions that stereotypes contain:

Stereotype is a science of distortions, but a vernacular science – one that reasons from a primary cause, which is the distortion itself, supposing that all difference can be explained as difference. It does not ask what are the traits of the outside, for it already knows them, as effects of causes it has adduced from the laws of its own world; reasoning only unknown effects from known causes, denying any causes peculiar to the outsider’s own history, circumstances, and occasions, particularly those hidden causes that lie in the crosscultural encounter itself, stereotype denies the outsider, in effect, an independent existence. For there is no investigation; stereotype forms its theories out of

those judgments of similarity and difference by which we assign individuals to groups and classes – the act of assignments being, in stereotype, the way we conceive or “know” the individual. Stereotype consists entirely of such assignments, its essential error being the simple fact that it knows social reality only in groups or classes, apart from which it has only the existential encounter with the individual: ‘Some of my best friends are stereotypes’ (Cantwell 1993: 160).¹¹

Despite the stereotype’s fundamental “error” in representing the nuances of individual experiences in “social reality,” Cantwell goes on to argue that, given their utility as shorthand to describe what someone or something is, “stereotype is always...true, even perfectly true, since it is essentially self-referential — as long as we are willing actively to experience, or are compelled to experience, one species of reality as if it were another” (Cantwell 1993: 168).

That is, stereotypes themselves are inherently relational, appending a cluster of ideas to a person, group or object by delineating what that person, group or object *is* or *is not* — requiring a temporary subscription to a particular “species of reality.” The human desire to classify, taxonomize, compartmentalize, and assign roles is realized through the stereotype: “Stereotypes are configurations of traits: racial traits; social roles and economic functions; kinesic, sartorial, and tonsorial styles; expressive forms – all taken as typical and marked by certain social and cultural valuations” (Cantwell 1993: 157). But stereotype does not account for the changeability and contingency of human traits, it is “the *stereo*, the fixed or solid, *type*, the stamp or seal, from which every individual impression takes its form in thought” (167). These impressions are often capricious, simplistic, and always enabled by distance — since “there is no stereotype without

¹¹ Cantwell defined his concept of *Ethnomimeses* as follows: “The term is not meant to mystify. *Ethno* is self-evident, I think; it has to do with groups and the forces that constitute them. *Mimesis* is complicated but not occult. I use it in the three senses commonplace in the teaching of literature. In one sense, it means simple “imitation,” which according to Aristotle was the primary form of learning - “this is that”; in this case, I refer to the learning that arises between, among, of, and by people in the realm of social relations, which includes most of what we call “culture,” but especially that unconscious mimicry through which we take the deposits of a particular influence, tradition, or culture to ourselves and by which others recognize them in us.” (Cantwell 1993: 5). Cantwell’s stress on the mimetic aspect of stereotypes resembles Taussig’s (1993) contemporaneous work on the mimetic aspects of colonial representation — the self-replicating phenomena by which external/dominant representations bear on the self-representations of a group, and then reflect back out to the dominant culture.

distance” (Cantwell 1993: 172). Furthermore, they work at “enforcing the distance between groups” (173). The stereotype reifies a constellation of ideas, forming those ideas into one crystalline term, one crude form of otherness. The matryoshka, laden with stereotypes of place, politics, history, colonialism, can be disassembled into discrete layers that display this relational quality of the stereotype. Each hollowed-out wooden figurine is polychrome; it is adorned with ritual symbols that link it to its nesting family while retaining its distinct character within the family. Each doll is a representation that points outward and inward simultaneously, mimetically reproduced in ever-more-localized variations of a dominant stereotype. A stereotype is one node in a series of ambiguous nesting orientalisms, like the matryoshka that contains more matryoshki within itself. Until the matryoshka is disassembled, however, the number of nested dolls inside remains secret, protected.

In *People’s Music Comparatively*, Charles Keil puts forth eight “hypotheses about people’s music processes in twentieth-century America” (1994: 202). The fourth hypothesis posits that, “For a working-class style to grow and prosper, the dominant culture’s stereotypes must be accepted and transcended.” In the original article, Keil was setting forth some preliminary postulations with regard to the specific contexts of Polish-American polka and Black American blues cultures in twentieth-century America. In the context of this project, Keil’s U.S.-based working-class “otherness” maps onto quintessentially “other” groups in the Ukrainian context, such as the Crimean Tatars and the Hutsuls. As groups that embody a range of stereotypes connected to their histories of “otherness” as “wildness,” both Crimean Tatar and Hutsul musicians struggle to “transcend” the dominant culture’s stereotype of their group as “exotic.” But the strategies used to transcend these dominant stereotypes are varied, ranging from engagement, to ambivalence, to hyperbole and other modes of subversion, to denial. Such local

strategies often butt against or seek to deconstruct “official” histories that contain and reinforce dominant stereotypes, thus opening up the rich space for ethnographic inquiry and insight that much of this project is premised on.

“Our People Know Much More Than What’s Written in Books”: On Ethnographic Authority

This dissertation draws upon two species of knowledge, the official (the “written” or “archival”) and the ethnographic; as such, these disparate species of knowledge present a number of conflicts that wheel around conceptions of “truth.” In Ukraine, where 20th century history was tarnished by Soviet social engineering and propaganda programs, “official” knowledge is often viewed by locals with a healthy dose of skepticism, as an inadequate or purposeful misrepresentation of lived reality. Much scholarship has addressed the post-1991 writing of Ukrainian history as a “crucial ideological battleground for national identity” (Wanner 1996: 149; see also Velychenko 2004; von Hagen 1995; Wilson 2002). In the course of my research, local challenges to official discourses arose as quotidian revelations in both Crimea and Western Ukraine. Much like Kate Brown’s vivid reconstruction of history in the forsaken *kresy* region of Ukraine (Brown 2004), I often engaged in conversations where a local would narrate a version of history that contradicted what I had recently read in the library. In one memorable dinnertime conversation, a man from the Hutsul village of Kosiv told me that he approved of my project and hoped that “the world would read it,” because “our people know much more than what’s written in books” (anon. interview, 1/4/2009).

In the Western academy, the disciplines of socio-cultural anthropology and by association, ethnomusicology, have undergone a sea change in approaches and attitudes in recent decades. The issue of the ethnographer's authority has been a central question in this upheaval (Clifford 1983). The post-colonial critique of anthropology and the social sciences pointed its finger at the colonialist, paternalistic, and ethnocentric origins of these disciplines, and the eruption of reactions that followed in U.S. and European academia ranged from profound to defensive, apologetic to deeply reflexive (Abu-Lughod 1991; Barz 2008; Behar and Gordon 1995; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Sanjek 1990). In *Writing Women's Worlds*, Lila Abu-Lughod addresses how the minutiae of everyday life easily get overshadowed by the ethnographic "language of generalization":

Yet the dailiness, by breaking coherence and introducing time, trains our gaze on flux and contradiction; and the particulars suggest that others live as we perceive ourselves living – not as automatons programmed according to "cultural" rules or acting out social roles, but as people going through life wondering what they should do, making mistakes, being opinionated, vacillating, trying to make themselves look good, enduring tragic personal losses, enjoying others, and finding moments of laughter... It is hard for the language of generalization to convey these sorts of experiences and activities. (Abu-Lughod 1993: 27).

As a partial remedy for the inevitable generalizations that accompany written representation, the ethnomusicologist Steven Feld proposed the strategy of "dialogic editing" as a challenge to the ethnographer's authoritative impunity (Feld 1987), when he brought his published ethnography back to the Kaluli of Papua New Guinea for their opinions and critique. Feld's authority was subjected to the local population's authority, who were able to emend and talk back to the written representation of their world (see also Jackson 1995). In a place like post-Soviet Ukraine, with its extensive and firmly rooted tradition of ethnomusicological scholarship, an ethnographer

dedicated to “dialogic editing” can choose to engage with the native population¹² as well as with a third party of “editors”: the professional experts situated in an institution at the nearest urban community to any given “field.” Yet, the chasm between institutional Ukrainian and U.S. approaches is substantial and, at times, fraught.

In Ukraine, the discipline of ethnomusicology is a musicological tradition that has been, implicitly or explicitly, bound up in nationalist or essentialist dogma (Filenko 2001; Helbig 2005; Wanner 1996).¹³ Rooted in Herderian nostalgia and Romantic striving for the authentic “soul of the folk,” transmuted through the perplexing push-and-pull of Soviet formulae for socialist folklore, and reinvented in the first tumultuous era of Ukrainian independence, contemporary Ukrainian ethnomusicology emphasizes the systematic, side-by-side comparison of the formal structure of songs and melodies, tunes that are most often transcribed according to strict imperatives based on lyrical syntax and village-based conventions of tuning and timbre. In post-Soviet Ukrainian ethnomusicology, professionals train by mastering staggeringly broad

¹² For ease of understanding the location of these groups, I am defining the category of the “native ethnographer” apart from the “professional experts” who work at institutions. In Hutsulshchyna, “native ethnographers” include early 20th century figures such as Shekeryk-Donykiv (introduced in chapter one) as well as contemporary scholars such as Vasyl Zelenchuk (who was elected mayor of Kryvorivnia, his home village, in 2010), who was trained at Ivan Franko University in L’viv but then settled back Kryvorivnia to promote local knowledge and pride through example (he speaks in dialect and subscribes to beliefs that he knows the outside world perceives as superstition). “Native ethnography” is an even more ambiguous category in the Crimean Tatar case, since 1) very few examples of pre-WWII ethnographies of the Crimean Tatars survive, to my knowledge and 2) the current population of Crimean Tatar repatriates are urban-dwellers. With this in mind, I consider individuals such as Fevzi Aliev in Simferopol (see chapter two) as a “native ethnographer” since his work is independent of institutions and invested in bolstering his native community.

¹³ However, this germinative fact of the ethnomusicological discipline in Ukraine does not necessarily mean that contemporary ethnomusicologists practice with any specific political or nationalist agenda. In fact, most ethnomusicologists with whom I have conversed on the subject profess a real, personal and emotional connection to the rural musics that they study. Recently, Yevhen Yefremov, a renowned Kyiv-based scholar, and one of the main figures responsible for the revival of village-style polyphonic singing traditions in Ukraine, expressed to me how deeply the songs of village women resonated with him when he was a student collecting materials in the 1970s. He poignantly described the first time that he realized how personal and relevant this village culture was for villagers, when he heard an old woman in a village sing “an ancient lyrical song with tears welling in her eyes, because she was singing her own story, too.” It was, he told me, so much more alive and true than the state-sanctioned, institutionalized folk music that was dominant in that period. Starting in the 1970s, he and some of his graduate student friends would informally meet to sing the village repertoires that they were collecting on expeditions. In 1979, Yefremov founded *Drevo*, a group devoted towards “authentic style” polyphonic song, which remains the foundational group in the revival of these vocal traditions in Ukraine today.

rural repertoires and developing a sharp ear for transcription to aid in contextualizing folk music along the indigenous guidelines of village rituals and beliefs. Given the piddling budgets allocated for this kind of field research, Ukrainian ethnomusicologists most often study the “ethnographic regions” closest to their urban universities: L’vivian scholars focus on the Western Ukrainian groups such as Boykos, Lemkos, and Hutsuls; Kharkivan scholars focus on Eastern Ukrainian villagers; Kyivans study Podilians and other Central Ukrainian “ethnographic groups.” Expeditions into the field are generally conducted over weekends or during weeks in the summer, and usually involve teams of researchers and students setting up camp in a village and fanning out in pairs or trios to find the eldest musicians in the community.

In contrast, ethnomusicologists in the United States generally go to field sites for extended periods of time, a simple fact that allows the forces of serendipity to play a larger role in steering research. My personal extended fieldwork experience was made possible by a series of both short and long-term grants from various U.S. institutions over many years. My methodology blended network-based formal interviews with “deep hanging out” in informal gatherings (Geertz 1998). For me, the ethnographic knowledge that I gleaned from the dailiness of life in these places was what gave form to my research questions from the beginning: it was from hearing local musicians talk about “Europe,” “wildness,” and “civilization” on a near daily basis that my interest in these constructs took root; it was in providing a context for locals to speak back to these constructs that I premised this project, which I imagine to be harnessing some of the ethnographic potential to reverse power-inflected representations, mediated by my own theoretical framing and writing process (Clifford and Marcus 1986).¹⁴ Ultimately, the freedom of

¹⁴ In a brief meditation on her time working as an anthropological expert hired to lecture about local culture in East African game reserves, Deborah Kaspin faces up to the impossibility of reconciling local and anthropological knowledge: “But while representations are fair game for interpretation, deconstructing the representations of a locality is a risky enterprise in the locality, whatever their historical origin. This does not diminish the value of the

design and impulse that shapes my project — a freedom that is accompanied by substantial challenges — is an outgrowth of contemporary U.S. models of fieldwork and ethnographic inquiry that have little presence in contemporary Ukrainian ethnomusicology due, in large part, to the financial limitations of conducting such extended research within Ukrainian institutions. Simply put, Ukrainian ethnomusicologists have never had the financial means or institutional support to conduct fieldwork expeditions far from their home base.

For ethnomusicologists working at the Lysenko Academy of Music in the city of L'viv — where I have had friendly and professional relationships with several ethnomusicologists since 1999 — field interviews are conducted according to a checklist compiled by Bohdan Lukaniuk, a towering figure in Western Ukrainian ethnomusicology. (In Kyiv, ethnomusicologists use a similar list.) The checklist runs through the possible genres, songs and ritual cycles that local musicians may know and emphasizes “ancient” and “authentic” music; Soviet, contemporary or original songs do not make it onto the list. In the highly systematized task of recording and analyzing village musical repertoires and rituals perceived to be threatened or dying, the power of each individual researcher to interpret ethnographic data is limited by the overarching mission of preservation. This team-based approach has obvious benefits as far as claims about objectivity go, since the question of ethnographic authority on the individual level is subsumed into the larger project of archiving rural repertoires. However, the all-encompassing project to salvage local musics, the central mission of Ukrainian folklore and ethnomusicology for the last 150 years, also projects an implicit set of assumptions about what kinds of music are valid and valuable (“authentic,” “forgotten,” “untouched by colonialism,” being at the top of the hierarchy,

interpretation, but underscores the fact that anthropological understandings are not the same thing as local understandings. *Pace* Errington and Gewertz (Errington 1989), their culture cannot be my culture, their politics cannot be my politics, and their voice cannot be my voice (Kaspin 1997: 57). I keep this fact of epistemological irreconcilability in the forefront of my writing process.

“original [*avtorski*] songs” and “Soviet era songs” toward the bottom). Furthermore, formal interactions between ethnographers and song-carriers generally conform to a prescribed script (such as the rundown mandated by the L’vivian checklist), and the specific thrust of such research projects usually develops around a variation of the question, “what is the oldest and purest song that you know in this specific ritual genre?” Ukrainian ethnomusicology retains, in many ways, the impulses that motivated Romantic-era questers for the authentic peasant soul.

The anxieties of cultural loss that pervade Ukrainian ethnomusicology today endure for reasons that are clear and wide-ranging as Ukraine battles with itself for the future of Ukrainian language, culture, and political allegiances. Such anxieties about cultural loss hit close to home for me, as the daughter of WWII-era Ukrainian immigrants who invested great efforts to instill a strong sense of Ukrainian cultural identity (through language, cuisine, religion, song and ritual) in their American-born children.¹⁵ Though today my stance towards cultural authenticity is fundamentally critical, shaped by my training in the United States, my original interest in Ukrainian “folk music” formed as an innocent, childish preoccupation with something that I took to be my own, true, unadulterated cultural heritage.

***“Nasha Amerykanka”*: A Reflexive Meditation**

As a child reared in the Ukrainian-American diaspora, I inherited nostalgia for my homeland. I learned what Ukraine was through the experiences of my family and the Ukrainian diaspora community in which I was raised — my childhood Ukraine was articulated in a

¹⁵ Both of my parents spent years in displaced persons camps in Austria and Germany in the years after V-day. My mother emigrated to rural Western Canada with her immediate family as a child in the early 1950s, eventually migrating to Winnipeg, then Ohio, later Virginia, and finally to New York (once she married my father in the late 1970s). My father came to New York with his immediate family as a teenager. He studied briefly at Kent State in Ohio and later at City College and Columbia University in New York. I was born nearly thirty years after they had independently come to North America.

Western Ukrainian dialect that I took to be unmarked, and informed by the sensibilities of WWII-era political refugees. My imagination of Ukraine centered on L'viv and the Carpathians, Eastern rite Catholicism, fields of yellow wheat and blue sky, lionhearted Cossacks battling marauding Tatar hordes and Russian imperialists, the evil Soviet Empire, the lachrymose poems of Taras Shevchenko, *varenyky* (pierogies), *borscht*, and *pysanky* (batiked Easter eggs). My Ukraine was Ukrainian scouting summer camp where we sang “Blowin’ in the Wind” with Ukrainian lyrics around the nightly campfire and patriotic Ukrainian anthems (*When we grow up big / brave soldiers / We will defend Ukraine / from evil hands*) every morning.¹⁶

In August of 1991, my parents took me with my younger brother, Marko, to Ukraine. An incredible string of events led up to our family’s extraordinarily timely arrival: leaving from Vienna on a massive, fume-filled train, we rumbled eastward across the Iron Curtain on the day that Ukraine declared its independence from the Soviet Union. It was August 24, 1991. At the age of ten, I could not comprehend the scale of historical events that we had somehow gotten ourselves tangled into, but I remember bottles of champagne when we arrived at the train station in *Truskavets*, my father’s tears upon reuniting with family that he had not seen since the 1940s, grey shops with empty shelves, the black market machinations my mother undertook to find my brother a toothbrush, the visit to our family’s village home where there was no running water and no flushing toilets, and the rock-bottom prices of hand-whittled keychains that my brother and I

¹⁶ These are translated lyrics from one anthem of the PLAST Ukrainian Scouting Organization to which I belonged until my teenage years. The anthem was sung by the young scouts [*novaky*], and remains a vivid childhood musical memory for me. The overt patriotism of the chorus (cited above) is set against verses that remind of Woody Guthrie’s iconic American folk song “This Land is Your Land.” Verse one (my translation): *We are Ukrainian children / we are young, like flowers / Small zhovtodziuby [lit. Yellowbeaks, the name for the youngest scouts, like the Boy Scouts’ “bear cubs”] / PLAST newcomers [novaky].* Verse two: “*We love our family homes / the wide steppe and groves / From the Sian to the the Kuban / Lies our native land.*” The song reinforces the idea that children of the Ukrainian diaspora were mantle-holders, preparing for the day when Ukraine would be free of “evil”/“colonial”/“Soviet” hands. A significant part of the campfire repertoire also rewrote classic 60s songs from Anglo-American folk and rock with Ukrainian lyrics. As a teenager, I was surprised to learn that the melodies to songs such as Bob Dylan’s “Blowing in the Wind” and the Rolling Stones’ “As Tears Go By” were not originally Ukrainian songs.

bought in Kyiv for our friends back home (in the days after the Soviet economy imploded, we purchased things for fractions of American pennies). When we left Ukraine on that first trip, I was inconsolable, crying as the train lurched out of the L'viv train station and all of my new uncles, aunts, and cousins waved goodbye to their distant American relatives. I was a ten-year old overcome with emotion at leaving the place that I had imagined for my whole life up to that moment. I discovered on that trip that my childhood Ukraine had been a mirage; the real place was alien and poor, full of real people with complex lives. In it, I was a strange misfit speaking an archaic dialect imprinted with distance and yet, I wept at leaving.

As an American teenager, I staged a rebellion against things Ukrainian-American, and reoriented my interests toward Ukraine. I started to travel there on a near annual basis. After graduating from high school in 1999, I spent three months exploring the country, a trip that broadened my eyes to the regional diversity of the country. It was on this journey that I first encountered Hutsul music in the village of Rakhiv, and that I first learned about the Crimean Tatar community fighting to re-establish itself in Crimea. I also got acquainted with a team of young ethnomusicologists based in L'viv, joining them for an ill-fortuned expedition into villages in the Bukovina region, a trip that was cut short by rains that flooded out our fieldsite, but that gave me my first taste of Ukrainian ethnomusicology. From 1999 onward, I returned to Ukraine frequently. As my social network expanded, I keyed into the ways that people talked about "Europe" aspirationally.¹⁷ When the Western Ukrainian pop star Ruslana won the Eurovision Song Contest with a song called "*Wild Dances*," I marveled at the fact that the first internationally viable Ukrainian pop music sourced the Hutsuls for its sound. On return trips to

¹⁷ When the Orange Revolution overturned the corrupt presidential election in 2004 in favor of the reform-minded Yushchenko, I bought into the optimistic spirit of that time, much of which circulated around the idea that Ukraine would now "go towards Europe." After the disenchantment of Yushchenko's regime, I followed the circus-like charade of Ukrainian politics that brought Yanukovich, the same candidate who had failed to steal the election in 2004, to the presidency in 2010.

Crimea, I witnessed as the tourist industry grew ever more bold in hawking “exotic” Crimean Tatar luxuries to visitors, even as Crimean Tatars themselves seemed to remain largely invisible in positions of power. By the time I came to do dissertation fieldwork in 2008-9, I had a wide network of contacts in Western Ukraine, and a firm commitment towards getting to know Crimea better.

Over the course of eighteen months in 2008-9, I traveled between several field sites — Simferopol and Bakhchisaray in Crimea; Verkhovyna, Rakhiv and L’viv in Western Ukraine — timing my arrivals and departures to coincide with key ritual and festival events in both communities. In the Carpathians and Crimea, people who knew me well would often refer to me as “*nasha Amerykanka*” (“*our American*”), or as “from America, but really ours.”¹⁸ At times, my interventions in host communities were more disruptive than cold analytical models of ethnographic observation would allow. Since people knew me as a musician as well as an ethnographer, I was often (spontaneously) called to perform at community celebrations such as weddings in both Crimea and the Carpathians — I once sang a traditional Crimean Tatar song for a bride and groom as revelers danced around me at a wedding palace outside of Bakhchisaray, and toasted a young Hutsul couple at their wedding dinner in English, at their request. On occasion, I would induce musical encounters, an ability that was greatly facilitated by the fact that, in the summer of 2008, I bought myself a used Austrian Mazda.

My beat-up white 1991-vintage vehicle featured in more than one wedding caravan in 2008-9; occasionally, it charged me with a good deal of responsibility, including a nerve-racking

¹⁸ The Slavic languages are particularly agile in expressing tenderness through diminutives. In Ukraine, I have had many names: In Western Ukraine, I was addressed most commonly as *Marusia*, a female diminutive of Maria that rings of rurality or quaintness to many Ukrainian urbanites, and that was my family name growing up in the United States (where I had no idea of such rural connotations). Often, Western Ukrainians would also call me *Marichka*, another popular diminutive form. In Crimea, I was *Maria* or, in the Crimean Tatar community, sometimes the Turkic diminutive *Meriem*; rarely, I was addressed as *Masha*, a common Russian diminutive of my given name.

midsummer Crimean escapade during which I raced to deliver a buttercream-frosted wedding cake from Simferopol to a nearby village refrigerator before it melted onto my friend. In Crimea, I was able to drive an elder Imam from a village near Dzhankoj to his family's home for an afternoon of religious songs and reminiscences (that day, I drove back to Simferopol with a trunk full of cabbages that the family had given me as a token of gratitude). In the Carpathians, I recorded the *spivanky* (Hutsul-style songs) of a woman in Verkhovyna, played them for the fiddler Mykhailo Tafiychuk in a village forty minutes drive away, and, at his wish, recorded him playing violin accompaniments to her solo voice through my laptop recording program and microphone.¹⁹ Such encounters were not premeditated but rather born out of the daily flow of life in these places; often, such interventions were rich with the kinds of insights that spring from sustained ethnographic research. So, while conducting research in two far-flung sites to which I had very different personal relationships presented numerous logistical and intellectual hurdles, it has also been an exhilarating challenge, both at the fieldwork stage and now, as I assemble these diverse and deep experiences during the writing process.

Textualities and Methodologies of this Work

While writing this musical ethnography, I have grappled with how to frame each chapter, realizing that only a slim slice of all of the stories, encounters, history, and ethnographic precedents of this work can be included. In his 1983 article, "On Ethnographic Authority," James Clifford examines various historical and emergent models of ethnography that display different attitudes towards ethnographic authority. He frames his analysis around the provocative question "How, precisely, is a garrulous, overdetermined, cross cultural encounter shot through with

¹⁹ In the field, I sometimes carried my laptop (outfitted with the basic Apple recording program GarageBand) and a Blue USB microphone to facilitate such recording experiences. Most often, however, I traveled with a Zoom H4 digital audio recorder.

power relations and personal cross purposes circumscribed as an adequate version of a more-or-less discrete ‘other world,’ composed by an individual author?” (Clifford 1983: 120). Writing ethnography inevitably calls on the writer to edit, filter, systematize, and select information to protect those who originally uttered it, as well as to make coherent arguments out of lives that are rife with intricacies. As an attempt to balance this work, I include a diversity of textualities and methodologies: each chapter includes a synthesis of the tight-focus ethnographic eye, contextualized through archival materials and historical records, and framed by theoretical questions that resonate with the concerns of my scholarly generation of ethnomusicologists in the Western academy. I confess to some hand-wringing about how those I am writing about will receive this work; there seems to be no way out from “othering” them by fixing them in a static text, or by situating their words in the context of an intellectual question that they could not have anticipated. My worry abates when I convince myself that this work is written in good faith, and that this work does provide a forum for these voices, even if mediated through my writing and representation.

Throughout this work, and especially in the two chapters that focus on historical discourses and traditional music, I integrate official and ethnographic forms of knowledge. The principal question of this dissertation, however, stems from ethnography: in the course of repeated visits and research trips to Ukraine, through insights gleaned in numerous interviews, informal interactions, and in everyday ways of speaking and making sense of the world, I accrued an archive of stories that generated a repertoire of questions that germinate, fundamentally, out of unofficial histories. In 1991, Vaclav Havel observed that, in totalitarian systems, “the center of power is identical with the center of truth” (cited in Buchanan 1995: 393). And so, in asking how the major events history cut across real people’s lives, we can access the ways in which local

truths test hegemonic, dominant conceptions of truth (Yurchak 2006). As an attempt to reinterpret dominant conceptions of social reality by focusing on local forms of knowledge, this work assesses how marginalized groups talk back to dominant ideologies of exoticism that have been imposed on them largely through “official” channels.

As a gesture to these local forms of knowledge, I have rooted each chapter in an ethnographically-derived question, introduced by an extended ethnographic vignette. Each chapter adheres to a form that resembles an inverse hourglass: beginning with a substantial ethnographic vignette, expanding into a broader scholarly-theoretical frame, and then narrowing back into ethnographic examples that resonate with the theoretical frame of the chapter. In each chapter, I have chosen ethnographic examples that display a diversity of local “truths” — examples that may partially contradict each other, talk past each other, and also validate each other.

Chapters one and two make up Part I of this dissertation and are concerned with “traditional” musics and historical discourses. Chapter one, *“Real Hutsul:” Stereotypes of the Natural and the Supernatural in Traditional Hutsul Music*, centers on entrenched socio-historical stereotypes of Hutsul wildness. I examine the ways in which such stereotypes persist today as external and internal forms of representation. Musically, I assess how these stereotypes connect to traditional musical practices and ideas about “realness.” The chapter reviews both outsider and native ethnographic and historical texts, literary and filmic representations of Hutsul superstitions. The ethnographic content of this chapter focuses on the Rakhiv Hutsul Orchestra — a Soviet-era institution that continues on today — and contemporary traditional musical practitioners, including the shaman Mykhailo Nechay and the Tafiychuk family from Velykyj Bukovets.

Chapter two, *Ey, Güzel Qirim! : Memory, “Homeland,” and Crimean Tatar Traditional Music*, is a close cousin to the first chapter. Focusing on traditional Crimean Tatar music, I examine how memory practices have contributed to the formation of modern Crimean Tatar conceptions of self and other, contextualized within the history of exile, deportation, and return, as well as the historical orientalist variations of the stereotype of Crimean Tatar otherness. The chapter interprets these memory practices through the institutional history of the Soviet-era ensemble *Qaytarma* and close textual readings of several important songs from distinct historical eras. The chapter also presents current debates about the utility and role of traditional music practices among Crimean Tatar returnees, especially centering on the published exchange of Fevzi Aliev and Server Kakura, two prominent Simferopol-based musicians.

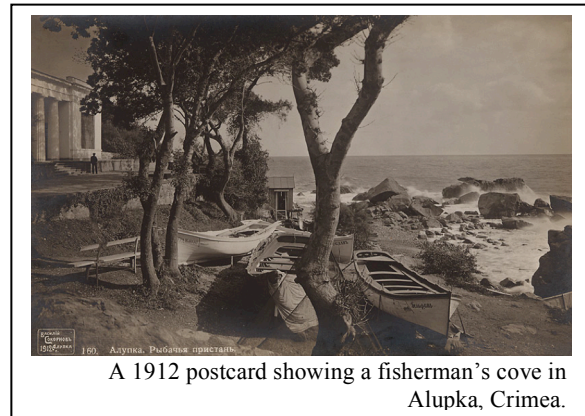
Part II (Popular Music, Markets, and Hybridities) addresses how Hutsuls are *being* represented in contemporary music by urban Ukrainian popular musicians (chapter three); chapter four demonstrates how Crimean Tatar musicians in Simferopol are *representing themselves* through hybrid expressions. Chapter three, *Marketing the New European Exotic: Wildness in Ukrainian Popular Music*, shows how contemporary urban Ukrainian popular musicians have been fusing hybrid Hutsul-inflected musics under the marketing banner of “wildness.” I provide three musical examples spanning three fusion genres: Perkalaba, a Hutsul-punk band; Banda Arkan, a DJ-led trance project; and Ruslana, the Eurovision-winning pop star. Chapter four, *Radio Simferopol: Strategic Exoticism and Crimean Tatar Popular Music*, asks how contemporary Crimean Tatar popular musicians absorb and deploy internal/external, local/global influences in crafting musics that aspire beyond their locality. The chapter demonstrates how a local radio station, *Radio Meydan*, transformed the climate for popular music in Simferopol, and introduces three groups of performers that forge aspirational Crimean

Tatar popular music: *Sel'sebil*, a violin ensemble affiliated with the local University; DJ Bebek, a pioneering Crimean Tatar hip-hop artist; and Enver and Leniye Izmailov, a father-daughter team of self-described “world musicians.”

Before leading into the case studies that make up the remainder of this work, I wish to address one last crucial and complex question that readers familiar with the diversity of exoticized groups in Ukraine may still be asking; the question of why I chose to focus this work particularly on *these* two disparate groups. In the following section, I present a synthesized response to the question, “why these two groups?” and a more substantial introduction to each group on its own terms.

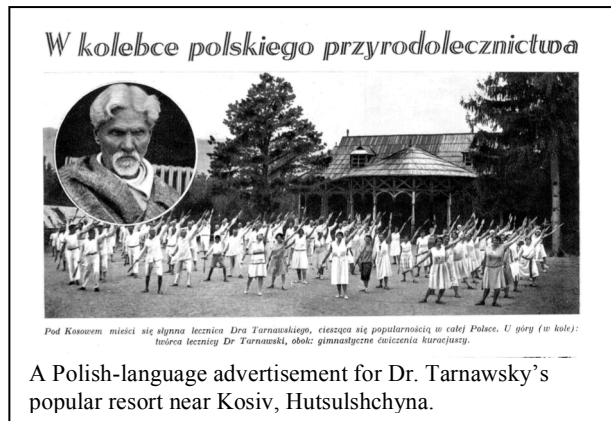
The Map of Ukrainian Exotica on the Mind of the Ethnographer

Crimean Tatars and Hutsuls are certainly not the only groups in Ukraine to bear a history of “wildness.” My reason for choosing to focus on these two groups rather than Jews, Roma, Armenians, Greeks, Chinese, Ugandans, or other groups stereotyped as “other” in Ukraine rests on the following key factors that I will expound on briefly: 1) tourism and the urban literary



A 1912 postcard showing a fisherman's cove in Alupka, Crimea.

imagination; 2) Ukrainian histories of occupation and shifting borders; 3) contemporary Ukrainian citizenship; 4) modern discourses of territorialized ethnicity and indigeneity. With these categories in mind, groups such as the Roma and Jews who do not claim Ukraine as their ancestral homeland fall off (as do all other minorities that claim a different homeland — Bulgarians, Armenians, Greeks, etc). Recent immigrants to Ukraine, such as Ugandan or Chinese



populations, do not have the historical longevity that my diachronic study of traditional music



demanded.²⁰

Crimean Tatars and Hutsuls share a few important key attributes in all of the above four categories: both groups have loomed large in the romantic imaginations of dominant regimes, enshrined in poetry (as in the famous example of Pushkin's rhapsodic Crimean poems), and literature (Kostiubynsky's iconic novel of the Hutsuls, *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors*, which was made into a renowned film in the Soviet 1960s is another prominent example). Since the 18th century, tourism has been a large factor in both the Carpathians and Crimea: "Because of the abundance of mineral springs, a healthy climate, and natural beauty, the Carpathians are the main resort and recreation area in Ukraine after the Crimea" (Kubijovyc 1988a: 373). In the era of globalization, when the touristic gaze has undergone some "momentous reconfigurations" due to the rise of technologies such as the internet, mobile phones, and the expansion of global air travel, both Crimea and Hutsulshchyna have grown to meet the demands of contemporary tourism, "staging authenticity" for tourists in the guise of cuisine, accommodations, performances, museums, etc (Urry 2001).

Since 1954, when Crimea was ceremoniously transferred from the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic by Khrushchev on the occasion of 300 years of friendship between the Russian and Ukrainian peoples, both of the

²⁰ Adriana Helbig has recently been working on the music of African migrants in Ukraine (Helbig 2008).

territories inhabited by these groups have fallen on the borders of Ukraine.²¹ Previously, both territories had been occupied by numerous colonial regimes.²² Since the 1990s, both Crimean Tatar returnees to Crimea and Hutsuls in Hutsulshchyna have possessed Ukrainian citizenship. Hutsuls and Crimean Tatars have both been overwhelming supporters for democratic reform and civil society building in contemporary Ukraine. For the Crimean Tatars, such a pro-Ukrainian position has added to interethnic tensions in overwhelmingly pro-Russian Crimea, which is controlled by an autonomous Crimean Parliament that has strongly opposed Ukraine's bids for the European Union and NATO — many Crimean Tatars will point out that they were they only people waving orange flags in Simferopol's Lenin Square during the 2004 Orange Revolution. The Hutsul support of Yushchenko in 2004 fell in line with Western Ukrainian nationalist tendencies; in 2008-9, some public spaces in the Carpathian Mountains were still adorned with tattered orange ribbons.

Within Ukraine, Crimean Tatars and Hutsuls have identities premised on the concept of “territorialized ethnicity.” This place-based identity is an outgrowth of the influential 1930s Soviet anthropological formulation of *ethnos*, which posits ethnic groups as the inheritors of a specific “homeland,” a formulation that reifies the relation between a group of people and their territory. Throughout this work, I employ a variety of terms to reference Hutsuls and Crimean Tatars as distinct and relatively finite collectivities. Of necessity, such terms indicate various aspects of the collective's social structure or political status. At times, I have privileged the term *ethnos* to identify each community. Such terminology bears specific meanings in the history of early Soviet ethnography, and it has resurfaced in the post-Soviet era as a popular term, often laden with pseudo-science, that gets deployed when questions of racial, regional or national

²¹ In 1945, the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, emptied of Crimean Tatars, was abolished and transferred to the Russian SFSR.

²² I go into the specifics of each territory's complex history of occupation in chapters one and two, respectively.

purity arise. Here, I offer a brief genealogy of the terms that I most frequently use and the ethnographically grounded justification for privileging certain terms over others.

Ethnos, *Narod*, Ethnic Group, and Ethnographic Group

To understand this particular branch of terminology we must first return to Stalin's formulation of *narod* (rendered in English alternately as nation, nationality, or "people"), introduced in 1913 in *Marxism and the National Question*, a text that eventually led the ambitious young Bolshevik to a post as the People's Commissar of Nationalities from 1917-1923. Stalin's definition "dominated...the literature concerning the totality of ethnic phenomena" in the Soviet Union into the 1960s (Bromley 1989: 425):

A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture.

It goes without saying that a nation, like every historical phenomenon, is subject to the law of change, has its history, its beginning and end.

It must be emphasized that none of the above characteristics taken separately is sufficient to define a nation. More than that, it is sufficient for a single one of these characteristics to be lacking and the nation ceases to be a nation.

It is possible to conceive of people possessing a common "national character" who, nevertheless, cannot be said to constitute a single nation if they are economically disunited, inhabit different territories, speak different languages, and so forth...

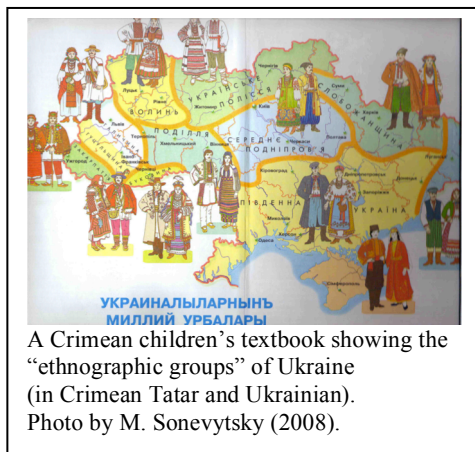
It is therefore clear that there is in fact no single distinguishing characteristic of a nation. There is only a sum total of characteristics, of which, when nations are compared, sometimes one characteristic (national character), sometimes another (language), or sometimes a third (territory, economic conditions), stands out in sharper relief. A nation constitutes the combination of all these characteristics taken together (Stalin 1913).

In a careful reasoning and refutation of other definitions of nation, Stalin highlights the difference between "*nation*, which is a historical category" and "*tribe*, which is an ethnographical category." This distinction between historical and ethnographical constructions of ethnic communities became crucial in the development of Soviet social scientific definitions of communal entities. Eventually, Soviet ethnographers and ethnologists elaborated the concept of

ethnos to encompass the distinction between *nation* and *tribe*, which were considered “as distinct subtypes of ethnic community” (Bromley 1989: 425). Starting in the 1960s, Soviet scholars took up the problem of defining *nation* once again, which led to the fleshing out of various new (and often polemical) theories of *ethnos*. During these debates ideas of “ethnic self-identity,” a group’s internal validation of external taxonomies became central. Concomitantly, the phenomena of ethnic communities absorbing and reproducing self- or ethnographically-enforced stereotypes came into question.

Beginning in the 1970s, Soviet and Western anthropologists occasionally exchanged views on *ethnos* theory versus “Western” concepts of *ethnicity*, seeking to unravel the ideology lurking behind terms that were presented as neutral. Such open dialogues were often characterized by the hostile or defensive overtones of Cold War rhetoric, and make for fascinating reading today (Gellner 1975; Artunian 1988; Bromley 1989). As these dialogues morphed into the 1990s, retrospective debates about the origins of these terms, their grounding in ethnographic versus empirical knowledge, and their relevance to the dramatic political upheavals that ended the Cold War characterized Soviet and Anglo-American debates about terms.

The Russian anthropologist Tishkov, who applies the terms *ethnos* and *ethnicity*



interchangeably, has argued that “the interpretation of ethnicity” falls into one of “three major approaches: primordialist, instrumental and constructivist” (Tishkov n/d: 1). Many prominent Soviet social scientists of the 1960s-1980s promoted the primordial view of *ethnos*, culminating in the controversial and influential extension

of the theory of *ethnos* introduced by Lev Gumilëv in the early 1970s. Though widely criticized

for its pseudo-scientific hypotheses, Gumilëv's book *Ethnogenesis and the Biosphere* became a best-seller in the late Soviet Union (Gumilëv 1990). (During my fieldwork, both Hutsuls and Crimean Tatars used terms such as *etnogeneza* and *pasionarnist* that were popularized by Gumilëv, and that I only later was able to trace to his work.) Gumilev's concept of *ethnogenesis* develops the idea of the ethnic community as both a *social* and *biological organism*, with a life cycle that originates and decays on a specific territory. The consolidation of the identity of the *ethnos* is catalyzed by *passionaries* with *passionary drive*, selfless leaders who energetically mobilize and solidify a collective's identity. Gumilev's theory has had a significant impact on native faith revivals in post-Soviet Ukraine, and has also had significant impact on discourses of ethnicity that are staked on territorial claims (Ivakhiv 2005b). The very notion of *etnogeneza*, a term coined by Soviet anthropologist L.V. Oshanin in 1938, has a distinct legacy in Soviet anthropology and geography that has been undertheorized by Western scholars (Bychkova Jordan 2003). Gumilev's broadening of the concept in the late Soviet period at once references the early Soviet anthropological projects of the 1920s and 1930s and the growing ecological concerns of the late Soviet period.

“Minority” or “Indigenous” Group?

The labels “minority” and “indigenous” are distinct from the above terms for their currency in political and legal (rather than ethnographic and social scientific) contexts. Both terms are borrowed from the lexicon of international human rights language, and both suffer from definitional problems in international as well as Ukraine-specific contexts. One key, though not universal, difference between “minority” and “indigenous” groups in the parlance of international political rhetoric is the territorial factor of indigeneity. Whereas in some

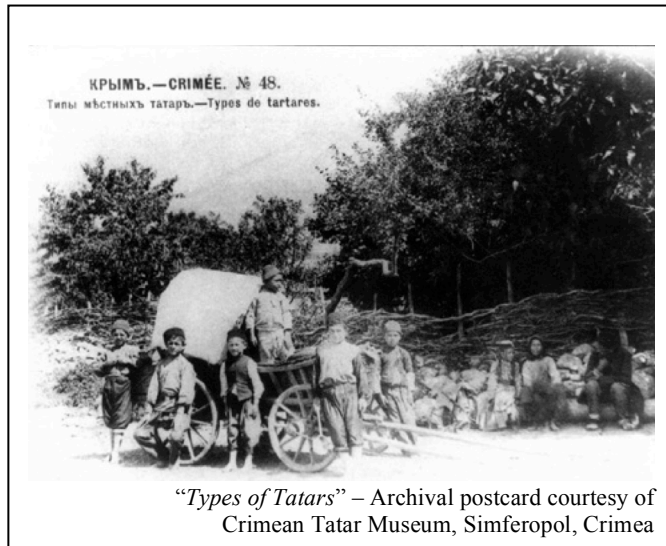
circumstances “minority” has been applied to migrants, women, and widely dispersed or nomadic communities, “indigenous groups” are generally defined by a claim on a specific land that pre-dates modern, colonial contact. Though institutions such as the United Nations, World Bank, and the International Labour Organization have taken up the problem of defining indigenous rights and creating a rubric for the protection of indigenous communities, no consensus on definitions has yet been reached (Aukerman 2000). The problem of minority rights has garnered slightly less attention in the international arena, but still, widespread efforts have been taken up, again with no consensus on definition. The problem of coming to consensus on a global definition that applies to such a diversity of specific situations and histories without over- or under- generalizing has stymied the enacting of legal provisions in the international arena. Furthermore, the relationship between the two categories of “indigenous” and “minority” have been repeatedly called into question, as Aukerman notes:

The contrast between the ways in which “indigenous people” and Central/East European “minorities” are defined and the ways in which their rights are justified highlights the lack of clear definitional boundary-lines, as well as the fact that such boundary-lines are linked to justifications for rights.... Indigenous peoples argue that they are sovereign nations with the right to self-determination and the preservation of their distinctive cultures. Non-discrimination—which is how minority rights are frequently defined in Western countries—fails to recognize that sovereignty or protect that uniqueness (Aukerman 2000: 1014, 1020).

This international institutional quagmire maps in many ways onto national debates about both indigenous and minority protections in post-Soviet Ukraine. Since 1991, the very nature of Ukrainian statehood, citizenship, and identity has been contested: multi-ethnic or multi-cultural, diverse or homogenous linguistically and religiously. With the post-Soviet influx of foreign aid and business, the growing population of migrants from Asia and Africa, and the rush of consumer items into a starved marketplace, a kleptocratic regime emerged that hardened class lines and forced the vast majority of Ukrainians into conditions of extreme poverty. Legally,

protections for all the groups that inherited Ukrainian citizenship were enacted in the post-Soviet climate, including the granting of automatic citizenship to Crimean Tatar repatriates.

The 1991 Declaration on the Rights of Nationalities in Ukraine and Article 11 of the 1996 Ukrainian Constitution enacted protections for minority and indigenous groups. The Constitution reads that "The state shall promote consolidation and development of the Ukrainian nation, its



historical consciousness, traditions and culture and encourage development of ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of all indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities of Ukraine,” but did not provide clear definitions of that constitutes “indigenous” or “ethnic minority” groups (Tyshchenko 2002). Such failures in basic

definitions continue to thwart the implementation of many policies regarding self-proclaimed minority or indigenous groups. Natalya Belitser has provided a comprehensive overview of the political struggles over “indigenous status” in Ukraine with reference to the Crimean Tatar repatriate community (Belitser 2002).

Who are the Crimean Tatars?

Crimean Tatars, a Sunni Muslim group that speaks a Turkic language, locate their nationality’s ethnogenesis in the 13th c. on the Crimean peninsula, a territory that has been an autonomous region of independent Ukraine since 1991.²³ Depicted as a “wild, bloodthirsty and barbarian”

²³ The term “Tatar” is a general term for any Turkic language Muslim minority groups that once inhabited the Russian Imperial lands. Greta Uehling (2004) compares the term to the North American label of “Indian,” which

threat to the Russian Empire, Crimean Tatars were forever considered a menace to the Imperial powers that considered themselves “civilized” and great “European” powers (Uehling 2004).

Williams writes that, “for much of their history the Crimean Tatars were, like Muslims and nomads, seen as Christian Europe’s ‘Other’ and were associated with both the dreaded Mongol nomads of Chingis Khan and the invading armies of the Ottoman Sultans with whom the Crimean Tatars



were allied” (Williams 2001: 329). In an article on *Ukrainian Multiculturalism and Principles of Tolerance*, Yulia Tyshchenko identified another persistent ethno-stereotype of the Crimean Tatars — as “traitors.” She argues that this characterization stems from the era of Catherine the Great’s annexation of Crimea, and was repurposed by the Soviets when they labeled the Crimean Tatars as “enemies of the people.”²⁴ However, as a testament to the severe discrepancy between

was used to generalize many disparate groups with little in common besides a claim to indigeneity on a specific territory.

²⁴ Tyshchenko’s analysis of the multicultural quagmire in Ukraine offers a lucid diagnosis of some persistent stereotypical slander of the Crimean Tatars: “The Crimean Tatars were deported from the territory of the Crimea under Stalin’s regime in 1944. Over 60 years of deportation, the Soviet power constantly introduced in social consciousness and maintained negative stereotypes towards the Crimean Tatars as “the people-traitor” - stereotypes that had been generated as long ago as in Tsarist Russia during annexation of the Crimea’s territory by Russian Empress Catherine the Great. Today, challenges of repatriation and integration of the Crimean Tatars are multiplied by problems of the economic reform (privatization of land) and their relations with power. As a result, certain events become a kind of a “hostage” of the political process, since some Ukrainian politicians attempt to build their political image on opposition of ethnic stereotypes and tension in relations of the Christian and Moslem worlds. These trends got more pronounced after September 11, especially in view of popularization of S. Huntington’s idea about conflict of cultures and civilizations. Except for image, political and economic challenges accompanying integration of the Crimean Tatars into the Ukrainian society, there are numerous cultural and educational problems. What matters is not only the topicality of revival of Crimean Tatar culture destroyed within the years of deportation (renewal of autochthonous toponomy and return of cultural values) but also the educational sphere. It is necessary to put an end to proliferation of old stereotypes of aggressive nature of Crimean Tatar culture toward the Slavs in school educational process because such attitude contributes to regular reproduction of ethnic prejudice in consciousness of new generations.... According to the “Non-Discrimination Review in Ukraine under the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe,” ethnic discrimination is based on existence of negative ethnic stereotypes proliferated also the sphere of education and affecting some national minorities and ethnic groups (the Roma, Jews, Crimean Tatars, immigrants from Asia, Africa and Caucasus). For instance, the textbook on history of Ukraine for the 7th class reads, “Brutal Tatars burst into the city and destroyed all its citizens. Only resistance of the heroic

dominant and local historical narratives, Crimean Tatars celebrate their independent Crimean Khanate (15th-18th centuries) as a Golden Age when some thirty ethnic groups on the territory of Crimea lived in peace and harmony, according to the policies of religious, linguistic and cultural tolerance enforced by the Crimean Khan (Allworth 1998).

A pivotal moment for Crimean Tatars came on May 18, 1944, when the entire population of Crimean Tatars – estimated at about a quarter of a million people – was brutally deported to Central Asia and the Urals under trumped up accusations about collaborating with the Nazis against the Soviet regime. (Drawing on old stereotypes about innate Crimean Tatar duplicity, the Soviet propaganda machine spread preposterous rumors that the Crimean Tatar traitors were horned, one-eyed, known for cannibalistic rituals.) Along the grueling two and three week journey during which they were held on cattle cars with no access to food or water, an estimated 40-60% of the population perished. Called a “humanitarian resettlement” by Soviet officials, the Crimean Tatars were scattered throughout “special settlements” where they were held until 1956 under a strict curfew regime that restricted their mobility and access to information.

Following the 20th Party Congress that released the various deported nationalities from their “special settlements” (and in many cases – though not the Crimean Tatar case – allowed them the right to return), Crimean Tatars clustered in the cities of Central Asia, especially in and around Tashkent, Uzbekistan. After their 1944 deportation and exile (known colloquially as the *Sürgün*), a Soviet resettlement campaign gave away Crimean Tatar homes and farms to loyal Soviet ethnic Russians and Ukrainians, the majority of whom still control the political establishment of the Crimean Autonomous Republic. Beginning in the 1960s, the Crimean Tatars launched the most sustained and successful non-violent human rights campaign in the former

Ukrainians liberated East-European peoples and the whole East-European civilization." The part of the textbook dedicated to foundation of the Crimean Khanate (less than 60 lines!) is full of negative remarks about the Tatars and Crimean Tatars and depicts the Khanate's foundation as jeopardy to Ukrainian lands” (Tyshchenko 2002).

Soviet Union, spearheaded by protestors such as Mustafa Jemilev, the current chairman of the Crimean Tatar *mejlis* (the representative body that is considered illegal by the Crimean Autonomous Parliament), and eventually taken on by international dissident figures such as the Ukrainian ex-Red Army General Petro Grigorenko.²⁵ After over half a century in exile, the Crimean Tatars' right of return was granted in 1987. Since then, an estimated 300,000 Crimean Tatars have returned to their historical homeland.²⁶ The stated non-violence of their movement to restore the right of return remains a central tenet of the Crimean Tatar community today.

In the economic chaos of the 1990s, facing rampant discrimination, many Crimean Tatars began to seize land plots on formerly communal lands in the outskirts of cities and towns. Such acts fueled anti-Tatar stereotypes as avaricious land-grabbers, and localized flares of inter-ethnic violence erupted in the 1990s. Stories of school-aged returnees often include tales of letting their Slavic classmates search their heads for horns, to disabuse the old Soviet rumors that Crimean Tatars were, in fact, horned “wild Mongols” (interview, anon., May 14, 2008). As staunch supporters of independent Ukrainian statehood for strategic reasons, the Crimean Tatars have been the strongest opponents to the Crimean secession schemes favored by many Russian nationalists, a majority of whom control the Crimean Autonomous Republic's parliament.

A long-term goal of the Crimean Tatar political agenda is to be recognized as an “indigenous group” (корінний народ) on the territory of contemporary Ukraine – a designation that would entitle the Crimean Tatars to certain privileges according to international human

²⁵ Grigorenko was a General in the Red Army who, after speaking out against Khrushchev's policies, was incarcerated in mental institutions starting in 1964 (with a wrongful diagnosis of “paranoid schizophrenia”). In 1968, he gave a galvanizing speech to Crimean Tatar activists (excerpted in part at <http://www.iccrimea.org/surgun/grigorenko.html>, accessed December 10, 2010). Grigorenko championed the Crimean Tatar cause and aggravated for their right to return until his death in New York in 1987.

²⁶ Reliable statistics on the number of returnees can be difficult to trace. In 2002, Tyshchenko wrote that the “mass return of the previously deported Crimean Tatar people to Ukraine continues. Nowadays, the Crimean Tatars constitute 12.1% of the Crimean population. The number of the Crimean Tatars on the peninsula increased by 6.4 times compared to 1989 (Tyshchenko 2002).

rights protocols on the rights of indigenous peoples, including the right to self-determination (which would make the *mejlis*, the Crimean Tatar representative body currently considered illegitimate by the Crimean government, legal), an official status for the Crimean Tatar language, a guarantee for certain land rights, and greater state support for Crimean Tatar language media and cultural organizations (UN 2008).²⁷ Achieving such status rests in large part on the ability of a unified community to vigorously push forward a unified agenda and fight against assimilation in Russian language and culture-dominated Crimea. Acquiring such protections would also protect some Crimean lands for indigenous peoples; since the influx of foreign capital (especially from Russia) has swept through Crimea, some Crimean Tatars consider Russian businessmen to represent the vanguard in the “third generation of colonialism — the buying up of private enterprise,” as Mustafa Jemilev told me (interview, 11/19/2008).

For the reasons enumerated above, public and private dialogues about appropriate uses of cultural heritage — including and especially music — are a vibrant part of musical discourse for

²⁷ Crimean Tatars count themselves as the largest of three indigenous groups in Crimea. The other two groups, the *Karaimy* and the *Krymchaky*, are much smaller in population and did not suffer the same history of deportation as the Crimean Tatars. Based in Simferopol and headed by Nadir Bekir, a politician who opposed the Crimean Tatar *mejlis*, the NGO called the “Foundation for Research and Support of the Indigenous Peoples of Crimea” works to protect the rights of all three indigenous groups in Crimea and has represented Crimean peoples as the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (an advisory body to ECOSOC) in New York City. According to Gulnara Abbasova, a young Crimean Tatar human rights activist who has represented the Crimean indigenous peoples at the UN, “there are several core principles when it comes to defining “indigenusness” (though there is no internationally accepted definition, there are “working definitions” developed through UN-commissioned studies). The major aspect is self-identification. Others are link to lands and territories prior to colonization/occupation, common language, culture, identity, political structures (characteristics of a nation) that the people wants to preserve and develop, etc. After self-identification, there is recognition by the global indigenous caucus. It's not a registered body or organization, it also doesn't give a stamped paper saying a group is indeed indigenous (in fact, no one can do that). The caucus unites indigenous peoples representatives and indigenous peoples organizations from around the world who participate in international processes on indigenous peoples' rights and issues. It's like a voice for the global indigenous movement.... We joined the international processes quite late. In the mid-90s. Way later than many indigenous peoples did, like Aborigines, Maori, North American first nations, Saamis, and some others. So in the beginning it took us some time to introduce ourselves, and indigenous caucus was very patient in listening to what we had to say, and who we were. The whole area of the former Soviet Union was a huge mystery for everyone. So the recognition by the caucus is inclusion. And Crimean Tatars are recognised as indigenous by the global caucus” (personal e-mail communication, Feb 20, 2011). Abbasova goes on to explain that, while there has been no opposition in the international community to Crimean Tatar claims on indigeneity, there are oppositional voices within Crimea, “when we hear politicians saying that their fathers have been living here all their lives so they are also indigenous.”

Crimean Tatars in Crimea today. Efforts to reconstruct pre-deportation “authentic” music often go hand in hand with admonishments to young musicians attempting to fuse some global popular music genre (like hip-hop, rock or reggae) with Crimean Tatar elements. Debates about performance practices (such as lip synching, costumes, melodic ornamentation) are a substantive topic of discussion among Crimean Tatar musicians. Among the young generation of musicians, the desire to participate in the global music market – expressed by some as an attempt to “break out” from the Crimean Tatar community, which also justifies the use of Russian language lyrics in some cases – forms an uneasy pact with a deeply felt debt to elders who instill a strong connection to tradition. Furthermore, as I address in chapter four, the self-reflexive positioning of many Crimean Tatar musicians vis-a-vis entrenched discourses of “wildness” has set many aspirational artists on a path of “strategic exoticism” — knowingly drawing upon the modishness of “Eastern-ness” and marketing it for “Europe.”

Who are the Hutsuls?

It is wartime, soldiers fall into German captivity. The Germans ask their captives, *who are you?* One of them is a Russian - *Oh, a Communist, shoot him.* They ask the next, *who are you?* A Jew. *Shoot him.* They ask the third one - *Khokhol* [pejorative for peasant Ukrainian] - *Send him to work.* They ask the fourth one, *who are you?* A Hutsul. *Shoot him!* The Hutsul yells, *Yoy-yoy, don't shoot! I'm the same as the Khokhol, just wild!*²⁸

- A popular anecdote told in Hutsulshchyna



Wedding photo, 1970s.

The Hutsuls are mountaineers who inhabit the southeasternmost corridor of the Carpathian Mountains known as Hutsulshchyna.

The region comprises parts of Galicia, Bukovyna, and

²⁸ I received this anecdote in an e-mail from my friend Oksana Susyak on Nov 2, 2009. Here it is in the original Ukrainian: “Війна, попали в німецький полон. Німці запитують у полонених: хто такий? Один з них росіянин - а, комуніст-розстріляти, у другого : хто такий? єврей -Розстріляти, у третього запитують - хохол- на роботу, в четвертого запитують, хто такий -гуцул- розстріляти, а він кричить: йой-йой не стріляйте, я такий самий хохол, тільки дикий!”

Transcarpathia, and is located between the Prut and Cheremosh rivers and the northern reaches of the Tysa, Suchava, and Seret rivers ("Hutsulshchyna" -). The eastern Carpathians are home to three Ukrainian ethnographic groups: the Lemkos, the Boikos, and the Hutsuls. The Hutsuls are the easternmost group, and the only one of the three for which animal husbandry - especially sheep herding - was the traditional primary occupation. Because of the demands for pastures and hayfields, "their homesteads are attached to their fields; hence, their settlements are scattered and extend to considerable altitudes" (Kubijovyc 1988a: 371). Though traditional ways of life began eroding in the Soviet era, considerable numbers of Hutsuls continue to live in the high mountains and maintain a herding lifestyle. The forest is another important source of sustenance for Hutsuls, who harvest berries and mushroom for export. In the late 19th century, narrow-gauge railroads were constructed in many mountain areas to facilitate the logging industry. Under the Soviets, logging in the Carpathians became a major industry, producing 60 percent of all the lumber in Soviet Ukraine, despite being host to only 22% of the lumber in the USSR (373). The Soviet lumber industry resulted in a massive and threatening deforestation of the mountains, and post-Soviet attempts at conservation and reforestation exist, but to insufficient extent.

The Hutsul language is generally accepted to be a dialect of Ukrainian, with loan words from diverse linguistic families that neighbor the region, especially Hungarian (a Finno-Ugric language), Romanian (a Romance language), and Polish (like Ukrainian, a Slavic language).²⁹ The *starovitzkij* [old world] Hutsul dialect was recorded in 19th century ethnographies (both native and outsider) (Shekeryk-Donykiv 2009; Shukhevych 1899/1997). It is still spoken today, especially among high mountain dwellers, and Hutsuls who consciously battle against its dying out. In 2007, a Kyivan press published a Hutsul phrase-book compiled by villagers from

²⁹ For a comprehensive overview of the lexical and vowel-shift peculiarities in the Hutsul dialect, see Janow's lexical atlas (Rieger 1996) or Horbach's article in the *Encyclopedia of Ukraine* (Horbach 1988).

Verkhovyna and Kryvorivnia with over 220 terms that are translated into Ukrainian, Russian, and Polish (Zelenchuk 2007a).

In the language of post-Soviet Ukrainian anthropology, Hutsuls are most often labeled as an “ethnographic group” or (borrowing from earlier models of Soviet anthropology), an *ethnos*. The *Encyclopedia of Ukraine* provides the following demographics for the ethnic makeup of *Hutsulshchyna*

In 1939 the population of the Hutsul region consisted of Ukrainians (89 percent), Jews (7.5 percent), Poles (in Galicia, 2 percent), Romanians (in Bukovyna, 0.5 percent), and Czechs (in Transcarpathia, 1 percent). Armenians, who at one time played an important economic role in the region, Germans, Hungarians, and Gypsies accounted for a tiny fraction of the population; the latter concentrated in the small towns and the resort centers of the Prut River valley and disappeared almost completely by the end of the Second World War. Ninety-five percent of the population is rural, and only the small towns of Verkhovyna (formerly Zhabie), Rakhiv, Yasinia, Putyliv, Vorokhta, and Yaremche lie within the region proper; the last two are important resort centers in the Prut River valley.

Such straightforward demographics, however, are problematized by Hutsuls themselves. Due to the shifting borders that characterized the borderland region of Hutsulshchyna, some Hutsul villages today lie in present-day Romania. The *Encyclopedia of Ukraine* (1989) listed eight Romanian Hutsul villages, while Domashevskiy identified 25 (Domashevskiy 2001: 528).



A Hutsul couple – archival image from Oksana Susyak

Furthermore, the national identity of the Hutsuls and other Carpathian indigenes has been complicated by the work of scholars such as Magocsi, who advocate for a different (non-Ukrainian) Carpathian nationality rooted in *Rusyn* or *Ruthenian* identity that encompasses what is today eastern Slovakia parts of northern Romania (*Encyclopedia of Rusyn History and Culture* 2002; Magocsi 1978, 1996). (While I did encounter some self-

identified Rusyns during my fieldwork, the vast majority of Hutsuls I interviewed identified

strongly as Ukrainians, sometimes in addition to identifying as Rusyns.) A current tourist website based in the Hutsul resort town of Kosiv further emphasizes disagreements about how many Hutsuls there are and where they are found:

Volodymyr Shukhevych, for example, in his work «Hutsulshchyna» confirms, that in 1880 there were 54,634 Hutsuls, in 1890 — 63,265 people. Practically at the same time Yakiv Holovatskyi, 1872–1874, counted 68 villages in Halychyni, on Bukovyni — 20, on Zakarpatti — 21 Hutsul villages with 107,610 inhabitants. Lately, once more, there were censuses taken in different territories of Hutsulshchyna and statistical attempts to generalize, but there is no clear picture of the whole ethnographic territory [sic]. (<http://www.kosivart.com/eng/index.cfm/do/hutsulshchyna.history-borders>, accessed January 11, 2011)

As I found during my fieldwork, much about Hutsul identity is contested: in addition to demographics, the borders of Hutsulshchyna, the nature of the Hutsul group, and the origin of the name are subject to debate. Amato corroborates this by pointing out that the “essence of Hutsulness has been – and remains – nebulous. Mountaineers are not separated from lowland peasants by language or religion. They are not a clan: they claim no common ancestor. Like their highland neighbors, the Lemkos and the Boikos, the Hutsuls have been referred to as a ‘tribe,’ but they do not have their own leadership nor have they ever formed a political unit (Amato 1998: 17). Indeed, as I examine in chapter 1, the self-regulation of affiliation - who is a “real Hutsul” - is a frequent topic of conversation. In many instances, Hutsuls would half-jokingly inform me that I had just wasted my time talking to so-and-so from a different village because they were “actually Boikos” [the neighboring highlander *ethnos*], Romanians, or descended from Gypsies. Such half-serious comments on authentic *Hutsulness* are woven throughout my interviews and field journals and form a substantive part of my analysis in chapter one.

Despite such hazy discourses of affiliation among Hutsul villagers, stereotypes of Hutsuls are codified through the language of *anekdoty* [anecdotes] — such as the joke retold above — as well as novelistic representation. Such stereotypes have circulated widely in Ukraine and Eastern

Europe and are deeply entrenched in historical and ethnographic records.³⁰ Petro Shekeryk-Donykiv (b. 1899), a Hutsul native ethnographer from the village of Holove, traveled during his army service and observed that outsider perceptions of Hutsuls were predominantly negative, adhering to the stereotype that “Hutsuls are dark savages [*temna dych*] prone to fighting and drunkenness” (Shekeryk-Donykiv 2009: 110). Amato reports that:

Prior to the turn of the century, the term “Hutsul” belonged more to observers and outsider than to peasants, and it was routinely applied even to mountaineers who did not use the word to identify themselves. The name “Hutsul” was infused with “gentlemen’s” disdain for the coarse and uneducated, “city folk’s” contempt for peasants, and lowlanders’ scorn for poorer highlanders. In the nineteenth century, many mountaineers took exception to the name “Hutsul,” treating it as a pejorative like “bumpkin” or “hillbilly” (Amato 1998: 19).

As an outsider term applied to label the group, the very word *Hutsul* has numerous viable origin stories, some of which are derogatory:

According to K. Milewski and Józef Korzeniowski, the name *hutsul* was originally *kochul* (‘nomad,’ cf literary Ukrainian *kochovyk*), which became *kotsul* and then *hotsul*, and referred to inhabitants of Kyivan Rus’ who fled from the Mongol invasion into the Carpathian Mountains. Other scholars (eg., Ivan Vahylevych) believed that the name derives from a subtribe of the Cumans or Pechenegs—the ancient Turkic Utsians or Uzians—who fled from the Mongols into the mountains. S. Vytvytsky proposed that the name derives from Hetsylo, the brother of Prince Rostislav of Moravia, or from the name of a tribe allied with the Ostrogoths—the Horulians-Hutsians. Since the 19th century the most widely accepted view (held by Yakiv Holovatsky, Omelian Kaluzhniatsky, Omelian

³⁰ The most comprehensive list of studies about Hutsuls that I have found is in the *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*: “The earliest studies of the region and its inhabitants were written in the 1790s by Baltazar Hacquet, professor of Lviv University, and in the first half of the 19th century by Ivan Vahylevych, Yakiv Holovatsky, and such Polish scholars as K. Milewski, Kazimierz Władysław Wójcicki, A. Bielowski, I. Czerwiński, S. Staszic, and Wincenty Pol. Since the second half of the 19th century much research on the history, Hutsul dialect, folklore, and ethnography of the region has been produced by Ukrainian (Holovatsky, Ivan Franko, Volodymyr Hnatiuk (Hnatiuk 1917), S. Vytvytsky, Omelian Ohonovsky, Fedor Vovk (Vovk 1906), Antin Onyshchuk, Filaret Kolessa, Ivan Verkhratsky, Volodymyr Kobrynsky, Ivan Krypiakievych, R. Harasymchuk, Volodymyr Shukhevych (Shukhevych 1899 (1997)), Volodymyr Kubijovyč (V. and N. Pavliuc Kubijovyc 1988b), Oleksa Horbach and Anna Halyna Horbach (Horbach 1988), and others), Polish (J. Turczyński, Oskar Kolberg, Adam Kirkor, Izydor Kopernicki, K. Kosiński, and others), Czech (Jiří Král, D. Krandžalov, J. Podolák), Russian (P. Bogatyrev), German (Raimund Friedrich Kaindl), Romanian (I. Pătruț), and Hungarian (B. Gunda) scholars. The region has also served as the subject or setting of many literary works, notably those by Yurii Fedkovych, Hnat Khotkevych, Lesia Ukrainka, Vasyl Stefanyk, Marko Cheremshyna, Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky, Olha Kobylinska, Petro Shekeryk-Donykiv, Mykhailo Lomatsky, Ulas Samchuk, Vasyl Grendzha-Donsky, Józef Korzeniowski, Stanisław Vincenz, and Z. Kuděj” (V. and N. Pavliuc Kubijovyc 1988b). Recently, Maria Lavruk has written a comprehensive Ukrainian-language ethnography as well (Lavruk 2005)

Ohonovsky, Ivan Krypiakevych, Volodymyr Hnatiuk, I. Pătruț, and others) has been that the name comes from the Rumanian word for brigand, *hoțul/hoț*. The Soviet scholar Bronyslav Kobylansky claimed that the Hutsuls are descended from the Slavic tribe of the Ulychians who resettled in the Carpathian Mountains. Based on the first written mention of the name (1816), Stefan Hrabec and Volodymyr Hrabovetsky believe the name is of recent origin and that it was originally a nickname given to the region's inhabitants by the neighboring Boikos (online *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, "Hutsuls," accessed January 11, 2011).³¹

Most people agree, however, that Hutsuls were peasants who fled from serfdom and protected themselves by living in remote mountain locations. According to the *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, "By the mid-19th century there were over 100 Hutsul villages and 10 noble-owned towns in the region" (online *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, "Hutsuls," accessed January 11, 2011). William Noll has written that the formation of national consciousness among many Ukrainian borderland peasants, including Hutsuls, developed in the late 19th century and was aided by institutions such as *Prosvita*, which provided literacy programs and the first forums for standardized folklore for rural populations (Noll 1991).

Today, the Hutsuls are imagined by many Ukrainians as a kind of modern-day "ecologically noble savage" (Ellingson 2001), especially by practitioners of native faith and pagan revival movements (Ivakhiv 2005b). It is true that *starovitzki* Hutsul beliefs were rooted in the natural world, blending a highly developed system of the supernatural and demonological with colonial forms of Christianity (see chapter 1). Under the institutionalized atheism of the Soviet era, Hutsuls maintained ritual practices to a higher degree than many other groups in Ukraine, and since 1991, Ukrainian Catholic and Orthodox churches have been restored and, in many cases, newly built. The religious profile of Hutsuls has also diversified since 1991, with great numbers of missionaries from the United States (Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and

³¹ Many of these plausible etymological origins were also documented by Volodymyr Shukhevych, whose 5 volume ethnography of the Hutsuls published in 1899 remains the most comprehensive document of Hutsul ritual and history. He cites Korzeniowski's theory of the term (though his version of history is slightly different - instead of the invading Mongols, the Hutsuls were fleeing Tatar and Turkish mauraders) (Shukhevych 1899 (1997): 51).

Baptists primarily) coming into villages that have been historically Greek Catholic or Ukrainian Orthodox.³²

In recent years, eco-tourism and music festivals have been springing up like wildflowers in the Carpathian Mountains, touting the “pagan” rituals, *samohonka*-fueled parties, and colorful garb and sounds of the traditional Hutsul ensemble. More and more Western European and international tourists have begun to explore the nearest borderlands of the expanded European Union, which Ukrainian entrepreneurs have been savvy to market as an oasis of rural pre-modern authenticity on the margins (but with all the comforts) of Europe. Since my first journeys into Hutsulshchyna in 1999, the tourist infrastructure has expanded significantly, and local entrepreneurs have proliferated in many remote (and sometimes surprising) locations.³³

My ethnomusicological interest in the Hutsuls centers on the ways that contemporary Ukrainian popular musicians look towards Hutsul culture as a kind of authentic folk id to the urban post-colonial Western Ukrainian superego. This stereotypical image of Hutsuls as the “wild” Ukrainians of the Carpathian mountains has had the biggest impact as a result of Ruslana’s *Wild Dances*, which won the Eurovision grand prize in 2004, though numerous bands of lower profile, such as Haydamaky, Perkalaba, Banda Arkan, Gutsul Kalypso, Shokolad, and Drymba da Dzyga invoke Hutsul themes and imagery that construct variations on the theme of indigenous Ukrainian “wildness” as well. These kinds of “wildness” articulate through not only the proliferation of music that trades on such stereotypes, but also through the marketing of DVDs such as the “Wisdom of the Carpathian Shaman (*Mol’far*)” that follows the last surviving

³² For an in-depth history and ethnographic study of Evangelism in Ukraine, see Catherine Wanner’s 2007 *Communities of the Converted* book. She focuses on areas in and around Kharkiv, Ukraine, but the experiences of her subject resound closely with many of the converts that I encountered in Hutsulshchyna.

³³ Significant numbers of Jewish pilgrims also travel to Hutsulshchyna annually, often on multi-bus tours to key Hasidic sites. Though such tours often avoid contact with the local Ukrainian/Hutsul population, the tours also employ a good number of locals. I spoke with cooks who had learned the rules of *kashrut* to accommodate Orthodox and Hasidic dietary needs.

Hutsul shaman as he heals and casts spells, and the elaborate repertoire of “*anekdoty*” (jokes) about Hutsul “wildness.” Such forms of stereotyping and marketing of “wildness” generate from outside of the Hutsul community but are often refracted back out by Hutsuls themselves, as I assess in chapters one and three.

CHAPTER ONE

“Real Hutsul”:

Stereotypes of the Natural and the Supernatural in Traditional Hutsul Music

The distinction between the two planes (natural and cultural) is abstract: everything is cultural in us (our *Lebenswelt* is “subjective”) (our perception is cultural-historical) and everything is natural in us (even the cultural rests on the polymorphism of wild Being).

- Merleau-Ponty 1968: 253, cited in Casey 1996: 34.

Because it is a structural element in social thought, stereotype both records what we perceive and shapes the form in which we perceive it, so that by its very nature its truth keeps coming home to us, again and again displaying itself in the human scheme and thus consistently affirming itself at the same time that we unconsciously conform to its secret influence. So thoroughly do we identify social reality with our traditional constructions of it that the rare union of the actual with the stereotypical produces a vivid sense of authenticity: The “real man” or the “real woman,” the real mountaineer or real cowboy or real Caribbean marketplace, is usually the perfectly stereotypical man or woman, mountaineer, Indian, or Caribbean marketplace, just as the spurious or phony equivalents of them are simply crude, careless, or meretricious attempts to reproduce the stereotype.

- Robert Cantwell, *Ethnomimesis* (1993: 181).

Transcarpathia is as far from Kyiv as it is from God.

- Local saying (cited in Judy Batt 2002: 155).

On August 10, 1999, I took the train from L’viv to Rakhiv, a rickety ride from the chic western Ukrainian city to the last Ukrainian town before the Romanian border. Juniper, a Peace Corps volunteer who awaited me at the terminus in Rakhiv, had warned me that the train had the reputation of being “the worst in Ukraine.” As a hardened veteran of the Ukrainian train system, I took her warning lightly. I was chagrined to find out that, until my trip to Rakhiv, I truly had not seen the worst. Leaving from L’viv in the heat of the scorching summer morning, I spent twelve stifling hours in a semi-comatose repose on the sweaty green vinyl bunks of the second-class car as fetid fumes wafted through the airless wagon. When the train unceremoniously

screached to stillness near midnight, darkness engulfed it, obscuring any evidence of a station. No word was uttered about our arrival. I peeked out of the steamy train windows and saw a small beam of light: Juniper, with a flashlight. I disembarked, my own flashlight in hand, and we fumbled toward each other over the train tracks.

It was my first arrival in Hutsul'shchyna. Though I had come to acquaint myself with Hutsul music and to volunteer at the Carpathian eco-tourism NGO where Juniper worked, my arrival on the night before the total solar eclipse that peaked very close to Rakhiv on August 11, 1999, also introduced me to the power of local belief systems. On the dreary morning of August 11th, as I scaled a nearby mountain with two American Peace Corps volunteers to fully experience the total solar eclipse, I noted that we were the only people visible in town. My friends explained that most Rakhivites were staying in that day – schools were closed, shades were drawn, restaurants dark – because of the prevailing belief that the unnatural light of the eclipse had soul-sucking powers. I marveled at the thought that so many people in a community could agree on a belief that seemed outlandish to me.³⁴ Over the next decade, as I returned to Hutsulshchyna, I discovered how deeply ingrained local cosmology and demonology are in the Hutsul worldview: in historical representations of Hutsuls, into religious beliefs that blend Christian with Pagan or animist elements, and in the contemporary stereotype of Hutsul culture.

In 1936, Samuel Koenig, an American anthropologist, characterized the cosmogonic beliefs of the Hutsuls as “eclectic; myth and legend are very loosely connected with occasional incidents from the Bible. The Biblical element, as a matter of fact, is of small importance and is

³⁴ My personal memory of this first trip to Rakhiv has been gently challenged by Shaun Williams, whose experience living in Rakhiv as a Peace Corp volunteer in 2008 (nearly a decade after my story takes place) led him to believe that my own inclination to romanticize Hutsul'shchyna lends my version of this story a touch of the exotic. (He, for example, finds it difficult to believe that in 1999 all of the “schools were closed, shades were drawn, restaurants closed” because of a solar eclipse. His experience working in the Rakhiv schools in 2008 makes him believe that students would have been encouraged to study and examine the natural phenomenon.) While there is a distinct possibility that my own romantic preconceptions of the Hutsuls amplified this memory, I did corroborate my personal recollection through Juniper Neill, who was also present on that day in 1999.

often limited to the substitution of Biblical for the original pagan names. The beliefs are further characterized by the ascription to Biblical personalities of powers, deeds, and functions which have no foundation whatsoever in the Bible itself” (Koenig 1936: 368). He elaborates on the Hutsul creation of the world, in which Satan, God, Elijah, the sun, moon, and stars, take central roles. Koenig introduces the same phenomenon that I came to discover, the same underlying logic that captivated the numerous ethnographers, literary luminaries, and folklorists who wrote about Hutsulshchyna in the 19th and 20th centuries, that is: traditional Hutsul belief systems are grounded in the wilderness of the Carpathian mountains, in the same manner that ancient Greco-Roman myths served to explain natural phenomena to those civilizations.

In contemporary Hutsulshchyna, evaluations of what is natural, artificial, or supernatural permeate local discourse about many aspects of everyday life, ranging from supernatural explanations of weather patterns to concerns about the poison in store-bought, pasteurized milk or factory-produced sausage. Ostap Kostiuk, a respected L’viv-based musician who leads the Hutsul ensemble *Baj*, told me that “the problem with Hutsul culture is that it’s hard to know where to draw the lines.” He explained that the isolation and natural wildness of the Carpathian mountains prevented the “contamination” of culture that Soviet cultural policy intended (interview 2/28/2009). In Hutsul musical culture, he explained, there is “no foundational myth” that sets the music apart from its ritual function:

For me, ancient music and spiritual practice is one and the same, although this perhaps sounds too full of pathos. But that’s how it was: our ancestors did not separate the wordly, shepherding, wedding rituals, the sacred sphere, etc. – these are all ethnographic conceptions (Hnativ 2010).

Melodies, called *ihry* (which also means “games” in Ukrainian), have particular functions for specific events in the yearly calendar: funerals, weddings, baptisms, carols. The Soviets, he explained, failed to unhinge the deeply ingrained sociality of Hutsul ritual from its music. Hutsul

music, he alleged, heard without an understanding of its context in the Carpathians, “is empty.” Kostyuk proposes a provocative schema for understanding how Hutsul musical authenticity might be construed – when divorced from ritual context and territory, it is meaningless. For Hutsuls, he claims, the social relationships that music constructs are implanted in the territory they inhabit. However, despite being a popular and widespread explanation for the essential quality of Hutsul music, Kostyuk’s evaluation of authenticity, like all evaluations of authenticity, is subjective.³⁵

Between 1999 and 2010, as I traveled to villages in and around Kosiv, Verkhovyna, and Yaremche, I noted that ideas of what is “real” weaved through jokes, musician’s personal origin stories, gossip, and local histories. Winking insinuations that the fiddle player I had just interviewed was not a “real” Hutsul, but possibly a Romanian or a Gypsy, carried the added insult that his fiddling style was somehow impure. On many occasions, people would suggest - but never avow - that a particularly celebrated, virtuosic musician was thought to have made an alliance with the *aridnyk* [devil] or *nechysta syla* [unclean spirit], an implication of the “supernatural” potential of music and the “unnatural” origin of his skill.³⁶ Such veiled imputations were most often alleged according to delicate local genealogies that carried a strong territorial component: *his mother was from such-and-such village, and everybody knows that her father came from across that mountain, and that is where only Gypsies live, therefore he is not a real Hutsul.* My next interviewee would be as likely to allege the same about the fiddle player I

³⁵ I take musicologist Allan Moore’s argument that “authenticity is a matter of interpretation which is made and fought for from within a cultural and, thus, historicized position. It is ascribed, not inscribed” (Moore 2002: 210) as a guiding tenet.

³⁶ Associations between the devil and musical proficiency occur in many diverse cultures, from Delta blues in the United States to Western classical violin traditions (most famously, with Niccolò Paganini (1782-1840) and Giuseppe Tartini (1692-1770)) (Halpert 1943). In the 1937, Samuel Koenig reported that Galician Ukrainians, western neighbors to the Hutsuls, believed that “mastery in any of the arts is attainable only with the help of the Devil,” in exchanges that hinge on the Devil successfully acquiring the musician’s soul (Koenig 1937: 68). Among Hutsuls, as I will illustrate later in this chapter, beliefs that dark spirits govern musical virtuosity are as entrenched in historical documents as in the ambivalent perspective of modern Hutsuls.

had just spoken to, creating a dizzying loop of charges that seemed ever to cinch the circle of “realness” around an empty, mythical center.

In his study of rural Texan country music, Aaron Fox defines local evaluations of “the real,” as a duality that must face “inward toward conventions of musical style and outward toward the deep social relationships that music construct[s], and to face both ways in the same artful moment” (Fox 2004: 17). Following from the argument that Hutsul “realness” is an enplaced discourse, rooted in the Carpathian Mountains, we must consider how musical sound works to articulate place, how Hutsul evaluations of “realness” privilege locality and kinship as the paramount “social relationships that music constructs.” In this chapter, I seek to contextualize such evaluations through the ethnographic grounding of the concept of “real Hutsul.” I approach the concept of “real Hutsul” through discourses of “the natural” and “the supernatural” – two entrenched external stereotypes of Hutsuls that inform how Hutsuls themselves measure “realness” today. Dominant stereotypes of Hutsul mountaineers revolve around their isolation, their fierce independence, and their untouched, ancient culture. As greater numbers of outsiders travel to witness the isolation, independence, and purportedly untainted culture of the Hutsuls, these essentialized cultural features become recast as commodities and reinforced as stereotypes. Much like the Górale highlanders of the Polish Tatras, touristic, ethnographic and literary representation of and by Hutsuls since the 19th century substantially contributed to the formation of the Hutsul ethno-stereotype (Cooley 1998, 2005). These dominant stereotypes recycle and reproduce a systemic ambivalence in the ways that Hutsuls self-represent, hyperbolizing and trading on *ethnemes* (Cantwell’s term for the germinative element of the social stereotype) that simultaneously reinforce and renegotiate entrenched outsider stereotypes of Hutsuls as superstitious, close-to-nature “wild” mountaineers (Cantwell 1993).

Elizabeth Povinelli has powerfully written about the conflicting obligations of “moral sensibility” and “public reason” in the contemporary lives of Australian indigenes who struggle to reconcile local aboriginal and Australian multicultural/national conceptions of self and citizen (Povinelli 2002). In the Hutsul case, such conflicting obligations between moral sense and reason hinge on a sense of the “real” that is, in turn, molded by local belief systems, intimate conceptions of self-as-Hutsul, and externally imposed and historically entrenched stereotypes of romanticized Hutsul eccentricities. All three ethnographic examples in this chapter present self-identified Hutsuls negotiating tropes of authenticity against historical representations and stereotypical formulations of who “real Hutsuls” are: the Rakhiv Hutsul Orchestra, a relic of Soviet cultural policy initiatives; the last surviving Hutsul shaman (*mol'far*) who practices healing through melodies rendered on the jaw harp; and the Tafiychuk family of village musicians, whose international profile juxtaposed against their traditional way of life embodies the ambivalence of the modern Hutsul.

Two Objects of Local Pride in Rakhiv

Rakhiv is a regional center in the eastern part of Transcarpathia [*Zakarpattia*], situated on the banks of the River Tysa, located about twelve kilometers from the current Romanian border. Throughout the 19th century and into the 1910s, it was under Austro-Hungarian rule. In the 20th century, Transcarpathia “underwent no fewer than 17 changes of political status,” including annexation and re-annexation by Czechoslovakia, Romania, Hungary, and, in 1944, by Nazi Germany (Batt 2002). Stitched in between were two brief stints of independence. Finally, along with the rest of the region known as Transcarpathia [*Zakarpattia*], Rakhiv was annexed by the

Ukrainian SSR in 1945. One popular local anecdote, displays the ambiguous nature of place and allegiance that still characterizes the attitudes of many locals:

A visitor, encountering one of the oldest local inhabitants, asks about his life. The reply: ‘I was born in Austro-Hungary. I went to school in Czechoslovakia, I did my army service in Horthy’s Hungary, followed by a spell in prison in the USSR. Now I am ending my days in independent Ukraine.’ The visitor expresses surprise at how much of the world the old man has seen. ‘But no!’ he responds, ‘I’ve never left this village!’ (Batt 2002: 155).

Rakhiv’s claim to historical fame is its proximity to the Hapsburg-era monument declaring the exact, mathematical center of Europe. Promoted by Soviet scientists despite the fact that the



marker’s Latin inscription was worn out to the point of being unreadable, the translation has been variously rendered: “Constant, precise, eternal place. The center of Europe was determined very precisely, with a special apparatus produced in Austria and Hungary, with the dial of meridians and parallels. 1887”; or “Main fixed point of exact height-leveling carried out in Austria-Hungary in connection with the European measurement of

meridional and parallel degrees. 1887” (Champion 2004, cited in Ivakhiv 2006). Local pride about the obelisk placed by the Viennese Geographical Society has manifested in the transformation of the petite monument of dubious verity into a grand mountain tourist complex with hotel, sauna, and a traditional Hutsul-style restaurant known as a *kolyba*. Though many locals roll their eyes at the notion that their borderland town marks the center of Europe, they take the symbolic weight and commercial potential of the designation seriously, embodying the ambiguity of their dual post-colonial status as mythical center and geopolitical periphery (Ivakhiv 2006).

Along with the requisite visit to the Center of Europe obelisk (pre-tourist complex), my first trip to Rakhiv introduced me to the other outstanding marker of regional pride at the time:

the Rakhiv Hutsul Orchestra. Over the next decade, I returned to Rakhiv periodically to document the rehearsals and performances of the Hutsul Orchestra and to interview its members. Over the years, I found the ensemble in various states: in 1999 and 2002, the ensemble was robust; when I returned in 2005, having traveled for three days from another remote location to make the weekly rehearsal, I discovered that rehearsals had been indefinitely postponed because



The Rakhiv Hutsul Orchestra leads the parade to the festival grounds, 2009. Photo by Oksana Susyak.

the musicians were in the high mountains mowing hay; in 2009, a less energetic version of the ensemble – with largely the same personnel as a decade earlier, wearing the same costumes – hosted a summer music festival that included participants from Romania and other surrounding regions. On my first visit, I was told that the Rakhiv Hutsul

Orchestra was the only surviving Hutsul Folk Orchestra in Ukraine, a fact that referenced a complex and rich history of the Soviet institutionalization of folk music in the 20th century, a history that I eventually came to realize bore the stigma of artificiality, an affront to the pride of the Rakhiv Hutsul Orchestra. As the surviving local relic of Soviet cultural policy initiatives, the Rakhiv Hutsul Orchestra must be



The official logo of the Rakhiv Hutsul Orchestra (photo M. Sonevytsky, 2002).

contextualized within the history of institutionalized folk music in the Soviet Union, and understood as the embodiment of a constructed musical-social structure in order to understand how it has been challenged by discourses of post-Soviet Ukrainian rural authenticity.

A Brief History of the Soviet Folk Orchestra

The history of Soviet music is punctuated by conflicts between high-minded artists and low-minded bureaucrats, alternating between defiance or compliance by the musicians, concessions or repressions by the Government and the Party (Schwarz 1983: xi).

Indeed, early Soviet cultural policy was marked by mixed messages. Beginning from Lenin's foundational tenet that "culture must serve the animating interests of the proletariat's dictatorship - and be dedicated to withering away class exploitation, through the vision and programs of the Communist Party," combined with the goal of "internationalism, the amalgamation of all nations in the higher unity," early Soviet musical policy served the Leninist mandate that "mass song," rooted in the traditions of peasants and workers, be the highest form of modernized art in the early Soviet Union (Miller and Yúdice 2002: 109; Lenin 1920/1965: 241). Bolshevik campaigns against rural "backwardness" sought to elevate traditional culture to the level of "progressive" culture, an aim that would at once elevate and equalize the folk traditions of indigenes across the Soviet landscape. However, in the era of *korenizatsia* (nativization), Lenin also advanced the freedoms of the minority cultures of the former Russian Empire, believing that in time the divisive effects of ethnic regionalism and nationalism would fade away into a pan-Soviet, and eventually, universal global brotherhood. Soviet composers and musicians thus turned towards folk culture as the wellspring of the "progressive" music they sought to craft. In the 1920s, music schools, publications of transcriptions from field expeditions, and other means to preserve oral traditions flourished, while experiments in "modernizing" traditional musics towards the "mass song" ideal proliferated (Schwarz 1983:77).

Such "progressive" practices included the standardization of instruments, the professionalization of musicians, and the institutionalization of ensembles that eventually came to be known as "Folk Orchestras" or "Folk Ensembles." Forcing together Western European art

music practice with the ritual cultures of indigenous peoples under the banner of ideological utopia, such institutions were characterized by inherent paradox: replicating bourgeois classical orchestra hierarchies in order to professionalize oral-aural tradition, re-assigning the roles of instruments according to the demands of conservatory-trained arrangers, notating oral-aural music according to Western classical standards, and finally, promoting local folk culture while obliging to the ideological “Friendship of the Peoples” that arose in the mid-twentieth century. Nercessian writes about the process of creating and orchestrating the “folk orchestra” in Armenia, placing together instruments that never would have played together in traditional or ritual ensembles, standardizing instruments, and teaching notation. “Players now had to learn to play *parts*, their role being dependent on their seemingly fragmentary participation and increased co-operation with fellow players. Such contexts were new and required consistency, a new form of accuracy and a suppression of the improvisatory instinct. For all this to be achieved, a whole system of musical education, again, modeled on the Western system was necessary and therefore set up” (Nercessian 2000:84). With the emergence of the professional folk musician, valued for score-reading accuracy rather than individualized style,³⁷ techniques that had once marked village-specific dynasties of musicians were obscured by state-sanctioned ornamentation and conventionalized melodies. Yet the clout and official status of such orchestras advertised their “authenticity.”³⁸ In studies of the Uzbek folk orchestra, Levin has called attention to the authority endowed to state-sanctioned institutions that cultivated “national” music, while pointing out the paradox that “in the final soup of Socialist Realist art, what truly reflects traditional reality, and what reflects a new, imposed reality, to hoist the theory by its own

³⁷ Hutsuls speak of how each village has its own particular nuanced musical aesthetic, often stressing that one only truly inhabits the style if he was “born in it.”

³⁸ Vesa Kurkela describes this in her study of deregulating popular music: “...the image of state folklore stresses authenticity...it is typical that the audience often thinks that this music is a real product of the peasant culture” (Kurkela 1993:96).

petards, seems a peculiarly arbitrary matter” (Levin 1980:157).³⁹ This confusion served the regime well as the folk orchestra became emblematic of a new Soviet authenticity, doubly effective as a vehicle for disciplining and regulating local culture.

In the 1930s, with the advent of the doctrine of Socialist Realism, Stalin vilified the folk orchestra as a regressive institution that divided Soviet society along ethnic and territorial lines: the “withering away” of regional and ethnic difference that Lenin had predicted had not occurred. “Mass song” was redefined apart from its Leninist roots in folk music and a new law that the “people’s music” should be “progressive” (defined according to the aesthetic doctrine of Socialist Realism) rather than based on “backward” peasant culture went into effect. However, the popularity of the folk orchestra, which, by the 1930s had multiplied across the Soviet landscape and been institutionalized in many major urban centers, did not allow for the elimination of the institution, and so the purpose of the folk orchestra was adapted to comply with the nationality clause of the doctrine of Socialist Realism. As Nercessian explains, “The folk ensemble was national in form, that is it used national instruments, but was socialist in content, that is it served the needs of socialism. It was at once for the masses, and progressive” (Nercessian 2000:86). Such self-contradictions between the ideology and practice of institutionalized folklore mirrors the fundamental paradox that Yurchak explores in his study of late Soviet culture, the “paradox between the goal of a total liberation of culture, and the means of achieving it through subjecting culture to total control by the party.” (Yurchak 2006: 165).

³⁹ Levin outlines a third phenomenon in the sphere of traditional music institutionalized under the Soviets: “the use of European models of morphology and terminology for music-theoretical studies of national musics, and perhaps more significant, the elevation of European harmonic techniques to the status of model for the future development of national musics.... A standard fixture in every music school in Uzbekistan is the orchestra of folk instruments — tempered, chromitized, and consortized (treble rebab, bass rebab, etc.) so as faithfully to reproduce the music of Brahms, Mozart, Bach, and other famous Uzbeks” (1980: 154).

In the 1950s, the Soviet folk musician emerged as a fully professionalized category with the advent of *technicums*, “low status conservatories where notation and performance on a number of folk instruments were taught, and which were intended primarily for folk players who were preparing for entry into folk orchestras” (Nercessian 84). After Stalin’s death, during the period of Khrushchevian thaw, *korenizatsia*-like initiatives flourished again, and the folk orchestra became a prominent site for the codification of “national” music as well as an authoritative emblem of national culture. Such ideological manipulation bred a style of musicianship that often clashed with local musical values: “The institutionalization of traditional music produced a contemporary national music style grounded in centuries of custom but aspiring to the values promoted by Western classical music resulting in a confrontation between older musical values and Western ideals of music professionalism. . . . These factors highlighted the non-traditional emphasis on precision playing that the creation of the folk orchestra engendered, and as trademarks of West European music professionalism, were iconic of the socialist philosophy for cultural progress” (Buchanan 1995: 390-1). In the period of independence, when diminished state support for such institutions left many ensembles foundering and uncertain how to adapt to the financial and cultural realities of post-Soviet society, the practices and values associated with “the socialist philosophy for cultural progress” have been challenged by “authentic” revival movements.⁴⁰ In many urban centers, folk orchestras and radio ensembles with roots in the Soviet era have fizzled out completely. Those legacy ensembles that persist have often found alternate methods of financing through private donors, but many more ensembles seem to endure solely through inertia and reputation. Scholars such as Frolova-Walker and Wanner have addressed the meaning of Soviet symbols in folklore

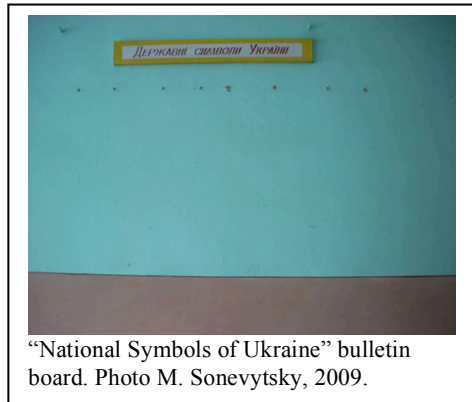
⁴⁰ Such “revival” groups have been especially successful in the realm of village family ensembles in Western Ukraine (including the Tafiychuks, who I will address later in this chapter) and in polyphonic vocal traditions from central and eastern Ukraine, practiced by notable ensembles such as *Drevo*, *Bozhychi*, *Hurtopravtsi*, and *Krosno*.

and their recontextualization since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, pointing out that “the cultural nationalism that the new independent states inherited from the Soviet period...was not thrown overboard as a vestige of colonial culture, but instead was in each case tailored to new circumstances” (Frolova-Walker 1998: 370; see also Wanner 1996).

In Ukraine, emergent discourses of authenticity have marked the period of independence in the realm of expressive culture. Such discourses of authenticity often privilege rural, remote, and purportedly “untouched” areas in an attempt to recover pre-Soviet strains of music and ritual. This search for roots, is, ironically, motivated in part by similar impulses to earlier historical campaigns that sought to rediscover and rebuild “the authentic” on the basis of peasant folk culture. However, in its post-Soviet variation, the quest has wrought an appropriately capitalist counterpart: the development of a powerful market for the recording and selling of village-style folklore (as well as the proliferation of hybrid experiments that blend ritual genres with global or generic pop) as well as a burgeoning eco-cultural-tourism industry centered on Hutsul culture. In the last twenty years, numerous albums have been recorded advertising Western Ukrainian village musicians as “the last authentic European folklore” to audiences in urban Ukraine and Poland. Attractively packaged multi-volume editions of ethnomusicological field recordings have been released by prominent Ukrainian World Music record labels such as Prosvita, based in Kyiv, and Koka Records, based in Lublin, Poland. In recent years, music festivals attracting hordes of young people for programs that include both traditional village music and hip experiments in popular genres have flourished in many regions of Ukraine. Rakhiv itself is host to over three annual Hutsul music and culture festivals annually.

The Location of “Real Music” in Rakhiv

On June 4, 2009, I climbed the stairs of the *Budynok Kultury* in Rakhiv almost exactly a decade after my first visit to their Hutsul Orchestra rehearsal. Outside the rehearsal room, I noted



a bulletin board, blank underneath its’ hand-lettered title, which read “National Symbols of Ukraine” [*Derzhavni Symvoly Ukrainy*]. A decade earlier, I had photographed the *derevtse* (ornamental shaker) player outside the same bulletin board, where a portrait of the

national bard-hero Shevchenko hung amid fragments of poetry and an elaborate greeting to visitors. In 2009, the symbols were gone and the board was blank, a detail that I jotted into my field notes as a sad little metaphor for what I thought was the vanishing confidence of the ensemble that rehearsed inside.



The founder’s brother and ensemble director since 1984, Petro Petrovych Erstenyuk, was expecting me for the rehearsal, and I took the opportunity of our few minutes together to ask him about some of the details of the orchestra’s history.⁴¹ He told me that before the Rakhiv Hutsul Orchestra, the town had a trio ensemble [*troyista muzyka*] made of local musicians playing *tsymbaly*, fiddle and *sopilka* who played for events such as weddings and elections. Building from this ensemble, the Folk Orchestra grew to eighteen members by 1961, with folk instruments mimicking the sections of the Western classical orchestra. The Rakhiv ensemble was formed under the aegis of the *lisokombinat*, the state-controlled forestry factory in Rakhiv that at one

⁴¹ His brother was the director from 1956-62; 1962-1968 Pomichko Pavlo Hryhorovych, who died of old age; then, they had a Romanian director Mykhailo Vasilyovych Mokanu 68-84; Petro Erstenyuk has been the director since 1984 (interview 6/4/2009).

time employed 2,500 Rakhivites (out of approximately 15,000), who sponsored the ensemble's costumes and compensated members with quantities of valuable firewood. Under the auspices of the *lisokombinat* and its music-loving director, the ensemble expanded to thirty members, and included some ethnic Hungarians, Romanians, Orthodox and Uniate believers (but, as Erstenyuk forcefully points out, no Roma). In 1961, the Rakhiv Hutsul Orchestra attended the first *Profsoyuzna Konferentsia* in Kyiv, and also traveled to the pan-Soviet meeting in Moscow. "During Communist times, the most important thing was work, and the *lisokombinat* would let [orchestra members] out to rehearse, but now people don't have work. Now," Erstenyuk complains, "we have nothing." Today, he says, "it is sustained purely by enthusiasm." When the



Male vocal soloist Mykola (left) and Petro Erstenyuk (right), waiting for the festival parade to begin, 2009. Photo by Oksana Susyak.

lisokombinat closed in 2000, the costumes were donated to the orchestra and the Rakhiv Culture Administration gave the ensemble rehearsal and storage space in the *Budynok Kultury* (interview 6/4/2009).

Erstenyuk boasts that the Rakhiv Hutsul Orchestra was the "first Hutsul folk orchestra in

Ukraine" founded by his brother Yuri Petrovych Erstenyuk in 1956, two years before Rakhiv's status was upgraded to "regional center." However, the historical record shows that more than two decades earlier, in 1940, a Hutsul Song and Dance Ensemble [*Hutsulskij Ansambl pisni i tansi*] consisting of a choir, dance troupe, and orchestra of folk instruments was founded in the bigger metropolis on the foothills of the Carpathians, Ivano-Frankivsk (then Stanislaviv). That ensemble performed works by Ukrainian and other composers in addition to its core Hutsul and folk Ukrainian repertoire, and, from the scarce existing information, adhered to the model of the

professional (urban) Soviet folk orchestra. Also, in 1946, the Verkhovyna Subcarpathian Song and Dance Ensemble [*Prykarpatskyi ansambl pisni I tantsiu Verkhovyna*], another professional performing ensemble was founded in the Western Ukrainian city of Drohobych, a location close to, but not actually located in, the mountains (Kubijovyc 1988: 584). In 2008, the Vandzhiurak and Iliuk amateur dance ensemble of the Verkhovyna region - complete with a trio of Hutsul musicians - celebrated its 25th anniversary (*Hutsul'skij Kalendar 2008*).

When I visited for the second time in 2002, the Rakhiv Hutsul Orchestra numbered six to eight *sopilka* [wood recorders] players, two *tsymbalists* [hammered dulcimer], three or four accordion and *bayan* players [button accordion], four violinists, one *bubon* [bass drum], one to four *trembitas* [Hutsul alphorns], one *berebenytsia* [horse-hair drum], one *derevtse* [decorated shaker], a male vocal soloist and a choir of three to five female vocalists. In 2009, the group was slightly smaller, but the instrumentation was approximately the same, and incorporated the eight and ten year old sons of two of the players and one Peace Corps volunteer. Today, rehearsals occur infrequently, usually just before city festivals where the orchestra is expected to take part. Though Erstenyuk crows that Rakhiv “has the most melodies of any Hutsul town,” the orchestra’s repertoire, according to my field notes and recordings, has not changed substantially in the ten years since I first visited. Erstenyuk tells me that the members of the orchestra are not musically literate, but the arrangements played by orchestra members adhere to the large-orchestra conventions of Soviet “folk orchestra” arrangement and orchestration, which leads me to believe that, at some point in the orchestra’s history, there were some members with musical literacy who were able to teach the arranged parts aurally.⁴²

⁴² In the case of the Bulgarian folk orchestra, Donna Buchanan identifies two “metaphors of musical experience” used by musicians to make sense of and assign value to new and state-sanctioned approaches to traditional music-making: “playing from the heart” versus “playing *notno*” [from notes] (Buchanan 1995: 394).

The day after I attended their rehearsal, I met Erstenyuk in the room where the Hutsul Orchestra costumes are kept in the *Budynok Kultury*, as members of the orchestra came by to pick up missing pieces of costume before the festival that was taking place that coming Saturday. That summer, I had befriended a Peace Corps volunteer and budding ethnomusicologist, Shaun, who articulated his frustration at arriving in Rakhiv and finding the orchestra to be disorganized and chaotic, explaining that he had waited months for someone to help him tune the *tsymbaly* that he had recovered from the orchestra storage space and dusted off. Told that he would march with the ensemble in the festival parade that coming weekend, Shaun was convinced that my presence as a foreign ethnographer finally motivated the director to integrate him into the group. As I asked questions about the history of the ensemble and Shaun was fitted for a Hutsul costume, Erstenyuk asked me if I had heard “real Hutsul music at a wedding.” I said yes, and he asked me where I had been. I told him the name of a small village, Bohdan, located in the mountains near Rakhiv, where I had been fortunate to attend a wedding and interview the musicians in 2005. Obviously pleased, Erstenyuk laughed and said, “Oh good, then you’ve heard our *real* Hutsul music!”



Musicians at the village wedding in Bohdan, 2005. Photo M. Sonevtsky.

Folkloryzm

Over the decade that I visited the Rakhiv Hutsul Orchestra, I noticed the orchestra’s reputation morph, away from being the exemplar of regional pride that it was on my first visit in 1999. Once the most visible and powerful representative of Hutsul musical culture in the region, the Rakhiv Hutsul Orchestra’s authority has been challenged by new discourses of anti-Soviet authenticity that have elevated some village musicians to celebrity status and has largely cast

institutions created during the Soviet period as “inauthentic.” One primary challenge to the integrity of the ensemble has come from the post-Soviet Ukrainian discourse of rural authenticity that privilege “the natural” over artificial, the organic and local over the institutionalized.

Ukrainians have their own term for music that Western scholars label “fakelore”:
folkloryzm.⁴³ I first heard the term *folkloryzm* used by my colleague, the Ukrainian ethnomusicologist Olya Kolomyets’, who casually used the term to describe a performance that we had recently witnessed together. She defined *folkloryzm* as “the second life of folklore,” where something that is authentic in context is decontextualized and put on display. Unlike “fakelore,” which is usually applied in a pejorative sense, she stressed that *folkloryzm* can be positive or negative, depending on the motivation for how and why it is presented (interview 10/22/009). By asking me if I had heard “real Hutsul music,” Erstenyuk displayed the complexity of his position as the foremost champion of the Rakhiv Hutsul Orchestra and its singularity and importance for Rakhiv, while calling attention to the constructed, and therefore “less real” nature of the music the orchestra plays.⁴⁴ However, despite its thorny roots in the ideological campaign imposed by Soviet cultural policies that sought the eventual excoriation of

⁴³ Regina Bendix explores the origin of the American conception of “fakelore,” citing the term’s originator and first flag-waver, the scholar Richard Dorson, who defined it as “an ideological manipulation of folklore for the purposes of *Realpolitik*” thus, inextricably binding the term to its negative connotation (Bendix 1997: 190). On *folklorism*, and the specifically Soviet origins and definitions of the contested term, see (Smidchens 1999). Dina Roginsky provides a detailed ethnographic study of folklorism in Israel vis-a-vis choreographic revivals (Roginsky 2007), and Kendirbaeva provides another interpretation of Soviet folklorism in her study of Kazakh oral artistry (Kendirbaeva 1994). Scholars working in the Caribbean have applied the term *folklorization* to Afro-Cuban performance traditions that become theatricalized in response to changing contexts and demands. Kathering Hagedorn amends this to the term *folkloricization* to refer to “the process of making a folk tradition folkloric” in her ethnographic study of how tourism has influenced Santería traditions in Cuba (Hagedorn 2001:12).

⁴⁴ Erstenyuk’s seemingly double attitude here - pride about his ensemble’s longevity and legacy and this off-the-cuff statement about where “the real” is really located might be explained as a brand of post-Soviet cynicism. Alexei Yurchak has written forcefully about late Soviet attitudes towards official and hidden beliefs: “One common attempt to explain how ideological texts and rituals function in contexts dominated by unchallengeable authoritative discourse whose meanings are not necessarily read literally is to assert that citizens act ‘as if’ they support these slogans and rituals in public, while privately believing something different” (Yurchak 2006: 16-17).

locality and difference from the very institution it had engineered, the *folklorizm* of the Rakhiv Hutsul Orchestra is not disingenuous, as the ensemble continues to serve its community.

Today, the Rakhiv Hutsul Orchestra continues to play at ceremonial events, rallying the community together under an admittedly worn old banner, albeit recontextualized now in the spirit of an independent Ukraine and its proud mountain people. It is not clear what, if any, explicit emendations were made to the mission statement of the Orchestra after 1991: the repertoire has not changed, the personnel are largely the same (now twenty years older), the costumes and instruments are the same. From within, members of the Orchestra accept a narrative that acknowledges institutional rupture – the end of the *lisokombinat*, the stark financial reality of the present – but glosses over a sea change in ideology. The view from outside, where I observe and inquire, is layered: as recordings of Hutsul music circulate in urban centers (in Ukraine and beyond) advertising the pre-colonial “authentic” (some with the explicit message that institutional folklore is a sinister brand of *folklorizm*) the endurance of such a borderland institution sharpens the focus enough to reveal the blurs at the borders of a post-socialist society such as Ukraine. Such an interpretation favors continuity: by papering over ideology in favor of artifice, we witness an institution born into paradox as it lumbers on today, replete with deep-rooted contradiction, but externally, unchanged.

“Nature” and “the Supernatural”

If you only knew what a captivating, almost fairy-tale corner of the world this is, with its dark-green mountains and eternally whispering mountain streams. It is pure and fresh, as if it were born yesterday. The costumes, the customs, the whole structure of life of these nomad Hutsuls, who spend their summers on mountain peaks, are so unique and beautiful that one feels as if one had been transported to some new and unknown world.

The Hutsul is a profound pagan; he spends all his life battling evil spirits that dwell in forests, mountains, and waters. He uses Christianity only to decorate his pagan cult.

- Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky, in letters to the writer Gorky, composed in 1910 and 1912, respectively (cited in Rubchak 1981: 85).

As the dominant ethnos associated with the Carpathian Mountain highlands, Hutsuls have been written into histories and ethnographies as the embodiment of peasants who “live close to nature.” In his five-volume ethnography *Hutsulshchyna* (1899), Volodymyr Shukhevych reported that Hutsuls who were forced to leave their mountain habitat to serve in the Austro-Hungarian army would very often succumb to “acute nostalgia or melancholia,” leading to suicide in many cases (1899/1997: 70). In the 1910s, Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky rhapsodized about the ancient wisdom held by the Carpathian highlanders and rooted in their land, a fascination with Hutsuls that eventually led to the outstanding novel *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors*, which has become an iconic representation of Hutsul village culture (best known through its filmic adaptation in the 1964 work of Soviet Armenian director Sergei Parajanov). Numerous other urban Ukrainian literati and intellectual luminaries of the 19th and 20th centuries - including Lesia Ukrajinka, Hnat Khotkevych, Ivan Franko, Mykhailo Hrushevskij, and Volodymyr Hniatuk - took inspiration from *Hutsulshchyna*, folklorizing and romanticizing Hutsuls and their profound connection to their natural landscape.⁴⁵ But how do contemporary Hutsuls imagine “the natural”?

In a study of East European Pagans’ definition of nature, Adrian Ivakhiv persuasively argues that the idea of *territorialized ethnicity*, which he defines as “the belief that ethnic communities are natural and biological entities rooted in specific geographical territories” is key to understanding how Ukrainians variously construe “nature” (Ivakhiv 2005: 194). Ivakhiv writes about organized Pagan and Native Believer groups in contemporary Ukraine, but his observations resonate with many of the observations expressed by Hutsuls whom I interviewed,

⁴⁵ This trend continues into the 21st century, as seen in the depictions of Hutsuls by popular Ukrainian authors such as Maria Matios, Yuri Andrukhovych, and Serhiy Zhadan.

when conversations would inevitably touch on themes of ethnic essentialism or land ethics.

“Nature” is the key term in Ivakhiv’s study, and he examines three overlapping ways that it can be defined: as land, as “blood,” and as “tradition” (Ivakhiv 2005b).

“Nature as land” encompasses the belief that land is “a source of sustenance, which should be cared for and shared by all” (2005: 211). This definition manifests in social and political movements that oppose the commodification of land, especially to prevent outsiders - people who have no relationship to the land - from owning and, subsequently, disturbing or harming it (212).⁴⁶ Among Hutsuls in the Verkhovyna region, the purchase of land by outsiders was a frequent topic of concern for many locals. As one confidante told me, “the sale of our land to Muscovites [a term applied in this case to any non-Ukrainian speakers] is a new form of colonization.” As the owner of a bed and breakfast that advertised an authentic Hutsul vacation to city visitors, she took great pride in introducing urbanites to the wilderness and customs of her people, yet the threat of foreign ownership was a frequent topic of conversation among her circle of friends in the local tourist business. In many conversations that I participated in during my fieldwork, the practice of outsiders to buy great swaths of fertile land and to not utilize the land to produce food, hay, or sustain livestock, was written off as a crime against the village way of life and a sin against the land.

Nature as “blood” (alternately construed as nature to ethnos/nation) follows an evolutionary model that positions Ukrainians as an ancient *ethnos* with a unique life cycle that must live out its destiny (Ivakhiv 2005: 212). This view emphasizes kinship, which spirals out from familial relationships towards broader communities, and eventually towards the largest grouping, the race. At its extreme form, this view constructs a pseudo-scientific *raceology* long

⁴⁶ This “stewardship ethic” is distinct from the North American wilderness preservationism movement which nostalgizes “nature” as pristine and devoid of human impact; Ivakhiv points out that Ukrainian Pagans idealize a wilderness in which sustainable human impact (i.e. traditional agriculture) is included.

discredited in the West, with manifestations that range from mild forms of Ukrainian ethnic pride to xenophobic neo-fascist and radical nationalist campaigns that have gathered considerable force in Western Ukraine (including segments of Hutsulshchyna) since the 1990s (Ivakhiv 2005:213; Dymerskaya-Tsigelman 2004).

“Nature” as “Sacred Tradition” or “Custom,”⁴⁷ mourns the “near total deterioration of the ‘ethnosphere’ and biosphere” in today’s world (Ivakhiv 2005:215). This view imagines a Golden Age from which humankind has been in steady regression, leading to the destructive “loss of tradition” that characterizes the contemporary world. Money, technology, and globalization are all identified as modern evils that threaten Tradition, which must be staved off by the reinstatement of ancient, sacred, or pure rituals and practices. In Hutsulshchyna, attempts to restore or preserve tradition have elevated some Hutsuls to the status of local celebrity, replicating the patterns identified by scholars who study the “heritage industry,” especially when the attention (and often the financial benefit) that comes to “heritage carriers” creates friction in the home community (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998, 2004; Savova 2009, Yudicé 2003). Those Hutsul individuals identified by outsiders (documentarians, folklorists, ethnographers, tour book authors) as “heritage carriers” are indeed elevated to small-scale celebrity among outsiders, while being regarded with jealousy or skepticism by locals.

All three of the formulations that Ivakhiv presents - nature as land, “blood” and tradition - were thematized by Hutsul musicians who struggled to define what is “real” against the imported temptations of modernity: the influx of globalized goods and endless information flow to the village economy. While many Hutsuls express worry that Hutsul culture is in the process of dying (or, worse, has been long dead) - that eternal swan song of folk culture voiced from within

⁴⁷ Ivakhiv capitalizes these terms to distinguish them from quotidian “tradition” or “custom” and because they are sometimes capitalized in primary sources from Pagan and Native Belief organizations (2005: 214).

the folk - others simply lament that it is being contaminated and transformed irrevocably. One public figure, who advertises himself as the last surviving Hutsul shaman [*mol'far*], utilizes the resources of the new informational regime to promote himself while transcending the traditional role of the local healer by becoming the marketed representation of a threatened intangible cultural heritage.⁴⁸

Mol'far Nechay

Nature doesn't joke, it judges as sternly as a prosecutor. Every person is a part of nature. And nature loves us and not herself. Because back when the pagan faith existed, from the beginning of time until the beginning of Christianity, then this pagan faith was nature, and nature was us, and we have violated it now, with Christianity.... I am half-pagan, I am half-Orthodox Christian. I can't reject paganism because it is Nature, and we are Nature. We can't exist without Nature.

- Mykhailo Mykhailovych Nechay, personal interview 2/2/09

On February 2, 2009, I drove my car out of Verkhovyna, past the village of Kryvorivnia, and straight through the roundabout that I usually followed to the left, up the mountain, to Bukovets' and Kosiv. On this day, I traced the spoke that hugs the Black Cheremosh river, where the road, destroyed by a summer flood, turned suddenly treacherous: icy, broken, a gauntlet of potholes. I arrived, white-knuckled, at the village of *Verkhnij Yaseniv* and parked my Mazda along the road, next to a worn pedestrian bridge slung over the river. I crossed it and approached the home of the local *mol'far* [shaman], Mykhailo Nechay. The mountains behind his Hutsul-style home were covered in a carpet of downy snow. I noted the sign hanging on his well, warning visitors that his

⁴⁸ Tragically, after the research for this dissertation was completed, *Mol'far* Nechay was brutally murdered at his home in *Verkhnij Yaseniv* by a psychologically disturbed young Ukrainian man (Skavron 2011). I have chosen to keep my representation of the *mol'far* in the present tense to preserve the original fieldwork-based conclusions that I derived at the time of writing, but future editions of this work will certainly address the fact that the *mol'far*'s death raises many questions about his life and legacy.

water had dried out. Another sign hung on the door asked visitors to please wait patiently inside, another asked visitors to refrain from littering sunflower seeds on the territory. I entered a frigid, tiny room where three local middle-aged women waited. I took in my surroundings: a desiccated bundle of herbs on the windowsill; a plastic bag of bottle caps; a poster of Danylo Nechay, the Zaporizhian Kozak hero whom the *mol'far* Nechay claims as an ancestor; a cooking pot with an ill-fitting lid. After some time passed, the *mol'far*, a sprightly white-haired man wearing large squarish glasses, escorted a young woman out of his office. He invited me to come in. I



protested: I didn't want to jump the line. He theatrically announced to the waiting room that I had come all the way from America to see him, and everybody insisted that I go ahead.

In his office, we traded business cards. His card, printed in full color, shows him in traditional Hutsul dress, wooden cross in hand, seated in front of his home. The card contains his full address and phone number, above which is written: "Nechay Mykhailo Mykhailovych: Native doctor. Extrasensory Perception. Clairvoyant. Practitioner-psychologist. Practitioner-sexologist. Master of white magic. *Mol'far*." The *mol'far* is a historical archetype, once considered the most powerful magician among Hutsuls, with the ability to control thunder and deploy both white and black magic according to his needs or desires.⁴⁹ Nechay himself gives the following description of the legacy of *mol'fary* in the opening to a documentary film:

From times immemorial, there have been sorcerers, molfars, seers, shamans. From prehistoric times the Lord has blessed those individuals, yet illiterate and uncivilized,

⁴⁹ In the 1912 novel *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors*, the character of the *mol'far* is described as follows: "People say he was like a god. Wise and powerful, that thunder-soothsayer and sorcerer held in his strong hands the forces of heaven and earth, life and death, and the health of livestock and mankind. He was feared but needed by all" (Rubchak 1981: 111).

with the power to heal suffering, illnesses or bad luck. They also predicted weather... If a sorcerer made a wrong forecast and somebody died, then the sorcerer was killed. That's how it was, all or nothing (Feofilaktov 2008).

Nechay calls himself the last surviving *mol'far*, trained by his grandmother, who was a sorceress and herbalist. He described the work that he does and the acclaim that he has gotten for it:

I heal people, fundamentally. I am a native [*narodnij*] doctor, of native medicine - official. I have been healing people for 42 years. I am a practicing psychologist, sexologist, philosopher, and teacher of teachers. I have read lessons at Universities and Institutes for professors and docents, researchers, and analysts. I have this gift from God - don't think that I am educated - all I have finished is secondary school. But still, half of the world listens to me. They made a documentary film about me in Ukraine, I have had visitors from Japan, Germany, Poland, and Russia, all the big countries of the world. My information bank [*bank danykh*] is in the internet. So, you can consult with me (Personal interview 2/2/09).

Critics of Nechay are widespread. In a scene from one film, the camera rests on villagers working in the field, who shake their heads at the idea that their neighbor possesses any special talents. One musician told me that he believed that the notion of Nechay as a "sexologist" was laughable or, worse, perverted. One Hutsul woman, considered a local witch by many, even told me that she believed Nechay was a charlatan, exploiting people to make money off of his celebrity. However, among Ukrainians, he is regarded by some as a true miracle-worker, and has consulted politicians as well as high-profile pop stars.

In parts of Poland and Ukraine, Nechay has become something of a celebrity. The 1997 photo-documentary book *Na Daleki Polonyn'i* [On the Distant Mountain-Valley], a Polish endeavor, has an image of Nechay on the cover. He is in full ceremonial Hutsul costume, holding the tools of his trade: a whittled wooden cross, an ordinary kitchen knife, and a "thunder-controlling" wooden club [*hromovytsia*] (Polets 1997). During Soviet times, he received bundles of letters asking for help, which he keeps in a pile in his home. In the late 1980s, he was asked to bless the first Chervona Ruta festival, the historical event that brought Ukrainian rock and folk

musicians together in opposition to Soviet power. He told me how he had controlled the skies over Chernivtsi, where the festival took place: for seven days, they had beautiful sunshine; as soon as the festival ended and he left for his village, it began to rain.

“Nature” and Hutsul Shamanism

[Magic] enchants the soul with its sounds and melodies, as well as rituals. Rituals are connected with nature inseparably, like a man and his body.

- *Mol'far* Nechay (Feofilaktov 2008).

I noticed, on our first meeting, that Nechay's words came in a rush, at a similar pace to the incantations that he performed on me in subsequent visits. Indeed, in viewing and transcribing two recent documentary films about him, I realized that his speeches seem to follow a loose script, touching on key themes in his belief system, his authority, and his reputation (Yakovlev 2007; Feofilaktov 2008). The trope of “nature” is especially key for him, and he rehearses themes that fall into Ivakhiv's tri-partite rubric of “nature as land, ‘blood’ and Tradition.” He invests his authority in “natural” powers derived from his environment, especially healing herbs and magical stones, rooting his shamanism in the land of his heritage. In one scene from the 2008 documentary, he explains how a special stone that he found in the forest can make a girl more attractive to men, exclaiming, “you can't find such stones anywhere but here!” He explains that the stone - a large circular stone that is white on one half and grey on the other - represents a natural binary:

These are two sexes. This is feminine and this is masculine. Yin and yang. Male and female, The inseparable sides of the world. Night and day. Good and Evil, Power and weakness, Life and Death. Two worlds combined in one (Feofilaktov 2008).

To perform the ritual, the girl must stand on the stone, naked, while the *mol'far* performs incantations. When I ask him, at one of our meetings, where he learned such rituals, he describes

his skills as both god-given and inherited, both supernatural and mysterious but also borne of “blood,” transmitted through his familial lineage of healers. He invokes the power of Tradition: his methods are ancient, rooted in a tradition that is essentially (and famously) Hutsul.

Nechay also links himself to a cross-cultural brotherhood of shamans, who “perceive nature more spiritually than physically.” In a short film made by Ukrainian documentarians for an English-speaking audience, he shows images from books in his home library and expresses his kinship towards the “wild tribes” of other parts of the world:

I’m interested in the wild [*dyki*] tribes who don’t give up the lifestyle of their ancestors. The tribes in warm countries like Africa and American Indians who live a wild life. Wild life means nature. It provides health, happiness and succession of generations (Feofilaktov 2008).

Indeed, traditional Hutsul shamanism bears affinities to other traditions of spirit-based faiths that blend colonial forms of religions and expand to include “a variety of cultural elements - individual practices and creeds, a complex system of folk medicine, a structure for community justice, a fertile oral tradition, a rich iconography... a wealth of metaphors of political affirmation” (Olmos 1997).⁵⁰ Yet, just like many other shamanic traditions, the relevance and context in which traditional beliefs are received and practiced has narrowed and - in many instances - become *folkloricized* for touristic consumption.⁵¹ Nechay, as the benefactor of recent documentary projects, maintains an ambivalent relationship to outsiders interested in his healing practice. He told me that he takes the long view. His view is ultimately optimistic: the *mol’far*

⁵⁰ Katherine Hagedorn has written about Afro-Cuban Santería and Joseph Murphy provides an overview of African diaspora traditions, including Haitian voodoo, Brazilian candomblé, and Afro-Cuban Santería (Hagedorn 2001), (Murphy 1994) for Caribbean and African traditions.

⁵¹ This phenomenon, the transformation of folkways into the display of folkways, was examined by Handler (cited by Roginsky), who studied the emergence of tourist culture in Quebec. As local Quebecois farmers became the object of a nostalgic gaze for urban tourists, the hospitality industry grew and displaced the daily rituals (and challenges) of farm-based subsistence. As a result, the farmers’ dependence on tourists grew. “Ironically, the more visitors sought the farmers’ authenticity, the less these farmers maintained it. As they became increasingly engaged in converting their way of life into a *display of folkways*, they gradually stopped living those folkways” (Roginsky 2007:44).

prophecies that global civilization will eventually return to a state of “wildness,” in which all evils and petty quarrels will be erased. His narrative is ultimately redemptive, but he believes that modern Hutsul culture is on a steady path of regression. He knows that when he dies, his practice and the traditions that he carries will disappear with him.⁵²

The Feminine *Drymba* and Musical Power

The *drymba* is like a mistress [*liubaska*] to me.

- Mol'far Nechay, personal interview 2/2/09

Among his other skills, Nechay is an expert *drymba* [jaw harp] player and manufacturer. Adept at harnessing the melodic potential of the buzzing, resonant jaw harp, Nechay played traditional melodies such as the iconic Hutsul male dance – the “Arkan” – for me on his petite handmade *drymba*. In his household, his mother, aunt, and father all played. His father taught him how to make the instrument, and starting at the age of 12 (in 1941), Nechay started making his own. He explains that “it’s delicate work...that’s why you have to have a deep understanding of the instrument, it’s not just based on the mold of another model, it has to be alive” (personal interview 2/2/09). In 1964, Nechay founded an ensemble of *drymba* players that numbered some 20 players from his village and surrounding areas. The ensemble still exists, and performs at festivals occasionally.⁵³

⁵² However, there are individuals who express desire to learn his ways. In one scene from the Ivano-Frankivsk-based band Perkalaba’s documentary film about the journey to Hutsul’schyna, they visit Nechay and one of the band members asks if he can learn what Nechay knows. Nechay tells him that he will have to consult with his spiritual guide - Saint Panteilemon - and if the answer is positive, Nechay will call him. If he does not call, it means that he is not chosen to be a *mol'far*.

⁵³ “I have been performing on stage for forty-three years with my ensemble - it’s the oldest ensemble in Ukraine of its kind, there’s no other one like it... it’s called *Struny Cheremoshi* [Strings of the Cheremosh]” (interview 2/2/09).

The *drymba* is one of the tools Nechay uses to heal. He believes that the *drymba* possesses a potent magic, but it's potential must be unlocked by the rare specialist:



Mol'far Nechay plays a *drymba* from his collection.
Photo M.Sonevtsky, 2009.

The *drymba* has such nuances that a simple person will not comprehend it; a musicologist or artist-scholar cannot understand all of the nuances of the tones of the *drymba* at its performance... If a regular musician plays the *drymba*, he doesn't have the same "energy" [*enerhetyka*] that the *mol'far* has when he plays it.... These sounds can heal mental defects or a shattered nervous system. This sonic vibration cannot be reproduced with other musical instruments. These are natural sounds of sonic purity. I not only play, but I kind of sing with my mouth while playing. That's the interaction of music and singing (Yakovlev 2007).

On my repeated visits to see Nechay, he emphasized the mysterious and "natural" power of the *drymba*. Yet it is the elemental "naturalness" of the *drymba* that also endows it with a supernatural potential that must be unlocked by the shaman.

Gendered conceptions of musical competency articulated along the male/female :: yin/yang binary that Nechay provided in the magical stone example, legitimize Nechay's special claim on the mystical *drymba*. While such a dichotomous perception of male/female roles are prominent in many aspects of Hutsul social relations, in music, virtuosity and competence usually lie squarely in the domain of the masculine.⁵⁴ Nechay, however, claims that the *drymba* is "a female instrument" – one that he "masters" through his shamanic powers but also through his "feminine soul": later in our meeting, Nechay told me that he believes that he possesses the reincarnated soul of a Mexican female playwright. Since he "has a female soul and a female

⁵⁴ The connection between musical virtuosity and idealized masculinity is prevalent in many cultures. Aaron Fox writes in *Real Country*, "the social importance of musical skill (esp as an index of masculinity) in this community" was a prominent factor during his fieldwork (*Real Country*: 51). I take this up later in the example from Shekeryk-Donykiv.

character” (partly evidenced by his affinity for sweets), he believes he is uniquely well-suited to the *drymba*, optimally able to access its potent magical potential (interview 2/2/09).⁵⁵

The *drymba* can carry you into another sphere, into a trance. If I were to play for you for a long time, you would emerge in another realm and see a different world. It’s very simple. There are people who specialize in trance, they can put themselves and others into a trance. And there are others who can only go into a trance through narcotics - they smoke cigarettes, or they drink [alcohol], or a special tea, or take some drugs...you can find another realm, it’s been shown in scholarship. The *drymba* has much strength. I treat people with psychological problems, by playing them various special melodies, and after this the person will understand that their psychological state is abnormal (interview 2/2/09).⁵⁶

The role of trance in music is a pervasive and historical phenomenon, and had been well-documented by ethnomusicologists: in the devotional practices of Sufi mystics (Qureshi 1986/1995), practitioners of Jewish Kabbalah (Glazerson 1997), Christian Pentacostalists in the United States, modern dance-music and rave culture (Gore 1997), and many other subcultures (Judith O. Becker 2004). Judith Becker defines trance as “a state of mind characterized by intense focus, the loss of the strong sense of self and access to types of knowledge and experience that are inaccessible in non-trance states” (Judith Becker 1994: 41). The *mol’far’s drymba* trance promises the same kind of transformation – a reemergence into an alternate reality – and is one example of how the mystical power of music plays heavily in representations of and by Hutsuls.

Representations of the supernatural powers of music – used to validate the “realness” of Hutsuls who are able to harness such powers – were widely written into 19th and 20th century sources that described the lives of the Hutsuls. Though the majority of such representations were produced by “outsiders” – either urban literati who traveled to the mountains for respite and

⁵⁵ He also explains that there are three ranges of *drymba*, two of which are explicitly gendered: “*zhinocha*, *muzhka*, *i bas*” (corresponding as: female - high, male - middle, and bass).

⁵⁶ According to Virlana Tkacz, who has studied shamanism in Buryatia, Mongolia, and Kyrgyzstan, the jaw harp is also used extensively in those shamanistic traditions.

relaxation, or colonial ethnographers who produced detailed monographs on the social lives of the Hutsuls – there is one stunning example of native ethnography that is not widely known,



even in Ukraine, today. To U.S. anthropologists who have been concerned with the fundamental crisis of ethnographic authority in the wake of post-colonial critique, the discovery of a voice such as this native ethnographer’s – Petro Shekeryk-Donykiv from the village of Holove – is doubly interesting because it provides an example of a “native ethnographer” from an era when the practice of ethnography in the United States was still in a nascent formation. My particular interest in Shekeryk-Donykiv centers on the impact of his work in

reinstating forgotten rituals and kindling contemporary pride in ancient local custom, and extends to the importance of his role as a native ethnographer in a borderland on the periphery of various colonial urban loci of scholarship. For these reasons, I include a substantial biographical background of this early 20th century native ethnographer – Petro Shekeryk-Donykiv – in the following section before delving into the published works of this exceptional figure.

Petro Shekeryk-Donykiv: Insider Representations of the Musical Supernatural

Petro Shekeryk-Donykiv’s fundamental faith in the coherence of his native people’s culture provides a counterpoint to the many better known exoticist and romantic literary and ethnographic accounts of Hutsul life by colonial and Ukrainian intellectuals of the 19th and 20th centuries (see Kotsiubynsky 1981; Shukhevych 1899/1997; Ukraïnka 1973; Vincenz 1955; Witwicki 1873, et al). Shekeryk-Donykiv writes with a Hutsul voice, in his Hutsul dialect. By organically integrating the complex belief system of the Hutsuls into his stories and reports, his

writing provides an instructive counterpoint from these outsider perspectives. The evidence provided by a native ethnographer whose work was untouched by the Soviet censorship regime and unfiltered through contemporary post-colonial politics offers a truly rare glimpse of the world that Shekeryk-Donykiv inhabited.

Petro Shekeryk-Donykiv was born into humble conditions in the high mountain village of Holove near *Zhab'ye* (renamed in the 1960s to Verkhovyna) in 1889. He completed four years of primary school education in Holove, where his teacher, Luka Harmatij, encouraged him to document his ethnographic observations. Harmatij presented his favorite student with a copy of Taras Shevchenko's *Kobzar* (the foundational text in romantic Ukrainian literature and politics), which had a big impact on the small boy. Through his teacher, Shekeryk-Donykiv became acquainted with many of the urban literati of the day when they came to the mountains for respite or inspiration – luminaries such as Ivan Franko, Hnat Khotkevych, Mykhailo Kotsiubynskij, Volodymyr Shukhevych – whom Shekeryk-Donykiv assisted in their folklore collecting endeavors (Shkribliak 2006).

During World War I, Shekeryk-Donykiv served in the Austrian army, where he agitated



Petro Shekeryk-Donykiv with his wife, Paraska.
Archival photo re-published in *Rik u viruvanniakh Hutsuliv...* (2009)

for the rights of Ukrainian speakers and encouraged his countrymen to take pride in the language and culture of Ukraine despite its status as the colony of various shifting empires. His physical maturation came hand in hand with his full-bodied conviction as an outspoken nationalist, and upon returning to his native land after the war, he actively participated in

numerous social, cultural and political movements, including the First Hutsul Theater company

in Krasnoilya under the direction of Hnat Khotchevych, the “Prosvita” reading halls and social organizations, the Ukrainian Nationalist Party (eventually as an elected deputy to its Rada in the 1930s), etc.⁵⁷ He was also a tireless activist working to combat illiteracy among the Hutsuls, and the founder and the chief editor of the annual *Hutsul'skij Kalendar* [Hutsul Calendar] that exists to this day. He was a prolific writer, who published over 106 works about the lives and beliefs of the Hutsuls in the 1920s and 30s, in presses as far-reaching as Warsaw.

Summarizing the achievements of his friend and collaborator, Petro Shekeryk-Donykiv, the renowned Polish ethnographer and writer Stanislaw Vincenz (1888-1971) commented that “he was a talented person, if not a genius, and he made a work that, if they someday dig it up, will be the pride of native writing and a monument to the old language, to which there is no parallel” (Arsenysh 2009). After more than fifty years, in the 1990s, the work to which Vincenz had referred was finally, and quite literally, dug up: it was physically exhumed from the soil near his family’s homestead, wiped clean by the author’s daughter, and presented to the editorial staff at “Hutsulshchynna,” the local press of the isolated Carpathian mountain town of Verkhovyna.

The history of this manuscript is exceptional for the unlikelihood of its survival, but also distressingly ordinary as an example of the countless erasures attempted or accomplished by the Soviet regime. Shekeryk-Donykiv, a prominent local intellectual and agitator for the rights of his people, was identified as a threat to the Soviets. Three weeks after the last page of the loosely autobiographical book was dated by Shekeryk-Donykiv (on April 20 of 1940), he was arrested by the NKVD and deported to Siberia, where he perished in the gulag. For the remainder of her life, his wife Paraska swore that his manuscripts, including the novel that was his masterpiece,

⁵⁷ William Noll provides a fascinating historical study of how the “Prosvita” organization contributed to the formation of Ukrainian national consciousness in the late 19th century on the Polish-Ukrainian borderlands (Noll 1991). The effect of this organization in designating the Hutsuls as a unique kind of “folk” and collecting their folklore had great repercussions for Western Ukrainian identity formation in the 1920s and 30s.

had been destroyed. In truth, she and her daughter Anna buried the works, moving them occasionally, until “better times” came. Finally, in 1999, eight years after Ukraine declared independence from the Soviet Union, Anna brought the manuscript to the editors of the “*Hutsulshynna*” press in Verkhovyna, and they re-assembled the novel from the partly-destroyed, partly-decayed original. The novel was finally published in 2007; the following year, the same press released the collected works of Shekeryk-Donykiv, titled “A Year in the Ritual Life of the Hutsuls” (Shekeryk-Donykiv 2007, 2009).

Since the publication of these works, due to the limited number of copies published and the obscure and antiquated dialect in which most of the work is written, Shekeryk-Donykiv’s output has had a limited impact outside of the Verkhovyna region. His work was, however, frequently cited as vital instructional material by Hutsul friends and subjects during my fieldwork in the mountains in 2009. During the winter holidays in Verkhovyna, my hosts would read aloud from *Dido Ivanchyk* to make sure that the *starovitzki* (lit. “old world”) dining procedures were followed - my host told me that they did this as a “show” partly for the tourists present at the table, but also partly for themselves. As my host read out of the novel, she instructed all of the guests at the holy Christmas dinner to climb under the food-laden table in turn and shake its legs, because this was believed to shoo away any unclean spirits or demons. The book triggered a long suppressed memory for the elderly matriarch, and, for the first time in decades, she carried freshly baked loaves of *kolach* [braided egg bread] into the brisk winter night to offer it to the deceased of that year, as her mother did in the 1930s.

Dido Ivanchyk is Shekeryk-Donykiv’s magnum opus. It is a novel about the life of a Hutsul man narrated from the perspective of his adoring grandson, written in the *starovitzkij* Hutsul dialect. The story includes invaluable details about the yearly rituals that marked life in

the pre-Soviet Carpathian Mountains in the 19th and early 20th centuries, including the complex intermarriage of pagan and animist beliefs with colonial forms of Christianity. The collected works (“A Year in the Ritual Life of the Hutsuls”) contain short essays in a folkloric-ethnographic vein, personal memoirs (including a history of the first Hutsul theater that Shekeryk-Donykiv worked on with Hnat Khotkevych), short stories based on local lore and legend, detailed explanations of calendrical rituals, opinion pieces, and humorous writings.

Both works also contain rich descriptions of the role of music in the daily and spiritual lives of the Hutsuls, as a force for calling together the supernatural and the terrestrial through sound. As the bridge between the disparate belief systems of paganism and Christianity, music often serves to blend and blur the distinctions between older and newer forms of Hutsul faith. Music may be seen as a natural god-given force to selected (almost always male) members of the community, special individuals who may possess mystical powers such as the ability to manipulate the weather or create a trance in others through melody, sound, or vibration such as the *mol’far*. Or musical mastery might indicate a dark alliance between musician and a demon spirit such as the *aridnyk*.

In *Dido Ivanchyk*, displays of musical virtuosity in public settings such as holidays and weddings become settings for head-to-head competition between two males for the title of more “honorable” (lit. «гоноровій»). In one episode from the novel, Shekeryk-Donykiv tells a story about such a meeting between two violinists, and the resulting supernatural tricks played by the loser of the competition to restore his honor.

The Masculine Fiddle and the Musical Supernatural

About halfway through *Dido Ivanchyk*, Shekeryk-Donykiv’s protagonist attends a wedding in Zheb’ye during which an episode of musical and masculine competition takes place.

Sukhon'ko, an elder master of the *starovitzkij ihry* has been hired as the violinist for the wedding procession and party. But at the party, a young man from Zheb'ye with "dark features... and of gypsy blood through his grandfather, Ignat Gavitz, the main musician of the new style of *ihry* to dance and song" (257) appears and outplays the elder violinist. While only elderly men continue dancing to Sukhon'ko's music, all of the youth dance vigorously to Gavitz's fiery melodies, so moved by the music and the copious amounts of alcohol that they take no notice of the cold or of "the snow rising to above their knees." Witnessing this, Sukhon'ko tucks the violin under his arm and flees to his house "covered in shame." He retreats, "as a dog beaten under the table" (257). The wedding guests drink more and raise many toasts to the health of the livestock of the young married couple (258).

The new musician, now referred to by the author in the diminutive "Gavitziuk," has been seated in Sukhon'ko's designated place of honor. The young fiddler proceeds to accompany the host, hostess, and children as they sing. Meanwhile, Sukhon'ko, furious that at his advanced age such a young violinist (and from Zheb'ye, no less!) could upstage him. His face burns. He recalls that the young violinist had not even properly greeted Sukhon'ko, an indication that "he took him for nothing," a worthless man who "does not earn his place in the world." Shekeryk-Donykiv writes vividly as he describes the elder violinist's realization that "the star of his musical fame was setting." Enraged by the shame brought on him, Sukhon'ko wants to spit in Gavitz's face, but he knows the guests would only laugh at him, because Gavitz had outplayed him and was therefore higher in the social hierarchy. There is a flash in his brain, and he thinks of another way to recover his dignity and status. Sukhon'ko remembers a curse. He steps outside, where the drunk wedding guests "opened the door for the elder musician as they would for the pope to church" (260). Biding his time, Sukhon'ko waits for the perfect moment to incant the hex,

mouthed the words as he eyes his rival's fiddle and lo, the strings on Gavitz's violin break "as if cut by a knife" (266). The dancing stops. Gavitz is stunned because his strings had never been broken before (though, Shekeryk-Donykiv writes, he had broken the strings of other musicians before, when he had been "protected" by a dark spirit). Gavitz does not understand who could have the power to break his strings - he had not considered Sukhon'ko as a formidable foe, but rather "as some local beggar, before he outplayed him." Sukhon'ko watches gleefully as the drunken and disappointed revelers encircle Gavitz and beat him for ruining the party. Sukhon'ko, seeing that the young man has learned his lesson, implores them to stop, and they do. The revelers beg Sukhon'ko to play again. They carry him back inside, to his honored seat at the table. He plays to the dancers until the end of the wedding party, smugly aware that his pact worked.

This episode – a departure from the main action of the novel – serves as an important glimpse into the psychology of musical competition between Hutsul men (who were the only sex eligible to be cast in the role of the wedding musician).⁵⁸ As an insight to the social poetics of Hutsul masculinity, this story reveals the trope of "honor" as a moral term that occupies a wide swath of space as both an interior and exterior social identifier. As a personal, private inner feeling of self-worth, honor operates as a motivator for reflection (as when Sukhon'ko contemplates his sinking star) and action (retreat, deception). As a "moral taxonom[y that has] to do with the public evaluation of behavior, with degrees of conformity to a social code, rather than with hypothetical inner states" (Herzfeld 1980: 341), "being honorable" also stands in for the public, performance element of musical display, of basking in the praise of the community of listeners and dancers. Herzfeld describes how the Greek "taxonomy of values... expresses the

⁵⁸ It is also, according to the violinist Hurdz from the pedagogical lineage of Gavitz, historically accurate to portray the wedding musician's role as cut-throat: "In the early years, the meeting of ensembles would almost always nearly lead to fights" (interview 1/29/09).

matching of performance with expectation,” an observation that holds to this example taken from Hutsul contexts, in which holding on to the reputation of being a man and musician of “honor” is of such high stakes that supernatural powers are called in.⁵⁹

Tales of the violinist named Gavitz still circulate among Hutsuls today. For many Hutsul musicians that I have interviewed, Gavitz is often named as the first of the three most influential innovators of Hutsul music in memory (along with Mogur and Yurchak). Taken to be the founder of the technically and flashy style of playing, stories told to me about Gavitz would often lead to asides delivered in hushed, nearly conspiratorial tones: “Well, you know he wasn’t really a Hutsul, he had Gypsy blood” or, “they said he sold his soul to the devil in exchange for his technique and protection against the jealousy and curses of others.” One musician told me a nearly opposite story from Shekeryk-Donykiv’s, in which Gavitz was posed against another violinist and his protector – the devil – made the other violinist’s strings break.⁶⁰ Shekeryk-Donykiv’s version of this encounter between Gavitz and Sukhon’ko provides a remarkable counter-narrative to the character of Gavitz with whom I became acquainted through my ethnographic research. The Gavitz spoken of today is endowed with an absolute and even supernatural musical power, though he is often also spoken of as jealous and protective of his skills (Ivan Zelenchuk 2008).⁶¹ Shekeryk-Donykiv, however, portrays him as the ultimate loser in the battle for musical supremacy. Why?

Reading intention back into Shekeryk-Donykiv’s novel is a speculative endeavor, but I want to posit the hypothesis that the portrayal of Gavitz as the wedding’s ultimate loser was

⁵⁹ Herzfeld’s (1980) work was responding to the mid-20th century anthropological belief that the gendered “dialectic of honor and shame” was a particularly Mediterranean construct; Herzfeld was one of many scholars to challenge this as a naturalized truth exclusively applicable to Mediterranean cultures.

⁶⁰ This same ability to make rivals’ string break is spoken about Mogur.

⁶¹ Two years before his death, in 1995, the fiddler known as “Mogur” - another important innovator in Hutsul music - recalled his childhood studies with Gavitz. Apparently, the older fiddler was reluctant to show his pupil anything too sophisticated so that “he could not be overtaken” (Zelenchuk 2008).

devised by Shekeryk-Donykiv as a lightly humorous cautionary tale. (The fact that Sukhon'ko's ultimate desire was to restore his public and private honor rather than actually harm Gavitz further bolsters such a hypothesis.) In Shekeryk-Donykiv's lifetime, Gavitz's faster, flashier playing style could have easily disrupted fiddle-playing norms of an earlier era, and the disrespectful attitude of a younger musician towards an elder male in the community would have been seen by the community as grounds for punishment. Recent studies of gendered subjectivities in traditional music have underscored the constructed and stylized performance of genders in traditional music (Sugarman 1989, Ninoshvili 2005). Tsitsishvili reveals how the tightly regulated gendered conventions of singing at the Georgian supra feast map concretely onto musical performance, in which "the community's requirements of ideal social order and community members' individual desires are amalgamated in complex ways, presenting social hierarchy in a favorable, acceptable light" (2006: 454). In the Hutsul world depicted by Shekeryk-Donykiv, musical virtuosity and talent operated as a sort of trump card that disrupted and inverted typical masculine social hierarchies that privilege age, but ultimately, by tapping into a dark and superhuman power, Sukhon'ko managed to restore the natural order dictated by seniority and reputation.

Following Sherry Ortner's argument that gender often functions as the master trope of difference on which other markers of difference are then mapped (1990, 1995), I advance the idea that the Hutsul ideal of "honor" is directly tied to a set of traits that are coded as distinctly masculine. In the case of music, this powerful masculine ideal of "honor" is intrinsically connected to instrumental virtuosity, showmanship, and endurance. This trope permeates contemporary discourse in Hutsulshchynna about the decency and competence of men in society; being designated by the community as a "man of honor" is one of the highest forms of praise,

and talent or skill in music can earn this kind of respect from the community at large.

Alternately, disgrace falls upon the man whose talent or skill is less than his competitor, or who squanders his talent by succumbing to alcoholism. This same pattern of masculine competition for the title of most “honorable” is narrativized in Shekeryk-Donykiv’s version in the story about the meeting of two violinists at a winter wedding in the Carpathians, in which supernatural forces are invoked to remedy an insult to one musicians’ social status.

While Shekeryk-Donykiv’s work provides a vital native Hutsul’s perspective to discourses of “realness” as (masculine) musical competence, the most popular representation of such discourses of musical power come from an iconic “outsider” work: Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky’s celebrated novel *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* [Тіні Забутих Предків], remade as a film in the 1960s by Sergei Parajanov. *Shadows* is saturated with references to the musical supernatural and, unlike Shekeryk-Donykiv’s work, Kotsiubynsky’s *Shadows* has won a wide international audience (especially through its film adaptation). As a popular representation of many facets of the Hutsul supernatural, *Shadows* has reinforced and codified stereotypes of the Hutsuls far beyond Hutsulshchyna. In the following section, I provide an introduction to Kotsiubynsky’s depiction of musical power in his 1912 novel. Following this, I introduce the role of the musical supernatural in Parajanov’s celebrated filmic version of *Shadows*. In the film version, musical power was portrayed both in original plot-driven uses of music in *Shadows*, and through the mythical status of the Hutsul musician known as “Mogur,” who was believed to himself possess supernatural powers, and who was enlisted by Parajanov to craft the soundscape and soundtrack for the film.

Outsider Representations of the Musical Supernatural: *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors*

Of all representations of traditional Hutsul ritual and music, the novel and film *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* has circulated dominant stereotypes of Hutsuls as superstitious, close-to-nature mountaineers more than any other medium.⁶² The novel was the last significant work written by Ukrainian novelist Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky (1864-1913), completed in October of 1911 and published in 1912. Shekeryk-Donykiv, the Hutsul native ethnographer, met Kotsiubynsky on one of his trips to Kryvorivnia, and published his recollections of their time together in 1925. In the characteristic effusive style of Hutsul toastmasters, Shekeryk-Donykiv lionizes Kotsiubynsky for his commitment to Hutsul culture. He recalls the novelist's inquisitiveness about every aspect of Hutsul life. Shekeryk-Donykiv introduced Kotsiubynsky to a diverse cast of demonic archetypes: the *nechysta syla* [unclean spirit], *shcheznyk* [the vanisher], *rusalka* [female undead, associated with water], *mavka* [wood nymph-sirens], *chuhaistyr* [a forest giant who threatens the *mavka*], and the *aridnyk* [the Devil]. He also shared the story of a local man's encounter with a "wild creature" (probably the *chuhaister*) and *mavky* in the forest - an episode that Kotsiubynsky recounted in the final scenes of *Shadows*. At a funeral that the men attended together, Kotsiubynsky "asked me why they play the *trembita*. I told him that here in the mountains, where one house is so far from the next, it is the only way to let people know about death" (Shekeryk-Donykiv 2009: 323).⁶³ Kotsiubynsky's last impression in the novel is sonic: the plangent blare of the *trembita* heard from outside the window.

In *The Music of Satan and the Bedeviled World*, Bohdan Rubchak provides an in-depth overview of how Kotsiubynsky integrated Hutsul music into his final and most famous work (Rubchak 1981). Much like Shekeryk-Donykiv's tale of two violinists, in which music is

⁶² More than any other medium with the possible exception of Ruslana's *Wild Dances*, taken up at length in chapter three.

⁶³ Recently, Olya Kolomyets has written about the role of the *trembita* in Hutsul funeral rituals (Kolomyets 2007).

depicted as a power that merges the terrestrial with the otherworldly, Kotsiubynsky presents music as an elemental power in the Hutsul worldview, and also as a sonic metaphor for the interiority of his main characters. *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* is a Romeo and Juliet story set against the ritual life of Hutsul villagers (Kotsiubynsky 1981, 2008). Ivan, the Hutsul Romeo, is the nineteenth child out of twenty in the Hutsul family of the Paliychuks. He is a strange child, called to “the faint and elusive melodies that dwelled within him” rather than the Hutsul folk melodies most children learn to play on the *sopilka* at a young age (Rubchak 1981:105). Early in the story, Ivan meets the *aridnyk* in the forest, and becomes enchanted by the melodies he hears from the devil’s *sopilka* [wood flute], as well as the devil’s ability to bring the “goats that God had taken from him” back while he played. Ivan dances joyfully, sealing his deal with the devil. Rubchak points out that “to be cursed from birth with the gift of unique songs, and then to have them confirmed by the devil, means to cross the forbidden line and to step on the road to perdition.” In effect, Ivan’s devilish dance in the forest foreshadows the tragedy to come just as Shakespeare’s line about “star-crossed lovers” functions in the prologue to the original.

Early in the novel, Ivan’s father is murdered in a battle of two families. He meets the young girl Marichka against the backdrop of the mournful *trembita*, signaling his father’s death. Soon, the curious melodies of Ivan’s *sopilka* displace the backdrop of death as he falls deeply in love with Marichka. Rubchak points out that “the constant companion of Ivan and Marichka’s love is song” (107). Marichka also possesses a musical gift, but where Ivan’s is governed by dark powers, hers is god-given and “natural”; her songs

... seem to have rocked in the cradle or splashed about in the bath with her. They were born in her breast the way wild flowers spring up in a hayfield or firs grow on mountain slopes (107).

Marichka embodies an earthly, “natural” music born of her people and her land: she composes joyful, simple, and sometimes ominous *kolomyjkas*, the most developed verbal art and song form of the Hutsuls. Ivan’s otherworldly music is strange, but, with Marichka’s lyrics, becomes rooted in earthlier themes.

To raise money for their wedding, Ivan goes to work in the highlands. He embarks on a treacherous, hallucinatory journey, in which the Carpathian wilderness turns menacing and dark melodies plague his soul. Ivan’s odyssey becomes a confrontation between himself and his demons. While Ivan is journeying in the mountains, Marichka drowns in the Cheremosh River, symbolizing the *aridnyk*’s final blow to his minion. At the loss of his beloved, Ivan retreats from society: “he attempts to ease the pain not by his former communion with the essence of nature but by vain endeavors to lose himself in nature’s hostile wilderness” (Rubchak 1981:110). Eventually, he meets another woman, Palahna, and they are married. The union is troubled: Ivan is haunted by Marichka’s memory (and by her demonic reincarnation - when he invites evil spirits to his Christmas dinner, she accepts the invitation) and Palahna falls under the spell of the wicked *mol’far* Yura. Under Palahna’s influence, “Ivan half-heartedly immerses himself in the black magic of greed, as opposed to the white magic of music and poetry which he shared with his authentic bride, Marichka” (Rubchak 1981:111). At the *korchma* [tavern] one evening, Ivan sees the *mol’far* with Palahna and, enraged, reaches for his axe. The *mol’far* strikes him first, and the men nearly kill each other. Ivan continues to suffer, until one morning he is awoken by the *rusalka* Marichka, who leads him to the woods.

Ivan is about to be vanquished for the last time. Upon Marichka’s bodily death, his soul was murdered, and all that remains now is for his body to be assassinated by Marichka’s violated spirit. His soul stands for music, and his body represents his pathetic attempts at worldly life, which in themselves are a caricature of the earthly existence that Marichka taught him” (113).

Ivan is led into the forest, where he eventually succumbs to the whims of the *rusalka* Marichka and the *chuhaister*. The novel ends with the village in mourning, and the sound of the trembita signaling Ivan's death.

Realizing the Sounds of *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* in Parajanov's Film

The film version of *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors*, released in the USSR in 1964, was directed by Sergei Parajanov and starred Ukrainian actor Ivan Mykolajchuk. As an early example of the Soviet Poetic school of cinematography, the film version captured the "wild kineticism" of



The home where Parajanov lived during the making of *Shadows*. Photo O. Suskyak, 2009

Hutsul life using techniques of "static tableaux...combined with dynamic, frequently dizzying camera movements" (Steffen 1995-6:19; Oeler 2006).

The film went on to win awards in Western Europe, and remains one of the most popular post-War Soviet films.

In contemporary Hutsulshchyna, the impact of the film is strongly felt: Verkhovyna made a museum out of the home where Parajanov lived with a Hutsul family in 1963-64. The neighboring village of Kryvorivnia has a museum in the home where scenes from the film were shot. Parajanov invited many local Hutsuls to take part during filming, which, according to Ivan Zelenchuk, a historian based in Verkhovyna, "brought bright elements of ethnography and folklore, authentic Hutsul culture" to the screen (Zelenchuk 2007b: 104). Occasionally, meetings of the actors who took part in the film still occur on anniversaries and birthdays of Parajanov or Mykolajchuk (Zelenchuk 2007b).

Around the villages of Verkhovyna and Kryvorivnia, where most of the filming was done, Parajanov's legacy is celebrated in terms similar to Shekeryk-Donykiv's exalted memories

of Kotsiubynsky. According to locals, he was said to have lived with the Hutsuls “as part of the family,” helping with chores, attending weddings, funerals, baptisms and other key social events, and “soaking up” knowledge about the ways of life “like a sponge.”⁶⁴ He aspired towards an authenticity that he explained after the film’s release: “everything that you see on the screen, was real. That way that Hutsuls lament, nobody else can lament” (quoted from *Yak Znimavsia Film...*). Local Hutsuls were cast in minor roles and in group scenes, though the Dovzhenko film studios provided them with authentic costumes in some cases. All of the musical performances in the film – as pervasive in the film as music is in the original story – were performed by Hutsuls based in the Verkhovyna region. The most famous Hutsul musician at the time, Vasyl Ivanovych Hrymaliuk (known by the street name “Mogur”), was hired as the music director, and his ensemble traveled to Kyiv to record music for the film.

Mogur’s reputation as a “musician from God,” the “Hutsul Paganini,” and also as a man rumored to have made a deal with the devil is a lived example of the motley reputation accorded to skilled musicians. According to one recent interview with Ostap Kostiuk, whose ensemble *Baj* won first place at the Mogur Festival in Verkhovyna in 2010:

There are many legends about Mogur. There are totally mythical stories about his magic powers: how apparently at competitions between musicians at weddings or in “cutting contests” [*perehrakh*] at parties strings would break, when without agreement others took over a wedding, it would “not go” for the musicians nor the bride and groom.⁶⁵ There are private testimonies from some musicians who were acquaintances: Mogur could prevail over a musician so much that his *bayan* would tear and he would lose consciousness. Some of his students, although they had already gone through all of their musical studies, would still follow him at weddings, taking on the secondary role, in order to soak up such invisible abilities (Korespondent 2010).

⁶⁴ The *mol'far* Nechay told me, “Parajanov came to me for two weeks and took lessons about Hutsulshchynna from me. And he was a wonderful man, and made the film *Shadows* based on the book by Kotsiubynsky, who also held us Hutsuls in high regard, and shows our originality” (interview 2/2/09).

⁶⁵ I was told that there were times that these musical battles would go on for hours until all the strings would break - but “Mogur would always win” (interview 1/29/09).

Today, such rumors about Mogur are circulated widely, repeating the thematization of the musical supernatural that appears in the fictionalized worlds of Kotsiubynsky, Parajanov and Shekeryk-Donykiv.

Mogur's role as the music director in the acclaimed film *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* brought "honor to himself and glory to all of Hutsulshchyna," an achievement that locals have not forgotten, even naming the competition of Hutsul folk ensembles that takes place in Verkhovyna annually in his name (interview 1/17/09). Mogur has been canonized as a key figure in the history of local music, yet some view him as the man who single-handedly transformed the older *starovitzkij* style:

Mogur was a reformer of Hutsul music. One can interpret this in many ways. On the one hand, a more professional approach to performance appeared, many diverse melodies and styles were brought together into one systemized repertoire. On the other hand - a strong authorial factor entered the musical tradition, which was not able to not impact the archaic heritage and style of performance. Before him, Hutsul music, thought it had a rigid ritual canon, was performed at will. Every violinist had his order, played to his feelings, composed melodies and dances according to his desires. Mogur ordered and unified wedding melodies, built them to a certain standard (Korespondent 2010).

Little formal history has been written about Mogur, but Hutsuls will often mention him as the most important violinist and teacher of the 20th century. The *Hutsul'skij Kalendar 2008* included a transcript of a 1995 video recording, when a violinist based in Verkhovyna (Roman Kumlyk) and local historian (Ivan Zelenchuk) traveled to Mogur's home in Kryvobrodakh (in the Kolomyja region) on his 75th birthday. They recorded him playing *starovitzki ihry* [old-world tunes]. Between melodies Mogur told stories from his life in music (Ivan Zelenchuk 2008), echoing themes I heard from many Hutsul musicians during my fieldwork in 2008-9: how parents resisted or rejected their child's call to music; the child's defiance or persistence to heed their god-given call to music; how authority figures validated the child's musicality at an early stage; how the community eventually came to celebrate their talent. Mogur's self-mythologizing

biography emphasizes the “naturalness” of musicality in the Hutsul worldview, while local counter-narratives about his musical prowess often suggest the link between musical power and the supernatural.

The Devil in the Fiddle

Music has a great power, it helps people to live, and to become better.

- Mogur, from a 1995 interview (in Zelenchuk 2008)

Like most outstanding Hutsul fiddlers, Vasyl Ivanovych Hrymaliuk (b. March 10, 1920 in Zelene (Verkhovyna region), d. 1997 in Kolomya region) was known by everyone his “street name” Mogur.⁶⁶ As a child, he came into conflict with his mother, who believed that ‘you can’t make a man-of-the-house out of a musician’ (“з музиканта газди не буде”) and strongly forbade him from playing music. Defying her, he collected enough money to buy himself a fiddle, and played it in secret. When his mother discovered him playing, she broke the violin on the child, and he ran away from home. He went to the local authorities, a Polish Commandant, who listened to his story. Mogur recounts how the Polish officer brought out a violin and asked the young Mogur to play it. Hearing his talent, he gave the child the violin on the condition that he “never lie or steal.” When Mogur realized later that it was the officer’s recently deceased son’s violin, he “became emotional.” With his new fiddle in hand, he trekked to the village of Iltsia, where the renowned fiddler Gavitz lived (the same Gavitz written about in Dido Ivanchyk), and asked him for lessons. Gavitz accepted, and took the student on for free. But Gavitz only taught him simple melodies because “he didn’t want me to show him off. But I really wanted to learn to play like him, that’s why I listened to Gavitz play through the walls of the *korchma* and tried to catch it.

⁶⁶ His name came from the couple who raised him for part of his childhood. Dmytro and Kateryna Mohoruk, from whom he took the nickname “Mogur.”

For this, Gavitz was mad at me.” Mogur left and went to apprentice with another fiddler, Shkapiuk in the village of Bilobereza, where he studied intensively. As a teenager, people started to invite him to play at parties, baptisms and other occasions; he started to make a living as a musician. Eventually, he taught himself to play *tsymbaly*, bayan, trumpet and *sopilka*. He put together an ensemble, taught them melodies, encouraged them to drink (vodka) in measure, and created a new level of professionalized ensemble. The ensemble played weddings for 30 years in the Verkhovyna region.

Mogur recounts the story of his first and true love, Yidvokha Filypchuchina. She played the *drymba* and he would accompany her on the violin. “She was killed when parts of the village were set on fire by the Russians” (probably referring to WWII, when the Red Army advanced into Hutsuls’ chyna) and, in mourning, he composed a sad melody “that saved him” (Ivan Zelenchuk 2008).⁶⁷ The narrative of music as salvation is deeply entrenched in the mythos surrounding Mogur in particular. Vasyl Iliuk (born in 1947 and known by his street name “Hurduz”), is widely acknowledged as the “best student of Mogur.” He recounted the most famous tale of “how Mogur saved himself” (a story I heard repeated by numerous Hutsuls). The story is set in the 1940s, when “the Russians came:”

Mogur had to play concerts because the Russians demanded it and they were in control. He played at elections for the Bolsheviks.” One day, Mogur was walking down a road, which some people believed was the road now called Zhebyevskij Potik, and saw soldiers from the UPA coming.⁶⁸ He hid from them, in a ditch by the side of the road, and covered

⁶⁷ He finally married at the age of 35 - “I wasn’t in a rush.” He lived with his first wife for 11 years. They were childless and separated. He remarried in 1969, eventually migrating into the Kolomya region to his wife’s daughter’s house, where, according to the many Hutsuls, he felt very out of place and homesick for the Verkhovyna region.

⁶⁸ The Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) was the military wing of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalist (OUN) led by Stepan Bandera, and conducted guerilla-style warfare against any non-Ukrainian presence in their territory, with some soldiers battling in areas of Hutsulshchyna (especially in and around the village of Kosmach) into the early 1950s. The role and legacy of the UPA is hotly contested in contemporary Ukrainian history. In *Bloodlands*, Timothy Snyder provocatively argues that “although the UPA was determined (perhaps the most determined) opponent of communism, the ethnic conflict that it started only strengthened Stalin’s empire. What Ukrainian nationalists had started, Stalin would conclude” (2010: 326-7).

himself up with twigs and dirt. The soldiers uncovered him and, “recognizing him as a traitor who played for the Russians,” they asked what his last request was. He asked to play a melody. He played so beautifully that it “touched the souls” of the soldiers, and they released him unharmed, but warned him to stay away from Russian functions.

Hurduz never asked Mogur about the story personally (he told me that “it never seemed appropriate to ask”) – but he did learn the melody from his teacher.

I interviewed Hurduz, his wife Maria and his son Dmytro – an accomplished fiddler in both Hutsul and “literate” musical styles – at their home on the mountaintop in Holove on January 29,



Hurduz and his son Dmytro play a Hutsul melody together. Photo Oksana Susyak, 2009.

2009. He and his family confirmed that Mogur possessed some dark powers. Maria told me the story of when she was pregnant with her first son Vasyl in 1979. Her husband was hired to play with Mogur in another village. Mogur predicted that his wife would go into a difficult labor and the baby would be still-

born if they didn’t go into the *likarnia* [clinic]. Mogur ordered Hurduz to return to his wife and take her to the clinic. Maria resisted, claiming that she felt fine. Finally, at her husband’s persistence, she went, and upon arriving, went into a difficult labor. She says that if they hadn’t heeded Mogur’s warning the baby would not have survived. “He read it in the cards. He could help with livestock, if the goats and cows weren’t giving milk. People in the community would consult with him” (interview 1/29/09).

On the day that I interviewed Hurduz, my friend Oksana from Verkhovyna joined me. We set up for what we were told was a simple walk “right up that mountain” that became a breathless uphill hike through waist-level snow, bringing us to the Hurduz homestead just before nightfall. Our hosts were gracious and allowed us to stay the night, so our interview was conducted in a cozy, leisurely fashion, as Oksana reclined on top of the family’s giant traditional

wood-burning stove. We ate a hearty meal, and heard many stories interspersed with melodies that Hurduz (sometimes joined by his son Dmytro) would play. At Oksana’s request, Hurduz played the melody “that saved Mogur” – one of the melodies that he learned from Mogur himself. He told us that he would be honored to play us the melody, and that it was “very powerful.” His rendition made my friend Oksana weep. The next day, she explained to me that she had simply “been overcome by the power of the melody.”

As the outstanding student of Mogur, Hurduz is viewed by many locals as the most “real” inheritor of Mogur’s musical power. Yet, today Hurduz lives a relatively peaceful, agrarian life. He is known at home and in the surrounding villages as a masterful musician, but he is relatively private as a performer, and has not received the attention that some other local musicians have garnered in recent years. In contrast, the Tafiychuk family of musicians, located in a village not far (as the crow flies) from the Hurduz family, were “discovered” by authentic music pilgrims in the 1990s. Today, marketed by Ukrainian and Polish world music labels as the “most real” version of extant traditional Hutsul musicality, the Tafiychuk family seeks to balance their small-scale celebrity with their traditional subsistence way of life.

Visiting the Tafiychuk Family



Mykhailo Tafiychuk with local musician “Dovbush” in front of his home.
Photo M. Sonevsky 2009

Mykhailo Tafiychuk’s house in the village of Velykij Bukovets’ is not accessible by vehicle, but in the deep snow of Carpathian Mountain winter, he might offer you a ride to the nearest road on his horse-drawn, hand-carved sleigh. I learned the road to his house well in many seasons: in spring, I learned to avoid the

glistening mud slicks after my first dramatic slide; in summer, I wore a hat to brace from the sun and dust; in winter, when I was on my own, I drove my little white Mazda as close as it would go, parked it on the road, and then hiked through pristine snow, occasionally plummeting down in weak spots to where the snow rose to my hips. Between my first trip to his house in May of 2008, and my second journey in December of 2008, the Tafiychuk's house had been re-painted in the bold manner of so many homes in Hutsulshchynna. As I came up the last hill and down the snowed-in path, their house appeared in the bright colors of the Ukrainian flag, wheat yellow and deep sky blue, a modest local advertisement for their proud and patriotic Ukrainian home.

My visits to their home usually adhered to a fairly consistent pattern. Usually, I would arrange a range of times that I might visit through a phone conversation in advance. Then, whenever I arrived and was finally approaching, I hollered “Ho ho!” – the traditional practice of Hutsuls when nearing a house to alert the dwellers that visitors were coming, what my friend Oksana jokingly called the “Hutsul cell phone.” Usually, Mykhailo's wife, daughter, or granddaughter, would respond with a resonant “Ho Ho!” and greet me at the door. In the spring and summer months, I would often arrive to find Pan Mykhailo in his low-roofed “*majsternia*” (workshop), walls hung with the pre-industrial tools of the blacksmith. He would greet me



Mykhailo Tafiychuk and his son Yura play at the dinner table.
Photo Roman Pechizhak, 2008.

wearing oversized goggles that amplified his eyes dramatically, hands greasy and work clothes speckled with sawdust. I would ask him what he was working on, and he would demonstrate to me in a flash, recreating the elaborate designs and precise measurements of his musical instruments with practiced hands. Inevitably, he

would suggest that we leave the cramped work space for the main house where, inevitably – and

no matter how much I stressed that I would not be hungry for a meal upon arriving – Hanusya, his wife, would have the traditional Hutsul wood stove fired up, with dishes of creamy polenta sizzling and green sour borsch bubbling. Often, after the meal, he would play music, sometimes accompanied by his son Yura, an accomplished *sopilka* [wood flute] player.

Mykhailo Tafiychuk, the patriarch of the family of Hutsul musicians, can trace his family's roots to the villages where he now lives back “as far as memory goes.” His father was a reputed blacksmith in their village, and passed the trade on to his son. Born in 1939, he finished four years of schooling before the chaos of World War II penetrated to his remote village. Though barely literate, Tafiychuk takes pride in his musicality, which he accepted as “a God-given talent,” especially since he had no other musicians in his family (interview, 1/27/09). His mother, who came from a wealthy village family with large cattle holdings, did not wish for her son to pursue an education either as a smith (since she believed “that was Gypsy work”) or as a musician (since that was layabout [“*valiuha*”] work). Despite his mother's admonitions, the young Tafiychuk was drawn to music, and started playing the *sopilka*, a homemade 5-hole wood recorder, at the age of six. He told me about his earliest memory of crafting a scratchy pseudo-violin out of wood and string, until, at age seven, his mother broke down and got him a beat-up, but real, instrument. He recalled how it seemed effortless to play his first *ihry* (lit. “games,” also the term Hutsuls use to refer to melodies) to the amazement of his siblings and parents.

By the age of fourteen, he was included in the male caroling parties that perform for the duration of the winter rituals that stretch from Julian Calendar Christmas Day (January 7) to Epiphany (January 18th), and was sought after to play at the village social dance parties known as *vechornytsi*. Soon enough, he was in demand to play at weddings, the central ritual for many communities and the most lucrative event for village musicians. He joked about courting his wife

of over 45 years,⁶⁹ and how she become enchanted by his playing even though it was commonly believed that “you can’t make a man-of-the-house out of a musician” (1/22/09).⁷⁰ However, besides a flamboyantly ribald sense of humor, Tafiychuk doesn’t adhere to the prevalent stereotype of the lazy musician-as-alcoholic, as Hanusya herself pointed out to me, citing her husband’s tireless work ethic and teetotal lifestyle. At age seventy, Tafiychuk says that he is mostly retired from both blacksmithing and music, though his productivity tells another story.

Every summer, his remote family’s home is visited by pilgrims from all over the world, as he liked to remind me on my frequent visits in the winter of 2008-9. “Germans, a whole group of Dutch, Americans, Canadians, Russians, Poles, even Japanese!” – Tafiychuk would wave his hands in mock dismissal, claiming that he “didn’t even know where some of them came from,” but clearly proud that his home had become an international tourist destination (Interview 1/22/09). These visitors would come because they had heard about his instrument making skills



and his family of musical Hutsul virtuosos through the world music records and festival appearances that his family band has made in the last fifteen years.⁷¹ Within Ukraine, his musical family has been elevated to the status of a national treasure. Oleh

Skrypka, an icon of Ukrainian punk rock and a powerful figure in Ukrainian culture, personally hiked to his home (which is inaccessible by car) to invite him to play in an ethno-rock festival called *Krayina Mrij* in Kyiv. Before that, the prominent pop star Ruslana sent a crew to

⁶⁹ Mykhailo was born in Nov 20, 1939, and Hanusya in 1940. They were married when he was age 22, so in 2009, they had been married for 48 years.

⁷⁰ This is the same phrase - “*Z muzykanta gazdy ne bude*” - that I heard repeated often in interviews and conversations about musicians.

⁷¹ Koka records, a small Polish label that specializes in Ukrainian music, has released two artfully designed volumes of the Tafiychuk Family. Sheshory, an important annual Ukrainian music festival that emphasizes roots music and eco-tourism, has collaborated with many other Ukrainian and Polish organizations such as the Polish Institute, ArtPole, and Taras Bulba Entertainment to release collections and albums featuring the Tafiychuk family.

commission eight *trembitas* for her award-winning *Wild Dances* Eurovision performance.⁷² In the winter of 2008, Mykhailo Tafiychuk was invited to New York City by the Yara Arts Group to perform at the LaMaMa Theater in an experimental work that integrated Hutsul caroling rituals with the Hutsul mythology about the creation of the world.⁷³ When I ask him if he would like to return to New York, he waves his hands and says, “I’m not needed there.” A beat later, he recounts how many people in New York pleaded him to come back, to teach Hutsul musical folklore.

Tafiychuk’s near performative ambivalence – somewhere between honest humility and show – expresses his wonder at suddenly being at the nexus of external discourses that have thrust him into an international limelight. By embodying the kind of Hutsul “authenticity” that post-Soviet Ukrainian folk revivalists seek, Tafiychuk and his family have serendipitously become touted as an emblem of an elusive rural “real.” Ironically, this shift in status has brought them opportunities that undermine the notion of the pristine authentic: extensive travel, celebrity culture, financial resources (when I stayed with them in the winter, they purchased a gasoline-powered generator to provide electricity in inclement weather). For living the way that they have always lived, for playing the music they have always played, they were suddenly considered invaluable – heritage bearers. His ambivalent attitudes encompass many aspects of modern life -

⁷² See chapter three for more on Tafiychuk’s reception of Ruslana’s *Wild Dances*. It is also worth mentioning that, despite all of the interest that I witnessed as I got to know the Tafiychuks, on my repeated visits to his home, conversation would inevitably veer towards a lament for Hutsul culture, which, according to him, is dying out rapidly. Indeed, the number of ensembles devoted to a rigorous course of mastering the traditional repertoire is quite small, and in recent years, the most successful ensemble - *Baj* - has been led by Ostap Kostyuk, Tafiychuk’s apprentice who lives and works in the city of L’viv, a five or six hour drive away from the Tafiychuk’s village home.

⁷³ Much is left to be written about how the Hutsuls perceived and were perceived by New Yorkers. I was in attendance of a “roundtable” in Kryvorivnia, where locals had the opportunity to ask the five Hutsul musicians who had traveled across the ocean about their experiences in New York. Virlana Tkacz, the director of the Yara Arts Group, has organized four trips (in 2005, 2006, 2008, and 2010) for musicians who perform “koliady” - carols. Most recently, in November-December of 2010, five musicians traveled from Ukraine to take part in a new experimental theater work based on the creation of the world. Their trip coincided with a visit of a Ukrainian literary superstar, Serhij Zhadan, who wrote a beautiful (but yet unpublished) essay about Hutsuls and exoticism in New York.

he considers the shaman a charlatan, he judges “real” musicians harshly (he favors the virtuosic, sober, God-given talents) – yet he rejects the idea that what he knows can be taught or transmitted, it is “natural” [*pryroodne*]. He insists that his sons were all born with the same natural talents that he possesses – he didn’t teach them anything.

When I asked him about the legendary Hutsul musicians of the past and whether he invests anything in the rumors about their “dark powers,” he waited months before confiding that he thinks there may be a kernel of truth to those stories about Mogur (interview, 1/27/09). Just as Nechay pronounces his own mastery of the spirit world, as Shekeryk-Donykiv wrote about the violinist’s masculine honor restored via supernatural hexes, as Kostiubynsky’s protagonist lives and succumbs to a demon realm, as Mogur’s rumored contract with dark powers, the occult chain continues: recently, a local musician told me that he heard that Tafiychuk may “serve a dark master.” It is an endless loop. It is impossible to parse Tafiychuk’s “real” down to any empirical quantity, because his “real” is as personal and pliant as any individual’s. But in tracking Tafiychuk’s ambivalence, I am reminded of Cantwell’s definition of stereotype, characterized by its “tortured ambivalence”: Tafiychuk knows that he has been cast as a “real” Hutsul by outsiders, but his ambivalence represents an unwillingness to embrace the label fully. Ultimately, this outsider label has caused some degree of friction in his community, and, in addition to being celebrated as a true natural genius, he is regarded by some of his fellow Hutsuls with suspicion, envy, or cynicism.

On Ambivalence and “Realness”

I know our superstitious beliefs are “irrational,” but some part of me still wants to and chooses to believe it.

- Vasyl Zelenchuk, independent scholar, village of Kryvorivnia (interview 10/19/2009)

It is not the mere existence of Hutsul superstitions that surprises, rather, it is surprising that the Hutsul, who uses all of the benefits of civilization, continues to live in the archaic world of magic. He will happily use the automobile, electricity, telephone and the television with satellite antenna. But, having watched the latest American film on television, the Hutsul woman will milk the cow, and then make the sign of the cross to it and lock the stable doors for the night – so that some unclean force cannot slip in. The Hutsul man will not work on a holiday – it is a sin, for which lightning might burn down the house. He will turn around his car if he sees a *baba* with empty buckets ahead on the road – it means the trip will not work out... In the twentieth century, civilization has changed the lives of the Hutsuls past the point of recognition, nevertheless, it is too early to say that it has triumphed over the mountain wilderness or the Hutsul soul.

- Valentyn Moroz, in (Polets 1997:102)

In this chapter, I have presented both outsider and insider representations of Hutsul “wildness” as “realness” as demonstrated through contemporary practices of traditional and ritual Hutsul music, as well as through important historical sources. Stereotypes of the “natural” and the “supernatural,” realms that interact in overlapping ways, are often filtered through music, the medium that serves to bridge between the terrestrial and celestial in the Hutsul worldview. Ultimately, the “natural” and “supernatural” both serve as indicators of the “realness” of the musician, the ritual, the performance. This measure of the “real” is balanced against conceptions of the artificial or contaminated, which, as evident in the case of the Rakhiv Hutsul Orchestra, belies a compromised history, rooted in institutionalized folklore that was implemented and sanctioned by the previous Soviet empire. In the post-colonial climate, Ukrainian “authenticity” reaches for a pre-Soviet rusticity that is unblemished, organic, and close-to-nature. In practice, this quest for authenticity spirals into the same epistemological murkiness that has characterized

the quest for authenticity since Herder. Scholars of the late Soviet period have emphasized the Janus-like dualities that citizens in the USSR were forced to accept in making sense of how the ideological promises of their regime did not connect to daily lived social reality - a stance of postmodern cynicism, according to Yurchak and others (Blank 2004 ; Yurchak 2006). In *Ethnomimesis*, Cantwell describes how stereotypes often cycle back onto a group's perception of themselves, resulting in an enactment or internalization of the stereotype, which again feeds back as an externalization (Cantwell 1993: 168). The Hutsul relationship to supernatural beliefs that have been the pivotal element in the casting of their stereotype as "superstitious, close-to-nature mountaineers" follows, I believe, a similar trajectory: as 19th and 20th century ethnographers and literati recorded and documented the beliefs of the Hutsuls, not only were the beliefs of disparate villagers codified and circulated, but they also cycled back to create a profound ambivalence about how Hutsuls today perceive their natural world and the broader world around them.

As the image of the "real" Hutsul continually becomes reinforced as more spiritual, more natural, possessing of more wisdom than the tainted post-colonial urban Ukrainian social sphere, the Hutsuls reflect ambivalence back to the outsider gaze. This ambivalence, in effect, becomes an emergent "real," a contingency defined as much by individual feeling as collective consensus. Ultimately, as Michael Taussig points out, it is "...not the truth of being but the social being of truth, not whether facts are real but what the politics of their interpretation and representation are" that tells us about how meaning is made in culture (Michael Taussig 1987:xiii). For Hutsuls, the authentic becomes both a parody and an x-ray, exposing a constellation of desires, demands, projections, that, in composite, constitute a social universe.

CHAPTER 2

Ey, Güzel Qirim! : Memory, “Homeland,” and Crimean Tatar Traditional Music

Our history was defiled and stolen. They want us to always live as slaves and Ivans, never remembering our heritage. So that we would be ashamed of our ancestors, as though they were wild nomads, and foul Tatars, barbarians and vandals.

- Murat Adzhi (Adzhi 1994: 15-16)

My native land abandoned long,
I sought this realm of love and song.
Through Bakchesaria's palace wandered,
Upon its vanished greatness pondered;
All silent now those spacious halls,
And courts deserted, once so gay
With feasters thronged within their walls,
Carousing after battle fray.

- Alexander Pushkin, excerpt from *The Fountain of Bakhchisaray* (1824)

Music gives us access to the past.

- Server Kakura, a prominent Simferopol-based singer, composer, and director of *Ensemble Qirim* (personal interview, 11/2/08)

In his encyclopedic anthology of Crimean Tatars songs and melodies, the composer, performer and ethnographer Fevzi Memetovych Aliev opens his chapter, “Resistance and Protest Songs” with the following epigraph:

I dedicate this chapter...to all of the initiators, activists of the Crimean Tatar national movement, who fought for justice and with their brave actions, motivated the return of Crimeans to their historical Homeland in Crimea (Aliev 2001: 93).

Aliev counts himself among these brave souls, as he told me one afternoon in late April of 2008, when I visited him with my audio recorder and list of questions. Born in 1936, Fevzi Aliev was deported with his family to Central Asia on May 18, 1944, along with an estimated 200,000

Crimean Tatars (the entire population in Crimea at that time). In exile, known by Crimean Tatars as *Sürgün*, Aliev faced difficulty in finding resources to study his passion, music, “so,” he told me, “I began to study music late, at age twenty, when I bought myself a *garmoshka* (a small button accordion) and “mastered it in six months.” Soon after, he enrolled in a *technicum*, “a Soviet institution lower than the Conservatory that trained musicians to be professional folk musicians,” where he studied for four years (Nercessian 2000). From his income picking cotton in the fields, he bought his first full-sized accordion. In 1956, at age twenty, he taught himself to read notated music and soon after, before he felt fully ready, got his first professional job, entertaining at a local resort in Kibray, twenty kilometers from Tashkent. He described how he became possessed, and began practicing “16-18 hours a day,” emerging after two months with a repertoire of the popular and ballroom genres of the day (including waltz, tango, fox trot, krakoviak, etc.). When the resort closed for the winter, he practiced endlessly, and, when he began to perform again in the spring of 1957, he told me, “I emerged as a professional musician” (interview, 4/28/08).

In 1960, he joined the ensemble *Qaytarma* – the first institutionalized Crimean Tatar song and dance ensemble – as their accordionist, and toured widely in the Soviet Union. He began to compose music “in the European style” and made arrangements for *Qaytarma*. In 1964, he registered in Moscow with the publisher’s union, and began to be compensated for his arrangements. That year, he entered the music college in Staropolsk [*Staropolskoye Muzykal’ne Uchylyshche*], where he was immersed in Western European music theory and history. Around this time, as his Crimean Tatar consciousness matured, Aliev devoted himself to collecting and transcribing the folk music of his people [*narodnaya muzyka*], along with its conventions of tuning and technique. Gradually, he established himself as a foremost expert on traditional

Crimean Tatar song as well as popular *estrada*-style music (interview 4/28/08). He counts his Anthology, which contains 1000 transcriptions of folk songs and dance music of the “indigenous people of Crimea,” plus 100 of his own work, as his magnum opus.⁷⁴

For such a legendary figure in the Crimean Tatar musical establishment, Aliev’s home studio is modest. A splendid velvet portrait of Aliev *à la* Elvis hangs on a wall. An old tape deck



Fevzi Aliev at home.
Photo by Alison Cartwright, 2008.

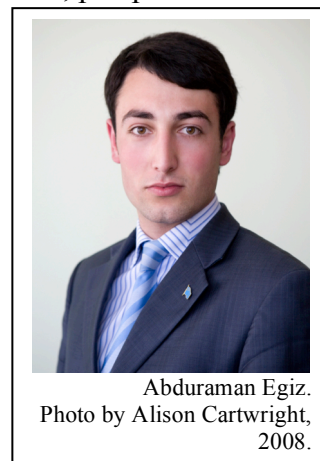
and a dot matrix printer are stacked on the floor. His wife dutifully carries in a tray clattering with petite porcelain cups of Turkish coffee and sweets, but is bashful in the presence of my microphone. He compensates for her timidity with enough energy to fill the room, narrating his story of deportation with a rich baritone and a flow that demonstrates skill at giving an interview. Our talk turns towards the early years of repatriation and he recalls the bitter disappointment of that

time. In 1990, bunked out in the squatter’s tents set up in the field where his house now stands, he read a poem in the Crimean Tatar newspaper by a man named Murtazayev that captured the raw disenchantment he was feeling. Inspired, he set the words to music. The song, titled *Qirimdaki chadirlar* (Crimean tents), became an unofficial anthem for squatters. The author of the words, an unknown poet, could not endure the harsh conditions in Crimea and eventually returned to Central Asia. Fevzi Aliev stuck it out and eventually received a legal plot of land in Kamenka, in the squatter’s area of a suburb outside of Simferopol, on which he and his sons built his new home with their own hands. Despite the hardships, his yet unfinished house, the lack of

⁷⁴ Critics and detractors, however, point out the Anthology’s shortcomings. One specialist in Crimean Tatar folk music, who is also a professor in the Music Department at the Crimean State Pedagogical and Engineering Institute (KIPU) in Simferopol told me to remember that “the Anthology is only one man’s perspective” and that “there are many flaws in it” (interview, 2/7/08).

opportunities for musicians in Crimea, he remains ambitious and prolific. His patriotic conviction is unwavering. On the day I visited, he showed me a freshly composed hymn for a Crimean Tatar youth organization: “Crimea is our home / we won’t give it away to anyone / Our goal is freedom / may our homeland live.”

The youth organization for which Aliev composed the hymn is called *Bizim Qirim* [Our Crimea], led by the aspiring politician Abduraman Egiz, a well-groomed, perspicacious and energetic young agitator for the Crimean Tatar cause in Russian-dominated Crimea. As a spokesman for the activist subset of the young generation of Crimean Tatar repatriates, Egiz is emphatic about the vital role that music has played in instilling his sense of belonging and ownership to Crimea, a land that he saw for the first time as a young adult. In an interview that I conducted with him in



Abduraman Egiz.
Photo by Alison Cartwright,
2008.

the *Bizim Qirim* offices in Simferopol in 2008, he explained the feeling of ownership that he had for his homeland, despite being born and raised in exile in Uzbekistan:

As children, we didn’t understand what fatherland is, as we do now, but we knew that it was ours and we must return.... We didn’t know what Crimea was, but we knew it was our land. We couldn’t explain how we found ourselves in Uzbekistan, and why we were born there, but the “dream of Crimea” – there’s no other way to explain it – also lived in us and we always wanted to return to Crimea. When I came to Crimea it was as a child but I understood – and I saw in trees, and in nature, that it was ours, and I was searching in nature for something that was ours – like the memories we learned in songs – and I understood that this is ours, we have returned, it was our real fatherland and we are going to live here. So even as children we loved Crimea, even before we saw it, we loved it. And when we arrived we held as an axiom that this is ours. And we returned, and this was our axiom, and we didn’t ask if there were other variants. Other variants did not exist. And this is the foundation upon which the new generation was built (interview, Nov 21, 2008).⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Egiz preferred to conduct this interview (and most encounters with me) in the Ukrainian language. In part, this was a gesture of generosity directed at me, since my Ukrainian is far more sophisticated than my Russian. But it was also a savvy political gesture that Egiz consciously used with my audience in mind. In Crimea, Russian is by far the most dominant language. As an aspiring politician sensitive to the politics of language choice, Egiz believes that Crimean Tatars should avoid speaking in Russian, which he regards as the language of their oppressors, as much as

Egiz went on to describe the first time he felt the winds of the Black Sea on his face, and how it strongly connected him to his experience singing songs with his family, triggering what he calls “the memories we learned in songs.” (Egiz specifically referenced *Ey, Güzel Qirim!* [Oh, My Beautiful Crimea!], which opens with imagery about the very same Alushtan seashore.) Born in exile, Egiz inherited a sentimental relationship to a place that neither he nor his parents ⁷⁶ had physically seen, smelled, or touched.⁷⁷ Yet, upon seeing that place for the first time, his received sensory memories of Crimea heightened and deepened his feeling of ownership over the land.

Greta Uehling’s (2004) subtle and insightful analysis of the various ways that memory practices function as political and social resources among Crimean Tatar returnees demonstrates that inherited social memory held by the children of exile holds systemic internal contradictions and complexities: “their return is beyond the memory they use to explain it” (17). Yet, in the volatile climate of post-Soviet Crimea, memory functions at times as a resource deployed to assert claims to specific places, hardening social memories into political agendas, and mobilizing “counter-memories” that challenge hegemonic discourses (Foucault 1977) – while still being a site of contestation and negotiation (Uehling 2004). In this chapter, I examine how memory and music have contributed to political attitudes that define the Crimean Tatar relationship to place, and specifically the concept of “homeland.” This special relationship to “homeland,” which refers in this case to the territory of Crimea, must be defined in the context of a traumatic fifty-

possible. He aims to show “respect for their home country” – Ukraine – by privileging Ukrainian in contexts where Crimean Tatar cannot be spoken. With other fluent Crimean Tatar speakers, Egiz and all of the members of *Bizim Qirim* speak solely in Crimean Tatar.

⁷⁶ His parents were also born in exile, in the Samarkand region of Uzbekistan.

⁷⁷ The children or grandchildren of Crimean Tatar deportees share much in common with children born to parents outside of any home country, though specific reasons for emigration can vary widely. Scholars of diaspora have written extensively about the universal phenomenon of displacement in its particular manifestations, tackling subjects such as trauma, loss, denial, nostalgia, and the “myth of homeland.” For a geographically and theoretically diverse sample of such discussions, see (Boym 2001; Clifford 1994; Hall 1990; Monson 2003; Safran 1991; Schuze 1996; Slobin 1994; Williams 2001a).

year period of exile, a state of purgatory during which sentiments about “home” were stoked in large measure through musical practice.⁷⁸ Throughout my time in Crimea, I was repeatedly told that “music is a powerful representation of our culture” – evinced by the sheer centrality of musical performances at social gatherings such as the annual Day of Deportation, Islamic holidays, political rallies, weddings, and casual gatherings. But how has musical practice helped to compose the sentimental attachment and political relationship to place that has come to define modern Crimean Tatar identity?

I address this question by juxtaposing various music-related strategies that Crimean Tatars have employed to talk back to the “official history” of the 20th century, a history that not only subjected them to the massive trauma of deportation, but reduced the ethnonym of “Crimean Tatar” to “Tatar” in Soviet passports (thus casting them alongside numerous Turkic-language Muslims spread throughout the Soviet Union).⁷⁹ The erasure of a territorial component to the Crimean Tatar ethnonym – the stripping of “Crimean” from “Tatar” – is especially significant within the context of Stalinist nationalities policies, which defined *ethnos* by binding groups to territorialized identities that emphasized the concept of “homeland.” Ivakhiv explains, “For decades such a territorialized conception of ethnicity was institutionalized in state practices, including passport registration and census procedures, and in nationality policies associated with the Soviet model of ethno-territorial federalism” (Ivakhiv 2005b: 206). In the Soviet 1940s, such

⁷⁸ Crimean Tatars were one of seven nationalities deported by Stalin in the final years of World War II. For many of these groups (most of which were allowed to return to their less strategic territories much earlier than the Crimean Tatars), the imagination of place was similarly reinforced by shared trauma: “The collectively experienced trauma gave rise to special sensitivity towards the territorial issue among repressed groups, and put a special halo around the idea of a “homeland” (Tishkov 1997: 180, cited in Uehling 2004).

⁷⁹ Greta Uehling has likened the “especially confusing ethnonym” “Tatar” to the outdated U.S. term “Indian” to describe all Native Americans. In both cases, the unspecific term describes many diverse groups with distinct languages, traditions, histories, and geographical origins (Uehling 2004: 28). As a generic term for Turkic-language Muslims, “Tatar” appeared in the Slavic lexicon as early as the 13th century.

a semantic erasure amounted to a program of both “ethnic and discursive cleansing” (Finnin 2007).

Banned from identifying openly with Crimea, deportees invested symbolic weight into musical genres, conventions and songs to carry social memory forward until the repressive ban on Crimean Tatars was lifted in the late 1980s. Traditional songs encoded the experience of exile and kept historical memories alive. Celebrated singers and instrumentalists (such as Sabrie Erecepova, Edie Topche, Ilyas Bakhshish, Enver Sherfedinov, and many others) became bearers of social and national memory through their recordings and performances, even when the content of their artistry could not be called “Crimean Tatar.” In 1957, Crimean Tatars formed the institutionalized folk and dance ensemble that called itself *Qaytarma*, a reference to the most popular and unique dance genre of the indigenous Crimeans, when Crimea itself could not be invoked. Despite the official denial of their territorial claim, the vast majority of exiled Crimean Tatars stoked the memory of Crimea privately, with family or trusted friends, subverting official channels and reinforcing memories about their shared “homeland” in varied, subtle ways.

While each Crimean Tatar individual’s experience of exile was unique, the sheer fact that two generations passed before the right to return was won (the result of the decades-long, non-violent human rights campaign fought by Crimean Tatars), and the massive return that began in the late 1980s, demonstrates that many Crimean Tatars born in exile shared an inherited, memory-driven claim on Crimea.⁸⁰ Such shared memories, however, did not limit the variety of

⁸⁰ There are Crimean Tatars who have remained in places of exile, estimated to number close to 200,000. Many reasons are given for why some Crimean Tatars did not return: many of the returnees in Crimea explained that those people simply did not have the means to uproot themselves and suffer the financial losses and personal hardships that returning to Crimea entailed. However, in some instances in Central Asia, Crimean Tatars were encouraged to “go home” by the newly independent Central Asian states (Uehling 2004: 42-3). Furthermore, the Ukrainian government policy towards automatic citizenship for Crimean Tatar returnees changed in the the mid-1990s, making the process of returning much more difficult and even more expensive. Finally, some Crimean Tatars in exile assimilated with dominant groups, intermarried, and possibly, do not hold the same sentimentalized idea of “homeland” that motivated returnees.

feelings, attitudes, and perceptions of “homeland” among exiled Crimean Tatars. While dominant Soviet historical narratives suppressed and attempted to erase other (local, less powerful) Crimean Tatar narratives of memory, even these competing discourses were internally fractured, since “dominant memory is not monolithic, nor is popular memory purely authentic” (Olick 1998: 127; see also Kohl 2007). Uehling (1994) points out the nostalgic and shifting definition of “homeland” for Crimean Tatars: “Crimea as they knew it was destroyed in 1944 but lives on in their imagination, in continual and dynamic tension with the “real” post-Soviet Crimea, in its present debilitated state” (2004: 16). Traditional Crimean Tatar music serves to reify this “dynamic tension” by expressively conjuring the past while being performed, listened to, or recorded in the present.

Memory, after all, can be as much about the present as the past: “Collective memories are partial and constructed experiences of the past, inevitably shaped by a standpoint in the present, and also often a vision of the future” (Lee 2007: 2). Dominique Arel has called social memories “morality plays” in which individuals and communities theatricalize negotiations of the past, rehearse social rules, recontextualize symbols of previous orders, and attempt to make sense of meaning in the present. Crimean Tatars, the victims of a systemic campaign of erasure, fought not only to restore memory of the past, but to continually make sense of the past in the emergent conditions of the present. But collective memory is “never innocent” (Lee 2007: 11), it is susceptible to both sinister and altruistic influence, and it speaks to layers of previous history in its official and unofficial manifestations: “...the art of memory for the modern world is both for historians as well as ordinary citizens and institutions very much something to be used, misused, and exploited, rather than something that sits inertly there for each person to possess and contain” (Said 2000: 179). But as slippery and erratic as social memory is as a subject of study,

it also provides unique evidence of “the phenomenology of human experience” (Boym 2001: 54). Studies of “social,” “counter-” or “collective” memory often hew perilously close to outdated anthropological models that paper over or collapse internal difference and contradiction among supposedly absolute “cultures” (Abu-Lughod 1991).⁸¹ Weary of smoothing over internal dissent, my analysis integrates current debates over the past and future uses of Crimean Tatar traditional music among prominent musicians in Simferopol – debates that hinge on the meaning and interpretation of the body of “social memory” extant as traditional music.

These current debates about the deeply iconic set of traditional musical works, personalities and symbols points towards the question of how musical practice has informed modern Crimean Tatar conceptions of self, and challenged deeply entrenched histories of stereotype and slander that depict Crimean Tatars as oriental, savage barbarians. This orientalist stereotype bears on the modern Crimean Tatar political establishment - which campaigns for the recognition of Crimean Tatars as indigenous and European – as well as on quotidian social dynamics in Crimea – where newspapers still regularly publish accounts of Crimean Tatars as pillaging, greedy, or uncivilized. To combat this history of stereotype, Crimean Tatars have developed a variety of nuanced and strategic responses, including the careful cultivation of a territory-bound identity that privileges “civilizational” values.⁸² I wish to spotlight this history of barbarism and the particular manifestations of “wildness” in the Crimean Tatar case before moving on to specific musical examples. In the following section, I address historical constructions of Crimean Tatar “wildness” that are also literally *emplaced* discourses - related to

⁸¹ Furthermore, the plethora of approaches and terms to describe “memory practices” are diverse and “decentralized.” Olick and Robbins (Olick 1998) present a comprehensive overview of various approaches to the study of memory in sociology and other disciplines. Said (2000) examines the historical implications of collective memory studies, and Boym (2001) offers valuable insights on the intersections between post-socialist nostalgia and collective memory.

⁸² Uehling (2004) identifies five primary strategies that Crimean Tatars use to mitigate the stereotype of barbarism that pervades the historical and literary imagination of the former Russian Empire and Soviet Union: humor or parody, scholarship, sub-ethnic displacement, language politics, and “acceptance” (27-28).

the vast swaths of steppe that emanate from northern Crimea, known as the “wild field” [Rus., *dykoe pole*].

The “Wild Field” as Discursive Battleground

Crimean Tatar historiography has aimed to reposition the Crimean past from the mental margins of history to its place among civilizations. Viewed as “blood-thirsty” and “wild” in the Soviet imagination, the Crimean Tatars are seen as exotica in the West. Only when we learn that Crimea was home to flourishing Greek city-states, Genoese and Venetian trading colonies, and the location of a proposed German Riviera are we sparked to bring what was previously blurred in peripheral vision to the center of attention. When we learn that the writers and poets of the Crimean Khanate are believed to have made a significant contribution to Islamic literature, that the peninsula was once studded with the caravansarai of the Silk Roads, that in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Solhat, or the city of “Old Crimea,” was a center of Muslim missionary activity with mosques, dervish monasteries, and *medreses*, is it clear that Crimea is an important part of the history of Europe *and* Asia. Moreover, its history raises questions about the ostensible boundaries between Europe and Asia (Uehling 2004: 30).

The massive Eurasian steppe that stretches between modern-day Moldova, Ukraine, the Russian Federation, and Kazakhstan loomed largely in the historical and literary imagination of the ancient Rus’ civilization and its imperial successors, Muscovy and the Russian Empire. The monks who authored the medieval Primary Chronicles depicted the “wild field” [*dykoe pole*] (referred to by the Rus’ at times simply as *pole*, “the field”) as a godless expanse, a “pagan place,” populated by savage marauders “where their ‘meek and suffering’ monkish brethren were taken away to be tortured” (Sunderland 2004: 12; see also Cross 1953). After the definitive fall of Kyivan Rus’ (following the Mongol sack of Kyiv in 1240), the seat of Slavic power migrated north to Muscovy, away from the threatening “field.” Beginning in the 14th century, the Muscovite princes began to “gather the lands of Rus’,” a campaign validated on “historical, dynastic, and religious grounds” that resulted in the tripling of the land holdings of the imperial power by the early 16th century (Kappeler 2001: 21). From the 16th to the 18th centuries, the emboldened imperial state’s quest reached past an agenda of manifest destiny, and became

defined by the “gathering of the lands of the Golden Horde” (Kappeler and Clayton 2001: 21-59). The “taming of the wild field” and the subjugation of the various nomadic warrior people that inhabited it, became a central goal of this expansion (Sunderland 2004).

Recent scholarship on the history of the Russian Empire has repeatedly pointed to its hybrid character as imperial territorial expansion overtook (and, to varying degrees, assimilated) numerous far-flung, but territorially contiguous, ethnic groups (Brower 1997; Kappeler and Clayton 2001; Von Hagen 2004; Wilson 2002). Accounts of the Russian Imperial encounter with the Crimean Tatars highlights the complexities of unraveling a history in an era of proto-ethnic, proto-national, proto-imperial alliances. Since dominant narratives of the encounter come from the Slavic perspective, and, in the 20th century, became tainted by the projects of Soviet state-building, contemporary historians of the Crimean Tatars provide numerous challenges to the dominant depictions of Crimean Tatars as the barbarian inheritors of the Golden Horde who were finally subdued and made “civilized” by Russian Imperial colonization.⁸³

Crimean Tatar historians have worked to combat the elision of Crimean Tatars with Mongol/barbarian/raiders. Uehling cites the example of Murat Adzhi’s (1994) work, *Polyn’ Polovetskogo Polia*, which “explores the intricacies of Turkic origins and suggest the linking of Tatar and Mongol into one hyphenated word is a gross oversimplification of a long history that has been warped almost beyond recognition by the Russian political agenda of portraying themselves as civilized and powerful” (Uehling 2004: 27). Modern Crimean Tatars trace their roots to the ancient Tavriis and Kimmerites who populated Crimea from 2-1,000 B.C.E.

⁸³ I present a partial history of the Crimean khanate and its encounter with the Russian empire. For more comprehensive histories, I recommend these various works by Alan Fisher (Alan Fisher 1978; Alan W. Fisher 1970, 1998) and the short article on Crimean Tatar ethnogenesis by Brian Glyn Williams (2001b). Uehling (2004) provides the most nuanced and multi-vocal account of 20th century Crimean Tatar history. For other examples of the “civilizing mission” of the Russian and Soviet empires, see Kate Brown’s excellent *Biography of No Place* (Brown 2004) for an in-depth look at the *kresy* regions of Ukraine, Yuri Slezkine (1992) (Slezkine 1992) for a study of the Soviet program of civilizing the “small peoples of the north”, and (Frank 1991) for a more general discussion of late Russian Imperial attitudes towards the “backwardness” of their peasantry.

(Kudusov 1995: 15), cited in Uehling 2004: 30).⁸⁴ Proto-Crimean Tatars existed as three separate sub-ethnie, the northern steppe dwellers (*Nogai*), the mountaineers (*Tats*), and the southern coast traders (*Yaltbodyu*, whose position at the end of the Silk Road created a melting pot of diverse ethnic groups, including a substantial population of Genoese and Greek merchants). These three geographically distinct groups were differentiated by livelihood, linguistic dialect, and expressive practices. In the mid-13th century, during the Mongol invasions by the armies of Batu Khan, these three groups were brought together for the first time under one regime, united symbolically as “Crimean Tatars.”⁸⁵ As the Golden Horde’s grip over Eastern Europe began to disintegrate in the early 1400s, the first Crimean Khan, Hacı Giray, established an independent Crimean Khanate in the early 1440s (Alan Fisher 1978).⁸⁶ This Crimean Khanate lasted until Catherine the Great’s annexation of Crimea in 1783.

Of the three sub-ethnie that came together to form the Crimean Tatars, the Nogai Tatars,⁸⁷ nomadic horse-people who inhabited the northern Crimean steppe, took on disproportionate symbolic weight in the Slavic imagination:

It was the Kipcak-Tatar Nogai element, which was distinguished by its Altaic-”Mongol” features and nomadic lifestyle, with which most westerners came in contact with, not those inhabiting the settled core of the seldom visited Crimean Khanate. The claims by outsiders, such as Giles Fletcher, a sixteenth-century English visitor to Moscow, that the Crimean Tatars lived only in *yurts* (felt tents) as nomads in actuality applied only to the Tatar-Nogai element of the Crimean steppe.

Long after Devlet Giray Khan’s famous raid on Moscow in 1571, this element continued to be a danger to the surrounding sedentary peoples. The surrounding Christian peoples were in fact justified in their fears of the cattle and slave raids of the Nogai inhabitants of

⁸⁴ This legacy was challenged by many Soviet historians, who insisted that the Slavs populated Crimea as early as the 10th century, when the Crimean Tatars appeared only in the 13th. This remains a highly charged controversy in the history of the peninsula.

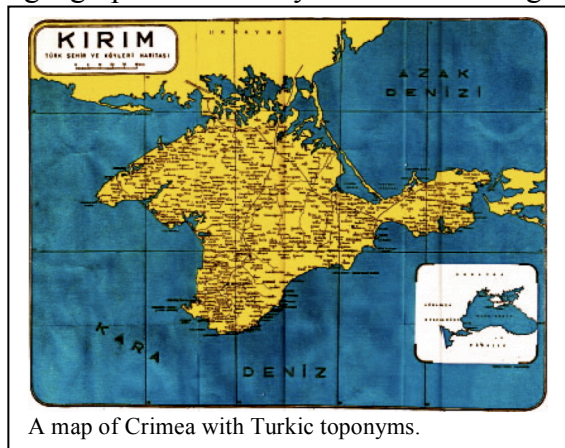
⁸⁵ These sub-groups were so distinct that, until the deportation of the Crimean Tatars in 1944, intermarriage between the three groups rarely occurred.

⁸⁶ The exact relationship of Hacı Giray to the Golden Horde, and the contract that the Crimean Khanate’s entered into with the Ottoman Empire beginning in 1475 are widely disputed historiographical problems (Alan Fisher 1978: 3-5).

⁸⁷ Williams traces the Nogai ethnonym to Emir Nogai, “a powerful Tatar commander who played the role of throne-maker in the Great Horde from 1280-1299” (2001: 348).

the *Dikoe Pole* (Wild Field), as the southern Ukraine was known (Williams 2001b: 347).⁸⁸

Williams (2001) complicates this stereotype of Crimean Tatar ethnogenesis by focusing on the geographical diversity of the three sub-groups.



With their light-skinned, European features and an economy based on mountain, step-terracing, and vertical transhumant sheep herding, the mountain Tat-Tatars' way of life differed considerably from that of the nomadic Tatar-Nogai cattle herders who roamed the open plains of the northern steppe lands of the Crimea (Williams 2001b: 338).

Yet, despite this heterogeneity among indigenous Crimean groups, the dominant stereotype of proto-

Crimean Tatars was as the “wild” savages of the “wild field.” In part, this was because the “wild field,” populated by Nogai in the south and Ukrainian Cossacks in the north, constituted a formidable buffer between the Khan’s capital city in Bakhchisaray and the coastal ports of the Black Sea. In part, this was because the economy of the Crimean Khanate flourished due to the slave trade that brought many Slavs into captivity and reached as far as Poland-Lithuania, Muscovy, and the Danubian Principalities that make up modern-day Romania. In part, this was because “barbarism” and “civilization” are a false dialectic, offering concurrent truths that may be articulated as narratives of slander or heroism according to the subjectivity of the omnipotent narrator (in this case, the historians of an expanding Russian Empire).

Under Catherine the Great’s imperial expansion, which culminated in its southward thrust with the annexation of Crimea in 1783, the imagination of Crimea as Russia’s orient took on

⁸⁸ One of the other five “modalities” that Greta Uehling names for how Crimean Tatars attempt to rectify the historical record is “acceptance” that Mongol heritage is, to some degree, part of Crimean Tatar history and ethnogenesis. In addition to scholarship (mentioned above) and acceptance, she also names humor/parody, racist (sub-ethnic) displacement (mentioned below), and language usage (such as the assertion of an “independent” Crimean Khanate, as opposed to portraying the Khanate as a dependent “vassal” state with regard to the Ottomans (2004: 31-32).

mythical dimensions. Politically, the addition of Crimea and its adjacent steppes “transformed the empire virtually overnight into a Black Sea power and amounted to the state’s largest incorporation of new steppe lands since the sixteenth century,” including the acquisition of warm-water ports (Sunderland 2004: 47). Poetically, the stereotype of Crimea as Russia’s Orient took hold of the Russian imagination in 1787, when the empress embarked on a triumphant southward voyage from Saint Petersburg to Crimea: “Commentary on the journey, written by the empress herself, members of her entourage, and her various correspondents, illustrates the initiatory formulation of an exotic Crimean imaginary — a year before Byron’s birth and 12 years before Pushkin’s” (Dickinson 2002: 3). Later, Pushkin, the originator of Russian-Romantic Orientalism, immortalized such images of exotic Crimea in his Southern Poems of the 1820s, including the iconic 1824 poem, *Fountain of Bakhchisarai* (2002: 18).

The prevailing Russian attitude in imagining the Crimean “Orient” reveals a chain of “nesting orientalisms”: while Imperial Russia was “Other” to Western Europe, it aspired towards Western European norms as a “civilized” imperial power with a “civilizing” mission. Crimea represented an “Orient” against which Imperial Russia could construct itself as relatively more Western: “attention to Crimean exoticism was a testament to the breadth and grandeur of Catherine’s empire, to its significance and comparability with the colonial empires of Western Europe” (Dickinson 2002: 10). Wolff (1994) highlights the tensions that Catherine the Great’s “voyage of illusion” reveals about Western European enlightenment ideals of “civilization,” which her program of “enlightened colonization” was purportedly bringing to the “savage tribes that yet people the remote parts of her empire.”

Catherine was German by origin, of course, and she too was susceptible to the idea of Russia’s Oriental barbarism, which justified her enlightened despotism. Now she would embrace the Crimea, and with it the idea of an “Oriental” Eastern Europe. Her voyage,

from the outset, was adorned with Oriental effects, and it was designed to express her power in a demonstration of mastery over bears and barbarians (Wolff 1994: 129).

As the empress and her entourage of Western European dignitaries traveled down the length of the Dnipro (Dnepr) River, they came upon the Zaporizhian Ukrainian Cossacks, whose legendary fierceness and mastery in warfare was presented as an exhibition, specially designed for the Empress and her guests. When they finally crossed the wild field and arrived in Crimea, the entourage lodged at the luxurious Khan's Palace in Bakhchisaray, the former seat of power for the now impotent Crimean Khan.

In Bakhchisaray, a member of the entourage, the French count de Ségur, wrote, "we could believe ourselves veritably transported to a town in Turkey or Persia, with the only difference that we had the leisure to examine everything without having to fear any of those humiliations to which Christians are forced to submit in the Orient" (cited in Wolff 1994: 135). Through the smug and condescending impressions of the French count de Ségur's travel diary (written, ironically, on the eve of the unprecedented violence and madness of the French Revolution), and Catherine's nostalgia-tinged sighs about disciplining the barbarism out of her colorful new subjects,⁸⁹ Wolff (1994) argues that "Eastern Europe became an illusionary Orient where Europeans held power, especially the power to observe and examine." More broadly, the various accounts of Crimean Tatar and Ukrainian "savages," filtered through the words and actions of a supposedly "enlightened" European delegation, reveals how the emerging dialectic of civilization/barbarism was rife with internal contradictions, compromised by the personal

⁸⁹ Wolff describes Catherine's "Rousseauist sentimentalism," reporting that "Catherine imagined them [her new subjects] in their tents, with their flocks, troubled by few needs and desires, and she wondered, 'I don't know if in civilizing them, as I want to, whether I would spoil them' (Wolff 1994: 131).

biases and aspirations of powerful individuals, and rendered illusory through the spectacle and display of Catherine's subjugated peoples (131).⁹⁰

In the 19th and 20th centuries, the mythical status of Crimea as the subdued Eden of the Russian Empire took on poetic weight, and the narrative of Russian "civilization" squashing local "barbarism" became inscribed into histories, songs (from the Russian perspective), paintings, and poems of the period. Mythologized tales of Crimean Tatar savagery displaced the evidence that Crimean Tatars also had cultivated "civilization"; today, many Crimean Tatars emphasize that, under the Crimean Khan, musical culture, visual art, and architecture flourished. (In fact, one of the newer Simferopol-based ensembles, Maqam, has devoted itself to reconstructing the music of the Khan's period.) Furthermore, the Khanate's doctrine of religious tolerance for non-Muslim groups was progressive for its time; eventually, such progressive attitudes gave birth to the Jadid Reformations in the 1880s that were initiated in large part by Crimean Tatars (most notably, Ismail Bey Gasprinsky). But, as Crimean Tatars became disenfranchised in the era of Russian imperial dominance, the stereotype of Crimean Tatar barbarism hardened into a textbook reality.

In the Soviet era, the stereotype of barbarism was manipulated to sway public sentiment against the Crimean Tatars. Accused of conspiring with the Nazis and betraying the Soviet Union, the entire population of Crimean Tatars, approximately 200,000 people at the time, was

⁹⁰ Wolff provides extensive excerpts from Ségur's at times fantastical travel diary, where he imagines various scenarios that fully illustrate the scope of his orientalist preconceptions (as when he imagines himself, a literate Frenchman, as a new Prophet to the local Muslims because of his education), or that display an attitude of utter disrespect for local conventions (as when they burst in on a mosque while local Muslims pray, or ambush bathing women to glimpse their oriental beauty without the barrier of the veil). Ultimately, as is perhaps Wolff's aim, the reader is left to marvel at the callous vapidness of the supposedly "civilized" Western Europeans.

forced onto cattle cars on the night of May 18, 1944 and carted thousands of miles to be resettled among other Turkic-language Muslim groups. One of Stalin's lieutenants, Lavrenti Beria, advised him the deportation was necessary, "taking into account the treacherous activities of the Crimean Tatars and...the undesirability of Crimean Tatars further residing in the border zone of the Soviet Union" (Knight 1993: 127). The official Soviet line was that a "humanitarian procedure" had been conducted to bring Tatars closer to their "brothers" in Central Asia and the Urals. It is estimated that between twenty and forty percent of the total population died en route.⁹¹

In 1954, on the 300th anniversary of the short-lived Pereiaslav treaty between the Russian tsar and the Ukrainian Cossack freedom fighters (an alliance forged, at the time, against the Crimean Khanate), Nikita Khrushchev transferred Crimea from the Russian to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic as a "token of friendship." As Soviet historiographers erased Crimean Tatars entirely from the history books, they emphasized (or fabricated, as Lowell Tillett alleges) an ancient Slavic claim to Crimea:

Here the argument is that the history of the Crimea has been inseparably linked with the Slavs since the third century A.D., and that bourgeois historians have falsified the history of the area by considering it a non-Russian area that was later annexed by the tsars....Since the Crimea is considered to be integral part of Slavdom which was severed from the trunk by the Tatar invasions, its later incorporation in the Russian state is referred to not as annexation (*prisoedinenie*) but as reunion or reunification (*vossoedinenie*) (Tillett 1969: 291).⁹²

⁹¹ By calling the deportation a "humanitarian resettlement," the brutality of the deportation was obfuscated. Finally collapsed the few Crimean Tatars who fought against the Soviet regime in with the entirety of Crimea Tatar, of which the majority did not conspire against the USSR. In 1967, a Soviet decree exonerated Crimean Tatars and released them from "exile." Hundreds of Crimean Tatars returned to Crimea, but most were harassed or forced back out by Soviet officials. At that time, some Crimean Tatars staged acts of self-immolation on the territory of Crimea in protest.

⁹² Uehling (2004) also provides "negative evidence" to show the specific erasures of Crimean Tatars from works such as the various editions of the Great Soviet Encyclopedia [*Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia*] (85-87).

As Slavs (mostly Russians and Ukrainians) were transplanted into the vacant homes of Crimean Tatar deportees, Crimean Tatars found themselves in stark conditions of exile, forced into austere “special settlement camps,” and reduced, as one friend told me, to a “true primitive state of survival” (anon., interview, May 4 2008). Furthermore, as many Crimean Tatars informed me, they considered their resettlement as part of an incidental “civilizing mission” to Central Asia. Frequently, in interviews with deportees, I was told about how Crimean Tatars educated Central Asians about many daily things, ranging from sanitation to home-building techniques - another link in a chain of nesting orientalisms.

Incredibly, according to personal accounts collected during my fieldwork, Soviet propaganda against Crimean Tatars went so far as to convince both the Slavs who were repopulating Crimea, and the Central Asian communities that received the Crimean “special settlers,” that Crimean Tatars had horns, were one-eyed, were cannibals, or drank the blood of children during religious rites.⁹³ Such fantastical allegations characterized much of the discrimination against early Crimean Tatar returnees in the late 1980s - when the threat of violence loomed large - and they still persist to small degree in contemporary Crimea. Enver Reshetov, a young father who was born in exile in the Ferghana Valley and returned to Yevpatoria, Crimea with his family when he was seven years old, shared his memory of arriving at his new Crimean elementary school for the first day of second grade. He remember how his classmates marveled at the fact that he had more than one eye, and inspected his scalp for the stems of the horns that they were sure hid under his thick hair. He told me that his arrival

⁹³ This is also corroborated in Greta Uehling’s (2004) “composite image” of the deportation, in which she lists the common patterns that appeared in stories of deportation. All of the specific points she lists are familiar from my own research, descriptions of the livestock “crying” after the Tatars left, women giving birth in the overcrowded cars, and “being met with suspicion by people who had been told that cyclops, cannibals, and people with horns were coming” (83).

“amounted to a small scandal at school, but it got to be less and less every year” (Reshetov interview, May 10, 2008).

Music, in such tense encounters between Crimean Tatars and locals who feared them, could function as a salve. I was told a poignant story to this topic in April of 2008, when I was invited to the birthday part of a Peace Corps volunteer that I had befriended in Bakhchisaray. At the time, Anna was working with a community of artisans who had formed the “Usta” craft workshop, dedicated to educating locals in Crimean Tatar traditions of silver filigree jewelry, pottery, painting, weaving and embroidery. For her birthday, her colleagues organized an evening of *shashlik* [kebab] and merriment in the backyard of the workshop, set in a hill among old Crimean Tatar homes in the historic district of Bakhchisaray. The “Usta” workshop is managed by a husband and wife team, Lutfi and Ayshe, who provide workspace for the master jeweler Ayder Asanov and his daughter (a rare female master) at their workshop. Lutfi, a tight-lipped, usually severe man, softened during the evening’s festivities, and as the balmy spring dusk settled around us, he shared this story with me: The jeweler Ayder-aga’s wife was originally from the Bakhchisaray neighborhood of Sala-chyk’, known for its outstanding musicians.⁹⁴ On the evening of the deportation, all of the musicians from the neighborhood were deported together, in one cattle car. After weeks in transit, the exhausted, dehydrated musicians arrived, and discovered that the local Uzbeks had been warned that Crimean Tatars were “hostile and had horns.” Perceiving their fear, the weary musicians took out their instruments and played. Soon, others joined in to sing and dance. The Uzbeks, “seeing that they were good, normal

⁹⁴ One commonly heard legend of the most famous violinist from Sala-chyk’, a man known by the street name of Ashirgan, was repeated to me numerous times by proud locals. Legend goes that when the Tsar Nicholas II came to Bakhchisaray, he was so moved to hear Ashirgan play that he mandated that he should have a Stradivarius violin, and procured one for him. This story is also told, along with some other legends about Ashirgan, in the liner notes to a recording of Luman Seidjalilov, a Crimean Tatar musician who remains in exile in Tashkent, Uzbekistan (Sultanova 2004).

people,” offered bread and water to the famished Crimean Tatars. After reflecting on the story he had just shared, Lutfi told me, “Music was one way to keep our culture true and alive” (April 8, 2008).

Music kept Crimean Tatar culture “true and alive” not just by defying preconceptions of Crimean Tatars as monstrous, murderous people, but also by mnemonically encoding the Crimean Tatar historical experience through song lyrics and styles. When Crimean Tatars began to return to Crimea in the late 1980s, they arrived in a place transformed by decades of Soviet social engineering and socialist realist construction projects. Both the physical landscape and the social dynamics of Crimea had been irreversibly altered. As returnees transported their possessions in wagons from Central Asia, or met shipping containers filled with the objects of exile, they also returned with repertoires of songs that had stoked their memory of home in exile. Many songs, both in lyrical content and formal musical structure, carried “national memories” that lent social coherence to the chaotic early years of return - another function of collective memory in “forg[ing] a sense of injustice and solidarity among the aggrieved” (Lee 2007: 8). These songs also reinforced nostalgic conceptions of “homeland,” and provided evidence that challenged the dominant historical discourses (biased against Tatars) that had taken root in Crimea, after the Crimean Tatars had disappeared.

Song as National Memory

“Songs are a historical record.”

- Rustem Memetov, singer and soloist with the ensembles *Qaytarma* and *Maqam*
(personal interview, Simferopol, May 11, 2009)

In exile, composers and poets expanded and modified traditional songs to reflect the specific conditions of Soviet exile, coding their bitterness and outrage in lyrics about memories of the

past, imagery of pastoral beauty, the taste of succulent Crimean fruit, and the simplicity of childhood. Musicians also developed a new repertoire of songs that spread as impromptu anthems of their historic human rights battle against the Soviet regime and proclaimed the injustice of the Crimean Tatars deportation and exile from their ancestral homeland, thus stoking their community's National Liberation Movement.

In Red Square in 1987, these various overlapping expressive song repertoires formed the musical backdrop for the dramatic protests that eventually won the Crimean Tatars the right to return to Crimea. In the late 1980s, as thousands of Crimean Tatars began to return to their ancestral homeland, they encountered a now-native population of Crimeans fearful of the returnees and faced rampant discrimination. Unable to secure jobs, purchase homes or land, many Crimean Tatars began to seize undeveloped land on the outskirts of Crimean cities and towns, organizing into protest camps that eventually became squatter's settlements. In these camps, the exile and protest songs that had extolled the beauty and warmth of Crimea in exile were recontextualized in the battle to survive the volatile post-Soviet climate and took on layers of new meaning ranging from bittersweet irony to unbridled optimism. Simultaneously, whole new repertoires of song – such as Fevzi Aliev's *Qirimdaki Chadirlar* – emerged expressing the anger and disappointment of the new reality that the Crimean Tatar community now faced. These songs sometimes challenged the idealized memories of previous song repertoires, and agitated for an organized political movement to respond to these injustices. In the early years of repatriation, during Crimean Tatar protests against discrimination preventing land permits and job placement, the population was characterized as “warlike,” “heathen” and “uncivilized” by politicians and Crimean media outlets — further stoking the fear and resentment of the majority Slavic Crimean population, and activating inexorable stereotypes about Crimean Tatar barbarism

(Uehling 2004: 210). These animosities were, in part, diffused by the stated non-violence of the Crimean Tatar National Liberation Movement from its inception.⁹⁵

According to many subjects, music has always been a core part of the Crimean Tatar National Movement, constantly present at rallies and meetings. Andy Nercessian points out, “Traditional music is, as is dance, traditional costumes and other such symbols, almost universally regarded as the positive attribute of national identities, as opposed to violence or other forms of violence-provoking demonstrations, which are regarded as negative and extreme. A demonstration which incorporates folk music and dance seems to have less implications politically speaking (despite the fact that this may not be the case) and is therefore tolerated” (Nercessian 2000:89). This hypothesis lends another possible cause for the Crimean Tatar National Liberation Movement’s success: as the first Soviet grassroots protest that garnered international media attention at the height of Cold War societal repression, is it conceivable that the centrality of non-violence and music neutralized some of the most violent assumptions about the group? Furthermore, the association of protest with traditional forms of music also heightens the relationship between music and nation, politicizing cultural forms and overtly linking them to ethno-territorial identities; another probable cause for the passion and unity of the Crimean Tatar National movement in those years.

In the following section, I present three lyrical songs of Crimean Tatar protest and resistance: *Tatarligim*, “*Ey, Guzel Qirim!*” and *Qirimdaki Chadirlar*. These three songs originated in distinct periods of Crimean Tatar history: the period leading up to the Stalinist deportation in 1944, the period of Soviet exile (1944-1987), and the period of repatriation (1987-present). Subsequently, each song reveals a specific chapter of modern Crimean Tatar history.

⁹⁵ Mustafa Jemilev acknowledges Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. as some of his models in creating effective, non-violent resistance.

Yet, all three songs also communicate potent messages about what homeland and place means to Crimean Tatar repatriates in the present, through lyrical and musical tropes that sentimentalize, protest, mourn, or celebrate the past and an irretrievably lost home, no matter the specific historical context. I analyze these three examples at various levels of proximity, ranging from broad historical context to the focused experience of one man – Fevzi Aliev – and his relationship to each song. First, I will introduce each song, and the key historical events that are bound up in the composition, circulation and significance of the piece. Then, I will put forward some hypotheses about how these songs construct both specific and abstract ontologies of “place,” concretizing memories transmitted through melody and text, and thus, effectively reinforcing, replenishing and prolonging collective memory.

Tatarligim: From “First Exile” to Memorializing Exile

Crimean Tatar history was marked by several waves of emigration, exile, and deportation. The first widely memorialized mass migration began in 1783, following Catherine the Great’s annexation of Crimea, and peaked during the Crimean War (1854-56) (Jemilev 2005: 51). Russian Imperial policies forced Crimean Tatars off their land and flooded Crimea with Slavic settlers, motivating a widescale emigration that, according to Uehling, “is retrospectively refigured as the ‘first exile,’ linking it symbolically to the exile they experienced later, under the Soviets” (Uehling 2004). As Crimean Tatars fled to the relative safety of the Ottoman Empire, they often traveled by circling around the coast of the Black Sea, leaving a trail of settlements along the coasts of modern-day Romania and Bulgaria, where a vibrant Crimean Tatar diaspora still exists today. It has been estimated that as many as 400,000 Crimean Tatars left their

homeland for the Ottoman Empire in the 18th and 19th centuries (Williams 2001a; cited in Uehling 2004).⁹⁶

Şevki Bektöre (1881-1961), the celebrated Crimean Tatar poet who penned the lyrics for the song *Tatarligim* (My Tatarness), was a child of this “first exile.” Born in Kavaklar in Dobruja, Romania in 1888, Bektöre and his family emigrated to Turkey during his childhood, where he took part in the growing Crimean Tatar nationalist movement. In 1917, he returned to Crimea with an entourage of fifty teachers and Crimean Tatar activists to begin a program of nationalist education. But their agenda was mistrusted by the Bolsheviks who sought to consolidate power over Crimea, and so Bektöre was exiled to Central Asia and the Stalinist gulags in Siberia. Celebrated for his emotionally rich poems lamenting his lost homeland, Bektöre is best known for the anthemic *Tatarlıgım*, which he composed in 1913 (Williams 2001a: 250, Aliev 2001). Later, the renowned scholar and poet Bekir Sitki Chodanzade (1893-1938) composed new verses to Bektöre’s popular words, verses that amplified the anthemic patriotism of the composition. Below are the lyrics, translated by Kirimca and Allworth:

Since my childhood I loved my Tatarness and my birthplace,
I cried, suffered, and felt for them many a time.
Wherever I went, I traced many. I saw the scattered Tatars.
They haven’t a single flowering rose to smell.
They became true wanderers in their own homes and gardens.
But to whom can you really tell them, these secrets?
They have been thrown to the mountains, stony places and battles by a strong wind.
This imperfect world has become a grave for Tatarness, for the Tatar.
I paused and poured teardrops on top of every grave.
For every one of them I made a headstone from my songs.
Palms raised, I prayed to God from my heart.
Let Him give a long, happy life to Tatarness, to the Tatar.

And then follows the verse by Chodanzade:

To those who ask if there are Tatars, I am a Tatar.

⁹⁶ According to leaders of the Crimean Tatar diaspora in Turkey, some four million Crimean Tatars are said to be living in Turkey today (personal interviews, Istanbul and Eski Shehir, 10/2008).

I am the young Tatar who knows his ancestry.
 To those degenerates who don't know their ancestors,
 I will shout: You aren't needed (in this struggle)!

Fevzi Aliev has written about his early memories of this song, and his belief that *Tatarligim* was a “folk song,” with no known author or composer. In his research, he was surprised to discover the author's story, but never solved the mystery of the composer. Aliev also describes how this song was never performed in official concerts, nor was it printed in Crimean Tatar anthologies of music.⁹⁷ However, the song was sung by the most “daring” singers at weddings, who knew the risk they ran by performing it in public, even at private gatherings (2001: 97).⁹⁸ Seyit Kirimca explains the irony of the role that *Tatarligim* played for the 1944 deportees, “Shevki Bektöre paradoxically lived in one of the regions to which the Soviet government and the Communists sent the 1944 generation of displaced Crimean Tatar persons. In a sense, he and his song, ‘*My Tatariness*’ welcomed the new wave of exiles from Crimea to Central Asia” (Kirimca 1988: 259).

⁹⁷ The best known and most widely circulated anthology produced in exile was Y. Sherfidinov's *Zvuchyt' Qaytarma*, published in Tashkent in 1979. According to Lenur Reshatovych, a musicologist that I interviewed on February 7, 2008, the anthology was originally supposed to be called “Crimean Tatar National Songs and Dances” [*Krymski-Tatarski Narodni Pesni i Tantsi*] but was changed to *Zvuchyt' Qaytarma* to avoid referencing Crimean Tatars as a discrete group (personal interview, Reshatovych). He told me, “The anthology features many songs that Sabrie-hanum [Erecepova] sung and became a very influential collection for future generations.” *Tatarligim* is conspicuously absent in the collection (Sherfidinov 1979). However, many other songs that reference specific places - mountains, villages, neighborhoods - were included in the collection. Based on the fact that so many ancient Crimean Tatar toponyms were replaced by Russian-language (and often propagandistic) names following the deportation, I would posit that these traditional songs were allowed to be published because they no longer referred to a concrete place on the map of Soviet cartographers and therefore, presented no real threat to the newly constructed Soviet reality of Crimea. Another important collection of Crimean Tatar music – organized by region and the three sub-ethnie of Crimea – was published in 1934 by Asan Refatov. Shortly after, he was charged with agitating for “pan-Turkism” and executed in 1937. According to Lenur Reshatovych, following his death, “his notes were confiscated and his memory was erased. We still don't know which ‘traditional songs’ were composed by him” (personal interview, 2/7/2008).

⁹⁸ Many of my subjects expressed the importance of weddings for keeping Crimean Tatar culture alive in the oppressive climate of exile. As one prominent Crimean Tatar musician told me bluntly, “in exile, if it wasn't for weddings, our music would have died” (interview, May 2009). Today, many musicians make ends meet by playing at weddings. The most common instrumentation for the wedding ensemble today is non-traditional, featuring accordion or synthesizer, trumpet, and violin. Ensembles often play a mixture of Crimean Tatar music and hits of the day. At numerous weddings that I attended in Crimean in 2008-9, various hits by the outrageous transvestite Ukrainian singer Verka Serdutchka were played, and usually met with great enthusiasm.

Tatarligim, however, was not the official anthem of the Crimean Tatar people – that designation belongs to the song “I Pledge” (*And ätkämän*), written by Numan Chelibi Jihan, the instigator of the national movement in Crimea in the first decades of the twentieth century. Celebiçihan was murdered by Bolsheviks in 1918. His gruesome death – he was reportedly hacked into pieces and tossed into the Black Sea – and also his birth are commemorated annually in Crimea, with wreath-laying ceremonies, academic conferences, and political meetings. Performances of “I Pledge” became a “political gesture or symbol and therefore a political risk” earlier than *Tatarligim*. For that reason, as well as for the dolorous, rubato melody of *Tatarligim*, it became the unofficial anthem of the 1944 deportation – despite its historical roots in an earlier period of exile.

Kirimca writes about the significance of these two anthems for the Crimean Tatar people in exile “as symbols of identity and cohesion”:

In the absence of a true capital city, of a national museum, of a national seal and flag, and other conventional marks of nationality, these songs have become the only palpable symbols remaining for Crimean Tatars to rally around. “My Tatarness” comments on shared national and personal experiences from birth to death. It seems unique to Crimean Tatars and in that way echoes the emotional history of the Crimean Tatar nationality (Kirimca 1988: 78-79).

Calling attention to the realness of the song by maintaining its “palpable symbolism,” Kirimca underscores the power of these songs to produce a reality – an inherited memory – that Crimean Tatars of many generations have learned. This reality centers on the historical trauma of exile, a memory that has been passed down through generations of Crimean Tatars. Today, *Tatarligim* is the song most closely associated with May 18, the Day of Deportation. At this annual meeting, Crimean Tatars from all over Crimea stage a peaceful march from all corners of Simferopol and converge in the central Lenin Square to assert their solidarity as a community, and to raise awareness of their unfinished struggle to rebuild in their ancestral homeland.

Indeed, the most powerful rendition of *Tatarligim* that I heard while living in Crimea took place on May 17, 2008, the evening preceding the Day of Deportation march. In recent years, local Crimean Tatar youth organizations have staged a candlelight vigil in Lenin Square to commemorate the eve of the deportation. In 2008, the candles outlined the shape of Crimea and spelled out the words (in English): “No Genocide.” The evening also featured performances of mournful Crimean Tatar songs, including an emotional rendition of *Tatarligim* sung by Gulzara Bekirova, a former soloist with the *Qaytarma* ensemble. The song was performed as an extended, semi-improvised lament, which Bekirova sung against a synthesized drone. The singer’s husky and resonant voice played with elaborate melismas against the warm electronic



Photo by Alison Cartwright 2008

drone, and a trumpet responded to the singer’s vocal lines with ornamented, drawn-out melodies. In the balmy open air of Simferopol’s central Lenin Square, the meditative, largo performance sounded as an extended plaintive cry, a testament to the grim historical event that

the night was meant to evoke.

Ey, Guzel Qirim! A Bittersweet Sing-Along

In the 1950s, the post-WWII Crimean Tatar National Liberation Movement began in exile, following Stalin’s death and the loosening of ordinances that kept Crimean Tatars to their restricted zones of habitation - the notorious “special settlements.” During the Twentieth Party Congress that convened in Moscow in 1956, where Khrushchev admitted to some of the atrocities of the Stalin years, a decree was put in place that released Crimean Tatars from their

“special settlements,” but did not restore them the right to return to their homeland (a right that many other deported peoples - of less strategic territories - were granted). This injustice catalyzed the grassroots National Liberation Movement that fought for the right to return for the



Mustafa Jemilev's personal attic archive of materials from the Crimean Tatar National Movement. Photo by Alison Cartwright, 2008.

next three decades. By the mid-1960s, the movement had gathered considerable steam, and local chapters held secret meetings with planning strategies to further their cause in many regions where Crimean Tatars had resettled. Delegates of the National Movement were sent to Moscow to solicit meetings

with Communist Party leadership, where many were promptly arrested and imprisoned.

According to Mustafa Jemilev, the most prominent figure to emerge from the historic battle for human rights waged in those years (and the current leader of the Crimean Tatar *Mejlis* in Simferopol), “from the summer of 1965, the presence of rotating Crimean Tatar delegates in Moscow - on average, fifteen to twenty, and sometimes up to one hundred – was almost permanent and uninterrupted” (Jemilev 2005:59). Following massive demonstrations in Tashkent in September of 1967, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR passed a resolution referring to “citizens of Tatar nationality who previously inhabited Crimea,” and bestowing to them the right to live in any region of the Soviet Union. This spurred hundreds of families to uproot their lives in Central Asia and travel back to Crimea, where they encountered blockages to land ownership, employment, violence, and forceful eviction to the neighboring Ukrainian SSR. Again, the Crimean Tatar community staged massive protests, culminating in now mythologized acts of self-immolation on the territory of Crimea.⁹⁹

⁹⁹ The most famous example of this extreme protest is Musa Mamut, a 46-year old father of three who self-immolated in 1978. He doused himself with gasoline as Crimean authorities were attempting, yet again, to evict his

Many Crimean Tatar musicians whom I interviewed repeated the common theme of censorship and terror in those years: the need to avoid certain words, ideas, and concepts because they were immediately interpreted as nationalist and, therefore, anti-Soviet. Fevzi Aliev provides the following list of terms to be avoided: “Homeland, sea, wave, poplar, *kizil* (cornelian cherry), hazelnut and many others,” adding that the authorities were constantly encouraging composers to write about anything to forget Crimea:

Under such conditions, neither poets nor composers could write about Crimea, because they knew that arrest was imminent. But all of this was still reflected in the songs. And so, in 1968, one of the most popular songs of exile appeared, ‘*Ey, Güzel Qirim*’ [*Oh, my Beautiful Crimea*] (Aliev 2001: 84).

It existed in many variants among people (and the variant I have transcribed differs lyrically from Aliev’s *Anthology*). The song has no attributed author; though, as Aliev complains, many have pretended to the title since the risk of imprisonment has vanished (2001: 84).

The lyrics of the song are explicit and romantic, expressing a bittersweet nostalgia for the balmy beachy paradise of Crimea:

Алуштадан эскен ельчик / Юзюме урды
 Балалыгъым кечкен ерге / Козьяшым тюшти
 The wind blows from Alushta and hits me in the face,
 Tears are dropping in the place where I spent my childhood

Мен ву ерде яшалмадым / Чокъ ерлерни коралмадым,
 Ветаныма асрет олдым / Эй, гузель Къырым!
 I can’t live in that place, many places in Crimea I couldn’t see
 I miss my homeland, my beautiful Crimea!

Багълаларнынъ мейвалары / Бал иле шербет
 Сувларыны иче–иче / Тоялмадым мен
 In your garden, fruits are like honey and “sherbet”
 I drank and drank their water, but I was not sated.

Ешилъ дагълар кульди манъа / Къайтып кельди татар санъа
 Къучагъыны ач сен манъа / Эй, гузель Къырым!
 Green mountains smiled at me, Tatars returned to you

family. Greta Uehling evocatively describes how “death came to be beautiful” in such extreme Crimean Tatar protests of the 1970s-1990s (Uehling 2004).

Embrace me openly, Oh my beautiful Crimea!

Бала–чагъа Ветаным деп / Козьяшым текер
 Къартларымыз элин джаып / Дувалап этер
 Young and old talk of Homeland and tears pour out
 Our elders, with hands open, make prayers

Озь эвиме баргъай эдим / Озь оджагъым коръгей эдим
 Окюнмез ич янмаз эдим / Эй, гузель Къырым!
 If I went into my house, if I saw my dwelling
 I wouldn't pity myself at all, Oh my beautiful Crimea!¹⁰⁰

Formally, *Ey, Güzel Qirim* imitates the popular Soviet *estrada* style of the 1960s. The song adheres to a simple verse-chorus form. Despite being rooted squarely in the harmonic minor mode, the song has a rhythmic bounce and a catchy melody that inflects it with a light-heartedness that the mode and lyrics betray. The repeated line “*Oh, My Beautiful Crimea!*” – the ultimate punctuation of each chorus – can sound more celebratory than sad in sonic context. Unlike *Tatarligim*, which mourns the loss of the homeland and shifts faith to the people-as-ethnonation, ‘*Ey, Güzel Qirim*’ highlights the natural beauty of the “Green Isle,” calling up the port town of Alushta’s warm sea breezes, and reminiscing about the candy-like fruits that blossom and ripen on trees. This song, composed in the idealistic and hopeful days of the Crimean Tatar National Movement, exhibits a different kind of nostalgia, which Svetlana Boym would identify as “restorative” – expressing the belief that the lost homeland can be recovered (Boym 2001). Indeed, I interpret this song as a bittersweet but hopeful wish for the restoration of the ancestral homeland. The song is doubly effective in this capacity for the sociality that is built into it: with each catchy refrain, listeners are invited to sing along.

Indeed, in practice, “*Ey, Güzel Qirim*” functions today as a rousing sing-along more than as a cheerless lament. During my tenure in Crimea, this song was the most noticeably “popular”

¹⁰⁰ I am grateful to Milara Settarova for assisting with the translation of these lyrics from Crimean Tatar to Russian, and to Zeyneb Temnenko and Zarema Seidametova for correcting my translation in English.

melody I heard, a song to which practically everybody knows the words, even in the diaspora community of Eskishehir, Turkey (field notes, 10/2008). At birthday parties, weddings, and other joyful community events, this song would be sung, resonating bittersweetly with the harsh reality that Crimean Tatar repatriates face today in their “Beautiful Crimea.” The communal spirit of the song, its acceptance as a modern *narodnaya pesna* (folk song) and the celebration of the geographical beauty amplifies the honeyed warmth of being back at home in Crimea, the realization of a dream met; yet the narrative reminds the singer that the home is unattainable, and thus magnifies the acidic feeling that so many Crimean Tatars have towards the unanticipated challenges that their return presented.

Qirimdaki Chadirlar: The Disenchantment of Return

In the Gorbachev era of reforms, the Crimean Tatar National Liberation Movement intensified again. In July 1987, Crimean Tatars staged their biggest protest yet, convening on Moscow’s Red Square in “the first open demonstrations in the history of the Soviet regime” (Jemilev 2001: 66). International media outlets picked up on the story and the protest became a public relations embarrassment for the Soviet Union, with human rights groups around the world reacting to the plight of the Crimean Tatars. The government retaliated with a TASS (Soviet News Agency) announcement that formed a state committee on Crimean Tatar issues headed by Andrei Gromyko. The announcement acknowledged the unjust deportation of the Crimean Tatars under Stalin but also reinforced the Stalinist slander of the Crimean Tatars, labeling them “anti-Soviet” and alleging atrocities that Crimean Tatars supposedly committed, including “burning people in ovens” (Uehling 2004: 163). After eleven months, Gromyko’s committee voted that Crimean Tatars would not be given the right to return for the reason that “it would be impossible

to restore the Crimean ASSR [the autonomous Crimean republic that existed from 1921-1945], since, as a result of postwar demographic changes, Russians and Ukrainians constituted the majority of Crimea's population" (Jemilev 2005: 67). Crimean Tatars protested and went on strike in Uzbekistan and Krasnodarskij Krai. Despite the obstacles and the ruling, families began to travel back to Crimea. According to Jemilev, by April 1989, forty thousand Crimean Tatars had returned to Crimea, overcoming great hurdles to move their possessions and rebuild anew. In May of June 1989, the Yanaev Commission reversed the decision of the Gromyko Commission and "recommended the full political rehabilitation" of the Crimean Tatars, thus removing the hurdle at the highest political level for Crimean Tatars to return home. At the local level, however, resistance persisted and repatriates faced rampant discrimination and violent assault by Crimean authorities.

For the Crimean Tatar activists who were part of the movement, the protests in Moscow were an exhilarating place in time. Some subjects told me of their belief that Crimean Tatars were the reason the Soviet Union collapsed, because those public Moscow demonstrations widened the cracks that eventually led the entire Soviet Union to crumble. Camaraderie among the protesters on Red Square is a bond of a special sort, as I witnessed through the network of 1987-8 veterans whom I interviewed during my fieldwork. Though many of the veterans I interviewed expressed the belief that they knew repatriation would be difficult, many also looked back on themselves in those years and commented on their naïvete. Many more expressed that, while they expected to encounter difficulty and hostility, they did not anticipate it to the level that awaited them. One commonly repeated line that I heard in repatriation stories was that "no one was waiting for us here."

In his *Anthology*, Fevzi Aliev writes that *Qirimdaki Chadirlar* was “the first song that he wrote in Crimea” (2001:453). He dedicates the song to the memory of an activist in the Crimean Tatar National Movement by the name of Bekir Osmanov, who visited Aliev’s home in Uzbekistan in 1967. Osmanov instructed Aliev on methods of resistance to further the cause of Crimean Tatars to return home, and it made a big impression on the young composer. In a personal interview, Aliev told me that during the worst days of discrimination and squatting in 1990, he drew strength from the model set forth by Osmanov (interview 4/28/08). The lyrics to the song were published in a Crimean Tatar newspaper as a poem, and resonated with Aliev while he was in the squatter’s tents. The desire to write a song seized him, and on December 5th, 1990, he wrote the music for *Qirimdaki Chadirlar*:

Къайтып кельдим Ватаныма,
 “Хош кельдинъ сен” деген ёкъ.
 Кенъ чёлликте чадыр къурдым,
 Азапларым билген ёкъ.

I returned to my Motherland,
 Nobody said “Welcome”
 I set up a tent in the wide steppe
 Nobody knows of my struggle

Чадырлар, чадырлар,
 Къырымдаки чадырлар,
 О чадырлар ичерсинде
 Хорланалар татарлар.

Tents, so many tents,
 Tents of Crimea
 O these tents degrade
 The Tatars.

Озь юртунда гъурбет олды
 Къырымтатар миллети.
 Эвсиз–баркъсыз ёлда къалды,
 Къайда онынъ девлети?

We were deported from our homeland,
 The Crimean Tatar nation.
 We had nothing on the journey

Where is our state?

(Багълама / Chorus)

Инанам мен, кунеш догъар,
 Булутларны ёкъ этер.
 Бизим чадыр коюмизге
 Онынъ нурлары етер.

I believe that the sun will come out
 And scatter all the clouds
 And our tent city
 Will be warmed by the sun's rays

(Багълама / Chorus)

Like *Ey Güzel Qirim*, the tonal content of the composition bears a resemblance more to 20th century popular song than to older traditional Crimean Tatar forms: it sits squarely in the key of G harmonic minor, never straying from the conventional Western mode. Metrically, however, Aliev composed the piece in 5/4, an asymmetry that, to him, marks it as “ours” (interview 4/28/08). The text of the piece is obviously topical, describing the fields of tents that were the initial dwellings of the Crimean Tatar squatters. Yet, like *Ey Güzel Qirim*, the song contains a tinge of hopefulness, articulated here explicitly. Despite the sad fate of the author of the poem, who eventually returned to Central Asia, discouraged by the situation in Crimea – Aliev retains the optimism of the last verse of the text. Ultimately, Aliev did manage to stake a claim on land and built a suitable home for his family, though it “does not compare” to the home they had in Uzbekistan. In many ways, this unofficial anthem of the squatters characterizes that period of disenchantment. Today, the song is not widely sung (the only performance I heard of it was played for me by Aliev at his home), but many people are familiar with the melody. Also, as I witnessed, those who lived through the years of squatting relate to the main image of the song instantly, describing vivid memories of fields of tents.

Just as *Qirimdaki Chadirlar* conjures memories of the early years of repatriation, songs like *Ey, Güzel Qirim* and *Tatarligim* reference specific episodes in the history of the Crimean Tatar people. While all of the above examples demonstrate how songs-as-historical-objects facilitate the circulation of shared “national memories,” songs-in-performance are also a vital site at which emplaced Crimean Tatar conceptions of self and nation are negotiated.

Song as Roots

First, it is very important to respect the original song. To understand the real meaning of the song, one has to examine her people or the people the song belongs to, and this requires very hard work. I would always want the audience to feel what I feel and try to make them understand the meaning and beauty of the song.

- Celebrated Crimean Tatar singer Sabrie Erecepova, quoted in Gülüm (1998: 91)

Crimean Tatar song has been one of the major entry points for dialogue between ethnic Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars in making sense of their shared citizenship. In 2000, the *Krymska Svitlytsia* newspaper published an interview with Ostap Kindrachuk, a *kobzar* (epic bard) from Ivano-Frankivshchyna in Western Ukraine, who spent two years in exile in Kazakhstan as a young man, and then worked in Crimea as a sailor. During his Central Asian exile, he met Crimean Tatar deportees who were not allowed to return to their homeland, and grew sympathetic to their cause. Now he wanders around Ukraine (and has reportedly set out across Europe) busking with his bandura, dressed in the Ukrainian Cossack manner, and playing epic *dumy*, or ballads. Despite the fact that so many traditional *dumy* of the *kobzar* tradition told of Crimean Tatars warriors raiding the Ukrainian steppes and making slaves of the Christian Slavs, Kindrachuk’s modern-day balladry includes a few songs from the Crimean Tatar

repertoire, and thus, their perspective. In the article, Kindrachuk spoke of his affinity for the Crimean Tatars and their songs:

In my view, everything that is felt and endured by a people takes place in song. And when I learned Crimean Tatar songs (learned them, obviously, not mechanically, but tried to understand about what is being sung, even though I didn't know the language), then I felt their soul through the songs, which really moved me. In one of my songs, for example, it is described how in the times of Suvorov¹⁰¹ they pressured Tatars out of Crimea, how far from their native land they had to lay their heads. And the last words on your last breath will be "O, our beautiful Crimea." You can't be left indifferent witnessing such a moving love to your homeland. And if I am a patriot and love my Ukraine, then with respect I understand these feelings of the Crimean Tatars (Van' 2000).

The interview concludes with Kindrachuk expressing his deep conviction that patriotic Ukrainians should support the Crimean Tatar repatriates in their efforts to rebuild in their ancestral homeland, despite whatever negative things they may think of Crimean Tatars "from the history books." Instead of the institutionalized fear of Crimean Tatars held over from previous regimes, Kindrachuk proposes a theory of kinship between Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars premised on common victimhood, as peoples who share a modern history of repression and trauma.

In May of 2009, I orchestrated a meeting for a visiting Ukrainian-American musician, Julian Kytasty, with Simferopol-based singers to exchange epic songs about historical conflicts between Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars. Kytasty, like Kindrachuk, is a practitioner of the epic bard tradition from Ukraine (*kobzarstvo*), and had traveled from New York to attend a conference of *bandura* players and bards in Yalta, the iconic resort town located on the southern coast of Crimea. After the conference, I invited him to visit me at my field site in Simferopol, and introduced him to Rustem Memetov and his wife Gulzara Bekirova, two veteran singers and renowned performers among Crimean Tatars. The trio exchanged songs and stories. All three

¹⁰¹ Alexander Vasilyevich Suvorov (1729-1800) was the last *generalissimo* of the Russian Empire, renowned for his brutality and record victories on the battleground. Suvorov oversaw both Russo-Turkish wars, between which Catherine the Great annexed Crimea and rendered the newly autonomous Crimean khanate powerless.

discovered an interesting common experience, divided as it was by circumstance and location: each, growing up in places where the dominant language was not the native/heritage tongue (Memetov and Bekirova in Central Asian exile, Kytasty in the United States), had mastered their languages through song repertoires. After Memetov, Bekirova, and Kytasty shared songs that illuminated different perspectives on various historical episodes from the 17th and 18th centuries, we shared a meal at the home of my adopted family, which I allowed their 11-year-old daughter, Sevil, to film.

Earlier in the afternoon, elders from the Crimean Tatar community had gathered to read a *du'a*, a Muslim supplication, for Ayder-aga at my adopted family's home. Ayder-aga had suffered numerous recent misfortunes – first, the family's car had been mysteriously set on fire, and then his arm was injured when he was hit by a car while he walking down the street near their home. At the dining table, Rustem Memetov (who was welcomed as a local celebrity) offered to sing a traditional religious song as a wish for the family's future wellbeing. Kytasty volunteered a *kobzar* song as well. On the video, Sevil's attention then turned to me, the ethnographer, as Memetov praised me for doing the “holy work” of documenting these songs that “have so much power.” Memetov concluded his emotional toast by explaining how much the meeting with Kytasty, “a man of similar passions, preserving the music of his people” had taught him: “I now understand where our roots are – in song!” (field video, 5/11/2009).

The metaphor of roots is threaded throughout my fieldnotes in Crimea, and commonly arose in tandem with conversations about music. Often, the idea of music-as-roots extended to the identity of Crimean Tatars as a territorialized ethnicity, or ethnos, bound by *jus sanguinis* to a particular place in the world. When I first asked Rustem Memetov where he learned the traditional song repertoires, he replied that it “was in my blood” and that his “feelings about his

motherland came with his mother’s milk.” Our conversation migrated to the topic of how the secondary music school in Simferopol did not offer instruction in Crimean Tatar music, and that the city government refused to provide any financial support for the *Ensemble Maqam*, a newer group dedicated expressly to reviving the music of the Khan’s period. He expressed his frustration again by drawing on naturalistic metaphors, describing “each nationality [*narod*] as a flower, with its own smell, its own color, and its own form of beauty. And, in the bouquet - in the sphere of humankind, if you allow a flower in the bouquet to dry out, can it bloom again? No! That beauty will be gone!” At that exclamation his wife broke in, emphatically adding, “and the whole world loses it!” Memetov continued, “You see, each nationality belongs to a place on this earth. Crimean Tatars, we have nowhere else to go.”

In November of 2008, I attended the “11th Annual Güzel Qirim Festival of Deported Nationalities” in the Pervomaisk’kyi region of Crimea, about an hour from Simferopol. I drove up in the morning with two judges from Simferopol – Server Kakura, the director of *Ensemble Qirim*, and Zarema-khanum, a well-known singer. The program included over forty acts



Server Kakura at his office in the *Ensemble Qirim* building. Photo M. Sonevsky, 2008

performed mostly by children, with the majority of songs and dances from the Crimean Tatar repertoire. (As I had come to expect, there were also some lipsynched performances, and at least two acts that drew on generic “Eastern” motives, including a belly dance performed by young ethnic Russian

girls set to Bollywood-inspired Indian music.) Following each performance, one of the judges would stand and comment on what had just transpired. Server Kakura, a well-respected authority on both traditional and popular Crimean Tatar music forms, critiqued one young virtuosic

accordion player for his flashy, but inauthentic, embellishments to the melody of the piece: “what makes this *ours* is how you execute the ornaments!” Following the performance of a young female singer who performed the traditional Crimean Tatar song, *Sabak'tan k'ak'tym* [*I awoke in the morning*], Kakura told the audience, “when she sang, we all felt like we were on Crimean soil [*zemlia*]” (field notes, November 6, 2008). Through such evaluative discourse that metaphorically *emplaces* musical performance as “of the earth,” Crimean Tatars reinforce sentiments about “homeland” that are simultaneously constructed and refracted through songs.

Ensemble Qirim and Qaytarma: Debates about Traditional Music

As an arbiter of Crimean Tatar traditional musical authenticity for his role as the director of the song and dance *Ensemble Qirim*, Server Kakura is one of several individuals in the contemporary Crimean Tatar musical community whose evaluations holds such authoritative power. I met with Kakura for the first time on November 2, 2008, at his office in the ensemble’s building. He told me about his childhood fascination with music, how he played his father’s accordion by ear until he started formal musical education in the fourth grade. Eventually, he entered the Tashkent Conservatory and graduated in 1984. In 1987, he, his wife and three daughters returned to Crimea. I asked him how they decided to return, and he responded by explaining that his desire to return came “from my mother’s milk,” so he jumped at the first opportunity that arose. Once they had relocated to Simferopol, Kakura was able to secure jobs teaching at several different musical institutions, including the Ukrainian folk ensemble *Tavria*, the children’s music school, and with a local children’s ensemble. In 1990, he, a man by the name of Izmet, and Dilaver Bekirov, a well-known Crimean Tatar violinist, had the idea to found *Ensemble Qirim*, with the mission to “carry and popularize the music that people carry.” They worked in harsh conditions as “fanatics and patriots,” but, he added, “we were so happy to be



An advertisement for *Ensemble Qirim*. Photo M. Sonevitsky, 2008.

here that it didn't matter." After years of "sustaining the ensemble purely on enthusiasm," *Ensemble Qirim* began to receive some state support from the Ministry of Culture in 1995. A few years later, they secured a cavernous, somewhat dilapidated building for rehearsals a few blocks from the central avenue of Simferopol (personal interview, 11/2/2008).

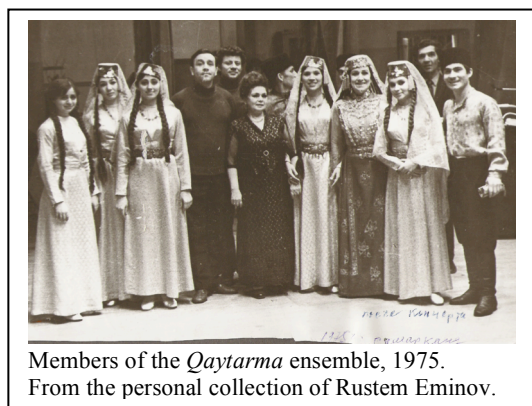
Ensemble Qirim was the first large-scale ensemble dedicated exclusively to Crimean Tatar music and dance that

was formed by repatriates on the territory of Crimea. When I visited them in 2008, the ensemble consisted of approximately nine instrumentalists (who played a mixture of traditional and modern instruments),¹⁰² twelve dancers, and five vocal soloists (including Kakura himself). In addition to traditional repertoire, the ensemble performs programs that feature new compositions and songs [*avtorski pesni*] based on folk materials, often authored by Kakura himself. Their foundational mission is to propagate, or as Kakura put it, to "infect" Crimean villages and towns with similar ensembles.

This expansive mandate of Ensemble Qirim is also an implicit critique of other ensembles, especially the Soviet-era institution *Qaytarma*, which alone held the mantle of Crimean Tatar traditional music in the second half of the 20th century. In 1993, the entire cast and crew of

¹⁰² I recorded a rehearsal of some of the musicians as they were preparing for a concert on November 5, 2008. On that day, the ensemble included a trumpet player who also doubled on *zurna*, a clarinetist who also sang, a keyboard player, violinist, *dare* percussionist who also doubled on accordion, and bass drum, *oud*, and *saz* players.

Qaytarma was relocated from Tashkent, Uzbekistan to Yevpatoria, a resort town on the western coast of Crimea (about a ninety minute drive from Simferopol).¹⁰³ Today, the ensemble works in residence at the Pushkin theater in Yevpatoria, and occasionally stages events around Crimea. During our interview, Kakura told me of his deep and abiding respect for the “legendary” ensemble *Qaytarma*, which “gave a voice to Crimean Tatars in our darkest hour.” But he also expressed his conviction that, at some point in recent years, they had made “a mistake by following the path of Soviet assimilation.” *Qaytarma*, he said, perpetuates a “friendship of the peoples” aesthetic, growing out of the tradition of the “Soviet *estrada*-circus show” [*estrada-*



tsyrkova show] that extolled false notions of the harmonious relations between all Soviet nationalities when, in fact, *Qaytarma* was strictly regulated by Soviet censors.

Founded in Tashkent in 1957, the ensemble was named *Qaytarma* to reference the iconic dance genre

of the Crimean Tatars, an asymmetrical, fast, celebratory dance that was once only performed by men.¹⁰⁴ Ilyas Bakhshish, who had directed the Crimean Tatar National Dance and Song Troupe

¹⁰³ Despite the distance and hardship of relocating the enterprise, many personnel came to Yevpatoria and continue to work in the ensemble today. Remziye Bakkal, a celebrated dancer with the ensemble decades ago, had become lead choreographer in the 1970s, and continues her work today.

¹⁰⁴ The genre of the *qaytarma* [къайтарма], also written as *khaytarma* [хайтарма] can also be found in Turkey, Moldova and in the repertoires of other neighboring Black Sea nations. Frank London, a trumpet player based in New York City, also pointed out the melodic similarity of the popular Bakhchisaray Khaytarma and the klezmer tune known as the “Der Heisser (Tartar Tanz).” The difference between the two renditions is an extra beat that makes the *qaytarma* asymmetrical – the *qaytarma* is played in the meter of 7/8, while the klezmer tune is rendered in 6/8. According to Server Kakura, the *ağrava qaytarma* [Агърава къайтарма] is completely unique to Crimea, as are the conventions of ornamentation in all genres (interview 11/2/2008). (I am unable to evaluate the accuracy of this claim.) As far as the origins of the *qaytarma* go, the musicologist Lenur Reshatovych told me of a Romanian study, conducted by Gizena Sylitsiana in the 1950s, in which the author confirmed that the dance used to be solely danced by males, and that, over time, it got faster and faster. Traditionally, the Crimean Tatar *qaytarma* is conceived of in 7/8 time, instead of the Moldovian convention of notating it in 7/16 time (personal interview, 2/7/2008). Interestingly, a 1950 album of “Exotic Dances” released by Folkways Records (in New York City) included the “Khaytarma.” On the cover of the album, Crimea is included among the countries listed (along with India, Burma,

in the 1930s and early 40s in Crimea until it was destroyed during the deportation, became the president and general manager of the new ensemble *Qaytarma* (Gülüm 1998: 88). In exile, the ensemble also took over the role of the pre-deportation Crimean Tatar theatre, and, starting in 1959, staged musical dramas such as *Arzy Kyz* by the playwright Yusuf Bolat (*ibid.*, 88-89). *Qaytarma* also gave a platform to many of the outstanding Crimean Tatar musicians of the twentieth century, including the iconic singer and composer Sabrie Erecepova (1912-1977). Born in Bakhchisaray, she worked under Yahya Sherfedinov (who later authored the important anthology *Zvuchyt' Qaytarma*) at the Crimean Central Radio music department of Simferopol, where her voice was regularly broadcast. Erecepova was said to have over 400 songs in her



repertoire, and she is widely still regarded as “the voice of the Crimean Tatar people.”¹⁰⁵

Lila Ellen Gray has written about the voice of Portuguese fado singer Amália Rodrigues as having “helped to structure an imaginary of group belonging and national memory, as well as to shape an idea of Portugal which was static, where time stood

still” (Gray 2007: 109). In Gray’s example, this “static conception of place” caused some locals

Spain, Japan, Panama, Rumania, Armenia, Argentina, and Equatorial Africa), yet no photo of the dancer or explanation of the dance form is included in the liner notes, whereas most other dances are annotated at length (“Exotic Dances, with Notes on the Dances by La Meri (from the Collection of La Meri and Ethnic Folkways Library)” 1950).

¹⁰⁵ Since the mass return to Crimea, personal memoirs and oral testimonies vouching for the experiences of exile have proliferated to compensate for “the ‘blank page’” that Crimean Tatars occupy in Soviet history (Uehling 2004: 84-85). Often, these newly available records also complicate generally accepted histories. On November 22 of 2008, I met with the head ethnographer, Rustem Eminov, at the Khan’s Palace in Bakhchisaray to discuss my project. At the end of our leisurely day together, which included a detailed tour of the museum grounds, Eminov told me about his grandmother, the singer Zeyneb Lumanova (1918-1992). Lumanova was one of the three big singers of the Crimean Tatar community in the mid 20th century (with Sabrie Erecepova and Edie Topchy), but her family believes that her legacy has been overlooked. Lumanova was a soloist with *Qaytarma* from 1972-6, and went on to have a successful solo career as well. He handed me a copy of the unpublished memoirs and recordings that his father, Ruslan Eminov, had compiled, all of which remain unpublished today, to my knowledge. I was also told about Sabrie Erecepova’s memoirs, written in Crimean Tatar, titled *Menum yenishle-yoqushl* (published in 1995) [*My Crooked Path in Life*], but I was never able to trace a copy.

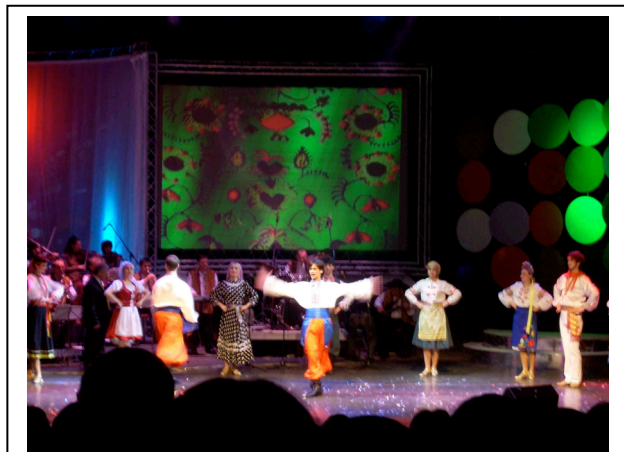
to criticize backwards-looking musical values for impeding “progress” in other arenas of Portuguese life. The example of Erecepova in the context of the Crimean Tatar exile, however, demonstrates a different attitude towards such a “static conception of place”: Erecepova’s career, her voice, and her repertoire of songs anchored Crimean Tatar sentiments about “homeland” when the “homeland” was most elusive. In an era of utter havoc, her voice transmitted familiarity, stability, and allowed listeners access to burrowed emotions about their collective recent trauma. Many people - both performers and listeners – who witnessed the early performance of *Qaytarma* recall how the audiences would “just weep” at the sound of traditional songs being performed in public. (As restrictions loosened into the 1960s, some intrepid performers would even risk performances of officially banned songs, such as *Tatarligim*). On more than one occasion, I was told about how the performances of *Qaytarma* always stirred “the desire to go home” among listeners.

Despite the vital role that *Qaytarma* played in the second half of the 20th century, the ensemble’s reputation in Crimea today is mixed. Born at the apex of Soviet institutionalized folklore, *Qaytarma* trafficked in a compromised form of Crimean Tatar-ness from its inception. Like many similar institutionalized folk ensembles of the Soviet period, *Qaytarma* promoted an outward image of unity and authority that jeopardized historical accuracy and heterogeneity.¹⁰⁶ As Nercessian points out in the Armenian case, “The music and the instruments are seen as authentic, since the limited knowledge of pre-Soviet folk music, instruments and dress may easily be manipulated to conform to this requirement” (Nercessian 2000: 89). Fevzi Aliev writes that “eastern instruments” – the traditional instruments of the Turkic orchestra – “were only added to the *Qaytarma* ensemble in 1972-74” (2001: 19). In short, the deliberate political program to erase the territorial component of Crimean Tatar identity after the deportation was

¹⁰⁶ For more on the history of Soviet institutionalized folklore, see chapter 1.

made manifest in the limits put upon *Qaytarma*; since the ensemble was transplanted to Yevpatoria in 1993, it has not substantially modified its program.

I attended the 50th Anniversary performance of the ensemble *Qaytarma* that took place at the massive concrete structure known as the Ukrainian Theater, located in Lenin Square, Simferopol, on March 21, 2008. The program blended traditional and modern elements,



Qaytarma's 50th Anniversary performance, at the Ukrainian Theater, Simferopol, 2008. Photo M. Sonevytsky.

sometimes juxtaposing them in jarring ways (an act that involved a hip-hop dancer popping as a woman in traditional dress sang a traditional song stands out in my video recording.) I was amazed that the evening's finale replicated what I had always imagined as the ultimate "Friendship of the Peoples" rousing circle dance showcase. Pairs of

dancers representing the various ethnic minorities of Crimea galloped onto stage costumed as Greeks, Ukrainians, Romanians, Armenians, Gypsies, Jews, Russians, Crimean Tatars, and Bulgarians. Each couple came into the semicircle in turn and performed a sequence, during which the music also shifted to include tokens of the national style being exhibited. Finally, all the dancers performed a sequence together as the audience clapped along and the music swirled towards jubilant climax. When, nearly a year later, Kakura voiced his "Friendship of the Peoples" critique of *Qaytarma*, this image flashed to the surface of my memory. During my conversation with Kakura, he explained that "when *Qaytarma* was the only option, it was absolutely the best option." Today, with greater freedom and numerous ensembles cultivating both "traditional" and "modern" repertoires, there is debate about which path is the best.

In part, these debates stem from the fact that there is extremely little reliable source material about pre-Soviet Crimean Tatar music. In the second half of the 20th century, while folklorists all over the Soviet Union were busily archiving the village-based traditional expressive cultures of their home regions as part of the Soviet ethnographic agenda, Crimean Tatars were excluded. According to Fevzi Aliev, the first ethnomusicological expeditions to record Crimean Tatar culture began only in *perestroika*, once Crimean Tatars themselves were fully acknowledged as a people again: in 1988, researchers from Moscow came to Tashkent and documented close to 200 songs – Crimean Tatars from all over Uzbekistan came to be recorded. The following year, the Moscow team traveled to Crimea and recorded approximately 100 more among the new returnees. For the following two years, expeditions were conducted in Uzbekistan and Crimea, culminating in the release of a disc, “*Kirimtatar muzykasynyng asabalygyndan*,” that represented the first time that “Crimean Tatar music” entered the “global musical encyclopedia and dictionary” (Aliev 2001: 18). Nadir Bekir, a Crimean Tatar politician who works for the protections of the indigenous peoples of Crimea, told me that, while it was “true that music was one of the cornerstones of Crimean Tatar identity...during the time of deportation and exile,” everything following the deportation “got confused - language, food, the difference between the Nogai and Yaliboyu...everything!” (interview, 4/22/2008).

This confusion has ignited some disputes about fundamental aspects of traditional musical practice. One such example rests on the controversy about the term *maqam*: Dzhemil Karikov, a respected researcher into music of the Khan’s period, named his ensemble, which aims for pre-colonial purity, *Maqam*. (Karikov, who told me that “pop music is fine, but we must be the warriors for our own culture first,” has been critical of “folk musicians” such as Aliev and Kakura, who occasionally cross over into popular entertainment (personal interview,

9/27/2008).) Karikov’s definition of *maqam* is corroborated by Fevzi Aliev, who provides several definitions for the term in his 2001 anthology, as both a “mode” and a “genre”:

Maqam [Мақъам] - a vocal-instrumental suite comprised of four sections; the genre is a native and professional music of the Crimean Tatars, which has not been adequately studied. The genre is indigenous to the coastal and mountainous regions of Crimea and is not characteristic of the steppe regions. It is disappearing, because there are no more experts or performers of this most ancient genre of Crimean Tatar music. The term “maqam” is also used to mean “melody,” and also to mean “mode” (2001: 10).

Server Kakura, on the other hand, insists that the very notion of *maqam* is foreign to Crimean Tatars. He suggests that the word was imported from Turkey or Uzbekistan and argues that *nağme*, a lyrical or satirical song form that often describes places in Crimea, is the correct indigenous Crimean Tatar synonym (personal interview, 11/2/2008).¹⁰⁷

In late January of 2004, Fevzi Aliev and Server Kakura entered into a public dispute about the role of folklore in contemporary Crimean Tatar life. The controversy was sparked by an article that Fevzi Aliev published in *Golos Kryma* [*Voice of Crimea*], a Simferopol newspaper



managed by Crimean Tatars. To celebrate the ten year anniversary of “the only Crimean Tatar family *estrada* ensemble,” Fevzi Aliev wrote an article detailing his group’s philosophy and proudest moments. The group, named *Destan* after the traditional epic song genre of the Crimean Tatars, is comprised of Fevzi-aga and his two sons, Alim and Edem. They play music that synthesizes dance-driven rhythms and electronic sounds with “Crimean Tatar motifs.”

They are a popular wedding band, and also frequently contracted to play at festivals and joyful

¹⁰⁷ The *nağme* is one traditional Crimean Tatar song genre that specifically references places, similar to the Turkish *Türk sanat müziği* tradition of describing Istanbul and its various neighborhoods. About Istanbul, Tom Solomon reports that “over 100 songs composed in this genre between the mid-17th century and the present that explicitly mention the city or one of its localities.... The repertory known as *İstanbul Şarkıları* (“Istanbul songs”) within this genre is effectively the aural equivalent of old picturesque orientalist postcards of the cityscape, painting aural portraits that praise the “genteel pleasures” and enchantment of the beauty spots of the city, evoking scenic views of minarets, the Bosphorus Strait and Golden Horn Bay from the city’s many hills” (Solomon 2005b: 47-48).

holidays. *Destan* performed their first concert on April 14, 1994, where they introduced Aliev's original songs (including *Qirimdaki Chadirlar*) that "are very popular to this day." Aliev writes that the group's motto is: "Always forward, developing, searching for the unknown." He narrates how, with much introspection, he arrived at the insight that "all that doesn't develop, will rot.... That is why development - is the guarantee of success." In the body of the article, Aliev articulates his position on the role of traditional music:

People often ask me: "Fevzi-aga, you know Crimean Tatar musical folklore wonderfully. Why didn't you create a folklore ensemble?" Actually, I could have created a Crimean Tatar folklore ensemble still in Uzbekistan. But the group of intelligentsia and political workers of that time, on whom this depended, did not understand my direction, and that is why my idea and plans were left unrealized. What a shame...

Why did I decide to go in the direction of *estrada*?

Folklore - is the art of past generations and the structure of that life, psychology, rituals, laws of behavior, etc. Today we live in a different world. People have changed, their worldview, psychology, and the character of interpersonal relations. And it is completely natural that today's individual requires a correspondence to the present day in *estradna muzyka*. Therefore, I consciously chose a modern path for the development of Crimean Tatar music. In this case, I was oriented only towards my sons Edem and Alim.

Exemplary tenacity, industriousness, and an iron will helped us to carry out our dreams (Aliev 2004a).

Aliev's lofty platform was met with ire by Server Kakura, who responded the following week in a rebuttal published in the same newspaper, titled *Folklore - our past, present and future* (Kakura 2004).

Kakura opens his response by saying that he could not "remain indifferent" to Aliev's statement that because "we live in a different world," Crimean Tatars must modernize away from traditional music. "Yes, the world today is different," Kakura writes, "however, progress in the musical arts of the Crimean Tatars can only proceed from folklore, because only in folklore are the originality and special features of Crimean Tatar music expressed." He continues by arguing that sequestering music to the past "denigrates" it: "A modern path for the development of Crimean Tatar music is impossible without folklore. It is the foundation of our music!"

Our people have gone through difficult trials, the aftereffect of which we feel ourselves today. We blame our neighbors, why don't we speak in our native tongue, why don't we know our customs, songs and so on (Kakura 2004).

Taking into account the failures of the state to support the Crimean Tatar revival of language, expressive culture, and religion, Kakura's solution is to shift responsibility onto "each one of us." He recommends that parents should introduce their children to musical folklore, especially as is it practiced by his group, *Ensemble Qirim*, "the only collective that takes as its mandate the growth and preservation of the true national musical art" of the Crimean Tatars. "Without folklore," he writes, "we risk losing our past, and ourselves."

On February 20, Aliev responded to Kakura's emotional plea for Crimean Tatars to reinvest and reinvigorate musical traditions along the model of *Ensemble Qirim*, by challenging Kakura's reading of the first article – that Fevzi Aliev is a radical who would throw traditional culture entirely out the window (Aliev 2004b). (The two men have known each other for a long time, and Kakura was one of the first reviewers of Aliev's 2001 Anthology - which is largely dedicated to traditional music - so these accusations seem to have been inflated in the heat of the dispute.) Instead of ignoring or destroying the past, Aliev argues for evolution: "if we do not want for our musical culture to die, we must renew it. We must urgently create the new, but corresponding to already present *estradna muzyka*." *Estrada*, he explains, is a modern language through which Crimean Tatars can express their unique culture.

When I asked each man about this exchange in personal interviews in 2008, they expressed similar opinions to those published four years earlier. The debate, which appears to be in a state of stalemate, remains timely and interesting, however, because both Aliev and Kakura have proven skill and fluency in both popular and traditional musical forms: in the traditional realm, Aliev's anthology and previous role in *Qaytarma* attests to this, as does Kakura's mission for

Ensemble Qirim; in the realm of *estrada*, Aliev's *Destan* and extensive catalogue of original songs matches Kakura's own catalogue of personally authored and widely performed original songs. Their debate, therefore, centers not the specifics of their creativity or musical careers, but on how each conceives of the traditions of the past: as inhibiting or catalyzing "true Crimean Tatar music." Such disagreement about the past is also a dispute about memory practices. Songs and melodies are palimpsests, encoded with layers of rich and complex historical, collective, and personal experience. In the context of exile and return, when music became a politicized mnemonic by which Crimean Tatars reinforced their relationship to the territory of Crimea, should the future of traditional music replicate memories of trauma, exile, and sorrow? Now that Crimean Tatars have partially regained their "homeland," how should expressive practices that summon a nostalgic and sentimental myth of place be managed?

On Homeland: Longing for Place in Song

Of what does the homeland smell?
 Of a dry blade of grass,
 Caught in a child's hair,
 Of a pine branch, of bitter wormwood,
 Or, of separation, buried in the heart?
 Or, of lamb's wool, of aromatic coffee,
 Tinkling as it pours into thin little cups,
 Of mountain tea, of almonds, fragrant with mint,
 Of today's reality, of yesterday's dream?
 Or, of the searing cry of a lone seagull?
 Or, of the snowy peak of Chatir-dagh?
 Of distant music from an ancient song?
 Oh no, my homeland smells of hope.

- Lilia Budzhurova (1989), cited in Allworth 1998 (3-4)

In *The Future of Nostalgia*, Svetlana Boym enumerates the unique forms of nostalgia as they are articulated by a variety of cultures. Boym delves into the particularly German concept of

Heimweh and French *maladie du pays*, Spanish *mal de Corazon*, the deeply introspective culture of nostalgia in the post-Soviet states and its counterpart in the post-Soviet diaspora of the United States. The Romanian word *dor*, “sonorous and sharp like a dagger . . . speaks of a specifically Romanian dolorous ache.” She lists Russian *toska*, which “evokes a claustrophobic intimacy of the cramped space from where one pines for the infinite” in opposition to Eva Hoffman’s description of Polish *tesknota* as a “welling up of absence.” Milan Kundera’s artful likening of Czech *litost* to a “feeling as infinite as an open accordion” is juxtaposed to Brazilian *saudade*, which she characterizes as “a tender sorrow, breezy and erotic” form of longing. Ultimately, Boym concludes that the curiously parallel belief that each form of nostalgia is “radically untranslatable” from culture to culture belies a fundamental commonality to all of these tropes: “While each term preserves the specific rhythm of the language, one is struck by the fact that all these untranslatable words are in fact synonyms; and all share the desire for untranslatability, the longing for uniqueness” (2001:13).¹⁰⁸

If it is true that each culture desires to possess a unique and essential experience of longing, what are the markers that endow each iteration of nostalgia with its specificity? I argue that a primary marker of this is *place*, especially an imagined, historical construct of *place*. In such a construct of *place*, the dizzying circle of past, present and future associations chase each other in what the poet Robert Frost called “an interminable chain of longing,” with no identifiable

¹⁰⁸ Boym’s formulation of “nostalgia” intersects with other scholarly treatments of longing and nostalgia, including Susan Stewart’s (1993) analysis on longing and its ways of intersecting with consumption, a relationship that draws emphasis to the potential mass-market quality of nostalgic feeling, as it is embodied in the souvenir. Also, Timothy D. Taylor (2009) has defined the nostalgia shared by a New Jersey community of doo-wop fans as a “Raymond Willamesque structure of feeling” – arguing that the nostalgia of New Jersey doo-wop fans has emerged as a particular “structure of feeling linked to particular generations and classes,” much like the shared experience and inherited memory of Crimean Tatar repatriates (2009: 97-99). Both Susan Stewart and Timothy Taylor draw on Kathleen Stewart’s 1998 essay on nostalgia, as well.

beginning or end.¹⁰⁹ Ultimately, the chase ends on longing – here is the unique nostalgic knowledge shared only within some bounded community (be it linguistic, cultural, proximal, racial, human) - as the unifying, self-replicating phenomenon. Boym writes, “Nostalgia, like progress, is dependent on the modern conception of unrepeatable and irreversible time.” Perhaps it follows that music, as the quintessential temporal art, derives some of its unique expressive power from such a paradox: while the act of listening to music can only happen in a period of occupied time/space which is contemporaneous with the time in which it is listened to, music, as it is being heard, can itself hark back to a time that is distinct from the time in which it is heard. In other terms, music is the cultural form that can recreate the past in the present, or, inversely, to remake the past or present as potential future.

Clifford Geertz has called attention to the fact that “‘place’ as an analytical or descriptive concept, explicitly set out and formally developed, does not appear.... But the invisibility of place has mainly to do with the fact that it is so difficult to free from subjectivities and occasions, immediate perceptions and instant cases. Like Love or Imagination, Place makes a poor abstraction. Separated from its materializations, it has little meaning” (Geertz 1996:259). But what is the elusive material of *place*? How can we pinpoint *place* as a broader analytic category, as the manifestation of collective subjectivities, collective memory, collective consciousness? One way to achieve this is to examine the sites at which collective memories are created and shared. In the Crimean Tatar case, one such site is in the song repertoires and musical discourses that explicitly cultivate association to territory-bound identity.

¹⁰⁹ He is no fugitive – escaped, escaping. / No one has seen him stumble looking back./ His fear is not behind him but beside him / On either hand to make his course perhaps/A crooked straightness yet no less a straightness./ He runs face forward. He is a pursuer./ He seeks a seeker who in his turn seeks/ Another still, lost far into the distance./Any who seek him seek in him the seeker./His life is a pursuit of a pursuit forever./ It is the future that creates his present./ All is an interminable chain of longing. – Robert Frost, *Escapist - Never* (1970).

In *Beyond Memory*, Greta Uehling challenged the popular assumption of the 1990s that the Crimean Tatar conundrum can be reduced to “an ethnic problem.” She persuasively argues that the Crimean Tatar’s relation to place was of utmost importance in the drive to restore the homeland, and that, as their relation to their homeland “became more tenuous, the idea of a homeland” grew in importance. While Uehling observes how these imaginations of place shaped Tatar repatriates in their quest to rebuild houses in the 1990s through an investigation of everyday conversation, my interest lies in the poetic genres and expressive practices - particularly song - that enshrined such imaginations of place for people in exile. Through songs that encode national memory, music that sentimentalizes homeland, and institutions that today imagine different futures for “traditional” music, the conceptual category of place maps onto the concrete geography of Crimea, and sensory memories of crashing waves, Black Sea wind, or the smell of ripe almonds and figs. As Mark Slobin points out, “Music has always been wired into the mobile body, forming earliest memories and later evoking deep-set emotions. Perhaps only the aroma of familiar foods has the same visceral power as the hearing of tender tunes. Beyond food’s more general evocation of linkage, music makes specific connections with family members, politics, and significant moments for which melodies are the milestone” (Slobin 1994:245-6). Slobin overlooks, however, the way in which music also marks concrete ties to places, with its potent ability to conjure “homeland” from a vantage point that is, sometimes, many miles away.

CHAPTER 3

Marketing the New European Exotic: Wildness in Ukrainian Popular Music

Globalisation of culture is not, as we believed for a long time, an exclusive synonym for the Westernisation of the rest of the planet, because the sonic invasion has been reciprocal, even if we assume responsibility for its initial impulse. Cultural globalisation appears, on the contrary, like a vast and indefinite game of distorting mirrors, in which the other sends back to us the altered image of our transient identity.

- Laurent Aubert, *The Music of the Other: New Challenges for Ethnomusicology in a Global Age* (2007: 53)

Traditions are neither genuine nor spurious, for if genuine tradition refers to the pristine and immutable heritage of the past, then all genuine traditions are spurious. But if...tradition is always defined in the present, then all spurious traditions are genuine. Genuine and spurious - terms that have been used to distinguish objective reality from hocus-pocus - are inappropriate when applied to social phenomena, which never exist apart from our interpretations of them.

- Handler and Linnekin, *Tradition, Genuine or Spurious* (1984: 288)

[R]oots, however deep they may be, need not be pure at all. Rather, they may embody a kind of 'original hybridity,' a messy, rhizomic entanglement which, in its undecideability, better represents the travails of human identity than do the national or ethnic differences that are solidified by borders in the first place.

- Adrian Ivakhiv, *Stoking the Heart of a (Certain) Europe* (2006)

This story begins in mid-July of 2005, towards the very end of a journey to a village that came at the very end of a narrow serpentine line on my large roadmap of Ukraine. We were en route to Kosmach, a village in Hutsulshchyna, the southwestern mountainous region of Ukraine that stretches from the border of Hungary along the border of Romania. Despite my years of previous experiences on equally bumpy, equally remote dirt mountain roads in this particular region of the world, I began to feel anxious, expectant. That morning I had re-read the press materials that were released at the *Znaju Ya* ["I Know"] music video premiere of Ukrainian pop star Ruslana in 2002, which kicked off her "Hutsulian Project." Parts of the video had been filmed in Kosmach.

The press releases told of how she had traveled “high in the mountains, where the people live in [a] different time and dimension” to find her “source of inspiration.” I knew that Hutsuls were often romanticized by Ukrainian urbanites, but still, I thought to myself, maybe this would be “the place,” as the press release boasted, “where you find true Ukrainian exotics!”

As my friend negotiated the unpaved mountain roads in his ancient Soviet-era car, I sat in the back and imagined that Kosmach might actually be different from scores of other Hutsul villages I’d visited earlier that week and on previous trips – it was, after all, at the *end* of the thin, squiggly line. After hours of scenic mountain vistas and roadside villages, we finally rolled into Kosmach, where a large Ukrainian Orthodox church and a few small cafes framed the center of town. It started to rain, so we ducked into the only café in sight that was open on that Sunday. Inside, three teenagers – two girls and a boy – sat sharing a Snickers bar and text-messaging each other with their cell phones from across the table. In my field notes, I jotted the observation that while Kosmach was geographically remote, its isolation did not seem to preclude such technologically sophisticated — if also technologically alienating — forms of modern teenaged flirtation.

Once their interest had shifted away from their phones and to us, I announced that I had come to Kosmach to investigate the “source of inspiration” for Ruslana’s music. Lida, the daughter of the café’s proprietors, leapt forward with an opinion that was echoed (with different degrees of intensity, but an amazing amount of consistency) by the vast majority of the musicians and video participants with whom I later spoke. Lida explained that “Ruslana had come in with a huge crew, it went well. We dressed up in our folk costumes for her and staged a wedding; everything was fine. But I can’t say that people are happy about it – especially about the name of the project, *Wild Dances*. How – in what way – are we wild?” My video footage

from that summer cuts from Lida's speech to a scene that happened a few minutes after she voiced her impassioned opinion: a wedding band called *Kosmats'ka Pysanka* – composed of many of the same musicians whom Ruslana had hired for her project – led a wedding procession through the center of town. They invited me and my friend to join them, so I went along, and spent the next two days gathering their perspectives on this same question.¹¹⁰

Now, I wish to pose this account against another. This one begins with a camera, swooping. As it soars above a massive audience and pans towards a dark stage, the rainbow of national flags seems an impressionistic rendering of an idealized, harmonious, globalized Europe. Over the sound system, the evocative trumpet of multiple *trembitas*¹¹¹ is heard and there are four figures standing, backs to one another, each holding a massive 9-foot conical horn up in the air. They are illuminated in a bright circle of red, pulsating light. Suddenly, the blare of mountain horns is eclipsed by an orchestral hit and Ruslana, wearing a long fur draped over one shoulder in the manner of Tarzan, enters from the back of the stage. She and five dancers, all wearing the same fur coat, storm towards the audience. They roar “hey!” with each deafening hit. Bursts of flame erupt on projection screens all around the back of the stage as Ruslana is flanked by dancers in pyramid formation. They rip off their fur coats to reveal skin: tan midriiffs, short leather skirts, tall heeled boots, seams studded with metal, muscular tattooed arms bearing

¹¹⁰ Many young native Hutsul musicians today fetishize amplification and electronic sounds as markers of technological and cultural sophistication, a departure from, and in some ways, a response to, historically imposed stereotypes of Hutsul “wildness.” As post-Soviet zeal for consumption has spread to the remote villages of Hutsulshchyna, evidenced by state-of-the-art *mobilki* [cell phones] or knock-off Gucci bags and Adidas sweatsuits, outward shows of being “Western” or “European” through consumption practices has replaced local pride in traditional ways of life. In the realm of music, this same fetishizing of “civilization” often signals a turn away from traditional acoustic instruments towards synthesizers and electronic sounds, and away from ritual genres in favor of the pounding *um-tzah* rhythmic aesthetic of generic dance music.

¹¹¹ The *trembita* is the iconic alpine horns associated with Hutsul Carpathian mountain highlanders. Ruslana's website romantically described the “longest wing [sic] instruments in the world, four meter trumpets that Hutsul craftsmen make out of pine trees that were stricken by lightning. The sound of the instrument is as mystic as the story of its creation [sic]” (accessed April 2005). Generally, *trembitas* are 2-3 meters long.

Ruslana's *Wild Dances* insignia. As they turn, the tin sound of *tsymbaly*¹¹² cuts through against a thumping electronic beat and the dancers jump into a synchronized choreography that resembles mid-1990s Janet Jackson more than Ukrainian traditional dance. It is a thrilling sight, overwhelming to the senses, as the observer is assaulted by ambiguous yet redolent images: Xena the Warrior princess or Britney Spears, Scythian gold or Celtic crests, European disco or Carpathian yodeling, global sex, local folk, Genghis Khan or Riverdance.

Ukraine was the tenth country to take the stage at the 2004 Eurovision Song Contest (ESC) held in Istanbul, a statistically unfavorable placement that was the result of a random drawing, Ukraine sandwiched between Albania and Croatia. Ruslana was Ukraine's second representative to the contest, making Ukraine one of the two youngest participants in the 49th ESC. Over one hundred million viewers in thirty-six countries were reported to have taken part in the 2004 televoting contest, making the 49th ESC the biggest televised and televoted contest in world history at that time. After each of the thirty-six participant national broadcasting companies reported their countries' televoting results, Ruslana and her Wild Dancers were proclaimed victorious.

Following her Eurovision victory, Ruslana became the most prominent Ukrainian musician in the world and subsequently, a political force. In March 2006, Ruslana was elected to Ukrainian Parliament as a representative of the *Nasha Ukraina* (Our Ukraine) coalition, a position she relinquished in June 2007. In the international political arena, she currently serves as a UN and OSCE spokeswoman against female trafficking in Europe, appearing in television commercials in Ukraine. In 2008, she premiered what she calls the "social single" "Not for Sale" which she composed as the intended anthem for the anti-human-trafficking league based in

¹¹² Another traditional Ukrainian musical instrument prevalent in Hutsul ensembles, comparable to the hammered dulcimers used in klezmer music.

Vienna, Austria – it was also shown as a teaser to promote her new albums. Billed as a “humanitarian pop star,” Ruslana presents herself as a promoter of “the Ukrainian image” for European audiences while building support for her creative projects.

This “Ukrainian image” draws to large extent on the Hutsuls, the indigenous Ukrainian mountaineers on whose traditions she based her Eurovision performance and album *Wild Dances*. As the most visible representative of Hutsul culture in the world, Ruslana’s role as mediator between Ukrainian tradition and modernity has been controversial. But Ruslana is also just one piece of the puzzle, the most visible example of a trend with a long legacy in Ukraine, specifically: the practice of lifting up the Hutsuls as an ethno-national symbol of Ukrainian originality and authenticity, or the mythologizing of Hutsuls as the Ukrainian “noble savage.” As a kind of ambivalent “indigenous branding,” the commercialization of Hutsul “wildness” falls into the model of ethno-national pop-rock that typifies much pop-rock music (made on the model of Anglo-American pop-rock, but seeking its own ethno-national character), a phenomenon of popular music hybridity that utilizes postmodern *aesthetic cosmopolitanism*, defined by sociologist Motti Regev as follows:

Aesthetic cosmopolitanism is the condition in which the representation and performance of ethno-national cultural uniqueness becomes largely based on contemporary art forms like pop-rock music or film, and whose expressive forms include stylistic elements knowingly drawn from sources exterior to indigenous traditions (2007:319).

This mash-up of indigenous music with global pop is characteristic of many postcolonial societies seeking to codify a modern national character, yet caught between tradition and modernity.¹¹³ The romanticizing of the “noble savage” is also, as Ter Ellingson points out, common in contemporary popular music, in which the “case of romantic self-affirmation can

¹¹³ For an in-depth discussion of ambivalence and “indigenous branding” see (Manning 2007), an analysis of how Georgian beer marketing embodies the duality that characterizes many post-Soviet states caught between Soviet legacy and the tumult of the independence era.

quickly and easily shade over into a case of commercial promotion of a corporately constructed [“wild”] ‘self’” (Ellingson 2001: 333). Writ broadly, the various manifestations of Hutsul-ness as Ukrainian-ness in popular music provide rich examples of the effects of tokenizing ethnic populations whose essentialized character becomes a stereotype exported internationally. But the marketing of Hutsul “wildness” must also be understood as a uniquely Ukrainian phenomenon, linked in part to the fractured nature of the independent Ukrainian nation-state and the unique geopolitical history of Ukraine as an eternal borderland between shifting imperial regimes (Batt 2003; Magosci 1996; Reid 2000; Subtelny 1988/2000; Szporluk 1997; Von Hagen 1995, 2004; Velychenko 2004).¹¹⁴

As a marketing term, Hutsul “wildness” bears many similarities to other exotic tropes from cultures whose world music market erupted in decades prior to Ukraine’s. The most analogous example comes from Bulgaria, where the marketing of female polyphonic vocal styles (most famously in the *Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares*, which contained mostly arranged choral pieces filtered through an urban sensibility) to the West in the 1980s and 1990s, capitalized on the mysterious, oriental, sacred, or primal qualities of the music (Buchanan 2006). Buchanan outlines six categories of metaphors that reified the Appadurian “mediascape”¹¹⁵ around the marketing of Bulgarian female voices in the late 1980s: “(1) the ancient, primeval, mythic, and medieval; (2) the Eastern, Oriental, Byzantine, and Turkish; (3) rurality, pastoralism, and the

¹¹⁴ The Hutsul-as-wildness aesthetic of Ukrainian popular music can be seen as analogous in many ways to the “kozak-rock” aesthetic of the popular Kyiv-based band *Haydamaky*. Blending ska and reggae with folk influences, *Haydamaky* have focused their attention on the epic bard tradition of medieval Ukraine, and the legendary Kozak freedom-fighters who dominated areas of the Ukrainian steppe from the 15th through late 18th centuries. Both Hutsul-pop-rock and kozak-rock are manifestations of Ukrainian “aesthetic cosmopolitanism” in popular music, yet they draw on distinct geographical, historical, and sonic conceptions of ethnic Ukrainian essentialism.

¹¹⁵ Anthropologist Arjun Appadurai introduced the term *mediascape* in a 1990 article titled “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy.” “Mediascape” refers to the ways that globalization and modern technology have facilitated the trans-national, trans-local circulation of electronic and print media. Buchanan highlights the effects of advertising – in print and other media – of the Bulgarian Women’s voices, that contributing to the codification of stereotypes of the Bulgarian female voice as “other.”

izvor; (4) feminine sensuality and sexuality, of which singing is a primal, natural, and organic expression; (5) the holy and sacred; and (6) the supernatural, magical, and mystical” (2006: 361). Buchanan’s taxonomy of metaphors bleeds over with many tropes found in the marketing of contemporary Hutsul and hybrid projects. Instead of “mystery,” however, Hutsul marketing revolves around the master trope of “wildness.”

Much like Bulgarian marketing language, Ukrainian popular musicians draw on numerous metaphors to describe the essential, wild qualities of Hutsul music. Such linked concepts serve dual purposes: first, they afford nuance to the generic trope of *wildness*, and second, they allow some distance from the tendentious history of the term’s specific association with *Wild Dances*. Given the primary association of *wildness* with Ruslana’s prominent but controversial *Wild Dances* project, many Ukrainian popular musicians who draw on Hutsul sources feel the need to distance themselves from *wildness*, yet they still seek to convey what they perceive as the intrinsic power of the Hutsul sources they cite. Thus, musicians will often draw on metaphorical concepts related to the overexposed term, concepts that code *wildness* in distinct ways. I will highlight two such key concepts that orbit around the master trope of *wildness* – *drayv* and *enerhia/enerhetyka* – in this chapter.

Related ideas, both are slang terms borrowed from outside of the Ukrainian lexicon and applied in diverse ways to signify how Hutsul music exerts sonic power or control over the listener. Both concepts are often deployed as naturalized, intrinsic properties that make Hutsul music “irresistible” or “inspiring.” *Drayv* is a direct transliteration from the English word “drive,” and describes the ardency or inherent excitement of musical sound. It entered the lexicon through youth culture, and most often serves to describe rock or dance musics: in one sense, it is an expansion of the concept of “rhythmic drive” that might be used in English

language contexts, applied to all aspects of musical structure. *Drayv* is a purposefully vague term, unconcerned with formal detail, employed to evoke the sublime. Something with good or unrelenting *drayv* usually indicates that it will spur the listener to move and dance; at its best, *drayv* promises transcendence. As a metaphor of the bodily and metaphysical, *drayv* references the language of rave subculture and its related spirituality (Hutson 2000). When spoken of as cyclical or trance-inducing, *drayv* approaches Keil and Feld's formulation of groove, where "slight variations become magical, hypnotizing, mesmerizing" when the cyclical nature of a particular kind of music "draw[s] you in and work[s] on you," when participatory discrepancies in performance constitute the feelingful realm of musical experience (Keil and Feld 1994:23). This belief in musical power to act upon the listener unites the elusive concepts of *drayv* with *enerhia/enerhetyka*.

Enerhia is the literal term for "energy" in Ukrainian, but metaphorically, it represents the power of musical sound. The attribution of energy to music refers not only to up-tempo or dance-based musics, but can stand in for broad notions of musical power: for example, in Ruslana's new fantasy-based project *Wild Energy*, musical *enerhia* functions as literal fuel for human survival (bloodless droids free themselves from their charging stations at hearing Ruslana's music) and, more generally, as a catalyst for spiritual awakening and salvation. Though they are sometimes used interchangeably, *enerhetyka* has distinct connotations from *enerhia*. In many contexts, *enerhetyka* specifically references the "soul" or "spirit" of musical sound. It is significant to note, however, that *enerhetyka* has a distinct etymology from Herderian or Soviet discourses concerned with the "authentic soul" of the folk: it most likely evolved out of post-Soviet neo-paganism's encounter with Western forms of native beliefs. In music, *enerhetyka* often connotes mystical or spiritual qualities and, like *drayv*, it does not apply exclusively to

traditional (folk) musics. Like *drayv*, *enerhetyka* is a metaphor that describes an ineffable aspect of musical sound, one that must be perceived by the listener to be made meaningful. Yet both terms - subjectively perceived - often circulate as objective merits of musical sound, i.e., *Hutsul music has an unstoppable drayv*. However, between the concepts, *enerhia/enerhetyka* is more diffuse; it is less concerned with structure - cycle or repetition - than *drayv*. *Enerhetyka* refers to an auratic quality of music sound, the essence of raw musical power. When applied to Hutsul music, both terms, through their sublimation of context into feeling, through their premium on irrational but meaningful transcendence, operate as contemporary variations on the master-trope *wildness*.

Local or transnational, formal or spontaneous, public and private debates about representation vis-a-vis *wildness* serve as a visible example of a trend that began in Ukraine in 1991, when popular musicians first sought to craft a music that represented something distinctly Ukrainian and free of Soviet ideology while integrating elements of Western pop and rock that had circulated in the Soviet underground (Bahry 1994).¹¹⁶ These attempts to cleanse Ukrainian culture of its Soviet influence in the 1990s were fraught with contradictions, especially since Soviet nationality policy had reified and standardized a narrative of Ukrainian history that adhered both to Marxist-Leninist nationality policy but also drew on the standard and purportedly ancient tropes of Ukrainian folklore (Wanner 2004). As post-Soviet Ukrainian artists and musicians sought to reclaim these national symbols, they found that the symbols themselves had been so thoroughly mythologized as part of the Soviet “Friendship of the Peoples” ideology that their original meanings had been undermined. David Chioni Moore observes, “...one result of extended subjugation is compensatory behavior by the subject peoples. One manifestation of

¹¹⁶ Pavlyshyn provides a statistic to substantiate this claim about the tradition of integrating a folk idiom into Ukrainian Popular Music. Drawing from a directory of Ukrainian popular music spanning from the 1950s through 2004, he concludes that 46 of 315 listed groups used folk music to some degree in their music-making (2006: 417).

this behavior is an exaggerated desire for authentic sources...” (Moore 2001:118). Indeed, since 1991, Ukrainians in many regions have aspired to locate authentic sources, returning to village-based practices that were purportedly left unharmed by Soviet projects. In Ukrainian popular music, discourses of “wildness” marked by experiments in hybridity, occupy contested territory within this search for authenticity; they lie in the space between official history and legacies of stereotype and slander, between musical traditions believed to be centuries old and organic as mountain soil, and between the multiple and overlapping constructions of “wildness” that are cultivated and represented by Ukrainian musicians.

Popular music acts that invoke Hutsul music in hybrid formulations such as “hutzul-punk” or “drive-ethno-dance” (Wickstroem 2008) have flourished in recent years, and new acts referencing Ukraine’s most caricatured ethnic mountain people continue to crop up.¹¹⁷ However, it is important to situate this particular debate in the broader context of a Ukraine that is vast and fractured: since the “wild” label indexes the traditions and beliefs of the indigenous Hutsuls of the Carpathian Mountains, the specific geography of these particular debates over “wildness” in Ukrainian popular music is concentrated in the predominantly Ukrainophone and nationalist-leaning west and center of Ukraine, between cosmopolitan cities and isolated villages, and often to the exclusion of non-ethnic Ukrainian groups who are Ukrainian by citizenship (such as Crimean Tatars, Roma, Jews, Armenians, and others). Most of the groups who experiment with blending Hutsul influence with pop and rock styles are young people seeking a new kind of music that will appeal on a mass scale to young audiences; they themselves are usually based in cities, and grew up listening to Anglo-American rock and pop music as much as (or more than) to Ukrainian indigenous musics. In many of the stories that comprise this chapter, the discovery

¹¹⁷ Acts such as Gutsul Kalipso, Perkalaba, Drymba ta Dzyga, Komu Vnyz, Shokolad, are all examples of this Hutsul/hybrid trend in popular music.

of traditional Hutsul music came as a revelation to these musicians when they were young adults; therefore, their subsequent attempts to merge popular youth-oriented styles with traditional Hutsul elements springs first from an intimacy with pop/rock, and secondly from an enthusiasm for traditional Hutsul music.

In recent years, the explosion of young Ukrainian popular music groups advertising Hutsul-inflected rock/punk/ska/reggae/calypso has escalated debates about representation and appropriate uses of traditional music and imagery in the present era. Many of these up-and-coming acts deny an aesthetic or ideological connection to the Eurovision-style kitschiness of the pop star Ruslana, but their connections to Hutsul music and culture may be equally nebulous. Through their music, iconography and marketing language, such pop and rock groups choose to stage a “wildness” that, in addition to invoking something Hutsul, also suggest a recklessness born from drug or alcohol-related debauchery, cross-cultural mysticism, carnivalesque absurdity, or postmodern pastiche, tropes that diverge from Ruslana’s sexualized yet kitschy Eurovision-brand of “wildness.” Other groups derive legitimacy from practiced knowledge of “authentic” Hutsul music, applied to modern contexts “organically.” As more musicians source Hutsul culture for their unique construction of “wildness,” the reception of these varied depictions range from appreciation to ambivalence to shame or outrage by Hutsuls themselves.¹¹⁸

In the discourse of contemporary Ukrainian popular music, wildness and its related concepts *drayv* and *enerhetyka* are slippery terms. Sometimes, “wildness” functions as a

¹¹⁸ Another side effect of the national interest in Hutsul music has elevated the status of some traditional Hutsul musicians, as I describe in detail in chapter 1. Often, these musicians continue to live agrarian lives in isolated villages for most of the year, but those that have become small-scale celebrities themselves are courted to perform at national and international festivals. In the last decade, professional studio-quality recordings of these musicians have been mass-marketed in Ukraine and Eastern Europe advertising “the last authentic European folk music.” Many of these releases have been on Polish world music labels, who have tapped into a romanticized and nostalgic notion of these mountain highlanders that used to be on the periphery of the Polish Empire, a bittersweet post-colonial manifestation of the imperial gaze for a nation that has seen its own Tatra gorale become the over-touristed and therefore “inauthentic” ethne of the Polish nation (Cooley 1998).

synonym for the “natural,” “authentic,” “pure,” or “rural” in addition to more classic descriptors of anthropological “otherness.” As a critical term, “wild” can elide with the numerous synonyms that have a long history of use in anthropological literature – “barbaric,” “savage,” “primitive” – and that have functioned as the oppositional term to “civilization” in the constructed binary that so much literature of recent decades has challenged (Ellingson 2001, Taussig 1993, Wolff 1994). In other applications, it can invoke a spirituality or morality that aspires towards the stereotypical hedonism of Anglo-American rebel rock n roll (Friedlander 2006). In its myriad constructions, “wildness” endures as a contested but key trope in the lexicon of Ukrainian popular music.

Through the prism of “wildness,” Ukrainian popular musicians reveal their ambitions for affiliation with expressive culture that is both local and global, essential yet generically appealing, strategic and grasping. By marketing *Hutsulness* as a brand of internal Ukrainian exotic, Ukrainian popular musicians embark on a typical path of postcolonial exoticism, trading in what Huggan calls the “alterity industry,” born of and by postcolonial discourse itself (Huggan 2001). Certainly, in its tactics, the appropriation of *Hutsulness* in Ukrainian popular music seems to touch on themes prominent in scholarly literature on globalization and the world music industry: the reproduction of hegemonic relations between cities and villages, the masking of compensation mechanisms, the denial of modern subjectivity to peoples on the margins of power, and, less cynically, the “intimate entanglement of sounds and bodies in music and dance underpinned at the ideological level by an ‘all out relationism’ and ‘empathetic sociality’” (Erlmann 1999:177).

But the Ukrainian appropriation of *Hutsulness* in popular music also follows from another distinct, place-specific trajectory: the politicized history of pop-rock music in Ukraine, the transition from Soviet to post-Soviet models of expression in that medium, and the struggle

within Ukraine to create a viable music industry that reflects and represents independent Ukraine. These narratives - of globalization/world music and of Soviet/post-socialist legacy - are interlocking truths that relate to each other hierarchically, as discursive “nesting orientalisms” (Bakic-Hayden 1995). From global discourses of world music, to national discourses that politicize popular music and identity, to the local (Hutsul) reception of such discourses, Otherness is reproduced variably along the chain of nested orientalisms.

This chapter presents three groups that that creolize or juxtapose Hutsul elements with popular cultural elements: Perkalaba, a “Hutzul-ska-punk” band based in Ivano-Frankivsk, a city on the foothills of the Carpathian Mountains; Banda Arkan, an “ethno-electronica” project; and finally, Ruslana, the pop star and Eurovision champion. Each party of musicians approaches and applies the stereotype of Hutsul “wildness” differently; such differences are articulated through marketing strategies, genre allegiances, stated affiliations, and through the artistry of the individuals who bring musical insights and experiences to each project. As for most popular musicians, iconography and stylized presentation figure largely into notions of performance (Frith 1996a, 1996b; Hebdige 1979). Therefore, I approach the musics of these groups through video analysis, to address the sonic content of these artists alongside the visual. I conclude the chapter by revisiting the reception of “wildness” by Hutsuls during my fieldwork. Before moving onto the musical examples of Perkalaba, Banda Arkan, and Ruslana, I wish to highlight an additional key colloquial term to frame the debate about “wildness” in Ukrainian popular music: this is the concept of *sharovarshchyna*, or the mixing of regional symbols and caricaturing of folk culture that was made manifest in Soviet cultural policy.

Sharovarshchyna

Sharovary were the billowy silken pants originally developed by Persian horsemen for ease in riding that were integrated into the wardrobe of the Ukrainian Cossacks by the 16th century. Through Soviet cultural policy practices that standardized “ethno-national costumes,” these pants became emblematic of a kind of “Ukrainian-ness;” instead of representing the freedom fighters of the Ukrainian steppe, the crimson pants became symbolic of daredevil male dancing in folk dance troupes such as the renowned Virsky Ballet (Shay 1999).¹¹⁹ *Sharovary* were also among the first highly politicized symbols to be reclaimed by young anti-Soviet activists at perestroika-era rock festivals such as *Chervona Ruta*.

The importance of rock festivals such as *Chervona Ruta* in establishing the discourse of Ukrainian popular music in the era of independence was vital (Wanner 1996). The first incarnation of the *Chervona Ruta* rock festival thematized the idea of Ukrainian national revival through the reclamation of Ukrainian song. Kyrilo Stetsenko, an important rock musician and critic, wrote program notes for the festival that betrayed this hopeful mission

The strength of popular songs lies in the fact that these songs can bring back those who have lost their nationality. The strength of these songs is to be able to uncover in the souls of these people sources of national existence which have been destroyed by foreign influences and education... and so...the Ukrainian song has the right to be one of the powerful and primary factors of national reawakening and education of our people (cited in (Bahry 1994: 251).

The first *Chervona Ruta* festival took place from September 19-24, 1989, in Chernivtsi, a Western Ukrainian city near the Romanian border (a region adjacent to Hutsul’schyna).

Following the success of the festival, the anti-Soviet activists organized a second festival in

¹¹⁹ Anthony Shay’s article on the phenomenon of institutionalized folk dance groups includes an observation that “the Ukrainian State Ensemble under the direction of Pavel Virsky, visually represented the entire Ukrainian nation through an opening choreographed spectacle in which all of the dancers appeared in the major costume types, representing villages and regions from all over the Ukraine. The dancers paraded impressively around the stage, and, in a final gesture, symbolically presented bread and salt, the Slavic ritual of welcome and greeting, to the audience” (Shay 1999:39). This practice continues today in the post-Soviet version of Kyiv’s Virsky Ballet.

1991. This festival was held in the city of Zaporizhia, the historic capital of the Cossacks, transformed into an industrial behemoth of the Ukrainian SSR with a significant Russian-speaking population (Wanner 1996:149). Wanner describes how “national grandeur was brought to life by Cossack mythology in the form of acrobatic horsemen and by the young men in the audience who shaved their heads and dressed in imitation of Cossack warriors,” a practice that ultimately alienated less-zealous audience members who did not share the anti-Soviet, pro-Ukrainian values of the organizers. In the transition from Soviet- to post-Soviet Ukrainian symbology, *sharovary* came to represent the tortured postcolonial authenticity of Ukrainian national symbols sullied by Soviet cultural policy. *Sharovarshchyna*, the critique of frivolous or cynical re-appropriations of Soviet era symbols, emerged after the idealism of the *Chervona Ruta* era had largely faded away.

At the broadest level, the concept of *sharovarshchyna* is an indigenous Ukrainian critique of world music hybridities and postmodern banality through specific reference to the Soviet institutionalized culture regime that dominated Ukrainian popular and folk music for most of the 20th century. *Sharovarshchyna* is slang, a term loaded with connotative meanings and subject to intense debate about the value of its endurance in the post-Soviet era. As a term of slander, musicians in Ukraine defend themselves against the charge of participating in *sharovarshchyna* fiercely, though the accusation is hurled at many by music fans and critics. One article in the online *Halytskij Korespondent* contains the best review of debates around *sharovarshchyna*, and, in order to unravel the knotty etymology of the term, I provide annotated translations of some of the perspectives expressed in the article. The author and article moderator, Trebunia, opens with the following exposition:

The term *sharovarshchyna* has a negative meaning. That’s the term we apply to culture of a low quality, which speculates on national motifs. It was especially active in

developing and being cultivated by the government in the Soviet times. The motivations of the regime were understandable: on one hand, complete control over creativity, on the other - throw a bone to those who still want to hear, see and create his or her native art.... Today's times are different. Ukraine is independent, there is no control over creativity. Nevertheless, *sharovarshchyna*, as the unprincipled Hutsuls sing, "lives and flourishes" [жуче ӱ проуѣимае] (Trebunia 2010).

The ending passage phrase – "lives and flourishes" – is a rich and sarcastic *double entendre*, an example of the "performative discourse" that characterized late-Socialist speech, which privileges formulaic Soviet-esque structures over literal meaning (Yurchak 2006). To Ukrainophone ears, the phrase "lives and flourishes" rings of Soviet propagandistic slogans (and might, indeed, be a quote from Soviet times). This high-faluting rhetoric is partly undermined, however, by the dialect form of the verb "to live": in literary Ukrainian, this is *zhyve*; the author's rendering (*zhye*) is a semi-comic evocation of how sell-out ("unprincipled") Hutsuls might utter the phrase. The author criticizes the way that money and resources get diverted to support projects tainted by *sharovarshchyna*, concluding that it is "at the peak of its development." He continues with a provocative question:

But, then again, if the development of pseudo-Ukrainian culture hadn't been organized in Soviet times, then would artists have had the opportunity to create and develop at all? It was at least a chance to step onto stage, in front of an audience.

The remainder of the article consults with "experts" - writers, public intellectuals, musicians - to assess whether there are any plusses to the "native and dear" pseudo-Ukrainian culture called *sharovarshchyna*.

Yurko Izdryk, a well-known writer, identified *sharovarshchyna* as the Ukrainian term for an otherwise international phenomenon:

Though so-called '*sharovarshchyna*' belongs to culture, it is not itself a full-worth cultural phenomenon. It is, rather, a cultural code, an identifying code. This is the code that puts a substantial part of identity on the nation-bearer and performs a representative function - it is an original calling card of the nation for emergence into the world. In this sense, "*sharovarshchyna*" is no different from similar codes of other nations -

“tsyhanshchyna”, “Russian matryoshka-caviar-vodka”, “Argentine tango”, “French chanson”, “Latin lovers,” etc.

However, Izdryk believes that the Ukrainian “identifying code” is in a “sorry state” due to its contamination by previous regimes of folklorizing discourse. He identifies Ruslana as the current paragon of this lamentable trend:

The only shame is that “*sharovarshchyna*” absorbed only the totally poor assortment of *oblmuzdramteatriv* and odious societies like “Prosvita.”¹²⁰ The trouble is not that “*sharovarshchyna*” begs poorly stylistically; the trouble is that it unsatisfactorily performs the identifying function. I don’t know how it seems to the miner from Donetsk, but to me, for example, it is very hard to identify myself with the pederastic youth in raspberry-colored pants, with their sado-mazo bracelets, their *oseledets’* flapping in the wind, doing some cosmopolitan dance move in the background of the national deputy to Ukraine, the winner of some kind of Eurovision, Ruslana Lyzhychko.¹²¹ Now then, here’s the definition: “*Sharovarshchyna* - this is a kind of *lyzhychka*” (Trebunia 2010).

Izdryk cleverly manipulates the pop icon’s last name - Lyzhychko - into a neologism that cycles back to define the term *sharovarshchyna*. By equating the most prominent contemporary purveyor of Ukrainian ethno-national pop-rock with *sharovarshchyna*, Izdryk eulogizes the state of expressive culture in Ukraine bitterly.

Another “expert” consulted in the article is Yarema Stetsyk, an artist, musician, designer, and teacher. His position on *sharovarshchyna* is ultimately more hopeful. He defines the term as follows:

‘Sharovary’ themselves are fated to the Chervona knyha.¹²² This is decorative culture, which is based on pseudo-authenticity, invested in the Soviet project, marked as the

¹²⁰ The term *oblmuzdramteatriv* is a Soviet-style abbreviation for “regional music and dramatic theaters”. “Prosvita” was the social organization and literacy society that contributed to the codifying of ethno-national consciousness in the late 19th century (Noll 1991).

¹²¹ The *oseledets’* (also called *chub* or *khokhol*) is the typical hairstyle associated with Ukrainian Cossacks. It features a forelock at the front of the scalp, with the rest of the head shaved. In the context of a performance of *Wild Dances* that is said to be drawing on Hutsul sources, the presence of Cossacks is a prime example of the mixing of regional symbols that is *sharovarshchyna*.

¹²² The “Red Book” was the book of endangered biological species in first published in the Ukrainian SSR in 1980. It listed threatened as well as uncatalogued flora and fauna, and continues to be published as a resource for biologists and ecologists today..

culture of the village and stamped with the promise of accomplished musical education (*muzosvitoju*).¹²³

Of all the experts interviewed, Stetsyk sees the “sharovary barrier” – imbecilic though it may be, damaging as it is to “thousand-year-old cultural materials” – as an ultimately positive phenomenon. By presenting such a flimsy and banal barrier, *sharovarshchyna* allows artists to easily think past the barrier, to conduct radical experiments; for Stetsyk, it is a low standard that is provocative and easy to surpass. He mockingly observes: “it may be artificial, but it is “*tradyshn.*”¹²⁴

Though the artist’s conclusion is ultimately optimistic, Stetsyk does not explain how he will judge successful experiments in “thinking past the barrier.” Indeed, as the following examples illustrate, what is “thinking past the barrier” for some is interpreted by others as simply languishing before the barrier.

“A Smile on the Lips, but Tears in the Eyes:” Introducing Perkalaba

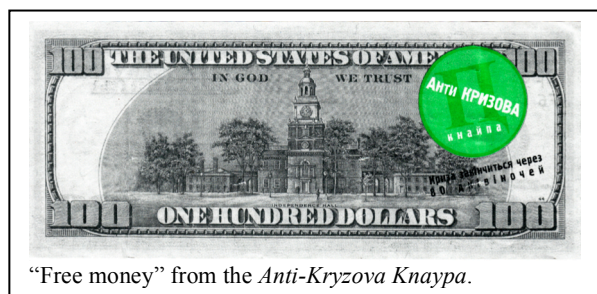
On December 19, 2008, I attended the film premiere and show of the “Hutzul-Ethno-Ska” band called Perkalaba in L’viv. The newly opened club where they played was called the *Anti-Kryzova Knaypa* (the Anti-Financial-Crisis Club), one of a chain of chic clubs managed by a powerful young entrepreneur whose playful nightclub gimmicks attract the stylish youth of L’viv in



Wall decorations at the *Knaypa*. Photo M.S.

¹²³ This last word is *muzosvita*, an abbreviation of *muzychna osvita* (musical education) that, in its abbreviated form, is a parodic reference to Soviet newspeak, much like Izdryk’s *oblmuzdramteatry* above.

¹²⁴ Stetsyk spells the word for tradition (usually *tradysia*) as a Cyrillic transliteration of the English term “tradition,” which I interpret as a snarky reference to the exploitative, colonial nature of “tradition” in *sharovarshchyna*.



“Free money” from the *Anti-Kryzova Knaypa*.

hordes.¹²⁵ The *Anti-Kryzova Knaypa* advertised that it would only stay open for 88 days, which was how long the financial crisis of 2008-2009 was predicted to last. Inside, the decor featured

loud, Lichtenstein-like artwork and black-and-white printed sheets with phrases such as

“inflation and devaluation are the terms of a generation with a different language.” I jotted down a slogan that caught my eye, “Penguins and Hutsuls are not afraid of the crisis,” and found later, after my return to the mountains, that repeating this slogan always made my Hutsul interlocutors shake their heads or laugh in agreement.¹²⁶ I noted, on my first visit to the *Anti-Kryzova Knaypa*, that such bold decor suited the carnivalesque aesthetic of the band Perkalaba, whose dada-ist iconography had intrigued me even before I heard that their music drew on Hutsul motifs. As I

¹²⁵ The entrepreneur who opened the *Anti-Kryzova Knaypa*, which has since been refashioned into a souvenir shop, is also the owner of the *Gazova L'ampa*, a modish multi-floor *knaypa* dedicated to the inventor of the gas lantern, who lived in L'viv; the *Masoch café*, a risque establishment dedicated to Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, the Austrian writer who was born in L'viv (Lemberg) and authored the famous masochistic text *Venus in Furs*; the *Livij Bereh*, a fashionable bar and music venue under the L'viv Opera House; and the controversial basement pub *Kryjivka*, a reconstruction of the kind of bunker used by soldiers in the Ukrainian Insurgent Army in the 1940s, and unabashedly devoted to Ukrainian nationalist song and decor (which some claim is extremist and xenophobic). Such a recent profusion of trendy and proud L'vivan establishments grows out of a long tradition of L'viv as a center of cultural innovation. Though L'viv is a relatively small city in the context of Ukraine, its historical and cultural significance in the Ukrainian imagination, however, is extremely large. Known as the hotbed of Western Ukrainian nationalism, L'viv is often portrayed as a rabidly Ukrainophone city to non-Ukrainian speaking visitors. (One Crimean Tatar friend told me about her secondary school class trip to L'viv, when her Russophone Crimean teachers warned the class that they may be violently assaulted on the streets if they were overheard speaking Russian.) Unlike many cities that were destroyed during WWII, L'viv is a palimpsest of previous Central European Empires: architecturally, Old L'viv bears a resemblance to Prague or Krakow, and in recent years vigorous restorations of neoclassical Hapsburg structures have somewhat renewed the city center's grime (though the dilapidated and massive Soviet-era housing projects of the outer city constantly remind of more recent regimes) (Czaplicka 2005). Ukrainians often speak of L'vivan “snobbery,” as the one vestige of aristocratic lifestyle that was not erased by the proletarian revolution of the Soviet Union. Known as a town serious about its coffee, a locus for literati and an incubator for progressive cultural trends, L'viv has also given birth to a culture of creative entrepreneurship that extends to café, concert, and festival culture. It has also produced numerous important Ukrainian popular musicians, including Ruslana, Okean Elzy, Maria Burmaka, and Taras Chubai, and *Braty Hadiukiny*.

¹²⁶ When, in the winter of 2009, Russia cut gas off to Ukrainian cities as part of an ongoing conflict over debts and services, the Hutsuls of Verkhovyna took pride in the fact that their isolated town, cut off from the gas pipeline network that the Soviets had built, was not affected by such international political squabbles, though sympathies for freezing Ukrainian urbanites - who were the subjects of much of the television news at that time - ran high.

trekked through the wintry L'viv night into the packed club, I found my friends debating the merits of the new night hotspot as they sipped *glintwein* and waited for the show to begin.

The night consisted of a performance by Perkalaba preceded by a screening of the band's 2006 documentary film titled *A Smile on the Lips, but Tears in the Eyes*.¹²⁷ The film follows the

band as they travel to Perkalaba, a remote Hutsul village, that they call their “musical Zion” (<http://perkalaba.com.ua>). As an introduction to the aesthetic mission of the band, the film is comprehensive: juxtaposing images of rural poverty, mundanity and madness against the boisterous ska-inflected sounds of the band in a



Perkalaba performs at the *Anti-Kryzova Knaypa*.
Photo by Marta Shvets.

frenetic style that could be interpreted multiply: as purposefully and artfully jarring, as a simple fetishization of the weird aspects of Hutsul culture, or as thoughtlessly provocative and anarchic. Perhaps meaning lies in this dubious polysemic space: as a postmodern pastiche of sounds and symbols, Perkalaba's artistry relies on rupture and absurdity to make meaning (Hebdige 1979).

The film opens with the lead singer, Fedot, explaining that “the name came first and then we came to Perkalaba.... Perkalaba is the end of the world and the beginning of it.” This observation leads into a montage of scenes from Hutsulshchyna, set to the sound of Perkalaba's uptempo ska-influenced music: a cow in the road, a military vehicle and a gleaming church obelisk, and then the musicians of Perkalaba parading raucously across a flimsy pedestrian bridge, finally ending with the band improvising cacophonously on the other side of the bridge, the cymbalist throwing his cymbals down, stomping and smashing them on the road.

¹²⁷ The film was released in 2006 by Polish filmmakers from Telewizja Polska (TVP), directed by Jan Sosinski, and shot by Jacek Siwecki.

The film develops as a travel narrative with interstitial snatches of a live Perkalaba performance. Oleg Gnativ, the band's manager and producer and native of the mountains, serves as a sort of narrator and tour guide in the movie. He brings the band to the Cheremosh river (iconic for Hutsuls) and explains that it is the "real Hutsul river" – "the same as in Perkalaba," the "musical Zion" that the band pursues in the film. As they drive, Gnativ rhapsodizes about the mountains, their proximity to God, and their ability to outlast mere humans. In each episode - as the band visits an elderly man (shown doing calisthenics to the music of Perkalaba), crashes a Hutsul wedding, and visits a woman's mental institution – the musicians display a mix of wonder and amusement at the daily absurdities they encounter. In one episode, they visit the local *mol'far* (shaman) Mykhailo Nechay who plays the *drymba* (jaw harp) for them (see chapter 1). The shaman is shown performing incantations on Vasyl, one of the band members. Vasyl then asks the healer if he can be trained to become a *mol'far*, and Nechay explains that he will consult with his spiritual guide, Saint Panteleimon, before he can answer. The sequence ends as the band witnesses a local woman's limp body being carried in for healing to the *mol'far*, a stark moment that places Vasyl into a melancholic mood.

Another important stop on their journey to Perkalaba comes when the band visits the home of Mykhailo Tafiychuk, the Hutsul musician and instrument-maker that lives in the high mountains between Verkhovyna and Kosiv. In the foreground, Gnativ, the manager, offers Tafiychuk a bottle of vodka, and the band stands in the background with instruments and shout a greeting - *Daj bozhe vam schastia!* [*May God give you happiness!*]. They show a moment of Tafiychuk, the instrument master, boring a new *sopilka* in his humble *majsternia* (workshop). Then one of the band members attempts to play the Tafiychuk's *trembita*. He remarks at how difficult it is. Tafiychuk demonstrates the instrument, and then the film cuts rapidly to the band

playing along with Tafiychuk (on violin) as Fedot and Gnativ yell a comic text about drunken Russians in the manner of a Hutsul *kolomijka*.

Finally, after a disturbing episode in which the band visits a local female mental institution, they arrive in Perkalaba to find muddy, nearly impassible roads and decrepit houses. Gnativ narrates, “We’ve arrived in Perkalaba finally. [Pause] Once there was life here, there was a store, there was a *klub*, there was a post office – now there’s nothing left, everything is ruined... It’s quiet and calm.” He narrates against more images of rural poverty, horse-drawn carts bouncing over the roads, socks drying on a fence, the interiors of local homes. Gnativ continues, “There are 70 people here, 15 families. The store has only water and macaroni, no *horilka* (vodka) for sale, no work.” They show encounters with locals in Perkalaba, who complain about the educational situation for village children and the attrition rate of youth to nearby towns and cities. The film shows the band members sampling *samohon* [moonshine], as local men strip the fur off of a fox carcass. The scene cuts to Fedot, with a view of the village behind him:

I, as a child of civilization, don’t understand.... This is a monastery - this is Shaolin, Buddhist, Indian of some kind, or an African commune. This is totally separate and exists on its own [*sama po sobi*]. I can’t say that they are happy people, because in their eyes there’s a great sadness – for what, I can’t say. Maybe because we pushed our way in here, maybe because they know that soon this will be a railway station, maybe it’s because they know a lot. The world stays in its place, and there are people who strive for research-technological progress, and then there are people who live in Perkalaba [he gestures towards the houses]. And each of them is right.

This melancholic monologue segues into a late-evening jam. Empty bottles of vodka sit on the table, and Vasyl sings, accompanying himself on the guitar. The proprietor stands in the doorway and yawns. Vasyl’s singing turns into a rant, and the night of drunken revelry turns toward the absurd. Vasyl begins to wash Gnativ’s feet using the Polish soap that Gnativ offers as other band members play music in the background. Gnativ then offers to wash Vasyl’s feet, in the same

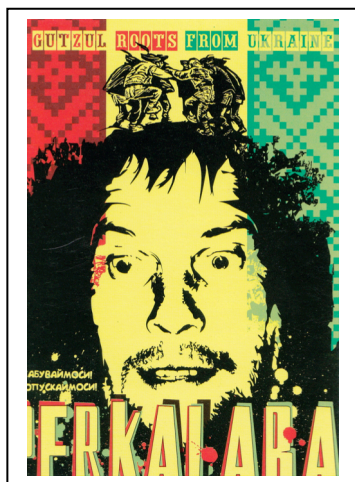
soapy water, and the invented ritual continues. When he finishes, Vasyl drinks from the basin of soapy water, and Gnativ pecks him on the lips.¹²⁸

I interviewed Oleg Gnativ in March of 2009 and asked about the band's connection to Hutsulshchyna. Born near the town of Verkhovyna, in a place where *didk'o kazhe dobranich* ("where the devil says goodnight"), Gnativ's father was the head of the Verkhovyna region, and a friend of Mykhailo Tafiychk's. His grandfather dealt in contraband along what was then the Romanian/Polish border in Bukovina, close to Perkalaba. Gnativ self-identifies "as a Hutsul." In our conversation, he articulated a mystical attachment to Hutsulshchyna, calling it is a "Zen place you go to all your life." When he was putting the band together in 1998 in Ivano-Frankivs'k, finding musicians who could inhabit the spirit he sought (none of which are Hutsuls), they chose the name for the band based on the single village that, to him, typified greatest inaccessibility, both physical and conceptual: "Perkalaba represents a different world, high in the mountain, desolate and forgotten," "a place the globalization will never touch," just as Hutsulshchyna, to him, represents a world in which *tam vse po druhomy* ("where everything is different") (interview 3/9/2009). It is through Gnativ's claim on Hutsul culture, as a child of the mountains with an innate understanding of that place and what he identified as its "authentic and wild energy," that Perkalaba's creolized absurdism claims its own authenticity (interview 3/9/2009).

¹²⁸ This episode leads into one of the most jarring sequences in the film. The band members wander in a Hutsul cemetery on a gloomy day, as one musician offers his beliefs in the afterlife. Next, locals play metal *trembitas* as a funeral procession leaves the church, and, in the background, the sound of applause - the beginning of a Perkalaba performance - is heard as the coffin is closed and lowered into the ground. A minor, but festive, melody is heard, as the footage returns to the live Perkalaba performance. In the next scene, one of the band members is shown praying for his band and their chauffeur at a roadside chapel [*kaplitsia*]. The scene is artful, not mocking, though the position of the camera in the rear of the chapel as the musician crosses himself and closes the doors betrays the staged nature of the scene. Immediately, the opening phrase of the famous *Verkhovyna* melody is heard, leading into the band's song *Hovoryt Ivano-Frankivs'k* (which draws heavily on the melody). In the extended outro, Fedot, shirtless despite the cold, wearing a knit cap in the colors of the Jamaican flag, pumps his fist and dances as the band plays, a scenic mountain vista behind them.

Stiob and the Carnavalesque

The peculiar mixture of straight-faced mimicry and devotion to Hutsul motifs treads in a



realm that calls to mind Yurchak’s definition of late socialist *stiob*, a genre of irony that “differed from sarcasm, cynicism, derision or any of the more familiar genres of absurd humor” in that it “required such a degree of overidentification with the object, person, or idea at which [it] was directed that it was often impossible to tell whether it was a form of sincere support, subtle ridicule, or a peculiar mixture of the two” (Yurchak 2006:250).

Though *stiob* had its origins in the parody of Soviet symbols, in the post-Soviet era the term had become all-encompassing, relevant to various genres of discourse:

The new post-Soviet *stiob* is reminiscent of the *stiob* of late perestroika, which reacted against both the ubiquitous symbols of Soviet ideology and their equally ubiquitous public derision. The difference in today’s context of ideological heteroglossia is that *stiob* may often position itself vis-à-vis a whole group of different ideological discourses simultaneously, in one text” (Yurchak 1999:101).

Perkalaba fuse a unique post-Soviet ideological heteroglossia as they hybridize native and imported (primarily Jamaican, Balkan, and Anglo-American punk rock) influences: Hutsul melodies and iconographic details; Rastafarian imagery, reggae/ska arrangements (Fedot, the lead singer, told me that you must “live on the upbeat,” referencing the groove of reggae/ska); the popular brass band stylings from Former Yugoslavia that rose to prominence in the 1980s and 90s through the films of Emir Kusturica (“After the success of Goran Bregovic, Boban Markovic Orchestar and the No Smoking Orchestra of Emir Kusturica, Perkalaba is the Ukrainian answer” (Perkalaba website); and the punk spirit of bands such as the Pogues and the

German rock band Element of Crime.¹²⁹ Of contemporary acts, Gnativ expresses a profound ideological kinship to *Gogol Bordello*, the New York-based band who have had significant international success marketing their anarchic brand of “Gypsy Punk.”¹³⁰ “We are following the same path” he says, “in terms of ideology and life philosophy.”

On their website and in press releases about Perkalaba, their “sense of humor” is listed as one of the most significant aspects of their music-making:

First of all one thing has to be mentioned, this band doesn't pretend to be nuts, they are! That's why they perform with a psychiatrist. Besides their musical quality it's mostly their curious sense of humor that distinguishes the band... It's their freaky show, the charismatic singer and their joy of playing what fascinates the audience even at extended two and a half hour gigs. Moreover the band is always full of nonsense, so spontaneous unplugged sessions at all imaginable places are one of their peculiarities (<http://perkalaba.com.ua/en>, accessed December 20, 2010).

But as reflected in the title of the documentary (*A Smile on the Lips, but Tears in the Eyes*), as well as in the numerous melancholic or even tragic moments (such as the funeral scene, the musician's mood after taking part in the healing practice of the Carpathian shaman) humor and laughter are multiply construed: as a defense against the sadness and emptiness of life, as a critique of the mundane and banal, and also as the catalyst of (still dubious) sincere expression. This is a kind of performative laughter, capable of signifying multiply, that recalls Bakhtin's notion of the carnivalesque:

¹²⁹ When I asked him about other Ukrainian groups who fuse Hutsul influence with other styles, Gnativ told me that he did not find anybody else's approach compelling. About Ruslana, Gnativ defended her professionalism and right to “take a technological approach” in her interpretation of Hutsul culture, though he admitted that it was not to his taste.

¹³⁰ The lead singer of Gogol Bordello, Eugene Hutz, is originally from Kyiv. Gnativ told me that they were acquaintances before Hutz emigrated to the United States (interview 3/9/2009). In the film *Non-Stop*, which documents Gogol Bordello's meteoric rise to international prominence, various band members articulate the fusion of “gypsy” with “punk” influence as natural and obvious given the “energy” and “freedom” of both musics; in this regard, Gogol Bordello's rhetoric is indeed, quite similar to Perkalaba's. Interestingly, Viriana Tkacz of the Yara Arts Group, who was an early supporter of Hutz when he arrived in New York City, shared that, before Gogol Bordello invented the category of “Gypsy Punk”, Hutz was “very taken with the Hutsuls – it was all he wanted to talk about” (personal correspondence, May 28, 2011).

Carnival laughter is the laughter of all people. Second, it is universal in scope; it is directed at all and everyone, including the carnival's participants; the entire world is seen in its droll aspect, in its gay relativity. Third, this laughter is ambivalent: it is gay, triumphant, and at the same time mocking, deriding. It asserts and denies, it buries and revives. Such is the laughter of the carnival (Bakhtin 1940/1981, cited in Hoy 1994).

As the bracketed space in which quotidian norms can be reversed, the carnival privileges self-parody, humor, laughter, and irony as modes of expression, much like *stiob*, which, in its early incarnations, hyperbolized and inverted well-known Soviet symbols to develop its unique genre of parody. Currently, in the postsocialist, postmodern climate of independent Ukraine, Perkalaba draws on such a legacy of inversion and parody to craft its bewildering message.

In her study of British football hooliganism, Hoy points out that the black humor of football chants, like punk and carnival, can access a “parodic and deliberate kind of bad taste which enables the chanters to deal with very tragic events,” including the “mockery of death” (Hoy 1994: 298). In the Perkalaba documentary, moments of questionable taste are many: in the visit to the women's mental institution, in the foot washing ritual, in the funeral rites, and in many other instances in which the quotidian absurdity of life in rural poverty is depicted divorced wholly from context or commentary, set against the boisterous, urban, celebratory-melancholic sounds of Perkalaba's music.

“Energy without limit:” Policing Perkalaba

When I interviewed Oleg Gnativ in L'viv in March of 2009, he told me about the time that Perkalaba shared the stage with the Tafiychuk family of musicians at the 2004 Sheshory Music Festival. The members of Perkalaba heard the Tafiychuk family rehearse at their soundcheck. The effect was transformative: when the Tafiychuk family played, “something changed in the air” (interview 3/9/2009). Hutsul music, he explains, has the most energy of any Ukrainian

music. Through its “tempo and delivery” it contains the potential to carry listeners into a zone of transcendence. In this way, he says, Hutsul music is similar to punk - “in tempo, rhythm, and energy.” “Everyone in Perkalaba is a punk” and what they present is a “theatricalized picture” of the punk heart of Hutsul music. To Gnativ, the driving force of this music rests on the elusive quality of “energy” - a force that gives the the ability “to rouse an audience of many thousands [as] their music spreads like a wild-fire. Here there is energy without limit...” (website). This boundless energy stems in part from the band’s carnivalesque attitude, which enables Perkalaba to embody freedom through the fusion of diverse tropes of liberation, ranging from the preindustrial sociality of Hutsul village music and the Balkan brass band style; to the spirituality of Rastafarianism; to the flexibility of postmodern pastiche and the potential of drug-or-alcohol-fueled transcendence.

While its members hold that such heterogenous influences endow Perkalaba the power to “impressively demonstrate the connection of genius and insanity” (as their website boasts), such a cherry-picking aesthetic has also riled Perkalaba’s detractors, who criticize the superficial use of Hutsul sound in the music of Perkalaba. To many, it is precisely this lack of limits, this purposeful mystification of meaning and intention, that some find irksome or irresponsible. As one Hutsul musician told me, “Perkalaba has no bearing on Hutsul music, it’s just punk. Oleg can sing Hutsul music, but he doesn’t like it; it’s a Soviet-era complex - that generation wanted to distance themselves from the village” (anon. 2/2009). To this musician, the invocation of Hutsul music by Perkalaba rings as disingenuous. He interprets Gnativ’s personal rejection of the Hutsul lands and lifestyle as evidence of this, a complex of shame now expressed as parody. Yarema Stetsyk, a well-known artist and musician came forward with an even more forceful charge against Perkalaba when he was interviewed about modern-day *sharovarshchyna*. Stetsyk

lifts up another rock band, *Haydamaky*, known for their fusion of rock with ethno-national motifs borrowed largely from Cossack mythology, as the most skilled at thinking past the *sharovary* barrier. But ultimately, Stetsyk locates the new Ukrainian authentic in the most *stiob*-like, the most derivative of Anglo-American mainstream trends: “I think that for [Ukrainians], Potap and Nastya” - a hip-hop duo featuring a Ukrainian rapper decorated with cartoonish bling and a female singer that is the spitting image of the late British R&B artist Amy Winehouse – “would be more natural contenders for the title of ‘national artists’ than ‘Perkalaba’” (Trebunia 2010).¹³¹ When I asked him about such challenges, Gnativ was unperturbed, pointing out that the essential *enerhetyka* of the mountains is the bedrock upon which they build their music, and that, he says, is enough (interview 3/9/2009).

Banda Arkan: Trance, Dance, and Drayv

In 2006, “one of the most famous ethno-DJs in Ukraine,” DJ Binghi (a.k.a. Kostyantyn Homma Markiewicz) united with instrumentalists Ostap Kostiuk, Liubomyr Ischuk, and Vsevolod Sadovyi to form the *etnoelektronika* project Banda Arkan (Trebunia 2008). Banda Arkan describes itself as “what contemporary discotheques would sound like, if Hutsul *troyisty muzyky* would come down the mountains onto the club dance floor, and instead of violin, hammered dulcimer, and drum they would play on DJ turntables and laptop blended with Jamaican rasta.” The group calls itself a “soundsystem” rather than a “band,” a differentiation that underscores the improvised layering of samples fused with live instrumental performance rather than a through-composed approach (Markiewicz, interview 1/14/11). Markiewicz calls the process of fusing such disparate elements “*Hutsulizatsia*” [*Hutsul-ifying*]: “we don’t play clean

¹³¹ In Soviet times, the category of *narodnij artyst* was official designation given to acclaimed (and state-sanctioned) performers. The practice of designating *narodny arysty* is still in existence in Ukraine today.

Hutsul music, we take a ready track and we add a Hutsul element... changing the music ‘on the fly’” (interview 1/14/11). As a student of *kulturolohia* (lit. “culturology,” a Ukrainian manifestation of “anthropology”), Markiewicz is critical of the notion of stylistic authenticity, pointing out that Hutsuls themselves do not adhere to strict genre boundaries, but are liable to play Romanian tunes, polkas, or switch between the *tsymbaly* (a traditional instrument) and synthesizer (a prevalent non-native addition) in live performances such as weddings. Rather, he stresses the idea of *performative* authenticity defined as “honesty in intention and energy:” an “honest performance” is amplified by the emergent dynamic relationship of performer to audience. Such an artistic credo sidesteps the inexhaustible discourse over authenticity that characterizes so much of contemporary debate over *sharovarshchyna* in Ukrainian popular music and, instead, privileges the individual’s reception of intention in fusion projects.¹³²

The group takes its name from two Hutsul terms: *banda*, meaning “community, brigade of musicians” and *arkan*, the name for the melody associated with an iconic traditional male circle dance.¹³³ In addition to his laptop, DJ Binghi also plays didgeridoo and *drymba* in live performances. Kostiuk, who also leads *Baj*, the young Hutsul ensemble devoted to “ancient and authentic” style Hutsul music, performs on a variety of traditional Hutsul instruments: *floyera* and *telenka* (two kinds of wood flutes), *duda* (bagpipes), *drymba* (jaw harp), and *trembita*. He also contributes Hutsul lyrics. The other two members play a variety of instruments, including *darbuka*, *tambur*, and *hurdy-gurdy*. Live performances often also include video projections. In recent years, the group’s mission and circle of collaborators has become quite flexible, with DJ Binghi as the one constant: in Kyiv in 2009, the groups featured a klezmer clarinetist with

¹³² Markiewicz offers that, while Ruslana’s *Wild Dances* took a superficial approach to Hutsul influence, groups such as Perkalaba and Gutsul Kalipso communicate the spirit of Hutsul music “honestly” and, therefore, successfully.

¹³³ The Arkan is perhaps the most widely recognizable Hutsul melody. Ruslana recorded a rendition of the Arkan melody as part of her *Wild Dances* project.

accordion and acoustic guitar playing against a background of electronic beats. In Fall 2010, *Banda Arkan* signed on with the Ukrainian Balkanfest to host parties all over Ukraine, an alliance that suggests further stylistic elasticity. With such recent stylistic moves in mind, I focus on an earlier incarnation of Banda Arkan, which I saw live in Ukraine in 2008.

In a recently published interview, Markiewicz was asked how he, as a native of the city of Mykolayiv in South-Central Ukraine, fell under the spell of Hutsul music's "unique *drayv*":

I started to listen to music very late – in tenth grade. The next two years, I consumed music like a machine. Punk, metal, ambient, bossa nova – all at once and without any breathing-space. When I finally took a break, the only music that filtered through my severe selection was ethnic music, dub and psychodelic-trance. And if everything with trance was already clear immediately (I could listen to it only if I was standing under the speakers on the dance-floor), then with ethnic music I had a long history. What's more is that as I listened to it - pure ethnic, not folk or new age - I wanted to listen to it more. Because this is a thousand year old tradition, honest and real. Especially in the case of Hutsuls, who live in the mountains. I love Central Ukrainian music too, and Odessan, but it's only Hutsul music that doesn't allow me to stand still. Why? This is a riddle, a question, for which I would not like to have an answer (Trebunia 2008).

As a university student at the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, he began to spin at chillout and trance dance parties. At the same time, he continued to experiment diversely: he was listening to throat singing, learning didgeridoo and Carpathian *drymba*. Through a friendship with Serhij "Kuzia" Kuzminsky, the lead singer of the legendary Western Ukrainian band *Braty Hajdiukiny*, Markiewicz got his hands on Jamaican reggae and dub from the 1970s, which he integrated into his down-tempo chillout parties. (He chose his stage name, DJ Binghi, to reflect his admiration for these Jamaican and Rastafarian influences.) Soon, he realized "that there are cool guys in the world, who uncover ethnic music in such a way that on the club dance floor it creates a trance that's a hundred points ahead [*sto ochok vpered*]...you can't hear Hutsul music and stand still." He accepted this as his mandate to craft *etnoelektronika* that fused indigenous with imported influences. His early experiments featured him on *drymba* against his own electronic beats.

Soon, the project expanded to include more instrumentalists, including Ostap Kostiuk, who was already deeply versed in village-style Hutsul music.¹³⁴

Banda Arkan's stated mission is to fuse neo-traditional Hutsul music with dance club culture in an ethical way, and to make that fusion available and appealing to Ukrainian youth as well as to Western European consumers. In many ways, such a mission resonates with examples of other hybrid experiments in the post-socialist world. In early post-socialist Bulgaria, musicians created the genre of disco-folk in an attempt "to turn the attention of Bulgarian youths to their cultural roots in a contemporary form with popular appeal, and to transform Bulgarian music into a style that the musicians thought would be popular and marketable in the West" (Buchanan 1995:406).¹³⁵ Cooley provides an example in Poland of the Trebunia-Tutki family of Górale highlander musicians responding to the 1990s fad of "disco-polo" by producing their own "worldbeat fusion" project with the Twinkle Brothers from Jamaica in order to lure youth away from the urban trend they identify as "banal" and back towards "their own" authentic folklore (2005: 196).¹³⁶ Such quests are frequently legitimized by the participants' own claim on the mastery of traditional music: in the case of Bulgaria, *disco folk* was developed first by professional wedding musicians; in Cooley's example, a family of respected native Górale musicians embarked on their own fusion project; in *Banda Arkan*, such legitimacy comes from master musicians versed in old-style playing. In all of these examples, legitimizing discourses of musical competency and authenticity are combined with economic aspiration and a stated

¹³⁴ Markiewicz's collaboration with Kostiuk eventually led to a performance at a wedding in the village of Zamahore where Kostiuk has friends and colleagues in his other ensemble *Baj*. Speaking to how their music was perceived in Zamahore, Markiewicz says that "Hutsuls - are very plastic, they approach newfangled things with an open soul" (Trebunia 2008).

¹³⁵ Disco-folk eventually became a largely derided musical form within Bulgaria, conflated with the controversial dance music genre known as *chalga* (see Rice 2002).

¹³⁶ The author of many recent articles on Ukrainian-Hutsul popular music fusion projects, a player in the scene himself, writes under the pseudonym "Trebunia" as a reference to this famous worldbeat fusion between the Twinkle Brother and the Trebunia-Tutki family.

altruism: internally, the crusade to provide modern sounds that reference an ethno-national essence through music for youth engagement and consumption; externally, the marketing of such ethno-national essences as a globally appealing and quintessentially modern musical commodity.

For *Banda Arkan*, this modern reference is rooted in electronic dance music, an outgrowth of the rave culture that exploded in Europe in the 1980 and 90s. In such an adaptation, the whirling, disorienting traditional dances of the Hutsuls become recontextualized on the club dance floor, with its tradition of dancing for long periods of time to repetitive, cyclical music in order to achieve a state of transcendent bliss. (In the history of rave culture, this transcendence is often aided by hallucinogenic or stimulant drugs such as Ecstasy or Ketamine.) Georgina Gore has proposed that rave culture can be conceived as a form of ‘neo-tribalism,’ with the DJ as a “shamanistic figure with star status and ‘magical’ powers to induce trance through the manipulation of the musical materials” (Gore 1997). In the case of Goa/psychedelic trance culture, Timothy Taylor has proposed that the Durkheimian ideal of “collective effervescence” - achieved through the loss of self by participating in the technology and sociality of the modern dance club - is central to understanding the “spiritual aspects of these new tribes” (Taylor 2001: 188). The application of such an analogy to the case of *Banda Arkan* results in an intriguing set of parallels: since trance is a method of healing practiced by Hutsul shamans (in the tradition of *mol’farstvo*) traditionally induced through the sound and vibration of the *drymba*, DJ Binghi can perhaps be seen as a modern-day *mol’far*, casting a spell on devotees to the trance-inducing music of *Banda Arkan*.

In July of 2008, *Banda Arkan* performed at the Sheshory LandART festival. The three-day festival takes place annually and attracts thousands of young Ukrainians to a small village in central Ukraine called Vorobijivka. (Originally, the festival took place in the Hutsul village of

Sheshory, but villagers complained about the massive influx of disruptive and reckless partyers, and the festival had to change the venue.) The festival's music program includes diverse groups that feature an ethnic element. Starting at 5 PM in the afternoon, a program of "*avtentyka*" (authentic ensembles) begins on the main stage - in 2008, this included a diverse mix of visiting acts (such as the Anchiskhati choir from Georgia, Guda from Belarus, and Derbenevka from Russia) and local acts (including *Baj*, *Berehynia*, and elderly singers from the village of Nadverchir'ya in Podillia). The "world-music" program begins at 7 PM, as crowds of thousands amass on a large open field. In 2008, foreign acts came from Switzerland (Triller), France (Nourou, DJ Uzun), Czech Republic (Mahasa), Poland (Village Quartet), and the United Kingdom (Trans-global Underground). Ukrainian acts such as DakhaBrakha, Perkalaba, PoliKarp, the Kharkiv Klezmer Band, Banda Arkan and Propala Hramota also took part.

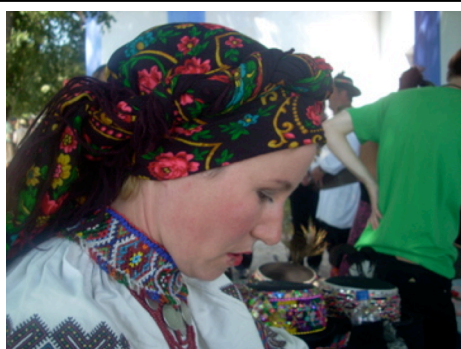
Banda Arkan performed on the main stage on July 13th as the last act of that evening, following the Kharkiv Klezmer Band. A short video of live footage cuts together highlights from the band's late night performance on the festival main stage. All of the men on stage are young, hip, and dressed casually in jeans and t-shirts. The first sounds are Kostiuk's *duda* performing a traditional Hutsul melody against a thick texture of beats, didgeroo, and *drymba*. Later, Kostiuk switches to *sopilka*, which becomes the most prominent soloistic instrument against the wall of rhythm, vibration and drone.¹³⁷ The video represents an abbreviated version of their set, which was one continuous but subtly shifting tapestry of sounds and rhythms, unbroken to keep dancers dancing, as in a typical DJ set. In the video, DJ Binghi is shown at his laptop dancing or playing

¹³⁷ Taylor also points out that "drone" is a critical musical feature in trance/vibe music, which references the Western tradition of droning to "signify the tribal, primitive other" and, "in this [dance club] context, probably help[s] listeners/dancers [to] get into the vibe, as well as facilitating the comparison between this music and the ancient, "tribal" music that trance is thought to be distantly related to" (2001:193). In my conversation with DJ Binghi, he noted that the absence of a substantial bass line in Hutsul music, and its necessary prominence in electronic dance music, facilitated his early experiments in augmenting the sound and frequency of traditional Hutsul arrangements (interview 1/14/2011).

the *drymba*, while the video projectionist - stationed behind a laptop - creates images projected on the side of the stage. The other musicians switch between instruments - with Kostiuk representing the consistent “Hutsul element” - though a drummer playing the traditional Hutsul *bubon* (a bass drum with small cymbal affixed) also accompanies the pulsing electronic background. In my field notes, I jotted down the observation that *Banda Arkan* “got everybody dancing” (field notes, 7/13/2008).

Traveling to Sheshory, Establishing *Hutsulness*

I was fortunate to travel to the Sheshory festival in the summer of 2008 as part of the *Baj* entourage, Ostap Kostiuk’s “authentic-style Hutsul band.” I had gotten to know Kostiuk through



Oksana Susyak prepares for a performance with *Baj*. Sheshory festival, 2008. Photo M.S.

a mutual friend at the Les’ Kurbas Theater in L’viv, and they invited me to come along. In seeking a helpful role, I served as the band’s audio-video documentarian, and soon found a second job helping to dress Oksana Susyak in the elaborate costume of a Hutsul woman. (She had come along with “Baj” to demonstrate traditional Hutsul

dances at dance workshops and performances.) As I learned to piece together the complex headwear (to hide Oksana’s self-described “punk” hairdo) and layer on the skirts and necklaces of the ceremonial Hutsul female costume, we became fast friends, and she became an invaluable resource in my research once I settled at her home in Verkhovyna in January of 2009.

Our trip to Vorobijivka from L’viv was a typical Ukrainian travel adventure. In the evening before the festival, I met with the members of *Bai* (Ostap, Oksana, and four instrumentalists who had trekked from far-flung Hutsul villages) at the L’viv train station, where Oksana sweet-



Oksana Susyuk after a performance with *Baj*, at the Sheshory festival, 2008.

talked the dour ticket clerk into selling us tickets for the train that, she insisted, was all sold out. (Mysteriously, the clerk eventually produced seven tickets.) The next morning, after a night of vodka toasts and midnight snacking, we arrived in Vinnytsia, the city closest to *Vorobijivka*. We were met by a festival bus that drove us to a Soviet-era *sanatorium* called the “Vanguard” (the irony of which did not evade our entourage) where accommodations were provided for

all performing musicians.

As we settled into festival life, *Baj*, the token “real Hutsuls” of that particular festival, enjoyed “performing their Hutsulness,” as Kostiuk told me (field notes 7/14/2008). At one dinner, my field recording of the men drinking and singing goes on for almost 45 minutes, as festival visitors and other musicians weave in and out of the situation, commenting on the boisterous Hutsul collective enjoying their meal. By drinking, boasting, joking, or singing loudly in a variety of informal situations, the members of *Baj* happily invited the festival gaze upon themselves, spurring on many memorable social situations. Kostiuk participated centrally in such performances of *Hutsulness* – in the recording mentioned above, his voice is heard improvising



Members of *Baj* after a performance at Sheshory. Kostiuk is second from the left. Photo M.S. (2008).

humorous lyrics to the endless *spivanka*. Daily, Kostiuk acted as bandleader and dance instructor for *Baj*, dressed in a full Hutsul costume for each performance, and then instantly changing back into his casual dress. He also represented *Baj* as a manager, booking them at the festival, arranging for all of the logistical and compensatory aspects of their trip. His

skill at balancing both insider and outsider relationships to the group were masterful, and evidenced also by his ability to participate in performances with two ensembles that inhabit seemingly opposite musical universes – Banda Arkana and Baj. To Kostiuk, both were part of an integrated sense of what Hutsul music is and how it can be responsibly interpreted through other genres, such as electronic dance music:

I really don't want for us to confine such a unique phenomenon [as Hutsul music] to the atmosphere of a saloon or folkloric report. That is why there is a need to speak to many circles through adapted sounds: in electronic projects (BANDA ARKAN), through the acoustic of WORLDMUSIC, or with the aesthetic of TATOSH BANDA. This is the bridge between cultures, the dialogue of generations, the city and village (Hnativ 2010).¹³⁸

As a unique thinker on the role of Hutsul culture in contemporary Ukraine, Kostiuk possesses an influential credibility as a standard-bearer and spokesman for both “authentic” and “modern” manifestations of Hutsulness. Along with Markiewicz, Kostiuk is central in crafting, legitimizing and promoting the mission of Banda Arkan.

Promoting *Hutsulness*

Ostap Kostiuk's father was from Kosmach, a large and vibrant Hutsul village, celebrated for its fierce resistance to invading armies during World War II. Though he was born in the nearby town of Kolomya in 1979, Ostap spent his childhood summers in Kosmach and grew to “need it like mother's milk,” cultivating what he described as a “native knowledge” about the place of his paternal ancestry (interview 2/28/2009). As a boy, he was not particularly interested in music; rather, he came to it at the age of 18 or 19, during his second or third year at university in L'viv, when he began to fool around on an instrument his grandfather had given him, the

¹³⁸ In the article, all of these band names are capitalized. Kostiuk uses “Worldmusic” here to describe contexts in which “folk musics” are promoted on stage, referencing the phenomenon of groups he admires from the Balkans. Tatosh Banda is a newer project for Kostiuk, and is devoted to the artistry of diverse L'vivan musicians who forge a new kind of music based on various ethnographic studies of groups in Western Ukraine.

floyera. At the time, he was studying history, but as his interest in Hutsul culture deepened, “the instrument steered [him] to the theater.” In 2001, he made his first visits to see Mykhailo Tafiychuk with his girlfriend (now, his wife) Olenka. He described a three-day journey that “has become legendary to him,” when he and Olenka roamed the mountains from Kosmach to Bukovets’, searching for a *floyera* player. Arriving at the Tafiychuk homestead, they slept on the hay bales in their yard and gazed at the stars; Ostap describes details from that first journey with near mystical clarity. When he first heard how Tafiychuk played the *floyera* with “the bass” - a technique of humming along with the overtone flute that produces a dynamic polyphony - “something changed in him inside – I can’t convey the depth of it.” He started an avid study from recordings, but, in retrospect, he tells me, “he wasn’t studying music yet but merely the *mekhanizm* [mechanics].” He describes an early failed musical experiment, when he, Olenka, and two other friends tried to put the Hutsul “motifs” together, but the result “was not even music, it was a ‘garage band.’” In 2004, he was invited to perform in Wroclaw for a festival with friend Nazar and Olenka. The Tafiychuk family was also invited. Kostiuk remembered that he did not consult Tafiychuk in advance, and how, by wounding his pride, “I crept past the father into hell... it felt cold.” He realized his mistake, and atoned. Later that year he was drafted into the army, and had to serve. When he returned, he started to take lessons with Mykhailo’s son Yura, the most accomplished player on the various wood flutes in the Tafiychuk family. Eventually, he bought them all mobile phones so that they could keep in touch across the distance.

In following years, Kostiuk continued to make pilgrimages from L’viv to the Tafiychuk homestead whenever his breaks from the theater allowed. As his proficiency developed, and his relationship with the Tafiychuk family deepened, he became known as a respected practitioner of Hutsul music in both L’viv and in Hutsul regions. At a roundtable meeting of Hutsul musicians

in Kryvorivnia in 2009, Kostiuk was repeatedly mentioned as “the only young person” who is interested in preserving traditional Hutsul music in Ukraine (field notes, 1/25/09). He founded the ensemble *Baj*, the youngest group devoted to playing authentic-style Hutsul music, further establishing himself as a virtuosic player in the *starovitzkij* (old style) Hutsul tradition. In 2010, his group won first place in the annual Mogur competition held in Verkhovyna (Korespondent 2010).¹³⁹

As the only L’viv-based member of *Baj* (the other members are based in scattered Hutsul villages and live more typical Hutsul, agrarian lives) Ostap faces serious organizational challenges. He voices the frustration that “Hutsuls don’t recognize what rehearsal is” (*ne pizanyut’*), which therefore makes it extremely difficult for an ensemble like “Baj,” composed of musicians from different village and family traditions, to cohere. Still, in this village-to-village stylistic diversity, Kostiuk identifies a source of endless potential and innovation. Despite the fact that the ensemble is not stable – Ostap views *Baj* as his collaboration with rotating musicians - it is his attempt to form a professional quality Hutsul ensemble from young practitioners of traditional music to combat the widespread belief that “the youth don’t want it, it’s the new law that “progress is better.” Ostap speaks with conviction that it is what’s old that has meaning, that ritual is cool (*klasne*). He argues that superficial approaches to Hutsul music are mere “tourism, like collecting souvenirs, but there’s a sense and meaning deeper that is more important. I didn’t understand that at first.” Ostap emphasizes that he is not nostalgic, but that his belief is that “music is not just sound, it is a body of practices.” In the faddish proliferation of Hutsul-hybrid musics, “the ritual aspects are losing out.”

¹³⁹ He took the name for the ensemble from a word from the Hutsul *argot*, and cites the popular Ukrainian author Taras Prokhas’ko’s text *Ne Prosti* [“Not simple”] for helping him choose the term. In that novel, “Bai” represents a certain kind of “ihra”/“hra” that binds certain texts to individuals.

He believes that this vulgarity, or confusion about what *is really* Hutsul stems from the fact that “there is no foundational myth about Hutsul music.” He compares this to the cult belief surrounding the foundation of flamenco, how, through its standardization and elevation to a national form, its ritual function disappeared. As strong personalities codified flamenco as “music” or “dance,” it was torn away from its origin in ritual. Despite serving as a wellspring for centuries of Ukrainian modern composers, and decades of Soviet folk music standardization, the lack of a single unified myth of Hutsul music is part of why “it’s so hard to say ‘I’m going to play Hutsul music.’” Part of the difficulty of playing Hutsul music, he explains, is that “nobody [in the city really] knows the music” because Hutsuls have a “closed culture” [*zakryta kul'tura*], “isolated” [*vidokremlena*] and with a strong “endogamous sense” [*sens endohamiji*].¹⁴⁰ For this reason, Kostiuk believes that experimentation is vital to keep both “authentic” and “modern”

Hutsulness alive:

Hutsul music has not yet revealed its potential. The Carpathian region - is fantastically rich with peoples and cultures. All of the nations of this region, except Ukraine, today have a super presentation and high quality of ethnic culture. The level of authentic groups and festivals among Bulgarians, Romanians, Hungarians, Slovaks, and Poles is very high. In Ukraine, tradition was buried in the folkloric reporting of village clubs, but it is still present in the transmission from master to student. For that reason this is not only music, this is tradition, for me this is a big project for my whole life (Hnativ 2010).

For him, *Banda Arkan* represents an approach towards syncretizing Hutsul music and dance culture in a holistic way, born from a central commonality to both musics: their cyclical nature. Drum loops and samples set against traditional cycles of *ihry* are an experiment in “blending the organic elements of Hutsul music to bring in a modern sound” (interview 2/9/2009). This claim

¹⁴⁰ At our interview, Ostap told me that he had recently started reading French metaphysicist René Guénon’s article “Popularity as a Mask,” which analyzes Sufi texts to show that the mass knows how to preserve itself. He believes that the Ukrainian dialectic of *narodnis't/vulgarn'ist* speaks to Guénon’s theory. According to Ivakhiv, the writings of such Western European radical traditionalists as Guénon have become popular among Ukrainian neo-traditionalists and ethnic nationalists, who often interpret the “sacred destiny” of their territorialized ethnicity according to a civilizational model counterposed to the corrupted and corrupting capitalist West (Ivakhiv 2005b: 209).

of hybridity through organicism is voiced by an individual uniquely positioned to assert himself as an authority, yet Kostiuk does not romanticize or lament the loss of tradition, as many nostalgic narratives about world music hybridities have in the past. Rather, Kostiuk is a promoter of all projects that he believes in, savvy to the reality that the stereotype of Hutsul “wildness” will not be easily disabused:

Hutsuls are exotic, they clearly stand out from the rest. In them - is the only fully preserved ancient instrumental school, and together - all of culture. People are drawn to exotica, to a secret, and the mountains hide their treasures (Hnativ 2010).

Yet, Kostiuk does not necessarily advocate for the removal of this stereotype, rather, he advocates for a thoughtful and strategic program to promote *Hutsulness* in both “authentic” and “modern” hybrid formations.

Commenting on Ruslana’s success, Kostiuk expresses happiness that her work was accepted, but he perceived it as an “unconscious work” [*nesvidoma robota*], a product of mainstream “*FM kultura*.” More importantly, he says, Eurovision is a marginal contest that is lacking in priorities, and the uproar that resulted following her victory, he believes, was misguided. When I press him further on this subject, he tells me that many “Hutsuls are ashamed of their culture, and have a complex emotional reaction - maybe it could be called a social complex.” On the other hand, Hutsuls are “*honorovi*” [prideful], and their honor is easily wounded. They know that they are perceived as a culture that “is not developed” and, though they resent that idea, by certain standards it is undoubtedly “a little true.” This kind of admission calls to mind Herzfeld’s definition of cultural intimacy as the “rueful self-recognition” and “inward acknowledgment” of traits that cause embarrassment when they are observed by outsiders (Herzfeld 1997: 42). To be called “wild” is not just an insult to their “nature,” but it is also read as a bigger, much more complex, “insult to their culture.” Kostiuk gives the example of

listening to the iconic Hutsul fiddler Yurchak - sure, it's "out of tune," but when you dig into the "hra" - it's not "wild," it's actually very "cultured" (interview 2/9/2009). It is through a deeper understanding of what Charles Keil would call *participatory discrepancies*,¹⁴¹ Kostiuk alleges, that the sophistication of Hutsul music is revealed (Keil 1994b). Furthermore, Kostiuk offers, maybe the music is just "wild" in the sense of expressing a primal energy [*pervynna enerhia*].

Kostiuk, like the other musicians attempting Hutsul-hybrid projects, expresses nuanced and complex attitude towards *wildness* as a Hutsul stereotype, articulated in a variety of ways that are inevitably refracted through the lens of Ruslana's *Wild Dances* phenomenon. Ultimately, the codification of the trope of *wildness* stems from Ruslana's international success; the musicians of Perkalaba, Banda Arkan and other Hutsul fusion projects are therefore forced to engage (even to small degree, by denying any engagement) with this most pervasive version of the stereotype. DJ Binghi told me of one of his early encounters with Hutsul musicians, when he performed at a Polish music festival with Perkalaba and the Tafiychuk family. On the way home, he realized that "Hutsuls are hostages. They are normal people, but they're in this idiotic situation, like Native Americans or Aborigines or Gypsies. They want to live a civilized life.... Gypsies play synthesizers now, they don't play how they are depicted in the films of Kusturica" (interview 1/14/2011). Yet, the pervasiveness of such cultural stereotypes make the caricatured populations hostage to the stereotypes of their culture, sometimes encouraging the reproduction of these stereotypes within the community of the caricatured. Though Ruslana's reputation among many Ukrainian musicians has soured due to the measure to which she originated the modern Hutsul-as-*wildness* stereotype, her early experiments with Hutsul-hybrid music were not ostensibly different in intent. Still, because of her commercial success, the reception of her work has been

¹⁴¹ The idea of *participatory discrepancies* is introduced at length in the introductory chapter. In brief, Keil introduces the term to describe the "out-of-timeness" and "out-of-tuneness" that gives performances their "musical power" within the conventions of certain styles (1994).

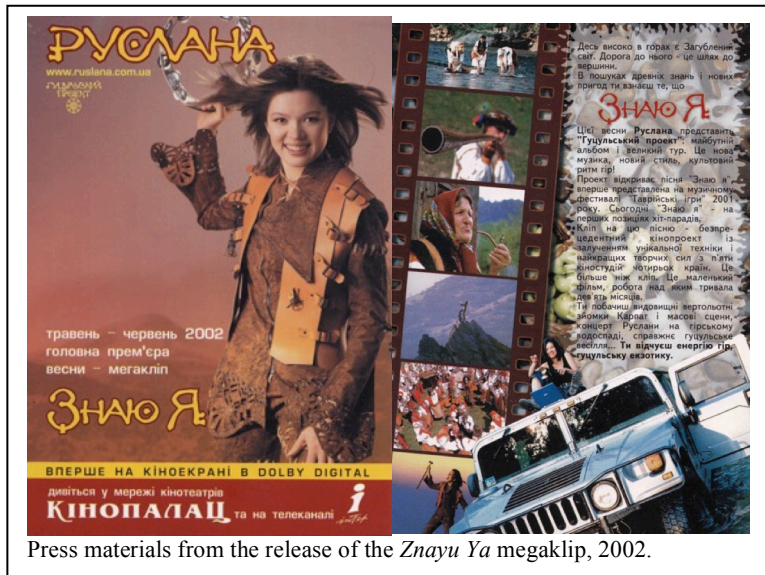
broad and complex. In the following section, I trace Ruslana's ascent to the Eurovision championship, her subsequent reception by Hutsuls, and her current reformulation of the stereotype of *wildness*.

Introducing Ruslana

Ruslana is experimenting with genres. There is no right name for it, but it could be either called Hutsul rap or kolmiyka's hip-hop. In any case...you are reminded that even though *Wild Dances* come from ancient times, they are still the product of the 21st century. DJ dance mixes on the songs of the album make you feel like [you're] at the dance floor in a night club.... Ethnic motifs with electronic elements of house and drum-and-bass make the music sound fantastic. And it also makes us think that hundreds of years ago the progressive young people were dancing to the same beat [sic] (www.ruslana.ua/en, accessed April 28, 2005).

Long before she was won the Eurovision song contested, long before she had an international presence, before she became a hotly contested icon of Ukrainian femininity, before she was elected to political office, before she became a spokeswoman for a range of social issues, Ruslana was a constant, if indistinct, presence in the developing Ukrainian-language popular music scene of the 1990s. Born in 1973 and raised in L'viv, Ruslana Lyzhychko studied classical piano and conducting at the Lysenko Academy of Music. In 1996, she won first place at the Slavianskij Bazar music competition in Belarus with her performance of the classic folk song *Oy Letily, Dyki Husy* (*Oh, the wild geese flew*). Her first album, *Myt' vesny* (*A Moment of Spring*, released in 1998) contained small ethnic musical gestures (such as melodies played on *sopilka*, or wood flute), but mostly aligned itself stylistically with the saccharine aesthetic of Soviet *estrada* pop balladeering. It was not until 2002, with the release of the *Znayu Ya* (*I Know*) music video, that Ruslana's "Hutsulian Project" began in earnest and raised the singer's profile.

I was fortunate to be invited to the premiere of the music video when it debuted in L'viv



Press materials from the release of the *Znayu Ya* megaklip, 2002.

at the newly opened movie theater in 2002. Billed as a *megaklip* (rather than an average music video, a *klip*), postcards handed out at the event explained that we were about to witness something “more than a *klip* - it is a short film, which took nine months of work.”

All of the guests at the premiere were treated to two back-to-back screenings of the five minute video, a live performance by a Hutsul ensemble (who had traveled from the mountains to play) and a performance by Ruslana. An elaborate press booklet celebrating Ruslana’s achievements praised “the wide range of her voice, her beautiful technical execution, ‘*drayv*’ and expression in the merging of unique and original styles of music - this is the singer Ruslana” (- 2002). The *Znaju Ya* music video was promoted as a trailblazing achievement by Ruslana and for Ukraine: as the biggest budget endeavor to date in Ukrainian popular music at the time, the video brought in 250 specialists from seven companies in four countries (Ukraine, Russia, Belarus and Finland) who utilized state-of-the-art camera and special effects. The filming included a fleet of ten helicopters, and at least one Hummer.¹⁴² Scenes were filmed in the Carpathian Mountains, the Crimean mountains, and in Belarus. In the village of Kosmach, the team filmed a fully-costumed Hutsul wedding. The press released noted that it is “interesting, that the Hutsuls, their costumes, and the wedding itself are real (for the clip, the betrothed played their parts a week early).” Press

¹⁴² According to the press release given out at the premiere, the *Znaju Ya* video was also the first Ukrainian cinematic product filmed on color 35 mm film in high definition and to the sonic standard of Digital Dolby. The release thanked the Ukrainian chocolate company “Svitoch” for sponsoring the project.

highlighted Ruslana's daredevil stunts (scaling rocky crags to get an unparalleled shot) and sense of innovation (a rock concert scene in the video was set on a stage built into a waterfall, and Ruslana performed without "any security"). According to Ruslana's press release, one thousand people travelled to witness the concert-on-the-waterfall.

Znaju Ya has a clear and seductive message: Ruslana has unlocked the wisdom and knowledge of ancient Hutsul culture, and now she wants to share what she knows with you, dear audience. The video opens with a crackling campfire. Fireside, Ruslana sits with a computer in her lap. She types in "The Lost World" (in English) and the computer begins "searching..." as she gazes into the distance. She then types in "*znaju ya*" and upon pressing enter, the scene dissolves into a cosmic panorama, which zooms out to reveal the end of a *trembita*, played by a man, soft focus, in Hutsul dress. Another *trembita* sounds in response. Winds rustle through mountain grass as the frame widens onto trees, forests, and sweeping mountain vistas. Ruslana enters, singing, dressed in a modest leather costume, telling the listener of a "beautiful land, that flies in the stars..." The rubato introduction culminates on the words "I know," and the song revs into a propulsive rhythmic groove. The remainder of the video juxtaposes symbols of ancientness against emblems of modernity - Ruslana on horseback, hitting a tambourine; Ruslana splashing through a mountain river at the helm of a Hummer; elderly women washing laundry in the river; Ruslana white-water rafting in a colorful plastic vessel; a wedding; men circle dancing around a raging, flickering bonfire; an elderly Hutsul woman puffing on a pipe; Ruslana holding a traditional Hutsul ax (*bartka*) used by male carolers at Christmas time; then, a rock concert on the river with fuming, glittering pyrotechnics.

Just as the press releases on opening night predicted, Ruslana's *Znaju Ya* video sparked massive interest among viewers on Ukrainian television. The success of that single led to

Ruslana’s signing with Comp Music, the Ukrainian affiliate of the global music label EMI, and an invitation to produce the *Dyki Tantsi* album at Peter Gabriel’s Real World studio, a famous locus for hit “world music” albums. Less than six months after its release in June of 2003, the album reached platinum sales in Ukraine (another breakthrough). *Dyki Tantsi* consists of ten original Ukrainian-language songs, and an additional remix version of the hit single *Znaju Ya*. Most of the songs incorporate token Hutsul sounds: the iconic *trembita*, *tsymbaly*, *sopilka*, and other instruments of the Hutsul *troyista muzyka*. Many songs utilize the scansion and declamation associated with the Hutsul song-form known as *kolomyjka*. The lyrics are all performed in Ukrainian and inflected with Ruslana’s L’vivian pronunciation, though she stresses familiar Hutsul lyrical tropes by pronouncing key terms in dialect, or by dropping the ends of syllables (as is the convention in village style performance). Rhythmically, the songs emphasize cross-rhythms and syncopations associated more with male Hutsul foot-stomping dances than the regular *oom-pah* played by Hutsul *bubon* drummers, though the rhythmic dimension of much of the album evokes a generic tribal quality more than anything specifically Hutsul.

Following the success of *Dyki Tantsi* in Ukraine, Ruslana was nominated to represent Ukraine at the Eurovision Song Contest.

Following her Eurovision victory, an English-

language album titled *Wild Dances* was released in May 2004, and her song *Wild Dances* topped the charts in Belgium, Greece, and Cyprus (it was in the top ten in many other European countries.) The song text of *Wild Dances* is written half in English, half in Ukrainian. The text is significant for the prominent booming “Hey!” (in the recording, the “Hey!” was recorded in the



Ruslana and her “Wild Dancers” at the Eurovision Song Contest, 2004.

mountains by Hutsul highlanders), and also for the prominent use of Hutsul vocables (shydy-rydy-dana, etc.):

Just maybe I'm crazy.
The world spins round and round and round.
Shydy-rydy dai, shydy-rydy dana. (2x)

I want you to want me
As I dance round and round
Shydy-rydy dai, shydy-rydy dana. (2x)

Forever and ever -
Go, go, go, wild dancers!

Refrain:
Dai-na, dai-na, wanna be loved,
Dai-na, dai-na, gonna take my wild chances,
Dai-na, dai-na, freedom above,
Dai-na, dai-na-da, I'm wild 'n' dancing.

Hey!

Напевно даремно (Surely for nothing)
Була я надто чемна (I was too civil)
Shydy-rydy dai, shydy-rydy dana. (2x)

Для тебе, для себе (For you, for myself)
Застелю ціле небо. (I will make a bed of the whole sky.)

Гей! Hey!
Shydy dai, shydy-rydy dana. (2x)

Без жалю запалю. (Without sorrow, I'll start the fire.)
Go, go, go, wild dancers!

[Refrain]

Dance forever! Come and be mine!
Dance together till the end of time!
Dance together!
Go, go, go wild dancers! (Pavlyshyn 2006)

Literary scholar Marko Pavlyshyn analyzes how “the lyrical “I” [of the song]...identifies her as ‘wild’ : her condition is one of pre-civilizational naturalness, perhaps of noble savagery” (2006:

474). Pavlyshyn further argues that this association with wildness acts as “Ruslana’s...refutation of the Orientalist stereotype. By association with the wild beast, she has strength, and it is strength that inflects her attitude toward love” (474). Pavlyshyn elaborates on the European Enlightenment ideals espoused in such confident assertions, but I think another interpretation is possible: instead of a feminist reclamation of power and a reversal of the Orientalizing gaze, the text of the song can be heard as a desperate plea for inclusion. Ruslana sings, “I want you to want me,” perhaps as an allegory of aspiration, instead of as an empowered solidarity with European “civilizational” values. Ultimately, both interpretations were voiced by fans and critics of the song.

Enter the *Amazonka*

Ruslana’s “Hutsulian Project” was marketed with flamboyant language from the outset, setting forth its mission of “popularizing” the ancient traditions of the Hutsul for the modern consumer, and positioning Ruslana as a uniquely skilled curator:

The colors of Hutsul music, fiery rhythms, dance that pulls you into its circle - that’s the energy that lights a fire in the soul! The music of Ruslana stores this fire. She brought the rhythm of the mountains to the stage and made it modern, cultish (- 2002).

Following the success of *Dyki Tantsi* in Ukraine, and in the lead up to the Eurovision performance, Ruslana’s marketing language became more ostentatious:

Here, high in the mountains, where the people live in different time and dimension, has Ruslana found the source of inspiration for her new ‘Hutsulian project.’ That’s where you find true Ukrainian exotics!... Without giving [the] audience an opportunity to take a breath from the impression, here we see wild and sexy, hot and dangerous, mystic and knowledgeable about all the secrets of Carpathian molfars, mountain Amazonkas. Fur and leather, ethnic weapons, dangerous games and unique meditations all of this charms and entertains you, gives shimmering in the heart [sic]” (Ruslana press release, 2004).



The *Amazonka* record cover.

This heightened pitch of her marketing language corresponded to the increased sexuality in Ruslana’s self-presentation and self-identification: instead of the wholesome girl-next-door, Ruslana emerged as an *Amazonka*, clothed in “leather and metal” (Ruslana n.d.a.). Whereas the Ruslana of *Znayu Ya* was modestly dressed in a tailored full-body leather suit, a

shoulder-length bob, and an unassuming grin; the Ruslana of *Wild Dances* emerged as predatory and stern, portrayed with an expansive mane of dark, gnarly, voluminous hair, and an innovative wardrobe of bikinis, microskirts, and other manner of revealing garb.

In press following the *Wild Dances* performance at Eurovision, Ruslana’s aesthetic was likened to *Xena the Warrior Princess*. Ruslana was careful, however, to underscore the pacifism of her message:

Ruslana - who has always maintained her work is entirely innovative and original - admitted she could see the parallels between her ‘*Wild Dances*’ costumes and those worn by US TV character, Xena the Warrior Princess. However, she maintained that unlike Xena, the ‘Wild Dancers’ are not hostile, merely “wild in style” (Eurovision press release, 2004).

Ruslana’s self-presentation as a “wild” *Amazonka* is first and foremost a nationalist allusion, referencing the ancient Scythian/Amazon warrior women who inhabited parts of modern day Ukraine (especially the Crimean peninsula) in the 5th century. Famously described in Herotodus’ *Histories* as merciless barbarians, Amazon warrior women battled on horseback, and were reputedly willing to amputate their right breasts to facilitate ease of shooting arrows (Herotodus 2003: 276-279). Ruslana knowingly drew on this history in constructing her persona as a fierce and wild woman, even releasing a video (*Oj, zahray my muzechen ’ko*) filmed in Crimea where

she is depicted as a horseback-riding free spirit, who beats up her cheating boyfriend at the shore of the Black Sea.

In the course of two years, from 2002 (when the *Znaju Ya* video was released) to the Eurovision competition in 2004, Ruslana reinvented herself as an icon of unrestrained sexuality and ferocity. The reasons for her self-orientalizing (not only of herself, but also of the Hutsuls) became a contentious source of debate for scholars, critics, and Hutsuls themselves – especially as the image of Ruslana-as-Scythian-warrior became conflated with Ruslana-as-Hutsul-woman. Ruslana justified the change as an outgrowth of her prolonged study of Hutsul culture, legitimized by her cooperation with ethnomusicologists from her *alma mater*, the Lysenko Academy of Music in L’viv.¹⁴³ Ruslana’s turn towards this reputed institution historically devoted to “preservationist” folklore was significant as a legitimizing step in her reinvention of the material, and as a brace against accusations of *sharovarshchyna*.¹⁴⁴ By emphasizing the “exotic” and “ancient” aspects of Hutsul culture as truisms ostensibly observed during Ruslana’s own ethnographic research, Ruslana validated her artistic license. Pavlyshyn explains: “Just as the music of ‘*Wild Dances*’ was publicized as the fruit of Ruslana’s own ethnomusicological research in the Carpathians, so the costumes were explained as the outcomes of the meticulous collection and study of ethnographic data” (481-2). This explanation, however, did not pass the muster of Hutsuls themselves: during my fieldwork, it was repeatedly pointed out to me that traditional Hutsul dress (for females and males) is quite modest (if extremely colorful), made of painstakingly embroidered shirts, ornate woolen vests ornamented with colored embroidery, mirrors, and leather [*kozhukhy*], overcoats [*serdaky*], pants (for men), skirts (*zapaska*, for

¹⁴³ It is important to note that some of Ruslana’s L’vivan ethnomusicological consultants eventually distanced themselves from the project, while other expressed mixed feelings about the results

¹⁴⁴ In the wake of such accusations, Ruslana denied that her project succumbs to the banality of *sharovarshchyna*: “We turned to ethnos, not to *sharovarshchyna* [...] I am a contemporary singer with ethnic interests who has seen [ethnic material] through fresh eyes.” (Koskin, quoted in Pavlyshyn 480)

women), and elaborate headwear - colorful hats for men [*krysania*], and meticulously wrapped head-scarves [*khustky*] or headbands [*namitka*] for women.

Ruslana's palette of leather and metal suggested, to many onlookers, a kinkiness that directly opposes the traditional conservativeness of Hutsul female self-representation. This was partially demonstrated in Ruslana's integration of Scythian imagery in her Hutsul project, repackaged as modern sexuality: "In these clothes, we felt ourselves to be true Amazons - at once sexual and warlike" (Lyzhychko, quoted in Pavlyshyn). Pavlyshyn read the "sado-masochistic attributes with which the costumes were replete" as a comment on the strong female voice represented in the song, one defined by power and the defiance of quotidian norms (481). Pavlyshyn's interpretation is valid, but one-dimensional: by the sheer diversity of interpretations and the robust debate about meaning that followed in the wake of the Eurovision victory, Ruslana's voluntary self-orientalizing generated richly polysemic meanings. As a representation of Ukrainian femaleness within Ukraine, Ruslana's body became inscribed with the weight of internal national discourses of Ukrainian sexuality and femininity; as the representative of Ukrainian femaleness outside of Ukraine (on the Eurovision stage), her message communicated an ethno-national "wildness" vis-a-vis unbridled female (presented variously as Hutsul or Amazon) sexuality.

In many societies, the female voice and body are recurrent tropes of the nationalist myth, equated with "nature" or "the natural" (Ortner 1974). Goscilo points out that "from time immemorial, the dominant Russian [and Slavic] iconography has projected nationhood as female..." (Goscilo 1996:32, cited in Heller 2007). In Ukraine, where a gargantuan Soviet-era statue of *Mat' Rodina* ("Motherland," affectionately called the *iron baba* by locals) towers over the city of Kyiv, the cradle of Slavic civilization, the symbolic position of the female protectress

and mother in the Slavic imaginary is manifest physically, in mighty quantities of steel. In modern-day discourses of Ukrainian femininity, Ruslana's sexualized self-presentation offers an alternative to other prevalent media representations of female Ukrainian sexuality. The ancient archetype of the female *berehynia* (protector of the hearth of the nation) has recently been rehabilitated as a prevalent trope in Ukrainian notions of femininity, referenced by prominent politicians such as Yulia Tymoshenko, radical feminist groups such as FEMEN, and in Ivan Kupalo revival festivals celebrating pre-Christian fertility (Bilaniuk 2003: 54; Helbig forthcoming). In its reinvention, the *berehynia* has been repurposed to express a range of stereotypical feminine qualities, from nurturing, to mysterious, to hysterical. Ruslana, through the *Amazonka* archetype, proposes an alternate brand of Ukrainian femininity to the *berehynia*, one founded on national discourses of female aggression and freedom.

The fact of Ruslana's triumph on the Eurovision stage – a forum that “notoriously mingles kitsch and geopolitics” (Reinelt 2001) – is also significant for the international resonance of Ruslana's self-orientalized presentation and bid for European-ness:

Eurovision... annually constructs the collective memory of European cooperation while dramatizing the impossibility of escaping the borders and boundaries of nation and culture, gender and sexuality, self and other. Participating countries are united less by geography than by media space. Otherwise, the contest serves as a consolidating cross-cultural discourse, situated squarely in the popular domain, wherein the struggle over European identity plays out (Reinelt 2001:386, quoted in Heller 2007:199).

Tom Solomon points out, with regard to Turkey's winning entry in 2003, when pop star Sertab invoked stereotypical musical and visual gestures evocative of “Turkey” (including the *arabesk*, the harem, and the Turkish baths), that “trading on, and taking advantage of, familiar orientalist tropes and Europe's fascination with exotic Turkey was...shrewd marketing, however politically incorrect it may seem from progressive and Europeanist Turkish points of view” (Solomon 2005a: 8). Ruslana's ambition was to combine the language of Eurovision kitsch with a claim for

Ukraine's legitimacy as a European state through marketing language that at once romanticized the object of her research while firmly asserting their location in Europe:

In the very heart of Europe in the majestic kingdom of the Carpathian Mountains there live an ancient people, the Hutsuls. Their riches are unique mystic rituals, mountainous rhythms and dances. Ruslana visited them and revealed their mystery (www.ruslana.ua/en, accessed Jan 2006).

Thus, the context of Ruslana's auto-exotic representation of Hutsul culture as Ukrainian-ness also doubles as a bid for a European identity, though admittedly this is a European identity filtered through the unique, kitschy sensibilities of the song contest.¹⁴⁵

Ruslana's manipulation of exotic tropes and claiming of them as a unique Ukrainian brand of "world music" on the Eurovision stage challenged some of the power structures inherent in exoticizing "the other." Her voluntary auto-exoticizing may have been enacted from a resistant or, even, powerful stance.¹⁴⁶ Dana Heller, in her study of Russia's controversial pop duo t.A.T.u.'s performance at the 2003 Eurovision competition, suggests that the group's faux-lesbian shtick and poo-pooing of Eurovision norms presented a "challenge to the hegemony of the West" and "indifference to the 'assumed rules of the globalization process', which, to Heller, reveals deeply entrenched norms in the Russian stance towards Europe (Gdaniec 2003; Heller 2007:204). In contrast, Ruslana's 2004 performance appears a dedicated endeavor to perfect the

¹⁴⁵ It is important to note that, unlike the original mandate of Eurovision, in which cultural difference was emphasized and performed through linguistic diversity and an emphasis on musics without Anglo-American influence, the contemporary pageant of Eurovision emphasizes ethno-national pop-rock's isomorphism, which Regev describes as the nation's "own" (Anglo-American influenced, folk-tinged) pop-rock, "believing this is the way to perform uniqueness in late modernity" (2007: 319).

¹⁴⁶ To add a shade of nuance to this argument, however, I should mention a recent trend that has been present and somewhat consistent in recent Eurovision contests. As Thomas Solomon pointed out in his talk at the 2004 Annual Meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology, Turkey's 2003 victory was nationally debated on the subject of representation: first, regarding the matter of language (Sertab Erener, Turkey's representative, insisted on singing in English) and second, on the "orientalist content in the video clip made to promote the song," with one critic voicing his disapproval by asking her "are you going to present us to Europe with Turkish baths and concubines?" (2005:3,7). Sertab later claimed that the uniqueness of the "orientalist imagery" of the song and the use of English led to her victory. In recent years, also, champions have often come from the Eastern (and Northern) periphery of the geographical zone traditionally demarcated as "Europe." Previous to Turkey's 2003 victory, Estonia and Latvia were ESC champions.

Eurovision Song Contest's balance between global pop kitsch and exotic/essentialized national self-presentation. But if her presentation can be interpreted as a powerful action – mired as it was in all of the kitschy implications of the Eurovision Song Contest – it is also problematized by the complaints voiced by the very people that she has constructed as “the subaltern,” the villagers of Hutsulshchyna. Their disapproval of being represented as “wild” – despite what they perceive as her elevation of Ukraine in the eyes of “Europe” – exposes a tension that is predicated on the power of representation. For some Hutsuls, the shame of being called “wild” outweighed the fact that Ukraine had won “the attention of Europe.” Segments of the community stereotyped as the “exotic other” attempted to resist such familiar tropes of othering that were thrust upon them through the rhetoric of Ruslana's press releases and the branding of her product. Yet, Hutsuls did not interpret Ruslana's success uniformly, as my ethnographic data reveals.

Contested Representations: Hutsuls receive *Wild Dances*

I asked Mykhailo Tafiychuk, the patriarch of the Tafiychuk family of musicians (see chapter one), about his opinion on Ruslana. His initial reply was a shrug. He then added that he “doesn't understand her jumping around... she behaved badly.” Furthermore, he says, “she really offended us” by calling our culture “wild.” I asked him what he took “wild” to mean, and he explained that it implies that “we are not smart” and then added, “animals are wild, not people.” At this, his wife, who had been quietly sitting by and listening, weighed in explaining, “Ruslana put on some underwear and a Hutsul *kozuhkh* [traditional decorated vest] and danced on television...it was not very nice [*harno*].” To the Tafiychuk family, Ruslana's labeling and

selling of her aesthetic as “Hutsul” to any extent was taken personally, as an insult and a denigration of Hutsul integrity and sophistication.¹⁴⁷

In the months following her victory, some Hutsuls lobbied their local district parliament to censor sales of the disc for their strong objections to the representation of their culture in such a “wild” way. Ivan Mykhailovych Zelenchuk, a historian and ethnologist based in Verkhovyna, told me about the misunderstanding and bitterness that local people felt when they saw Ruslana’s re-presentation of the deeply entrenched stereotype of Hutsuls as “wild people:”

Ruslana harmed us in this regard, because instead of calling them “fiery dances” [*zapaln’i tansti*], she was looking for a word, and someone must have suggested [wild] – if she had called them *Fiery Dances*, she would have hit the mark [*popala v tochku*] and become a national hero. But someone must have suggested – this – “wild” and she went with it – and *wild* has many meanings, a few different aspects. The word *dyki* literally means primitive – implies that someone is primitive – and people understood in its most direct meaning, and so, there were some incidents... [in which] people did not accept it, but then it passed, all of that. (Interview 1/20/09).

One local historian based in the village of Kryvorivnia expressed an even more nuanced view on Ruslana’s impact. He commented on the fact that “wildness” is a pervasive and potentially insidious stereotype of his culture, but that it can be read multiply, as evidenced through varied reactions of Hutsuls to Ruslana’s depiction. (His village, Kryvorivnia, had spearheaded the attempt to boycott the album in Ukraine, expressing outrage at the term “wild” in the album title, though he was not directly involved). As we talked about representation of Hutsuls in popular music and ethnography, he revealed his extremely nuanced feelings about it: on the one hand, it’s good to raise awareness of our existence, on the other hand, we don’t deserve slander (interview, 10/19/2009).

¹⁴⁷ I asked Tafiychuk his perspective on Perkalaba, who visited him at his home. His response: “Ah, let them have their fun, they’re good kids. There’s nothing Hutsul about it, but what’s the harm?” (interview with the author, 1/27/09).

Others whom I interviewed interpreted Ruslana's stereotype of "wildness" positively, because, as one young Hutsul violinist told me, "she brought glory to Ukraine" (interview, Hurduz 1/29/09). Many others voiced ambivalent reactions, acknowledging that while Ruslana may have raised the profile of Hutsuls and helped stimulate tourism, it came at the price of mild disgrace and the reinforcing of pejorative stereotypes. During my fieldwork, many Hutsuls would simply laugh about the dispute, repeating a canonical joke such as: "What is a Hutsul? He is a Ukrainian, but wild!"¹⁴⁸

Debate about *Wild Dances* in Hutsulshynna could arise in many social situations, including the quotidian practice of locals gossiping about each other. On January 7, 2009, (Christmas Day by the Julian Calendar), I visited the Sergey Parajanov Museum in Verkhovyna with my host Oksana, her friend Svitlana, two visiting tourists from Kyiv and Sweden, and my Russian-American friend, who was visiting me. Located in the humble Hutsul house where the Georgian-born, ethnically Armenian filmmaker lived while directing the internationally acclaimed film *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors*, Pani Halyna, tour guide of the two-room Parajanov Museum recited her tour guide's monologue and then opened the small floor to questions. As the formality of the tour guide-to-audience relationship relaxed, she shared a story concerning Ruslana and her reception since *Wild Dances*. Following a devastating flood in the Verkhovyna region, which destroyed many homes in isolated villages in July 2009, Ruslana sent provisions via Hummer and helicopter, and also wanted to stage a concert to "lift the people's spirits." The people, however, were not all receptive. Pani Halyna and Oksana discussed:

¹⁴⁸ I heard this joke in variations as well as many other jokes about Hutsuls during my fieldwork (including a substantial repertoire of "dirty" Hutsul jokes told mostly to me by Hutsuls themselves). Memorably, the particular variation cited above was told to me when I first met the violinist and teacher Ruslan Tupeliuk, the director of the children's music school in Verkhovyna. He was dressed in full Hutsul regalia and rushing to meet his band of carolers during the Christmas ritual season, but before rushing out the door, told me this quick "prykol" (Interview 1/12/2009). A more complete version of this joke is retold in the introduction.

H: My godmother [*kuma*] was involved in the *Dyki Tantsi* project - maybe you remember, in the first video, there were three ladies, and they're all standing, and they show their fingers - do you remember? It was a short fragment. And so she came to me and said, did you see Pani Marijka on the television? And I hadn't seen it yet... She was so offended. Even now when there were the floods, she [Ruslana] loaded up a whole truck with provisions and sent it up to [the village of] Zamagora -

O: Yes, that's true -

H: Ok, I heard all of this from my *kuma*, I don't ask these questions myself! [Laughs] And so this lady said "She made a joke of me to all of Ukraine, this humiliation, and now I'm supposed to take her macaroni too?..." I laughed so hard!

O: [To me] See, our people are stubborn as rams!

S: Did she know they were making a film?

H: Yes, but, you see, they said for what? Why turn the cameras to show our fingers? Like we don't wash!... They were so mad, even that one fellow Futivsky, he said it was really not good, said they made us into clowns, with horns, *shypki i shche rakhuyte navushnykamy*.

O: No, well, the thing is that there is progress! She couldn't have just given us the same old thing - then it wouldn't be her song! Let the *troisti muzyky* [traditional trio ensemble] set up and play, that's one style and hers is a different one -

H: That's what I'm saying - this is contemporary life [*suchasnist*]!

O: But I think we made an important project! And the fact that people get so upset about these *Dyki Tantsi*, I tell them "Good people, we should be proud that we're *dyki*, that our nature here is wild, so let us be wild in that sense, as in original/primordial [*perevozdatsynmy*]! But our people, they say "we're not wild, we're like this, we're like that" - but why should we be ashamed?... See, and even now, she's so proud, she'll die of hunger before she takes macaroni because she's so offended (field recording, 1/7/09).

Oksana articulates another viable interpretation of Ruslana's "wildness" stereotype, in which "wildness" stands as a trope of resistance to the commercial, urban industrialized world. For Oksana, "wildness" emphasizes the obvious fact that Hutsuls live in "wild nature, high in the mountains." She later pointed out that having the hands of a farmer or shepherd was also no ground for shame, since the traditional values and lifestyles that Hutsuls take so much pride in maintaining are based on agrarian and subsistence living.

A similar position was articulated by the local shaman [*mol'far*] Mykhailo Nechaj. He was consulted by Ruslana while she was developing the project, and has remained her trusted friend:

MN. She took the strength of Hutsulshchyna and showed the whole world! Beautiful women, outside and inside, Hutsuls wild and active dances. She was in 70 countries of the world, and she showed the artistry of our Hutsuls, that the whole world watched and

marveled, not only those 70 countries of the world, but even more. So she's a woman deserving because, you understand, she showed the history of our Hutsulshchynna.

MS. And you look at it positively?

MN. Yes! she was here in Yaremche last year, with her mother, and she sent an emissary for me, but I was at a concert, so I was not able to meet with her. (2/2/09)

Outside of Hutsulshchynna, some accounts of Ruslana's *Wild Dances* often repeated romanticized notions of Hutsul wildness in a celebratory, simplistic fashion. One Western Ukrainian reviewer rhapsodized that *Wild Dances* was "an attempt to touch the soul of the people, which has always been in harmony with the universe. Consciously or not, Ruslana has brought to life a deep, strange layer of genetic memory [...] that is able, ultimately, to explode with revelation: yes, I am a Ukrainian, these are my lands, my mountains, my people" (Koval', quoted in Pavlyshyn 2006: 482). Perhaps it is no surprise that the kitschy nationalistic pageant of Eurovision would cultivate such prideful feelings in Ukrainians who saw Ruslana's depiction as embodying a deeply entrenched truth about their culture. Yet, such romantic attempts to draw the line from a conceptual and essentialized Ukrainian "wildness" through the indigenous Hutsuls to Ruslana's polysemic *Wild Dances* resulted in a variety of reactions - some negative - from Hutsuls whose intrinsic "wildness" was purportedly being represented on the global stage. Why? In part, because the heart of this debate over "wildness" lies a fundamental question about affiliation in Ukraine, a nation forever occupying a liminal position, the historical crossroads and battleground of empires, and now the borderland between the exclusive European Union and Russia. Through the successful enactment of this stereotype in music, Ruslana's *Wild Dances* aggravated a nerve that is political as much as social, and belies the close relationship of music and politics in contemporary Ukraine.

Coda: The Politics of Wild Energy

A month after her Eurovision victory, Ruslana shrewdly aligned herself with the victorious side of the 2004 Orange Revolution, the massive protests that challenged a corrupt presidential election and installed a pro-European, pro-democracy candidate Viktor Yushchenko to the presidency. Appearing on the stage at Independence Square, the ground zero of the revolution, Ruslana emerged as one of Ukraine's most powerful – and controversial – players in the realm of music and politics. Through a rigorous schedule of international touring, through her Good Will Ambassador status from UNICEF and the OSCE, and through her work as a deputy to the Parliament of Ukraine (from 2006-2007), Ruslana became a vital force in promoting pro-European Ukrainian diplomacy through popular music. This position gave her the unique power to develop and elaborate the discourse of what contemporary “Ukrainian-ness” means in post-Orange Revolution Ukraine.

In 2008, Ruslana released her *Wild Energy/Amazonka* project, a science fiction sequel (of sorts) to the *Wild Dances* project. Two different CDs were released: the Ukrainian-language



Wild Energy press materials, 2008.

Amazonka and the English-language version *Wild Energy*, which also features U.S. hip-hop artists T-Pain and Missy Elliot guesting on two songs.

According to a press release on her website,

Ruslana's *Wild Energy* project “takes us into a future city which experiences a global energy crisis, far more threatening than lack of oil and gas. The inhabitants of the synthetic city are lacking their will for life, their energy of the heart - the ‘fuel for people.’” The project was developed in collaboration with Ukrainian science fiction authors Sergiy and Maryna Diachenko in the spring of 2006. The protagonist of “Wild Energy” is Lana, a bleach-white-skinned,

platinum-blond-haired girl who is “a synthetic.” Lana, like all the other synthetics in the city, depends on a daily charge of electricity, transmitted through wires, to charge her life. However, she is aware that, “in the city, there are others” who feed their energy needs through “wild rhythms,” though the “energy police” do everything in their power to keep the “synthetics” away from these “other people.” (The “others” are depicted in earth tones, cavorting to the sounds of hand drums and soaring around the post-Apocalyptic landscape on giant bat wings.) In the closing line of the opening monologue in the video, Ruslana (as Lana) tells us that “Today, I will seek this wild energy, and I will find it... or die.” As the music begins, Lana breaks free from the wires that feed her energy. After successfully avoiding the energy police, she encounters the crew of non-synthetics and, like Michelangelo’s representation of the mortal fingers of Adam approaching the divine touch of God, a non-synthetic man finally energizes the pallid synthetic Lana of the future through a touch of the hand, thus propelling her into “real life.”¹⁴⁹

Ruslana’s *Wild Energy* project doubles as a social campaign in which Ruslana reinvents herself as Ukraine’s most prominent environmentalist. On April 7, 2008, National Public Radio introduced Ruslana to the US public through her social project:

Like a Brazilian soccer star, Ruslana gets by with just one name. And everybody in Ukraine knows it. In her music, you can hear echoes of Ukrainian folk songs. But no one is going to call Ruslana a folk singer. Her live shows are spectacles, with fire, smoke, dancers and costumes. In the middle of it all, there’s Ruslana, tossing her hair, stamping her feet, and usually not wearing very much - a small bundle of unbridled energy. That

¹⁴⁹ The *Wild Energy* video was released in conjunction with OSCE-sponsored television commercials to raise awareness about female trafficking. Summarized by the slogan “People are not products” and the image of a hand with a bar code on it, the campaign calls attention to the dehumanizing sex trade industry that enslaves 40,000 Ukrainian women annually. By repeating the image of a bar-code inscribed hand throughout the commercial, and showing the image of a naked woman transported in a box marked “Leather: Made in Ukraine,” the manufactured nature of the human slave as “product” underscores the “synthetic” nature of the industry. In the power gesture that concludes the commercial, Ruslana’s hand touches the hand of a young woman who is rescued from a future as a sex slave as the glass wall between them shatters. The hand-touching gesture would be familiar to viewers who had seen the *Wild Energy* video on Ukrainian television as well, where the culminating moment depicts a non-synthetic man’s hands reaching out for Lana’s, creating a rupture that prevents the synthetic future from coming into existence.

image is why she originally decided to call her new stage show “Wild Energy” (Charles 2008).

Ruslana describes her new stage show as way to viscerally communicate the importance of Ukraine’s need for renewable energy, energy independence, and the dangers of global warming “with dazzle and a driving beat.” The NPR story presents the difficulties that Ruslana’s campaign has faced in engaging young Ukrainians in environmental concerns, when they are “too busy hanging on as their country continues its wild ride from Soviet socialist republic into capitalism.” The article concludes that in money-hungry post-Soviet Ukraine, Ruslana’s cry that “[energy] is the most valuable currency” is too symbolic a rallying cry.

It is significant that this new project draws on and expands the concept of “wildness,” steering the term away from specific Hutsul reference and towards a more generic Other. In *Wild Energy*, salvation is promised through a nostalgic rediscovery of Ukrainian “wildness.” This recovery of an earlier, pre-industrial, pre-urbanized world certainly suggests indigeneity-as-wildness, but it does so without overtly referencing Hutsuls. In fact, Ruslana’s comments at the premiere of the video stressed “the complete originality” of the *Wild Energy*, and the transformation of the *Wild Dances* aesthetic “into a futuristic, electronic sound with no ethnic samples.” Still, the idea of “wild rhythm” comes from the language of *Wild Dances*; visually, the “wild” non-synthetics are dressed similarly to the *Wild Dancers* of yore; and most significantly, the climactic moment of the video - when Lana reaches out for the hands of a “wild” man, the music pauses dramatically, and, in a heartbeat, we see the image of “wild” Ruslana taking a deep breath on a drumhead we hear a brief sample of trembitas, an undeniable sonic link back to the iconic opening sounds of *Wild Dances*. Despite such linkages, Ruslana’s rhetorical shift away from Hutsuls may betray a broad ambition for this project: that crafting a more generic, universal redefinition of “wildness” will also make it easier to market outside of an ethno-national

framework (certainly, the presence of US hip-hop artists on *Wild Energy* suggests aspiration for the US music market, where Ruslana has not broken through). But perhaps this inclusive new manifesto of “wildness” also works as a salve to quiet the protestations of those Ukrainians who took issue with such blunt stereotyping of Hutsul culture in *Wild Dances*.

Arturo Escobar has responded to the ‘problematics of alterity’ that force the question, “how can we accept the other, who is different from us, as both equal and different?” (Escobar 2006:120). Whereas the desire for equality inevitably leads to assimilation by marginalized groups into hegemonic structures, the maintenance of difference inescapably invites power imbalance between groups. For this reason, “difference-in-equality is...rarely achieved” (121). Yet, as globalizing processes reproduce difference through the “innovation of new cultural forms,” the implicit assumptions that analysts of globalization make about global dominance over local practice deserve reconsideration: “But if we are serious about diversity, must we not resist this imaginary of a placeless world in which ‘local cultures’ are merely a manifestation of global conditions?” (Escobar 2006:121). The way out, Escobar suggests, is through careful attention to a “politics of place” and the ways that economic, ecological, and cultural factors contribute to hierarchies that undermine equality. In this chapter, I have presented diverse examples of groups that position themselves as cultivators or protectors of unique brands of place-based identity, musicians that, in various and complex ways, invoke Hutsul indigeneity vis-a-vis the tropes of *wildness/drayv/enerhia* to construct a version of modern Ukrainian identity. These examples present unique and, in some ways, discordant portrayals of Hutsul “wildness.” Ruslana’s aesthetic and sonic content is marked by the particulars of the Eurovision Song Contest, an annual pageant of global pop with a stylized national element (and now reinvented in *Wild Energy* with a universalizing, sci-fi twist). Perkalaba inherits the attitude of

international reggae and punk icons while drawing on the unique “wild energy” they perceive as quintessentially Hutsul. Banda Arkan displays a complex attitude about ethical and organic models for hybridizing modern and ancient musical practices. In all of these examples, the agency of musicians in devising an artistic credo and implementing it through sound and iconography should not be underestimated. Likewise, the reception of these various depictions of Hutsul wildness (by Hutsuls and critics) must be understood in their own right as agentic (and equally aspirational) discourses.

In *Provincializing Europe*, Dipesh Chakrabarty draws on Homi Bhabha’s distinction between the *pedagogic* and *performative* modes of nationalism (1990: 297) to demonstrate how “the peasant” perspective may be assimilated into a national discourse that portrays “the peasant’s world” as representative of an idea of national culture:

The ‘nation’ and the political are also performed in the carnivalesque aspects of democracy: in rebellions, protest marches, sporting events, and in universal adult franchise. The question is: How do we think the political at these moments when the peasant or the subaltern emerges in the modern sphere of politics...? (Chakrabarty 2000: 10).

The ‘nation’ is also performed in the practices of popular musicians, as when the “subaltern” Hutsul materializes as a recurring symbol of ethno-national pride in myriad hybrid projects that generate meaning in various politically charged ways. Michael Herzfeld has called on anthropology to “transcend the binarism of colonizers and colonized” by paying attention to intimate hegemonies that constitute the politics of representation (Herzfeld 2002). As a move towards breaking open this binary, I have introduced a network of examples that illustrate a dynamic process of post-socialist negotiation. By tracing how these scenarios play out through a chain of nested orientalisms, we bear witness to how Hutsuls, the caricatured ethnic population,

and the urban popular musicians invoking *Hutsulness* construct distinct but interlocking narratives about Ukrainian modernity.

CHAPTER FOUR

Radio Simferopol: Strategic Exoticism, Aspiration, and Crimean Tatar Popular Music

The attraction of the East for the West is after all nostalgia; it is as if, when we are awakened by dreams, we remember that forgotten country out of which we came. We came out of the East, and we return to the East; all our civilisation has been but an attempt at forgetting, and, in spite of that long attempt, we still remember. When we first approach it, the East seems nothing more than one great enigma, presented to us almost on the terrifying terms of the Sphinx. We are on the threshold of a mystery, a curtain trembles over some veiled image, perhaps the image of wisdom. The grave faces of worshippers look into our faces without curiosity; they come out into the light from behind the veil and go about their daily business, and they are as inscrutable to us as if really they were in communion with a wisdom which we do not know.

- Arthur Symons, *Cities* (1903: 259-60)

Yet this mimetic faculty itself is not without its own histories and own ways of being thought about. Surely Kafka's tickling at the heels, brought to our attention by the ape aping humanity's aping, is sensateness caught in the net of passionate images spun for several centuries by the colonial trade with wildness that ensures civilization its savagery? To witness mimesis, to marvel at its wonder or fume at its duplicity, is to sentiently invoke just that history and register its profound influence on everyday practices of representation. Thus the history of mimesis flows into the mimesis of history, Kafka's ape standing at the turbulence where these forces coalesce.

- Michael Taussig, *Mimesis and Alterity* (1993: xviii)

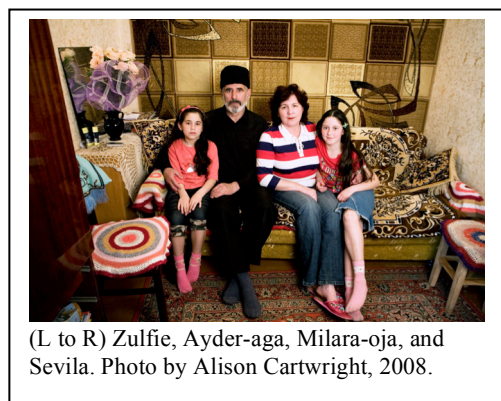
On January 30, 2008, I landed at the underwhelming domestic terminal of the Simferopol airport, where my suitcase, my banjo, and I clumsily skated along the icy tarmac towards two college students and a professor who had come to meet me. It was not my first time in Simferopol, but my other summertime arrivals had more resembled expeditious departures as I skimmed over the gritty "city of utility," hopping from one vehicle into the next, and happily abandoning the landlocked transportation hub of Simferopol for the more scenic Black Sea resort towns of Yalta, Sudak, Alushta, or Yevpatoria. My landing in late January was markedly different: I had come

expressly to off-season Simferopol, the capital of the Crimean Autonomous Republic and the hub of the Crimean Tatar repatriate community, to conduct fieldwork on the contemporary Crimean Tatar musical scene.

My first weeks in wintry Simferopol were often disorienting, as I blundered through the bustling central bazaar acquiring exotic pickled vegetables, and gingerly explored the side streets that spoked off the monumental plaza known as Lenin Square – where a concrete statue of Lenin still presides. Despite my best attempts to blend in, I was betrayed daily by my heavily Western Ukrainian-inflected speech (more than once, I was casually accused of being a Ukrainian nationalist; more than once, I was told to speak in “a civilized [Russian] tongue”). The father of my Russian host family also confirmed a stereotype that I had braced for in researching xenophobia in pro-Russian Crimea: as the former Soviet military man let his guard down around me, he revealed his low opinion of the local minority Crimean Tatar community, whom he characterized as greedy, land-grabbing mafiosi. In my first days, I was having a hard time finding a way in to the Crimean Tatar community, living with the Russian host family in a dimly lit neighborhood diagonally across the city from the Crimean Engineering and Pedagogical University (KIPU), where I was to report for Crimean Tatar language classes. To secure a hold in my new strange city, I dedicated many fleeting daylight hours towards mastering the commute by way of multiple *marshrutkas*, the overstuffed mini-buses that wove through the city in an intricate network of routes that could seemingly only be learned through persistent questioning of locals.

Once I began my classes at KIPU, I was assigned to study with Milara Settarova, an energetic Crimean Tatar woman whose rapid Russian language explanations of Crimean Tatar grammar exacerbated my initial feelings of disorientation. As a language student, my progress

was mediocre and incremental, but in the course of our regular meetings, Milara-oja¹⁵⁰ and I sparked a fast friendship. We discovered a mutual interest in music – she had dreamed as a little girl of becoming a famous singer. As a break from grammar drills, Milara-oja had begun to teach me traditional Crimean Tatar songs in her husky, uninhibited voice. Soon, our private lessons at the University migrated to her home, where we would sit at the family’s rickety upright piano as I picked out accompaniments to traditional Crimean Tatar songs, and she (sometimes with her two school-aged daughters) taught me the correct pronunciation of lyrics. I became a regular guest for dinner (eventually even trusted to help dice garlic or parsley, dill, basil), during which we would watch the Crimean Tatar evening talk shows or Portuguese soap operas dubbed in



(L to R) Zulfie, Ayder-aga, Milara-oja, and Sevila. Photo by Alison Cartwright, 2008.

Russian while discussing local politics and even more local gossip. As we warmed to each other, Milara-oja introduced me to her vast network of family, friends and acquaintances, and allowed me many opportunities to show off the Crimean Tatar pleasantries that I was slowly grasping. (She also gave me ample opportunity

to perform the songs that we had learned together, and for which I was developing simple, albeit unorthodox, banjo accompaniments.) Her husband, Ayder-aga,¹⁵¹ told me his story of deportation and I learned that he had first met Milara-oja during the heady days of the 1987 Red Square rallies that finally resulted in Crimean Tatars’ right to return to Crimea. Upon returning to Crimea, they had started their family. As they both began to invite me along to events in the

¹⁵⁰ ”Oja” is a commonly used suffix that means “teacher” in Crimean Tatar. It is a term of respect that students use for their teachers, and that I used to address Milara-oja.

¹⁵¹ ”Aga” is another common suffix that means “brother,” used to refer to older males with whom the speaker has a degree of familiarity.

community, I became acquainted with a wide array of Crimean Tatar politicians, community leaders, scholars, musicians and performers.

On the morning of February 22, 2008, I attended a somber conference at KIPU with Milara-oja, who had lured me by the prospect of hearing a contemporary Crimean Tatar ensemble, the popular KIPU-affiliated violin ensemble called *Sel'sebil*. The conference was to commemorate the ninetieth anniversary of the execution of Numan Çelebicihan (1885-1918), the first leader of the Crimean Tatar national government (*Qurultay*), who was gruesomely murdered by the Bolsheviks in 1918 (Allworth 1998).¹⁵² Çelebicihan, an Islamic reformer, was also the author of the words to the official Crimean Tatar national hymn, *And ätkämän* (Kirimca 1988:



Members of *Sel'sebil* perform at KIPU with portrait of Çelebicihan in the background. Photo by M. Sonevytsky, 2008.

72). So, to kick off the memorial, five female violinists from the ensemble *Sel'sebil*, costumed in dramatic floor-length black dresses, filed into the small conference hall and performed two pieces - *And ätkämän* and Remo Giazotto's setting of "Albinoni's *Adagio*." It was my first exposure to any

contemporary music in Simferopol, and my fieldnotes from that morning revealed my initial impression: "unusual mix of elements: karaoke-style violin section!" (fieldnotes 2/22/08). The ensemble played both pieces in unison or two-voice arrangements, similar to the parts of the violin section in a symphonic orchestra. Both pieces were also accompanied by pre-recorded MIDI backing tracks that included programmed drum sounds, warm synthesizer pads, and other harmonic elements. (The backing track for the hymn also began with the sound of waves crashing and the cries of seagulls, two digital samples that I soon began to recognize as iconic

¹⁵² According to public belief, Çelebiçihan was chopped into pieces and thrown into the Black Sea after being accused of agitating for "pan-Turkism" (and therefore, implicitly, against pan-Sovietism).

sounds in many contemporary Crimean Tatar musical projects.) The next time I saw *Sel'sebil* perform, at the Crimean Tatar Theater in Simferopol for the March 8th celebration of International Women's Day, nine female violinists came on stage dressed in voluminous white gowns - Western-style wedding dresses - for the more joyful occasion. In my field notes at that performance, I again noted my surprise at the jarring juxtaposition of elements - the array of slim young women in wedding dresses, swaying with their violins against smooth arrangements of popular "light classical" tunes in combination with Crimean Tatar melodies (fieldnotes, 3/8/2008).

Over the nine months that I spent in Crimea in 2008-2009, I saw *Sel'sebil* perform frequently, often as one act in a long and varied program of *estradna* (popular) Crimean Tatar musical groups that usually included more than one act that I found surprising. As I acclimated to the catch-all conventions of the contemporary Crimean Tatar music circuit, I grew to see how



Sel'sebil performs at the Crimean Tatar Theater on International Women's Day. Photo by M. Sonevytsky.

estradna ("popular") musical practices were counterposed against *narodnaya* ("traditional," "folk," or "authentic") musical practices - while very often drawing on folk sources to retain elements of "Crimean Tatariness" (Rice 2002).¹⁵³ *Sel'sebil*, presenting its brand of technologically-mediated "light classical" music, combined elements that resurfaced in many

¹⁵³ This positioning of "popular" versus "folk" is an important distinction from the conventionalized counterpositions of "popular" and "classical" music in U.S. academia. In the former USSR, where national "folk" music was institutionalized and regularized as part of the mandate of the "Friendship of the Peoples," such an opposition between "traditional" and "progressive" music could manifest as "folk" versus "popular" (in addition to another opposition, of "academic" (or "classical") versus "popular.") With this distinction in mind, the "popular" music of the late Soviet and post-Soviet periods can encompass technologically mediated forms and settings of Western "classical" melodies.

diverse genres of hybrid Crimean Tatar contemporary musics – such as the use of digital samples of waves crashing and seagulls crying, or extreme sartorial choices.

To better understand the artistic mission of the ensemble, I set up an interview with Zarema Alieva, the director of the group and a teacher in the KIPU music department. We met, along with Elmaz, Sevila, and Laura – three of the student performers – for an interview in Alieva’s office at the University on October 31, 2008. Alieva, who speaks in an animated, inflected voice softened by diminutives that mark every statement, told me that the idea for the group originated with the rector of the University, who had a vision for the violin ensemble. The name of the group, *Sel’sebil*, is a Crimean Tatar word that means, roughly, “the source of paradise.” (Alieva told me that when she was searching for a name for the ensemble, she asked a language teacher for his suggestions on old indigenous terms that could describe the ensemble, and when she heard *Sel’sebil*, “I knew this one was the word to describe us, because people get so much energy when they listen to us play” (interview, 10/31/2008). They founded the ensemble on April 4, 2003, drawing its members from the pool of students that study violin at KIPU. While the ensemble is not exclusively open to females (on a few occasions, I saw a male student, costumed in a tuxedo, perform with them), Alieva explains that the vast majority of her most advanced violin students have been females. While the ensemble is not exclusively open to Crimean Tatars, KIPU’s student population is majority Crimean Tatar, so the ensemble’s ethnic composition in 2008 included only one non-Crimean Tatar, a female Russian student. Zarema Alieva wistfully spoke of her wishes to expand the act to “a full orchestra,” and, while making the hand gesture for money, she added, “the reality is that, in Simferopol, there is just no possibility for such projects” (interview 10/31/2008).

Like many Simferopol-based popular music acts, *Sel'sebil* has ambitions that range beyond the immediate community of Crimean Tatar repatriates, and that force the ensemble to balance between representing Crimean Tatar-ness and more universal musicianship. This is reflected in the group's core repertoire choices, which straddle the "world of eastern music, like contemporary Crimean compositions and folk melodies" – the group has even commissioned works by Crimean Tatar composers – and "simply beautiful melodies like Albinoni's *Adagio*" (interview, 10/31/08).¹⁵⁴ Throughout our conversation, Alieva repeatedly emphasized that the ensemble "is for the friendship of the peoples" [*druzhiba narodov*], a dissonant allusion given the phrase's origin in Soviet nationalities policies, but understandable in the context of the unwillingness of *Sel'sebil* to be pigeonholed:

We don't just play *narodna muzyka*, because we can't just lock ourselves up in our culture - we play music for all peoples... we play European classical, and in the Crimean Tatar classical style... I think that music doesn't have a nationality! There is folklore in national styles, but we don't play national music - we can play Jewish, Armenian, Tatar, Russian, Ukrainian, we play everything (interview, 10/31/2008).

She added that "since our University is not a nationalist university," *Sel'sebil* was very serious about incorporating non-Crimean Tatar repertoire and elements in their performances. I asked if the decision to use pre-recorded backing tracks was part of this move away from traditional classical, orchestral, or folk idioms. Her answer gave both aesthetic and pragmatic reasons for the directions that the group has taken:

How did this start? We could just play with a piano. Well, but, it started when we were first invited to play at a large symposium with delegates from all around the world - not long ago, we were at something like that in Yalta, in September - you arrive and there's no piano, there's nothing there, and we set to wonder, what could we play? And we thought, well, there is a computer deck, and people write *minusovki* [backing tracks], and

¹⁵⁴ The *Adagio*, a faux-baroque composition that has been prominently featured in film scores, became a hit in 1999 for the multi-lingual singer Lara Fabian, who added English lyrics to her orchestral-synth-pop setting of the tune. In Simferopol, the melody is performed widely in many languages including Russian and Crimean Tatar; I first heard it on the local Crimean Tatar radio station, *Radio Meydan*, performed by Emine Ablava.

we tried it a little, and we saw that the public really liked it. So we decided to work like this a little.¹⁵⁵

Performances that merge *minusovki* and live performance are standard fare in the contemporary Simferopol music scene, though such arrangements are most frequently practiced by solo singers (who frequently also lip-sync). However, *Sel'sebil's* experiment with fusing these disparate elements was received well by the public, and so, today, they perform exclusively with backing tracks, and the group has produced studio recordings that merge live violin playing with a synthetic background.¹⁵⁶

At the end of our conversation, I asked about when and how the idea to wear white wedding dresses first arose. Alieva explained that it connected to a new arrangement they were working on at the time for a festival in Saint Petersburg, the romance from Georgy Sviridov's musical drama *The Snowstorm*. The women, giggling over their shared memory, reflected on the first time they wore the dresses in public:

Zarema Alieva: Remember?

Student 1: We rented dresses -

Z.A.: We rented dresses, in that moment we just wanted to all be in white -

Student 1: -- and for snow, for snow--!

Z.A.: - and for snow to surround us! So we took them as rentals, and it was such a success in the hall, it was just... it was something!

Student 2: [laughing] So, we took them as rentals...so long as they were white!

Student 1: [laughing] - And later we bought them!... Then...then we were choosy - this one won't do, this one - no! [Laughs]

Z.A.: Yes, it is really very beautiful. And soon - our next performance – we will play in the white....

Q. And in Petersburg the audience was curious about the dresses?

Student 1: Yes! People asked us – are you all brides? [laughter]

Z.A.: It was, I think, honestly, a little shock...a little shock for the people. They told us! - They were setting up our microphones for a long time, and someone even yelled out of the hall - “You don't even have to play, you can just stand there!” [Everyone laughs.]

¹⁵⁵ Alieva told me that she “chooses the repertoire personally, but it has to feel good for everyone.” Then they enlist their resident arranger, Rustem Abdurakhmanov, who creates the *minusovka*, backing tracks, for live performance.

¹⁵⁶ Zarema Alieva also has a solo recording of herself playing the violin with backing tracks. The album features much of the same repertoire as *Sel'sebil's*.

And we were, of course, all so beautiful, with our hairdos, *blairdos*, everything so carefully arranged on stage.¹⁵⁷

The “shock” that the audience experienced at the sartorial choice of the ensemble remains a small thrill for the woman in the group, though I observed that the Crimean Tatar community in Simferopol has largely grown accustomed to the ensemble’s wardrobe - frequently, people would reference the ensemble by their costumes (i.e., “the women in the wedding dresses”) instead of using the name *Sel’sebil*.

Both sonically and aesthetically, the members of *Sel’sebil* named Paul Mauriat (1925-2006), the French orchestra leader known for his popular “light music” arrangements for orchestra and synthesizers, as a major influence.¹⁵⁸ Mauriat’s orchestra also had a bold and formal dress code - often appearing in white tuxedos or suits - that bears on *Sel’sebil*’s sartorial self-presentation, as the ensemble cultivates an elegance that is nostalgic, naive and sentimental, summoning images of feminine purity (white wedding dresses) that are in line with the buttoned-down tastes of much of the local Crimean Tatar community, while articulating a distinct non-Crimean Tatariness (the dresses are Western-style, and as such, emblems of difference). In the former USSR, where Mauriat’s compositions were used as theme music for some Soviet television programs, such easy listening orchestral pop once symbolized a progressive move away from the restrictive conventions of formal “classical” music – indeed, in the 1960s and 70s, Mauriat’s sentimental blend of electronic and orchestral instruments playing catchy pop melodies was considered cutting edge by many, and was wildly commercially successful in

¹⁵⁷ My translation here attempts to convey one of the common verbal games that speakers (especially female speakers) in my interviews often use: the closest approximation I can think of in English is the Yiddish-inflected reduplication game, i.e. hairdo/shmairdo or lipstick/shmickstick. In Russian, there is no Yiddish connotation. Alieva’s exact words here are “причёски блзки” [*prechoski* (hairdo) *blozki*].

¹⁵⁸ Mauriat was also an accomplished songwriter, known especially for his authorship of the hit song *Chariot*, released in English as *I Will Follow Him*. Beginning in 1965, his *Le Grand Orchestra du Paul Mauriat* released numerous recordings and toured widely. In terms of wildly successful mid-20th century phenomena, there are interesting commonalities between Mauriat’s European variety of pop classical arrangements, and the “corny aesthetic” of Lawrence Welk’s equally influential U.S. “champagne music” empire (see Sonevytsky 2010).

Europe, the USSR and Japan. *Sel'sebil*, with their more limited means, aspires to present a similarly successful and profitable blend of “classical” and “popular” idioms, while remaining relevant to their home community in Simferopol.

Such a delicate balance of local and global elements lies at the heart of the contemporary Crimean Tatar popular music scene in Simferopol, where this balancing act manifests variably, resulting in fusions that range from the stunning, to the virtuosic, to the commercially successful, to the awkward, to the controversial, to the bizarre. As my network of musicians and performers in Simferopol grew, my encounters with such fusions became almost daily: before a rehearsal of the traditional Crimean Tatar student orchestra at KIPU, which performs classical arrangements of Crimean Tatar pieces in a Turkic orchestral setting, two male student musicians practice the heavy metal riffs of Black Sabbath (“Iron Man”) on their school-commissioned *saz*-es. At a showcase of Crimean Tatar wedding traditions sponsored by the *Bizim Qirim* youth group, a budding diva sings a traditional song in a contemporary arrangement while gyrating sexily and lip-syncing for the audience at close enough range that the young hijab-covered woman seated next to me feels compelled to express her shame at the “lack of ethics” in the young woman’s performance. At an outdoor festival to celebrate the Muslim spring holiday of Qidirlez, a girl in full traditional female dress performs the locally famous, understated choreography to the melody *Tim-tim* against a boisterous hip-hop setting by the Simferopol-based artist DJ Bebek. At a Crimean Tatar festival of children’s music, two school-aged girls bellydance to Madonna’s 1998 hit “Ray of Light” (with its vague Hindi overtones).

Unlike the musicians who are invested in reviving traditional Crimean Tatar music in Crimea (discussed at length in chapter two), Crimean Tatar popular musicians are aspirational beyond their locality. For many Crimean Tatar musicians in Simferopol, the category of “popular

music” is inchoate and inclusive, mediated by technologies and influences that, through the idiosyncratic nature of historical and social developments, have impacted Crimea in a salient and often seemingly disproportionate way (the influence of Paul Mauriat’s orchestra is one example of this, synthesizer patches from the 1980s is another, ubiquitous covers of the Eagles hit “Hotel California” is yet another). As artists working within the specific dynamics of post-socialist society, where popular music is “at once a popular art, a commodity with economic value, a site for modeling new behaviors made possible by the transition from communism to capitalism, and a wildly polysemic symbol” (Rice 2002: 36), they derive their aesthetic and professional missions from the dictums of global markets and the conventions of popular music, drawing on influences obscure as Paul Mauriat, but also Bob Marley, Bobby McFerrin, Madonna, Emir Kusturica, Timbaland or the Beatles, alongside Crimean Tatar musicians such as Sabrie Erecepova, Enver Sherfidinov, Ilyas Bakhshish, and others.

In *The Postcolonial Exotic*, Graham Huggan introduces the idea of “strategic exoticism” as one method of reaching beyond the local towards the global. Huggan defines postcolonial exoticism as “a pathology of cultural representation under late capitalism – a result of the spiraling commodification of cultural difference, and of responses to it, that is characteristic of the (post)modern, market-driven societies in which many of us currently live” (Huggan 2001: 33).¹⁵⁹ Despite persistent discrimination against the Crimean Tatar community in Crimea at the level of government and land rights, their community has reaped some benefits from two recent phenomena that reward the cultural difference that is symptomatic of postcolonial exoticism: the

¹⁵⁹ Huggan’s idea of “strategic exoticism” dialogues in an illuminating way with scholarship that examines modes of “cosmopolitanism” in the contemporary era. While this chapter opts to focus on “strategic exoticism” to explain how locals reach beyond locality and negotiate the tensions inherent in hybrid musical projects, my approach to the question was informed in part by literature that focuses on “local cosmopolitanism” (Hannerz 1990), “aesthetic cosmopolitanism” (Regev 2007) (this was addressed explicitly in chapter 3), and “vernacular cosmopolitanism” (Werbner 1999, 2006; also see Cheah 1998 for a diverse array of approaches to “cosmopolitanism”). While this chapter does not explicitly delve into these literatures, they did shape my approach to the questions posed in this chapter and merit mention.

expansion of summertime Crimean tourism that emphasizes the “oriental” cuisine and comforts of the peninsula, and the general fetishizing of “Easternness” that pervaded aspects of daily life when I lived in Simferopol in 2008-9 - especially visible with the explosion of classes in belly dancing and yoga that targeted females of all ethnicities and ages, and the prevalence of musical motifs that index the “East” in much recent chart-topping popular music from the U.S., Russia, and Turkey (Solomon 2005b; Sunaina 2000).

To many visitors and locals, Crimean Tatars represent Crimea’s authentic link to such fetishized “Easternness,” a stance that some Crimean Tatar popular musicians have internalized and reflected back in their fusion projects. Huggan further observes, “the self-conscious use of exoticist techniques and modalities of cultural representation might be considered less as a response to the phenomenon of the postcolonial exotic than as a further symptom of it” (Huggan 2001: 33). If, indeed, there is no escape from the morass of exoticism, if indeed the “spiraling commodification of cultural difference” stands to benefit some, then embracing a status of exotic otherness can become potentially lucrative. Many contemporary Crimean Tatar musicians, however, struggle to refine personae that position their “Easternness” as secondary. *Sel’sebil*, for example, who emulate the “light classical” model of Paul Mauriat, include “eastern elements” in their performances to fulfill the demands of their local community, while refusing to be pigeonholed as “a Crimean Tatar ensemble.” Such nuanced positioning runs along the spectrum of contemporary Crimean Tatar musicians, and ultimately, each musician or ensemble’s position is changeable, molded by the flux of commercial access and public favor.

Since the rise of mass culture in the 20th century, popular music culture has displaced older elite, traditional or “classical” music forms as the site in which music is made profitable on a wide scale (Taylor 2007: 1). Martin Stokes has questioned why ethnomusicologists have

traditionally neglected the question of how musicians make money, and how money impinges on music-making. In order to “understand music in the context of real lives and concrete social situations,” Stokes argues, the financial aspects of musicians’ lives and careers must be addressed openly (2002: 146). A serious discussion of the financial motivators of music-making, furthermore, may pose a challenge to the “teleological, historicist assumptions about the inevitably dominating ‘incursion’ of money into musical worlds that a simplistic reading of Marx seems to supply” (Stokes 2002: 139). Furthermore, as Tomlinson points out,

...People don’t turn from ‘doing the economic’ to ‘doing the cultural’ in the way that we might imagine them ending work for the day and turning to leisure activities. If this were so then we would have to suppose that no one ever derived any meaning from the activities by which they earned a living. And yet this way of thinking is quite deeply engrained in common-sense views of culture referring to the practices and products of art, literature, music, film and so on. These are all important forms in which specific meanings are generated, but they will not do to define, exclusively, the cultural dimension (1999: 18).

The “cultural dimension,” then, is informed by pragmatic, economic factors as is it by the creative processes associated with “cultural products.”

A generation after the conversations about “world music” laid bare the stark discrepancies of power that mark musical appropriations and collaborations, the global music industry is morphing dynamically towards a model that privileges celebrity and spectacle over album sales. Simultaneously, regimes of belief that rewarded creative inspiration and hard-won success topple as televised *American Idol* style competitions (the hugely popular Ukrainian analogues are called *Narodna Zirka* [*National Star*] and *Ukrajina Maye Talant* [*Ukraine’s Got Talent*]) catapult tenacious singers adept at covering the hit songs of known celebrities to stardom. As the actual workings of the contemporary global popular music machine become exposed, musicians who make aesthetic decisions based on potential financial gain – such as to lip-sync at an arena show

– are not necessarily viewed as cynical or insincere in approaching their livelihood this way (Fitzpatrick 2008; Frith 1996b, 2002).

On the ground in Simferopol, my conversations with musicians inevitably veered towards discussions about the financial viability of having a career in music, and the frustrations that many artists faced in cultivating a career within the limited Crimean Tatar community. Many expressed a belief that the way out lies through the development of a singular persona that fuses together the exciting aspects of Crimean Tatar identity with known formulas of popular music. As a way to connect ideologies of indigeneity to global markets, many Crimean Tatar popular musicians deploy exoticism strategically through hybrid soundscapes that synchronically index local, generic, exotic, and/or global musical features and values. In the context of the politics of indigeneity in Crimea, such polysemic musical statements bear upon the balancing act of Crimean Tatars as indigenes that imagine themselves as both “Eastern” and “European.” The remainder of this chapter focuses on three stories of Crimean Tatar popular music based in Simferopol that embody the example of musicians who position themselves consciously as *both* “Eastern” and “European,” drawing on stereotypes of “otherness” and discourses of aspiration simultaneously. The first story provides background on the recent explosion of popular music in Simferopol that is connected to the local Crimean Tatar-owned Radio Meydan; the second explores the controversy around the first Crimean Tatar hip-hop artist, DJ Bebek, and the sonic content of his album *Deportacia*; and the third example traces a generational story from Enver Izmailov, a virtuosic and successful “world musician” to his daughter Leniye, an aspiring singer who had just launched her “Beatles project” when I met her.

Radio Meydan and the Rise of the Simferopol Pop Star

Following the Crimean Tatars' tumultuous mass return to their homeland in the late 1980s and 1990s – the culmination of the most prolonged and successful human rights campaign in Soviet history – repatriates confronted the challenges of rebuilding in a hostile new Crimea, where rampant discrimination and localized outbursts of violence led to a massive campaign for land rights centered around squatting on previously collectivized lands following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. As one of my subjects told me during my fieldwork in Crimean in 2008-2009, in the 1990s there was “little opportunity for creativity, all Crimean Tatars were struggling to build themselves a house, to scrape together a living – these were our daily trials” (interview with the author, anon.). Yet, the 1990s saw the gradual re-establishment of Crimean Tatar culture in Simferopol and other locations in Crimea: the Crimean Tatar theater reopened; the entire cast and crew of the Qaytarma ensemble were transplanted from Tashkent to Yevpatoria; new ensembles such as Uchan-Su, Efsane, Ensemble Qirim, and Maqam were formed in Simferopol; musicians of the exiled generations formed new groups and began to record albums of music; memoirs of legendary Crimean Tatar musicians were published; archival recordings were released in digital forms.

One of the most significant forces to transform the creative landscape of the Crimean Tatar community, however, came in 2005, when Radio Meydan was introduced to the Simferopol airwaves. According to Ridvan Khalilov, the current general director of Radio Meydan and its sister television company ATR, the idea for a Crimean Tatar media outlet devoted to Crimean Tatar language and music had been in development since 1996 at the initiative of Shevket Memetov, the former director of the state Teleradio company in Uzbekistan. At that time, Crimean Tatars had limited exposure to radio and television media channels, through the state

television and radio broadcasts that provided 35-45 minutes of Crimean Tatar programming every week.¹⁶⁰ Due to struggles with local bureaucracy, the initiators of the Crimean Tatar media enterprise were not able to secure a broadcasting license until 2005, nearly a decade after they began the process. On February 5, Radio Meydan opened its doors, followed by the opening of ATR television in September of 2005.

I met for an interview with Ridvan Khalilov at the Radio Meydan office in the late morning



Ridvan Khalilov at Radio Meydan.
Photo by M.Sonevsky, 2008.

on November 21, 2008. It was a busy day for the station – they were being inspected by city officials. He had graciously greeted me at the door and quickly shepherded me into a temporarily empty sound booth, where he anticipated we would face fewest interruptions. Still, his phone rang constantly, and we had to pause

while a broadcaster came in to record an advertisement live to air. In the midst of these interruptions, Khalilov jokingly lamented trading his job as a radio broadcaster for the general directorship, and then reflected on how much things had transformed since the radio's founding, when "there were only three of us broadcasting, working like dogs."¹⁶¹ Now, he told me, there are 12 people employed at the radio, and about 26 at the television. Today, the radio station features news in Crimean Tatar and Ukrainian, call-in request shows, and general music programming. "But when we first opened, for the first month, the radio programming was all music." I asked why:

¹⁶⁰ At the time of my interview with Khalilov in 2008, the state-run outlets broadcast one hour of Crimean Tatar language per week.

¹⁶¹ At that time, a woman named Nadzhie worked as the radio's general manager, and Ridvan and another man named Mustafa and Ridvan worked on air. Both Mustafa and Ridvan had come from a background in television, so "we were also learning a new medium" (interview, 11/21/2008).

Honestly, it was because we didn't know from which side to approach it, where to start. We had ideas for news programming, other programs. By March 1st, we had news. The first news, I read in Crimean Tatar and Nadzhie read in Ukrainian.

Q. What is the balance of musical programming to news now?

A. We broadcast 18 hours of the day - about 4 hours are programs, morning, call-in show; probably 6 or 7 hours are programs... So 60-65% music, sometimes up to maybe 70%. We have Eastern music [*Vostochnaya muzika*], of about which 60% is Crimean Tatar music. Ukrainian music is represented, and also Turkish, Arabic. Probably 25-30% is Ukrainian.

As our conversation progressed, I discovered that the “60% of Crimean Tatar music” within the “eastern music” catalogue was overwhelmingly recently recorded music, a result of the rapid increase in musical production that followed the opening of Radio Meydan:

RK: When we first opened, we had a big problem, which was that we didn't have a Crimean Tatar base for broadcasting. Absolutely – I remember, when we started we had about 110 melodies – songs and music of recorded music. Total. When we opened, we broadcast for 10 hours. And in 10 hours, those songs would often be repeated 2 or 3 times. And people would listen and call in upset that they were hearing the same things over and over [laughs]. We collected everything we could from our musicians and composers, and everything that we could find was 110 melodies... Back then, we would advertise that if you have any recordings of Crimean Tatar music, you should bring them here - and we would immediately digitize them and make them available. Many people did this - they would call the Meijlis – people were interested. Many vans full of vinyl records. We found such amazing things! Records from 1933... Truthfully, many of them were static more than music, our editors would try to clean them.

MS: And that changed so quickly in just three years?

RK: Yes! Of course!... All of the musical activity that you've seen has emerged in the last two, three years, since the radio opened. Before there was none of that. If I had to guess, I'd say that about thirty new young artists [have emerged]. I'm not a music critic, so I can't say if they're all professionals - perhaps some of them just think they can sing well! [Laughs] (interview, 11/21/2009).

This explosion of young would-be pop stars in Simferopol has fundamentally altered the musical practices of Crimean Tatars who aspire to make contemporary popular music. With greater access to broadcast media, and in hand with the celebrity culture that Ukrainian television programs such as *Narodna Zirka* (the “American Idol” of Ukraine) cultivate, young performers that hybridize folk and popular music idioms have been producing music that test the boundaries

of Crimean Tatariness in lyrical and musical content, personal style, and performance conventions.

This proliferation of new acts has, according to Khalilov, has activated some controversies within the community. One effect is the exacerbation of confusion about “what Crimean Tatar music is”:

Yes, today it’s a problem for Crimean Tatars ourselves – what is Crimean Tatar music and what is not.... Take for example Crimean Tatar weddings, where earlier musicians would only play Crimean Tatar songs and melodies. And now, it’s flipped, maybe 20% is Crimean Tatar, the rest is...Uzbek maybe, more than Crimean Tatar. They love [Verka] Serdiuchka, they love Serdiuchka. These are the tendencies.¹⁶²

Despite the fact that Radio Meydan broadcasters contextualize non-Crimean Tatar musics during the course of programming, the station’s reputation “as the Crimean Tatar radio” leads people to assume that “all Eastern music is Crimean Tatar, or otherwise, that none of it is *really* Crimean Tatar.” Khalilov explained that with the exception of the “*qaytarma* [dance genre], which everyone recognizes as ours,” for many listeners, other “Eastern musics” lose their distinctiveness in the grab bag of popular tunes. Furthermore, the dominant Slavic presence in radio and television boosts stars such as the outrageous cross-dressing Ukrainian phenomenon known as Verka Serdiuchka, displacing traditional Crimean Tatar celebratory melodies and dances in favor of the gloss and oom-tzah rhythms of Ukrainian or Russian MTV hit-makers, who Radio Meydan also includes in its programming.

Some of this confusion, Khalilov points out, also contributes to a positive effect of the radio, which is that “more and more non-Crimean Tatars are tuning in.” Khalilov says that at least once a day, “a caller named Natasha or Sergei [standard Russian names] will call in to dedicate a song to an Elmaz or Ayder [traditional Crimean Tatar names].” Sometimes, he adds,

¹⁶² Verka Serdiuchka is the cross-dressing Ukrainian pop star who has had great success in the Russian and Ukrainian popular music market and also poses fundamental challenges to Ukrainian national discourses of self and other (Yekelchuk 2010).

“they even learn to say *selaam* [hello] or *sag olinis* [thank you] in Crimean Tatar - these are positive changes!”

The generation that’s growing up together now in Crimea – the oldest are 17, 18 years old – they’ve grown up together with Ukrainians, with Russians, who live here, and they have a strong friendship. Our people who came when they were 30 years, all of his friends were from Uzbekistan, so they would share memories about Uzbekistan, but the younger generation who were born here, after 1988, they don’t have Uzbekistan in their memory, they only have Crimea. And all their closest friends live here, and they might be Russian or Ukrainian. And I think that’s why a Russian starts to listen to Radio Meydan – because his friend is Crimean Tatar. Because he knows that if he wants to greet his friend, he has to call in to Radio Meydan, because that’s what his friend listens to. And I’ve noticed when we’ve travelled to villages, people – not Crimean Tatars – listen to Radio Meydan because they like “Eastern” music (interview 11/21/08).

I ask if he attributed the modishness of “Eastern” music in Simferopol and surrounding villages to the recent glut of young aspiring Crimean Tatar musicians. Khalilov reflected on my question and then answered, “No, not entirely. I think ‘Eastern’ music has simply become popular all over the world, so maybe we are the ones benefiting from that...benefiting but also losing, to some degree.” In Khalilov’s view, the popularization of “Eastern music” bears on the Crimean Tatar community as both a positive effect - in increasing listenership and promoting inter-ethnic understanding – and negative – as the specific qualities of Crimean Tatar music become absorbed into a generic and universal idea of the “East.”¹⁶³

Similarly, Khalilov’s stance towards the global democratization of recording technology, which has granted so many young musicians the freedom to create and record in Crimea, embraces two opposing attitudes. In Simferopol, as in many diverse places throughout the world,

¹⁶³ Khalilov named some singularly positive effects to the recent saturation of the Crimean Tatar music market. He explained that the Shelale festival - an annual festival of music and dance that was previously broadcast via Crimean Tatar media outlets exclusively - had recently been shown on the national station UT-1, which Khalilov says, “is a big step up.” Also, he says, despite the fact that “Simferopol is small and it’s hard to make money on festivals, or if you rent the Ukrainian Theater which fits 900 people” many more artists have begun to organize their own concerts: “Recently, Uriye Kermencheke, Alim Osmanov, Gulzara Bekirova, and Edip Asanov have all organized concerts that were well-attended. Also, the young singer Emine Ablava, and, last year, Arsen Bekirov - only 22 years old - did their own concerts at the Ukrainian Theater. Earlier, there was nothing like that, only Qaytarma, the government ensemble, could do that” (interview 11/21/2008).

the rise of the home studio has transformed the ways in which people produce and record music.

Khalilov explained this transformation in broad historical terms:

When we lived in Uzbekistan, it was the state that released all the recordings that we had. There was a very strict censorship regime. It was forbidden to sing about Crimea, about your mother, about homeland, about different historical events – so basically you could sing about love, and there were about 25 or 30 songs in the whole repertoire, and all the artists sang the same songs and recorded them over and over. After we came back here, things were better in this regard, but there was a new problem of where to do quality recordings. The only place at first was at Crimean radio, but since there was only 35 minutes of programming a week, there was no exposure. Back then, in Uzbekistan, everyone performed live. After the return, the culture changed, everybody took to building, those years were so hard, everything was stagnated. And then around 96-97, the festival Shelale appeared on TV, artists could appear on stage so people could see you. People started to stand on their own legs, studios began to open up - like Edip Asanov's. And then the Radio opened and everything took off, now it's flooded. You can walk five steps and you'll bump into someone's studio (interview, 11/21/2008).

Within the Crimean Tatar community, this greater access to studio technologies has accelerated the pace at which new artists rush to record both original and folk songs. Khalilov explained that many elders look upon this sudden explosion of young artists critically, admonishing the younger generation for not studying their folk music sufficiently before making their own youth-oriented work: “And now many young singers have started to sing folk songs – many elders think they are doing it wrong – I don't know.” Indeed, young artists that have attempted to hybridize or montage Crimean Tatar folk music with rock, pop, and hip-hop have been especially subject to criticism and debate in the community of Crimean Tatar repatriates in Simferopol.¹⁶⁴

The first, most prominent, and controversial figure to attempt such a hybridization in the realm of contemporary youth music in Simferopol was DJ Bebek, whose first album, *Deportacia* (released in 2004), merged dance and hip-hop elements with traditional Crimean Tatar melodies

¹⁶⁴ One public example of these debates can be seen in the series of articles written in 2005 between Server Kakura, the director of Ensemble Qirim, and Fevzi Aliev, the founder of the ensemble Destan and collector and anthologizer of a book of one thousand Crimean melodies that are discussed at length in chapter 2. In summary: Aliev published his views on the role of folk music in creating new Crimean Tatar music on the occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the Destan Ensemble, and Kakura responded in an article challenging Aliev's premise that outside elements have any place in Crimean Tatar music. The acerbic dialogue continued from there. These articles were printed in February and March of 2004 in the newspaper *Golos Kryma*.

and theatricalized narratives of the 1944 deportation. In 2005, DJ Bebek, whose real name is Rolan Salimov, was working part-time at Radio Meydan, where he frequently heard “our famous folk songs” that were later incorporated into his first album.

MS. Where did you learn the songs you used in *Deportacia*?

RS. They’re our famous folk songs. People hear them everywhere, always playing on Radio Meydan. Earlier there were other methods, people would just pass it from their hands to others. This was protected. Very much music was lost in the time when people were focused only on survival. In the case of music, a lot of the tradition of playing on our traditional instruments was lost (interview, 4/24/08).

While working at the radio station and being exposed daily to Crimean Tatar folk melodies, Salimov felt inspired to take up the *saz* – the long-necked lute that was prominent in the “classical” Crimean Tatar orchestra during the Khan’s period. Soon, he began to experiment with the fusing of traditional Crimean Tatar folk elements with the U.S. hip-hop and “balkan beat” styles that he personally admired. After the release of his first album, the directorship of Radio Meydan approached DJ Bebek to write “the hymn of the radio station – the business card of Radio Meydan” which was included as a full instrumental track on DJ Bebek’s 2005 album *Azatlek* [Freedom].¹⁶⁵

The Trouble with Crimean Tatar Hip-Hop: DJ Bebek and *Deportacia*

In late April of 2008, I met with Rolan Salimov in a small office at KIPU, where he graduated in 2004 – the same year that he released his first album as DJ Bebek. Born in Armyansk in 1979, Salimov studied classical violin in secondary school (at the Simferopol

¹⁶⁵ I consulted Nariman Asanov, a Crimean Tatar violinist and band leader based in Brooklyn, NY, to help me identify the melody that DJ Bebek uses for the Radio Meydan jingle. Asanov identified the tune as a “Cuçek” (Cuchek), a dance tune, similar to melodies used for belly dance. “I think Bebek created that tune under influence of the music of Turkic speaking gypsies from Eastern Europe. He named it “Meydan” for purpose of the Radio station. It is simply Eclectic in the style of BALKAN TONE - and that includes Crimea!” (personal e-mail correspondence, 3/26/2011). Other musicians I consulted about the tune - specialists and performers in Balkan, klezmer and Turkish musics - could not pinpoint the melody specifically, but many agreed that it “sounded like many generic tunes sampled in Balkan beat-style music” (anon, 3/25/2011).

Muzychne Uchilishche). At KIPU, he started to learn recording techniques from his teachers in the music department. His first experiment, a setting of the traditional Crimean Tatar dance known as the *Khoran*, was later featured on his first album. Eventually, Salimov explained, he “fell into recording work in Simferopol,” but the studio where he worked went out of business. Now, he told me, he prefers to work from his home studio, because “my home is the most creative space - I want to love my work, and my work is the creative process...so I like to be in my most creative space” (interview, 4/24/08).

In a 2004 interview with the Simferopol newspaper *Golos Kryma*, Salimov added a dash of mystery to his “creative process” by revealing a faith in divine inspiration. When asked about how his stage moniker “DJ Bebek” - the “image that represents the dance musical direction in which I work” - developed in tandem with his first album, *Deportacia*, he explained that,

This album was given to me from above, because I do not believe in coincidence. After I had recorded a few compositions, I began to think, what should I name the project, I didn't want it to be similar to others, I wanted to make something of mine, new, for it to stand out even in the title. One evening, I was thinking for a long time and did not find an answer, so I decided to lie to sleep, I told myself that whatever the first thing that comes into my head in the morning will be my name. When I was waking up, suddenly, unexpectedly, the first word came to my mind - “bebek”... After that I added the prefix DJ, and that's how the name was born. And the meaning of it, in my view, came next - it's a young project, just gaining strength, the first sprout, the firstborn, in general, like the first child, or *bebek*, in Crimean Tatar (Yuksel' 2004).

Indeed, the release of DJ Bebek's first album *Deportacia* was widely hailed as a groundbreaking achievement in creating “modern Crimean Tatar music.” The album, which blended local discourses that emphasize the collective remembering of the Crimean Tatar community's progression from trauma (deportation, exile) to redemption (repatriation, rebuilding) with global discourses marked by the consumerism and sounds of youth club culture vis-à-vis the technology and artistry of the hip-hop DJ – was nothing short of a sensation in Simferopol. The same

interview in *Golos Kryma* introduced the young hip-hop artist as a savvy connoisseur of both folkloric and popular styles, the original purveyor of the Crimean Tatar music “of the future”:

The formula for success was introduced long ago. To achieve popularity, you must have quite a few elements - the product should be modern and its content should appeal to the deepest, oldest, “saturated with mother’s milk” qualities of human sensitivity. The novelty of the album *Deportacia*, the work of DJ Bebek, succeeds in that it uses old, well-known Crimean Tatar melodies and songs like “Tim-tim,” “Khoran,” “Eki Cheshme,” and “Kuchuk Ozen” mixed with the contemporary rhythms of disco, techno, rap, and chaos. This gives the melodies an absolutely new, innovative sound that destroys existing stereotypes of perception. And, the fact that the tunes on the album are being played in practically all of the discotheques, all of the discs have already sold out, and the author has started working on his second album, once again confirms the reliability of the formula for success, which was derived long before us (Yuksel' 2004).

Yet, despite the popularity of the album in Simferopol, DJ Bebek’s fusion of local and global sounds and images generated a robust discourse about the “future of Crimean Tatar music” in the community of Crimean Tatar repatriates. In the same interview cited above, the interviewer goes on to press Salimov about numerous issues that demonstrate the community’s anxiety about DJ Bebek’s early hip-hop experiment.

Chief among these concerns, as articulated by the reporter conducting the interview, is the anxiety that “the youth will only listen to our folk music if it is presented to them in this contemporary format” (Yuksel’ 2004). DJ Bebek’s response assuages the interviewer by articulating an aspirational theory on the fundamental worth and potential popularity of any music - of any genre - that is “high quality”:

We should have folklore, jazz, classical music, and contemporary music should progress. And we have to be at a high level, and not stuck back 50 million years. Only if we craft competitive material, can we carry our culture onto the world stage.... In my opinion, our culture can be popularized beyond Crimea. Indian, Arabian, and Turkish music are famous throughout the world, often performers do not live in their homeland. The main thing is that music is made well, with taste and in a modern way.

Their dialogue continues on to discuss his plans for upcoming live performances, and Salimov lists the present conditions that he sees as insurmountable barriers in allowing a Crimean Tatar

musician to gain broad popularity: “In Simferopol, there are no good organizers, or decent venues, with a good stage, lighting, and a normal sound system.” The interviewer adds, “and the guarantee of income, which is very important.” DJ Bebek responds to this point with an eye towards his next albums:

Of course [income is important], although I recognize that a music industry does not really exist in Crimea. So I did not make my album with an eye on financial gain, but more for the self-realization of the listener. We can hope, that in the near future sponsors will presents themselves, who will known what they are investing in, and won't look at me like just a regular boy from the street. After all, with the right approach at this, you can earn a living (Yuksel' 2004).

When I met with him four years after this hopeful statement was printed, Salimov had not yet located such investors, and his frustration at the limits of his local music industry in Simferopol had reached a peak: “the trouble is that, it's like you work hard, and we'll build you a monument after you're dead [laugh]. We'll say thank you. But you can hear this once, hear them say thank you twice, but after that, you need something else.”

In 2008, Salimov told me that since *Deportacia*, his creative process has changed in substantial ways - now, working from his home studio, he does not bring in other musicians because “it's a problem of organization and finances.” He spoke passionately about his desire to tap into the Ukrainian music market, since “people recognize me now, but I want to go further, to a bigger audience, and work with people who will want to support me financially and creatively”:

Yes, we should support Crimean Tatar *estrada*, but to support it, it needs financial support. I don't want to be a martyr. There should be some reward, even a miserable one, but something besides just “congratulations for your work.” Everyone saying to you that you are “a fine person” [молодец] won't feed you the next day (interview 4/24/08).

He expressed his disappointment that since 2004, when the floodgates of Crimean Tatar popular music opened and “the center of innovation shifted to the young generation,” (a phenomenon

that he attributes to the release of *Deportacia*) that Simferopol still “has very limited live venues with weak resources”:

The majority of clubs are designed to bring people in to drink and dance, but they are not technically equipped to support live performances. So people lipsync. The level is not high. And to come out with a microphone when it’s all whistling, then it’s better just to lipsync and then [laughs] everything at least sounds good (interview 4/24/08).

Such performance practices as lipsyncing contribute, he believes, to the “low quality” of the vast majority of contemporary Crimean Tatar music being produced in Simferopol today. Frustrated that his ambitions have not been realized, DJ Bebek has become a critic of the contemporary Simferopol musical climate that he credits himself with transforming. Positioning himself as the original innovator, Salimov cultivates an aura of authenticity around his work, even as it is criticized for being derivative or lowbrow by other segments of the Crimean Tatar musical community.

Such a stance calls to mind the cross-cultural implications of the core hip-hop value of “keeping it real.” As David Novak writes, “Part of the discourse of ethnicity and identity in hip-hop culture in the US is reflected in the phrase ‘keeping it real,’ insisting on the maintenance of one’s cultural/racial background despite hegemonic pressure – the ‘real’ of the performer’s fixed role as a member of a marked and disenfranchised subculture” (Novak 2000: 18). Just like Novak’s example of the Japanese DJ who began to integrate the sounds of the Japanese *samishen* in his work, DJ Bebek sought to “synthesize” transnational musical influences with the soundscape of his under-represented minority community as means of achieving the authenticity implicit in the value of “keeping it real” – a position Salimov underscored in 2004 by insisting that the project was not crafted with financial reward in mind. Solomon (2005) has demonstrated an analogous example in Istanbul-based rappers who, “in their appropriations of the globalized genre of rap...thoroughly reterritorialized and indigenized it, embodying in their rap the sounds

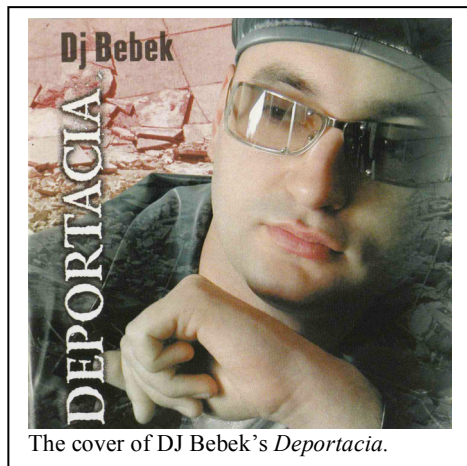
and discourses of other, indigenous musical genres and creating a hybrid musical expression that serves as a vehicle for local imaginations of place” (Solomon 2005b: 61). *Deportacia*, with its specific and iconic references to Crimea and the 20th century deportation of the Crimean Tatars, similarly “reterritorialized” the global sounds of hip-hop and crafted a trailblazing musical expression among Crimean Tatar musicians.

The Sounds of *Deportacia*

According to Salimov, despite the trauma that inspired his debut album, the narrative that he presents in *Deportacia* is ultimately uplifting:

In the album, one of the tracks is called “*Deportacia*”, which I think deserves special attention, and that’s why I named the whole album after it. If you notice, the selection and sequencing of the tracks traces a plot. The album opens with the composition “Kuchuk Ozen”, followed by the hit “Eki cheshme” [both traditional melodies/songs].

This produces a light effect, rhythmic, the story begins with a bright page: a people



The cover of DJ Bebek’s *Deportacia*.

[*narod*] lived in Crimea, lived its measured and happy life. After that follows the composition *Kogda liudy plachut* [*When people cry*] - the clouds descend, there is gravity, heat, it reflects an alien and hostile invasion of people’s lives. This comes as a prelude to deportation, which did not occur only suddenly or by itself. And then, immediately “*Deportacia*” follows... At first, I created it in the form of a song, but afterwards I rejected the lyrics, I stopped it only as music.... And after that follows *Vozvrashchenie* [*The Return*] - a commentary on that which we are living through today, returning to our Homeland.

Throughout the album’s narrative arc, DJ Bebek integrates a variety of sonic components that index Crimea in both concrete and abstract ways. Popular folk melodies and dances played by traditional Turkic instruments (as well as Soviet-era instruments) appear on all twelve tracks on the album. Rhythms are often provided by the traditional *dare* and *davul* of the Crimean Tatar percussion section in addition to electronically generated beats.

Samples of birds trilling, crickets chirping, waves crashing, gun shots and wolves howling can be

heard on a number of tracks, as a hip-hop era sonic manifestation of the tropes that Crimean Tatars in exile were explicitly forbidden from uttering in song, since during the period of exile, any sonic or lyrical tropes that referenced “Homeland, sea, wave, poplar, *kizil* (cornelian cherry), hazelnut and many others” were censored (interview with Fevzi Aliev, 4/28/08). The specific reference to wolves also has special connotation in Turkic symbology, where wolves can signify “a certain outlook and position in life, a symbol of Turkic Patriots” (Yuksel’ 2004). Furthermore, Salimov explains that he used the howls of wolves to evoke feelings of “melancholy, sadness, anxiety, and loneliness, since, ultimately, people were left alone without their Homeland. And on top of that, the wolf also symbolizes Asia, where they were sent, and from where they later began their path back home” (Yuksel’ 2004). On a few cuts from the record, archival recordings of elders singing folk songs thread in, further establishing the ancient and rooted qualities of the *narodnaya muzyka* that Salimov reinvents.

Track three of *Deportacia* – the “prelude to the deportation” – blends many of these elements in an evocative way. The track opens with the sound of waves breaking, followed by the entrance of an elder woman’s voice singing a lullaby [*Ay-ne-ne*]. Soon, a low and menacing electronic sound interrupts the pastoral-nostalgic soundscape, giving way to a beat and melody that eventually buries the female’s singing under a thickening electronic layer of synthetic sound. At one moment, the sounds of children playing can be heard in the background, but their laughter is soon smothered by the carpet of electronic sound. After about five minutes, these dense layers of dance-like music recede until the woman’s voice re-emerges, eventually again submerging into the crashing of waves, the iconic sample that indexes the Black Sea and bookends the piece.

Throughout the album, English language lyrics appear ubiquitously, often as short interjections, linking Salimov’s effort with the U.S. hip-hop tradition from which he takes many

cues. The only episode of rapping on the album comes on the second “hit” track, *Eki Cheshme* (which returns as a reprise on track 10). The track opens with a funk guitar sound and electronic drum beats, and expands into a fuller, synthesized jam. Finally, a male voice is heard - “Here we go!” - kicking off the entrance of a highly processed trumpet-like instrument playing the melodic turn - an elaboration of the vocal line - that returns throughout the four minute track. After the instrumental break, a smooth male vocal enters, singing the first verse of the popular traditional love song, *Eki Cheshme (yan yana)* [Two Adjacent Fountains]:

Two fountains next to each other,
I quenched my abundant thirst.
Mother, who bore you,
Let her be my mother-in-law.¹⁶⁶

Following the first verse, a rapid harmonized English language break enters, (the first lyrics are “ooh my my baby, you drive me crazy, and let me hold your body tonight”)¹⁶⁷ delivered in a reggae style. This break is followed by the melodic instrumental break, and is again followed by a verse, sung in Crimean Tatar with two shout-out style English-language interjections:

On one branch there are two cherries,
One scarlet, the other white. [*That’s right!*]
I love you very much,
I am waiting for your letter. [*Everybody!*]¹⁶⁸

Again, a Jamaican-style English-language break enters (“want to see your body day and night / one more time, I want to be with you tonight”). Finally, two minutes into the song, the chorus enters for the first time. For listeners familiar with this song, the delayed chorus - a catchy and

¹⁶⁶ This is my translation from the Russian lyrics that are printed in Sherfedinov (1979). Sherfedinov credits these lyrics to S. Shemshedinova, whom he recorded in the field in 1930. In the Crimean Tatar community, there are alternate lyrics for this song, but these approximate those used by DJ Bebek.

¹⁶⁷ Because of the heavily accented and rapid delivery of these lyrics, they are difficult to hear precisely. These lyrics are my best approximation.

¹⁶⁸ The third verse that is commonly sung does not appear in DJ Bebek’s version. The traditional lyrics are: “On one branch there are two apples / Tear one off, do not touch the other / I love you very much/ Hurry after me (Sherfedinov 1979: 140).

punning lyrical passage that begins with the playful turn *Salla salla, sallasana yavulğin* - provokes intense anticipation:

Wave to me with your handkerchief, (*Salla, salla, sallasana yavulğin*)
Send me a little note of your health. (*Bir mektuble bildirsene sağliğini*)

When it finally enters, the chorus repeats three times, accumulating more harmonies at each iteration. A short melodic break leads into a stripped down breakdown of the chorus, which then continues to repeat for the last two minutes of the song in slightly different arrangements and with occasional melodic interjections in both Crimean Tatar and English. In *Eki Cheshme*, DJ Bebek crafted his first hit. Through a fusion of the traditional Crimean love song, with its veiled and subtle lyrics, juxtaposed against brash and sexually explicit English lyrics, his re-imagination of the song hit a nerve in the local youth music scene.

In addition to the reggae-style English samples on *Eki Cheshme*, and Crimean Tatar language folk songs, there is one stark occurrence of the Russian language on the album that occurs during the fourth and title track, *Deportacia*. This track opens with the sound of crickets chirping, over which the sounds of noisy tires, dogs barking, wheels screeching, and doors slamming are progressively layered. Then, a dialogue between male Russian speakers outlining vague but obviously sinister intentions — a direct reference to the night of May 18, 1944, when the Crimean Tatars were deported — leads into what DJ Bebek identified as the mournful “leitmotiv from [the folk song] ‘Miskhor Kyzy.’” The melody continues as the sound of gun shots are heard, and soon another cinematic melody (DJ Bebek’s own, but crafted to mimic a folk melody) swells with trumpet and *k’aval*, until it is eventually taken over by a keyboard riff not marked by any obvious ethno-national reference. For the duration of the song, the melodies waft in and out, and the cut ends with the sound of howling wind, wolves crying, and human weeping.

Deportacia is DJ Bebek's most charged cut on the album and it is followed by *The Return*, a boisterous accordion-led dance number. The rest of the album features a setting of the famous *Khoran*, a reprise of *Eki Cheshme*, a few other dance melodies, and a self-aggrandizing version of the extremely popular and celebratory dance song *Tym-tym*, the melody of which, in the hip-hop tradition of boasting – is interrupted by a sample of applause and the reminder that this track was brought to you by “DJ Bebek!”

Theorizing the local and the global after *Deportacia*

Ushakin, writing about Russian strategies for coping with the new realities of the post-Soviet world, argues that trauma may not necessarily manifest as an internal psychological experience, but as an externalization of suffering and loss. One such externalization, he says, may occur through music and song (Ushakin 2009). When it debuted, many interpreted DJ Bebek's *Deportacia* album as an example of such a traumatic externalization, or what Katherine Verdery (1996) calls *lacrimogenesis*, the expression of an origin story rooted in trauma – wherein the past is retold so that it never fully releases its grip on the present, becoming a worn script that blurs the edges of temporal borders. Furthermore, in the post-Soviet climate, narratives of discrimination or victimization sometimes turn into “commodities for exchange” (Merridale 2000:419). As the first Crimean Tatar hip-hop experiment to reference the overt commercial overtones of hip-hop as a global genre, some detractors criticized DJ Bebek for cheapening their traumatic history through such a commercial, globally mediated filter.

However, when I asked DJ Bebek whether he intended the album to convey a patriotic or nationalistic message, he flatly rejected the notion that *Deportacia* could be interpreted as a political statement. As someone born in exile but generations removed from the deportation, the

album's sonic attempt to express the deportation, he says, was intended not as a political move but as a "historical document." He emphasizes that his music "is a synthesis, not a juxtaposition of opposing elements" and that *Deportacia* was intended as "music for contemplation and reflection" [*muzyka dlia rozmyshlennia*]:

Of course with the first album, I was afraid that people wouldn't understand it. Because we have plenty of fanatics...who might not understand it properly and criticize it, because I might be held responsible for the political aspect of the name. But I didn't consider it as a political album - I thought of it more as a historical album...to transmit and show what we went through, to create the feeling and atmosphere, and most people, thank God, understood the album (interview with the author, 4/24/08).

However, not everybody in the community "understood the album," and, among my interviews with musicians, his work was often dismissed or criticized for the "ignorant" or "uninformed" mix of Crimean Tatar folk melodies and generic "balkan beat" style licks, layered on top of electronically generated beats and original melodies. Others criticized his live performances at the time *Deportacia* was released, which showcased a quartet of skimpily dressed female dancers known as *Ballet Indiga*, whose risqué choreography shocked many audience members accustomed to the modest aesthetic associated with traditional Crimean Tatar female performers. Most often, critiques of DJ Bebek expressed by older members of the musical community were challenges not only to his musical competence but also to the social dynamics and concomitant practices associated with hip-hop as a distinctly non-Crimean Tatar tradition with distinctly non-Crimean Tatar values.

I asked DJ Bebek if he considers himself a Crimean Tatar hip-hop artist, and he responded that he considers himself "an Eastern Man" with great respect for American hip-hop culture (he specifically identified Timbaland and Beyonce as icons he admires). When I met with him in 2008, Salimov had released four more albums as DJ Bebek, the 2005 album *Azatlek* [Freedom] of light dance music which he says blends "a little East, a little Europe"; the 2006 album *Uzat*

Yol [Long Ago Folk]; the 2007 album *Oyle Ola* [That's how it goes]; and his 5th album, untitled at the time of our interview, which he claimed would be “music for everybody,” a “real synthesis of east and west, R&B, and *glamour*” that would show his listeners how many-sided his artistry is. “The project,” he said, “won’t have Tatar words, but an eastern coloring.” With this album, he said, he “wants to show that I am not just a representative of Crimean Tatar music” but the maker of music that “will get ‘respect’ from everyone” (interview, 4/24/08). In general, since *Deportacia*, Salimov told me, he has avoided incorporating Crimean Tatar folk motives or other sonic content that might be read as political or nationalist, explaining that “he got tired of folk music” (interview, 4/24/08). When I asked why, he explained that the target audience for his music since *Deportacia* – which includes three albums, and one forthcoming – reaches far beyond Simferopol and Crimea. Furthermore, he added, “every project should be commercially viable” and he feels he has “outgrown” the Crimean Tatar community: “I’m an creative man, I want to experiment, I don’t want to just stay with the tradition, it gets boring. I consider that a phase that I have passed.”

Simultaneously, however, he rejects the idea of making music to pander wholesale to the Turkish or Ukrainian markets, which he views as the most potentially profitable. “Why drive Chinese teapots to China? I think we make something *here* that will be relevant *there*...it just has to be high quality and nuanced.” In seeking this balance of the local and global, Salimov demonstrates his commitment to utilizing local sounds and influences in moderation - enough to retain some measure of specificity – but not so much that this specificity will inhibit its wide circulation and popular reception. In addition to financial rewards that the Crimean market can not provide, Salimov told me that his other goal is universal “respect” – a term that he uttered in our interview as *respekt*. As a direct transliteration from English, clearly appropriated from the

vernacular of Black American hip-hop, *respekt* links back to the theme of “keeping it real” that justifies and authenticates the hip-hop artist’s mission; such a conception of *respekt* also demonstrates how his personal musical goals have been mediated by the argot and values of global hip-hop culture. Furthermore, his numerous references to geo-cultural identification as an alchemist of influences and ideas that bridge and blend the “East” and the “West,” hark back to ideas about Crimean Tatar indigenes as self-defining within the liminal spaces of “Europe” and the “East.”

In *Performing Democracy*, Donna Buchanan enumerates the myriad ways that citizens coded and conceptualized meanings of “Europe” in post-socialist Bulgaria. The first oppositional construct she lists is the binary that defines “Europe [a]s a geographic descriptive for a “Western” place interpreted as a site of intellectual growth, technological progress, and economic advancement that stands in opposition to a less knowledgeable, technologically and financially inferior “East” (2006: 45). In DJ Bebek’s conceptualization, the “East” also represents an authenticity of intention and a wellspring of tradition that, despite his resistance to being boxed in as a Crimean Tatar artist, makes him proud to proclaim that he is “an Eastern man.” Yet it is his unique reach as “an Eastern man” with ambitions towards the “West” vis-à-vis the language of hip-hop that, he believes, will earn him “respect” with a broad audience. Within the vernacular of hip-hop, the quintessential crossover music that connects the local to the global through a politics of local voices, DJ Bebek justifies his craft and his strategically exotic message.¹⁶⁹ Through the endless referentiality of digital sampling and the technology of

¹⁶⁹ I am deeply indebted to my friend and colleague David Novak for helping me to think through the influence of hip-hop culture on a global scale. His work on Japanese DJ culture has also been influential in shaping my understanding of how the particularities of this Crimean Tatar example intersect with the particularities of artists in cultures as distinct from Crimea as Japan.

mixing, DJ Bebek represents a powerful, if controversial, local expression of the young Crimean Tatar voice, aspiring towards bigger markets through hybrid expressions of the local and global.

When I asked Salimov, at the end of our interview, if he admired any of the younger generation of musicians that emerged since the *Deportacia* album debuted, he told me that there “is no one I can learn from.” After more thought, he added, “except for Enver Izmailov – I think he is our true genius.” And then, laughingly, he added, “Maybe this is the one thing that all Crimean Tatars can agree on!” Indeed, in numerous interviews where I posed this same question (*whom do you admire?*) the almost universally spoken name was Enver Izmailov, who is also the most visible Crimean Tatar musician internationally. When I asked Enver Izmailov about his prospects for the future, he named his daughter, Leniye – an ambitious young singer and beneficiary of her father’s skills and reputation – as an exciting prospect. Together, the father-and-daughter team have collaborated on several recent projects that similarly seek to balance local sounds with global appeal.

“I am a World Musician”: Enver Izmailov and his daughter Leniye

In short, you are about to hear very interesting, spectacular and unique music which can be described as "borderless" or "global" (cp. "global music", "World Beat" etc.). Don't forget that this is Asian music which is so trendy today. And things Eastern, as the Russian proverb says, are a nuanced matter...

- Ukrainian jazz radio DJ Alexey Kogan, liner notes to the 1999 album *Minaret*

Enver Izmailov has made his name through his highly sophisticated and unusual system of two-handed “tapping” on the electric guitar. Naturally left-handed, Izmailov plays leads with his left hand and accompanying parts with his right hand – unlike Stanley Jordan (b. 1959), the Chicago-born guitarist to whom Izmailov is most often compared. Izmailov performs on a custom triple-

necked guitar fashioned for him by Kyivan master luthiers, also distinguishing his technique from the “Chapman stick” style of tapping and fretting. To many, he is considered an inventor of a whole new style of playing, as this published exchange reveals:

Q: But what do you mean by inventing a technique – is it like inventing radio or bicycle?

Izmailov: The invention always goes through blood, sweat and tears. This is the case with my technique. A man may keep trying to approach such invention for decades, whereas the problem may be solved in five minutes time (Potekhina 2000).

In another interview, Izmailov acknowledged that “God suggested the idea of my tapping style, which I developed



Enver Izmailov's album cover for "Around the Black Sea"

through a lot of hard work” (Prasad 2010). As a teenager, Izmailov got his hands on an electric guitar and “it took me three days to figure it out - I had no idea! I finally learned how to make a sound not by strumming but by what we later called ‘tapping’ - that’s how it started” (interview 11/11/2008).¹⁷⁰ (Soon, he learned more conventional methods of playing from friends who taught him the chords to Deep Purple, Santana, and Beatles songs.) It was not until 1984, when a Moscow music critic compared Izmailov’s performance style to Stanley Jordan, that he heard of other musicians who used similar techniques.

In addition to his impressive guitar playing, Izmailov is also known as an accomplished Mongolian-style throat-singer. (He speculates that this skill may be a “genetic” inheritance from his mother’s *Nogai* roots, which links back to the territorial conquests of the Golden Horde in the

¹⁷⁰ Techniques similar to tapping have existed for centuries on instruments besides the electric guitar. Notably, the technique of *şelpe* used in Turkish folk music played on the *saz* (*bağlama*) or *cura* predates the two-handed virtuosity of Izmailov. Growing up in Uzbekistan, it is possible that such Turkic folk techniques may have inspired his early experiments with producing sound on the electric guitar, though I have not been able to confirm this with him personally (Stokes 2010: 110).

13th century.)¹⁷¹ Izmailov also incorporates a rapid scatting technique that draws on the syllables of Turkic *usul* (rhythms) and the *solkattu/bols* traditions of Indian *tala*, merging them in an improvisatory fashion in performances and recordings. (In live settings, his rapid-fire delivery of these vocables reminds of the widely circulated recordings and footage of Alla Rakha, the tabla player associated with Ravi Shankar.)¹⁷² Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Izmailov's dynamic live performances have made him a popular fixture at many European jazz festivals. However, despite frequent travels to places like France, Germany, Finland, and Switzerland, his connection to his homeland - and the role that it plays in his music - is very strong, as he told one interviewer in 1998:

True, I like doing concerts, but a week after another tour begins my thoughts are already in my village, with my family. I love audiences, but my music, if it can be called mine after all, is spiritually remote from big cities, though civilisation is present in it to a certain extent. At least, the electric guitar, a tribute to my rock youth, is evidence of that. In all other senses I can feel at home only in my home country, in my village in the Crimea, where I merge with nature, and where the morning breeze from the Black Sea and the smell of watermelons and lush southern vegetation stir deep emotions inside me, and I hurry to express them in sound (Alperin 1998).

Indeed, many critics and fans have waxed poetic about the sounds that Izmailov's guitar evokes, drawing comparisons to indigenous lutes such as the Turkic *baglama*, the Uzbek *dutar* or the Arabic *oud*, and generally celebrating the romantic, "Oriental" qualities of Izmailov's artistry.

Izmailov himself embraces such exotic characterizations of his music, positioning himself as an alchemist of the musical conventions of the East and West, a quintessential "aesthetic cosmopolitan" (Regev 2007). In the liner notes to his 1998 album *Eastern Legend*, Misha Alperin celebrated Izmailov's vision of "world music," extolling its sinuous, exotic "eclecticism":

¹⁷¹ For more on the link between modern Crimean Tatar ethnicity and Mongol heritage, refer to chapter two. Izmailov's father did not have *nogai* roots - he was from the southern coast, in Sudak.

¹⁷² I would like to thank Niko Higgins and David Novak for their insights on the particularities of *solkattu/bols* styles of vocalizing rhythms.

Enver Izmailov's is a world of sound meditation. In India it would be called dynamic meditation. His music is meditative and devoid of internal conflicts, which makes it so natural and close to nature. To put it in a nutshell, folk music is part of mother nature itself. It has always been and it will always be. I'm pretty certain about that. Enver Izmailov's music is indisputably rooted in the oriental instrumental tradition. Sometimes it sounds very much like passionate silence, often explosive in the oriental sense of the word. Its authenticity does not impede the musician's desire to experiment, although the opportunities classical tonal music playing offers are rather limited. Enver Izmailov is a 20th century person, and his compositions owe a great deal to modern improvisational chamber music, to jazz, if you wish. He is authentic whenever he wants to be so, but in other cases he easily goes beyond the bounds of what is already well known to him to create his own oriental eclecticism a professional ear will hardly notice (Alperin 1998).

In a 2010 interview with *Guitar Player* magazine, Izmailov himself explained the concept behind his newest album, *River of Time* using a culinary metaphor:

It represents my desire to showcase the capabilities of the guitar as something that can reflect the music of different nations. My interest in uniting Eastern, Asian, and Western sounds is inspired by my love for the cuisines of these regions. The album focuses on modern jazz-rock arrangements featuring straight electric guitar, as well as guitar with a variety of effects (Prasad 2010).

To Izmailov, the fusion of “different national” sounds is analogous to the fusions that occur in an experimental international kitchen, where spices and textures mesh and mingle in unusual combinations. He told me that his music “always has at least a hint of Crimean Tatar flavor,” because “my politics is music – it tells the world that Crimean Tatars are very interesting, and worth listening to” (interview, 11/11/2008).

Such adeptness at merging “hints of Crimean Tatar flavor” – drawing upon the “trendiness” of the East – with the techniques of jazz improvisation and the sheen of the “world music” marketing apparatus has garnered Izmailov prestigious awards – notably, the 1995 Grand Prix at the European Guitarists Competition held in Lausanne, Switzerland.¹⁷³ The French press

¹⁷³ In the “Black Sea Trio,” Izmailov collaborated with Bulgarian saxophonist Anatoly Vapirov and Hungarian percussionist Kornel Horvath, to create music that the German press described as a “tighter, modern folklore. The exuberant cheering Bulgarian wedding music, the plaintive blues of the wild east, rural pastoral songs, the sound of the electric guitar and furious rhythms blended into a unique, intoxicating fusion of music beyond all clichés”

have dubbed his style “imaginary folklore,” in Germany and Finland he has been hailed him as a “modern jazz genius” (Potekhina 2000). Izmailov personally prefers the label of “world music” to describe his music, as he told me in his unpretentious way when I met with him on a sunny late autumn day in Simferopol: “People call me a jazz musician, but I think in world music, there are no labels. If there is joy, it is good. I am a world musician...I have friends in many cultures. While I am proud to be Crimean Tatar, I don’t want to be simply branded by my ethnicity. My music is also international – confining yourself can be sad! If Tatars are listening, you want to include them. If others are listening, you want to include them too” (interview 11/11/2008).

Such a desire for inclusivity seems a part of Enver Izmailov’s gregarious nature, as I observed over lunch at a café near his house, in the former squatter’s neighborhood [*mikroreyon*] known as *Aq Mechet*.¹⁷⁴ Over piping hot bowls of *lağman* - Uzbek-style lamb stew with fresh doughy noodles and copious cumin – Izmailov shared the broad strokes of his biography in a light-hearted, bullet point style: born in 1955 in the Ferghana Valley; studied classical bassoon in secondary school; developed a revolutionary guitar “tapping” technique as a teenager; practiced eight to ten hours a day; after military service in the mid-70s, played at weddings where he learned Uzbek and Crimean Tatar folklore¹⁷⁵ and began to write original [*avtorski*] songs; in the 1980s, established himself as a virtuoso in the Soviet *estrada* circuit, playing with the Ferghana-

(Krieger). Since successfully breaking into the international limelight, he has also shared the stage with the vocalist Bobby McFerrin, and guitar luminaries such as John McLaughlin, Mike Stern, John Scofield, and Stanley Jordan.

¹⁷⁴ This was one of the first areas where Crimean Tatar repatriates squatted upon returning to Crimea in the late 1980s and being blocked from employment and the ability to purchase homes. Today, most homes in this neighborhood have been built up, and are overwhelmingly inhabited by Crimean Tatars. Like the other *mikroreyons* where Crimean Tatar repatriates settled, *Aq Mechet* is on the outskirts of Simferopol, in areas that were communal farm properties during the Soviet era. Unlike the other large *mikroreyon-s* (*Marino*, *Kam'enka*), *Aq Mechet* is a Tatar term meaning “white mosque” - this was the old Turkic name for the city before it was renamed to Simferopol (from the Greek, meaning “city of utility”) by Catherine the Great.

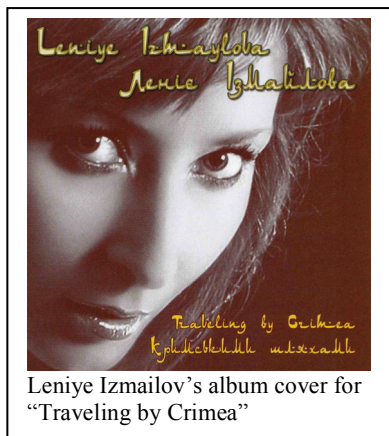
¹⁷⁵ During our interview, Izmailov told me that as a teenager, his interests lay with Anglo-American popular music. “Everyone,” he says, “looks to America but fails to see what’s under their feet.” When he finally learned traditional Crimean Tatar and Uzbek folklore by playing it at weddings (adding that he learned it aurally - “notes are the enemy to a musician”), it transformed his “outlook on the music I wanted to make” (interview 11/11/2008)

based ensemble *Sato*; returned to Crimea in 1989 and began his solo career; now divides his time between an apartment in Kyiv, his family home in the outskirts of Simferopol, and various touring vehicles in Europe. Throughout our interview, Izmailov was refreshingly reluctant to romanticize his success or his skill, pragmatically asserting that “anyone can accomplish what I have done – you just have to be willing to always be alone, to practice for ten hours a day!”

The same passion and focus that impelled him, as a teenager, to such demanding regimes of practice - endures today as a genuine and infectious enthusiasm for his musical projects. Following our lunch, Izmailov asked me if I wanted to hear some of the latest project he was working, a collaboration with his daughter, Leniye Izmailova. I was very interested. He suggested we listen in his car, so that he could “perform the car stereo test” to check if his high-quality studio recording held up on less sophisticated speakers. We sat in his large black SUV, and he played the first track, a cover of the Beatles song “Michelle,” sung by his daughter. As we listened to the arrangement – with its nonchalant bossa-nova style guitar part, swinging jazz kit, warm synthesizer pads, dreamy chimes, Leniye’s reedy and melismatic soprano, gospel-style background vocals – Izmailov drummed along on the steering wheel of his car, pointing out special moments in the arrangement by silently gesturing towards the stereo. After the song, he offered to play some others, and we listened intently to the Izmailov re-imaginings of the Beatles classics “And I Love Her” and “Come Together.” Afterwards, I asked him, *Where did the idea for this Beatles project start?* He answered that, when Leniye decided to try to make a career in music, he warned her that “it’s a hard road.” But he desires to “create an artistic revolution in Ukraine” by supporting talent in the younger generation, and he believed that Leniye possessed the ambition and skill to succeed. They began to perform together, and he noticed that “classic rock” music was constantly being requested, so “we had an idea to make a program with a more

commercial orientation.” They found an investor, and in late February 2009, presented the Beatles project as a live tribute at the hall of the Music College [*Muzychna Uchylshche*] in Simferopol. Later, they toured in Western Europe with the project.

I met with Leniye Izmailova and her manager, Khalil Khalilov, on May 13, 2009, at Café Divan, a fashionable new Crimean Tatar establishment on Gorky Street, across from the circus in



the heart of Simferopol. We ordered coffees, and they ordered a decadent sample of honey-drenched Crimean Tatar sweets for our table, insisting that I try them all despite Leniye's abstention ("if I started, I would eat the whole plate"). Born in 1981, she told me of how her early musical sensibilities were shaped by traditional songs learned from her grandmother, and her father's experiments in "folk jazz – he was always playing, always searching." With her father's guidance, Leniye developed an improvisatory scatting technique similar to her father's - one that references Turkic and Indian rhythmic vocables. "I worked hard on developing those rhythms using universal intonations... In general, my vocal technique is not Crimean Tatar – it's all about feeling rhythm differently, melismas, scatting, improvisation" (interview 5/13/2009). The other major influence on her artistry, she said, are "global stars." She named Bobby McFerrin, Ella Fitzgerald, Natalie Cole, and Rachelle Ferrell (the accomplished U.S. pianist and jazz singer) as her heroes, along with her childhood idol, Mariah Carey:

I heard Mariah Carey - and I understood that I want to sing... I was used to the fact that my father was virtuosic, and I searched for virtuosity in people - for me, she [Mariah Carey] was also virtuosic. So I started from there - from what she did, and from our folklore, from our harmonies. Our generation likes what they can listen to on the radio. So our task is to blend our music with what you can hear on the radio... Of course, at first, it didn't really work that well, but always, I was searching for a way in. And I still am searching today, though now I'm making music that is closer to what I am seeking (interview 5/13/2009).

In the Beatles project, Leniye's affinity for Mariah Carey's vocal stylings is audible, as she flexes her melismatic muscles, adding elaborate runs and trills to the iconic performances of the Beatles' originals.

Come Together (Right Now): Polysemic Eclecticism

The Izmailov's version of *Come Together* – the opening track on the Beatles' last album, *Abbey Road* – showcases Leniye's vocal acrobatics as well as Enver Izmailov's inventiveness as guitarist and arranger (Everett 1999). Their version, which is brisker in tempo than the original, does not open with the famous McCartney bass riff (accompanied by Lennon's cryptic whisper - *shoot me*); their recording begins with the sound of marching feet, sonically far away and growing closer, louder. This gives way to an opening guitar riff, elaborated by Enver as a series of complex, interlocking, funk-inspired cycles that reference the architecture of the original bass line. Fifteen seconds in, a full rhythm section enters, along with a whispered "*shhh*" sound on every downbeat. After a few cycles of this, Leniye's voice enters, delivering the first verse and break of the song in heavily accented English:

Here come old flattop
 He come groovin' up slowly
 He got joo-joo eyeball
 He one holy roller
 He got hair down to his knees
 Got to be a joker
 He just do what he please

At "*He just do what he please*" the arrangement thins out to one sustained note (much like the Beatles original) and then the full groove - drum kit, interlocking guitar parts, and bass - re-enters emphatically. The next verse and break follow the same pattern, with a prominent guitar solo (filtered through what may be an Ebow or a MIDI effect) taking over the interlocking guitar

parts after the second verse. To this point in the song, Leniye's vocal performance has been focused on a clear (if accented) delivery of the lyrics. On the third verse, however, she adds a lower harmony through to the line "*he got feet down below his knees*" and then breaks into a pop diva-style melisma, adding growl to the beginning of the next line (*hold you in his armchair*). On the end of that couplet (*you can feel his disease*) the harmony re-enters high above the melody line, recalling the stratospheric "whistle register" range of Leniye's idol, Mariah Carey. Immediately after she ends the line, a child's voice (most likely her son) exclaims "Come Together!" [кам тугезеп!]. For the remaining forty seconds of the song, the funk guitar, bass and drums continue while Leniye repeats the line "Come Together" between rapid melismatic passages, and the child's voice periodically exclaims "Come Together!" In the last fifteen seconds, the sound of marching boots enters and fades into the distance.

When we discussed the Beatles project, Leniye was open about the commercial appeal of covering classic rock songs: "Crimean Tatar musicians work mostly on enthusiasm. If there are only 150-200,000 people in the whole community, you can't realistically expect to build a career, so you have to branch out.... And still today, our people are so occupied with trying to survive that culture is always secondary, so you have to look for other places where it's...more primary." With the Beatles Project, the Izmailov father-daughter team sought universal appeal through covers of world famous rock hits, and courted the European jazz market with a Western European tour. I asked about the reception of their Beatles project in Western Europe, and Leniye expressed her surprise that "even though we did not incorporate any Eastern elements in this project, people who listen to it say they get a whiff of the East." She shook her head incredulously – "but that's what people say!"

I asked Leniye if she ever felt confined by the expectations of such European audiences, who perhaps desired and searched for a "whiff of the East" in her performances because of her

Crimean Tatar roots or her father's reputation as a "world musician." After a moment of pause, she responded: "No, I'm not bothered by it - we *are* Eastern! Our rhythms have fives, sevens, nines, elevens...balkan rhythms. And our colors are different." Despite the intention to create a music that would appeal universally, Leniye acknowledged that listeners may want to deduce a "whiff of the East" in her Beatles project. And, while it may appear paradoxical, she embraces this characterization of her music as factual and apparent – "we *are* Eastern" – even though it does not match her stated intent in the Beatles Project. Perhaps this kind of geo-stereotyping is simply the lot of the "world musician," but I believe that her ambivalence in this regard is also a manifestation of the strategic exoticism that marks so many contemporary Crimean Tatar fusion projects. In *The Postcolonial Exotic*, Huggan observed that,

Exoticism, after all, remain an at best unstable system of containment: its assimilation of the other to the same can never be definitive or exhaustive, since the 'collision between ego's culture and alien cultures' (Mason 1996: 147) is continually refashioned, and the effects that collision produces may unsettle as much as reassure, dislodge authority as much as reconfirm it (2001: 32).

By accepting her status as inextricably entangled in a conceptual "East," Leniye Izmailova reflects back her internalized and flexible attitude for its *potential* rather than for its limitations. In other words, if people want to hear the "East" in her Beatles project, if that adds intrigue to the work, then let them imagine the "East."

Towards the end of our conversation, Leniye expressed her artistic credo through a telling metaphor that emphasizes such flexibility in intention and effect:

I don't want to sing in only one direction, so I listen to jazz-rock, folk-rock, folk-jazz, pop-folk - all of these genres are so instructive....each has its own nugget [изюминка]. And each nugget, god bless it, is beautiful. And so now I'm using all of this in my own creativity, with great thanks to my father (interview 5/13/09).¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁶ Later in our conversation, I asked Leniye if she imagined returning to folk sources in future projects. She told me that she had not decided about what her next project would be, but that, if she does work with folk sources, her goal is for the "popularization of Crimean Tatar song rather than the preservation of it" (interview 5/13/2009).

In this egalitarian vision of musical influence, Leniye draws on the Russian-language metaphor of the *izyuminka*, roughly rendered as the nugget, zest, salt, crux or spark of the essential property of musical style (literally, *izyum* means “raisin” – *izyuminka* is a diminutive form). I asked Leniye to clarify her notion of the *izyuminka*. First, she explained, that it’s “the property only we have...in our music.” She elaborated by calling attention to the instrumental piece playing over the cafe speaker system – a *qaytarma*, the iconic dance music of the Crimean Tatars. Pointing towards the corner speaker, she said,

It’s clearly eastern, objectively. There are moments that are purely Crimean Tatar - in the mode, meter, ornaments...It’s the same for us as anyone, every music has its own *izyuminka*. For Crimean Tatars, we just recently started developing away from our “folk” music - what our elders, our parents still like... But this isn’t totally correct. In Europe, you can’t break through with just straightforward “folk music” - you have to add in other *izyuminky*, other colors, something of your own. That’s when it becomes interesting in Europe. Or even more interesting.

As an expression of the germinal spark of a musical style, the idea that a musical *izyuminka* can be isolated, chosen, and juxtaposed against other *izyuminky* creates an interesting paradigm for conceptions of musical hybridity - not unlike her father’s alimentary metaphor to describe how different national soundscapes can be fused as if they were spices. In Leniye’s assessment, the European market demands the experimental cross-pollination of *izyuminky*; traditional music is not enough to “break through.” In Simferopol, this position is considered radical by segments of the Crimean Tatar community devoted towards revitalizing and preserving traditional music; in this context, the cross-over Beatles Project was received variably by Crimean Tatars themselves. On more than one occasion, I had conversations with people who attended the Simferopol concert of Beatles songs and complained that “there was nothing of ours in it” (interview, anon. 5/17/2009).

Ultimately, the Izmailov's Beatles Project exposes the tension inherent in projects of hybridity, projects that, by nature, occupy a liminal space that teeters between local and global conceptions of imagined self and imagined other. In *Globalization and Culture*, Tomlinson argued that globalized "hybridity" should be seen as a "subsidiary concept to deterritorialization" (Tomlinson 1999: 147) since, through reference to global models, individuals engaged in hybrid projects inevitably sever some ties to their locality, either by re-imagining staid styles, conventions, performance practices, or sound materials. To some, such disconnect from locality may be regarded as a betrayal; to others, it is experienced as forward-looking, innovative, or savvy. Yet, just like the multi-directional flows of globalized influence, Tomlinson stresses that "deterritorialization is not a linear, one-way process, but one characterized by the same dialectical push-and-pull as globalization itself" (1999: 148). In the Izmailov's Beatles Project, which covers some of the most iconic rock songs of the 20th century popular music catalogue, the "dialectical push-and-pull of globalization" reveals itself through the project's reception – varnished by "Eastern-ness" despite aiming for "Western-ness" in the reception of Western European audiences, or alternately, devoid of local essence for many Crimean Tatars in Simferopol – and finally filtered through the musician's own elastic position vis-a-vis such unanticipated effects.

On Aspiration

As the examples in this chapter show, music can be a powerful medium to articulate local difference; it can also be the site at which aspirational global discourses are voiced. Through the polysemic nature of musical sound, the limitlessness of musical hybridity, the plasticity of interpretation (as musical performances are perceived by listeners), and the malleable (at times

strategically so) personae and stylistic choices of musicians – music can mean multiply: it can powerfully articulate local difference *while* simultaneously aspiring beyond locality. Since their return to Crimea, popular musicians in Simferopol have explored the boundaries of hybrid popular music experiments that are imprinted as “Crimean Tatar” while also referencing external influence and global discourses of popular music. Inevitably, these musicians must confront the fact that their identities will be colored by the hierarchies of “otherness” that their position creates: they are rooted as a Muslim, Turkic-language minority population in Russian-dominated Crimea, an autonomous region of Ukraine, which is itself a quintessential Eastern European borderland.

Situated at the narrowest link on this chain of nested orientalisms, the Crimean Tatar repatriates of Crimea have adopted strategies to speak beyond the limits of their undeniable marginality. As demonstrated through the stories of *Sel'sebil*, Radio Meydan, DJ Bebek, and the Izmailovs, a common strategy in contemporary popular music is the deployment of “strategic exoticism” that, to paraphrase Huggan, exposes the grounds of its own material production by unabashedly soliciting commercial attention (Huggan 2001: 77). To see past such solicitation of commercial attention as more than an avaricious exercise in opportunism reveals a rich site at which contemporary discourses of Crimean Tatar-ness are negotiated vis-a-vis popular music – the site where decisions of style, performance, convention, and sound material are refined by financial considerations or personal ambitions. In Crimea, the idea of the “East” that permeates discourse about the present and future of Crimean Tatar hybrid musics provides numerous possibilities for tactics of strategic exoticism. To many, the inescapability of this conceptual “East” is not a pernicious stereotype so much as one that belies a certain truth of their complex position. After all, “stereotype,” as Cantwell provocatively argued, “is always...true, even

perfectly true, since it is essentially self-referential – as long as we are willing actively to experience, or are compelled to experience, one species of reality as if it were another” (Cantwell 1993: 168). In order to be true, these “species of reality” must be inherently relational, chaotically orbiting around conceptual designations such as the “East” or the “West” that are themselves unstable, contingent, polysemic nodes. It is in this storm of semiotic instability that contemporary Crimean Tatar musicians fuse, invent, and re-imagine their aspirational popular music.

CONCLUSION

Alternate Subalterities, Musical Modernities

May God bless you with water, with dew, with the bright sky and the shining sun, from all good people and from me. May everything stir good thoughts in you, free from the poison of chemicals, nitrates, or phosphates, and clean of herbicides or pesticides, or the contamination of radiation, the mutation of viruses.

Live your life fully, drink clean water, and never anger at others – because it will harm your appearance. Be well; don't forget about old friends.

I wish you luck and health for many years, for blessed years, to return in a year and celebrate these holidays once again, to look forward to future brighter days with grace, with joy, with bliss.

- Hutsul toast, recorded in Rakhiv, Ukraine, July 2002

If I have dwelled so long on the hypothesis of this primitive condition, it is because, having ancient errors and inveterate prejudices to eliminate, I thought I ought to dig down to the roots, and provide a picture of the true state of nature, to show to what extent inequality, even in its natural form, is far from having in that state as much reality and influence as our writers claim.

- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *A Discourse on Inequality* (1775)

In late May of 2011, I flew to Ukraine with ten large boxes of framed photographs and a duffel bag full of old Soviet telephones retrofitted with digital audio chips, programmed to play fifty-second clips from my fieldwork in Crimea. I was heading to Kyiv to open a museum exhibit with my friend and photographer Alison Cartwright. In May of 2008, Alison who had joined me in Crimea and we traveled the peninsula as a team, documenting the lives of Crimean Tatar repatriates in various stages of rebuilding. A year after our exhibit, titled “No Other Home: The Crimean Tatar Repatriates,” opened in New York City’s Ukrainian Museum, we were flying to Kyiv to show it at the Honchar Museum of Folk Art and Ethnography.

As I boarded my Aerosvit Ukrainian Airlines flight at JFK airport, I browsed the various newspapers that the airline provided to its passengers. The headline of a magazine titled

Ukrainian Week screamed at me: “All You Know About Ukraine Is Wrong.” The subtitle was



vaguely threatening: “Viewing Ukraine as ‘part of the Russian and Soviet world’ weakens Europe and opens the way to extreme developments in the East of the Continent.” The cover was a digitally altered image of a toothy, smiling Viktor Yanukovich, the current president of Ukraine, wearing an embroidered shirt, a giant fur hat, an oversized Orthodox cross, with a balalaika slung over his shoulder – costumed, in other words, as a caricature of an Eastern Slavic male.

The entirety of the issue was devoted towards debunking predominant stereotypes of Ukraine. The feature article, titled “Not Russia,” purported to present the “real history” of Ukraine, and drew on a controversial interpretation of history to conclude that the dominant narrative that aligns Ukraine with a “common millennium history with Russia” is entirely a falsification, a bona fide modern “myth.”¹⁷⁷ On arriving in Kyiv, I searched for the Ukrainian-language version of the same issue (in the magazine *Tyzhden*), and finally tracked it down at a book fair in the hip and newly restored arsenal building just outside of the city center. In Ukrainian, the image of Yanukovich is the same, but the headline reads “Ukraine in the Eyes of the West” [Україна Очима Заходу].

The articles in the Ukrainian-language issue address local politics and systemic corruption

¹⁷⁷ Of course, some of the points raised in the article are valid, if controversial. In general, the interpretation of historical events in this article veered heavily towards a separatist view of Ukrainian and Russian relations, more so than any historical interpretation that I have read other than relatively extreme Western Ukrainian nationalist accounts. Another article in the English-language issue shares “7 Facts About Kolomyia,” the picturesque Western Ukrainian town that serves as the “gateway to the Carpathians” and is considered, by some, to be the capital of Hutsulshchyna. The article praises the anti-Russian attitudes of the townspeople (noting that “Kolomyia has the most dissidents per capita – not only in Ukraine – but in the entire former Soviet Union”) and describes how the food and culture are distinctly Ukrainian, and even more so, Hutsul. The article mentions the local comedy duo known as the “Wild Hutsuls,” who “perform at the concert hall for railway workers” (2011: 46), and the fact that Kolomyia was the “center of weaving,” specializing in Hutsul styles.

more than sweeping historical analysis. The featured article ("Not Russia") appears in both versions, though with slightly different subtitles: in the English version, the subtitle reads "The twisted vision of Ukraine can turn out fatal to European security"; in Ukrainian, the editors add the observation that "The West does not understand what Ukraine is."

The magazine's agenda to clear up some of the confusion about "what Ukraine is" – and especially to make "the West" (or "Europe") realize that it is "not Russia" – touches on the very nerve that radiates throughout this dissertation. Such anxiety over Ukraine's position vis-à-vis Europe and the West has been an anxiety for a millenium, as the authors of the "Not Russia" article dutifully trace. Today, it remains a hot-button anxiety, even as Ukraine celebrates its twentieth year of independence from the Soviet Union. Despite the global financial crisis that has destabilized the supremacy of Western economies in the last few years, "Europe" retains an aspirational quality for most Ukrainian citizens, for the civil, legal, and cultural rights that "European" societies are believed to possess.

For groups on the margins of Ukrainian society, such as the orientalized Crimean Tatars or the romanticized Hutsuls, the anxiety over "what Ukraine is" resonates locally as an anxiety over what "Hutsuls are" or what "Crimean Tatars are" politically, socially, historically, culturally. While politically, both groups officially emphasize a connection to "European-ness," stressing the historical events that build this case while diminishing the facts that would weaken it, my examination of local musical cultures maps out a soundscape that is much more ambiguous, much thornier. It could be European, perhaps, but it is also asymmetrical and raw, also unique and heterophonous, at once ruefully aware and definantly proud of its musical *wildness*.

The four preceding chapters of this musical ethnography have presented case studies that circle around an imagined Manichean construct, the dialectic of civilization and wildness. This

simplistic binary has been challenged for a long time, as evidenced by the fact that Jean-Jacques Rousseau himself was attempting to deracinate the conventional wisdom of his time in his seminal 1775 treatise *A Discourse on Inequality*, by challenging the naïve notion of “wildness” as a state of moral purity and justice. Rousseau argued that inequality and difference are largely born through the social — rather than the imagined innate or natural — dimensions of life:

It follows from this exposition that inequality, being almost non-existent in the state of nature, derives its force and its growth from the development of our faculties and the progress of the human mind, and finally becomes fixed and legitimate through the institutions of property and laws (Rousseau 1775/1984: 137).

Earlier in his exposition about the idealized “man in the state of nature,” Rousseau asserts that, while it is the trappings of *civilization* that breed inequality, “civilized man” cannot and, moreover, *should not* retreat to a state of nature. It would be futile, for example, to attempt to annul Rousseau’s own sense of obligation to his “civilized” society. Furthermore, Ellingson’s (2001) close reading of Rousseau’s oeuvre reveals that Rousseau articulates the idea of “true savagery” as a *hypothetical* construct to balance against the *idea* of “civilization” – since “the savage nations known to us” had already evolved past a true state of nature at the time of Rousseau’s writing (2001: 84). By 1775, there is no such thing as authentic *wildness*, and the ideal of *civilization* has already been submitted to intense ontological scrutiny.

Among the many invaluable insights that Ellingson provides in *The Myth of the Noble Savage*, he predicts that his work on debunking the myth of the Noble Savage would result in “a rush of new sightings of Noble Savage manifestations, and one of its most useful results would be an enhanced critical attention to the meaning of constructing and projecting a label such as ‘the Noble Savage’ back into its own prehistory” (375). I hope that this work, by subjecting both poles of the civilization/savagery binary to intense ontological scrutiny, has done some work towards destabilizing these poles as axiomatic. In the introductory chapter, I developed the

argument that Hutsuls and Crimean Tatars embody distinct clichés of *wildness* — Hutsuls as a Herderian ideal of an internal ethnic “folk,” Crimean Tatars as the menacing and encroaching “oriental” exotic. Through the four preceding chapters, I demonstrated how individuals in these communities, living in the contemporary era, make sense of such ingrained clichés vis-à-vis music. Through their expressive cultures and their political agendas, both groups confront these deeply entrenched ethno-stereotypes with a variety of strategies that demonstrate how co-existing indigenities manifest in the modern nation-state. They are *alternate subalterns*, exemplifying one pair of co-present dualities within the context of the Ukrainian nation. And yet, by the de facto nature of their mutually exclusive experiences as subalterns, these two *alternate subalterns*, the Hutsuls and the Crimean Tatars, make way to imagine the numerous other co-existing subaltern groups that populate other margins of the modern Ukrainian nation.¹⁷⁸

Attention to the specific economy of “wildness” in a liminal nation-state such as Ukraine forces us to expand towards a global frame for the relational nature of “otherness”— the “nesting orientalisms” that pervade this work. Historically, Ukraine was positioned as a battleground between “Western” and “Eastern” religions and empires, so much so that Johann Gottfried Herder predicted that the “many little wild peoples” of Ukraine would one day spring forth to rescue corrupt, alienated Western Europe from its slumber (Herder 1953 : 77-79). As the “map of civilization” was drawn in Enlightenment Europe, Ukraine became part of “Eastern Europe” — what Larry Wolff calls “Europe but not Europe” (1994: 7). For centuries, linguistic and cultural difference between Ukraine and its Slavic neighbors — especially, during the Soviet era, its cousins Russia and Belarus — were papered over by dominant regimes in the name of pan-Slavic unity, a historical trope that remains an incendiary topic of political debate in

¹⁷⁸ Indeed, within Ukraine, examples of other *alternate subalterns* include (but is not limited to) ethnographic and ethnic groups such as the Lemkos, Boykos, Roma, Jews, and even just the village dwellers of Central and Eastern Ukraine.

contemporary Ukraine. Since the integration of Poland, Hungary and Slovakia into the European Union in 2004, Ukraine has formed part of the eastern borderland to the European Union. Internally, Ukrainians often speak about the future of their state as a choice between “Russia” and “Europe.” Both internally and externally, this choice is laden with explosive and entrenched valuations of place, affiliation, and self-identification, all set into relief against the intellectual construct of civilization/savagery.

In a 1995 essay titled “Does Ukraine Have a History?” the historian Mark Von Hagen predicted that Ukraine’s need for “a civic, patriotic history of its nation-state” would become a source of ferocious debate as Ukraine matured into its post-Soviet independence. Von Hagen forecast that, as post-socialist Ukrainian history and historiography developed, it would serve as “laboratory” in which “the nation-state’s conceptual hegemony” would be challenged (1995: 673).¹⁷⁹ Today, the debate over history continues to rage in Ukraine, especially as some scholars refute the very notion that Ukraine is a post-colonial, or decolonizing, society.

In *Post-colonialism and Ukrainian History* (2004), Stephen Velychenko’s polemic against post-colonialism’s vast influence in the western academy, he rails against the idea that “this flawed literary method [has become] a valid social theory.” Velychenko asks whether there is any basis for applying post-colonial theory to a place like Ukraine, with its imperial legacy that is so varied, nuanced and contested: “Ukrainians disagree among themselves over whether or not tsarist and/or Soviet Ukraine constituted a colony” (398). He argues that post-colonial theory reinforces the belief that “identities are biological and immutable; that liberation demands that these identities be reclaimed so as not to be lost – that they be reinforced rather than

¹⁷⁹ In contemporary Ukraine, such debates have not been restricted to the discipline of history; the various disciplines that claim folklore in their purview - ethnomusicology, philology, ethnography, and, to a smaller extent, the institutionally marginalized fields of anthropology or “*kulturolohia*” (culturology) - contest the common intellectual terrain they inhabit on grounds both methodological and ideological.

transcended” (392). But ultimately, this viewpoint is flawed, since “national identities are hybrid, multiple, and mutable” (393). National identities are also inherently relational, defined through geopolitical and ideological positions relative to other states, and also, to large degree, by internal imaginations of self, including the imaginations of internal otherness.

In *Ethnomimesis*, Robert Cantwell outlined the three steps that comprise the hardening of social stereotypes from “encounter” to “stereotype” and finally, “recognition” (1993: 5). This final stage of “recognition” resonates with Herzfeld’s idea of “cultural intimacy” — the “rueful self-recognition” of oneself reflected in (an often embarrassing) social stereotype (Herzfeld 1997: 42). As a localized form of “national cultural intimacy,” Cantwell’s conception of *ethnomimesis* also pays heed to the margins of groups, to the borders of cultural or national zones, and to local manifestations of selves recognizing themselves in stereotype. Local musical practices, loaded with the musical nuances that Charles Keil terms “participatory discrepancies” (the *out-of-timeness* and *out-of-tuneness* of a particular genre of player) and that often form the basis for stereotypes of “otherness” (Keil 1994b: 96), are rich sites through which to uncover the relationship of individuals to dominant, hegemonic ethno-stereotypes. While musical sound is ostensibly ambiguous, it is injected with meaning through social context and convention. In delving into the historical assumptions and social conventions that breed stereotypes of wildness (of both the pernicious and beneficial varieties), I have tried to show how these stereotypes function in the daily lives of individuals living in two borderlands of contemporary Ukraine.

Part one of this dissertation was comprised of two chapters that dug into the historical roots of stereotypes of wildness that Hutsuls and Crimean Tatars embody, and then analyzed these stereotypes through the practice of traditional music in both communities. Part two examined how Hutsuls and Crimean Tatars have managed “wildness” as a trope of popular music,

repurposing it (or, in the case of Hutsul representation by urban Ukrainians, having it *be* repurposed) as a creative testing ground for hybrid experiments that engage with notions of otherness. At the end of all this, *wildness* remains a slippery term, an “otherness” that means multiply but never independently — *wildness* is always contingent, emergent, and ambivalent.

Ethnographer’s Coda: The Ambivalence of Wildness Revisited

In mid-October 2009, I traveled to Verkhovyna and met for tea and conversation with Vasyl Zelenchuk from the village of Kyvorivnia.¹⁸⁰ Zelenchuk told me his story: he completed his undergraduate degree in philology at Ivan Franko University in L’viv in the early 1990s, but “fled back to the mountains” because city life felt confining to him. At home, he became the local expert on Shekeryk-Donykiv — the early 20th century “native Hutsul ethnographer” who perished in the Soviet gulag, and whose work was rediscovered in the 1990s and published in the late 2000s.¹⁸¹ As an undergraduate in L’viv, Zelenchuk studied demonology in the Hutsul belief system and was captivated by the figure of Shekeryk-Donykiv. He “knew in his heart” that the manuscript of *Dido Ivanchyk*, Shekeyk-Donykiv’s lost *magnum opus*, still existed. In the late 1990s, when the manuscript was excavated and rescued by Shekeryk-Donykiv’s daughter, Zelenchuk had the honor to make the first public announcement that the manuscript had been found. He guided the work’s restoration through its publication in 2007, even assembling a dictionary of Hutsul terms to accompany the publication of *Dido Ivanchyk*. Zelenchuk emphasized his personal commitment to speak as much as possible in Hutsul dialect (though he told me that he was speaking more “literary Ukrainian” with me, his speech was still flecked with occasional Hutsul words and his pronunciation was unmistakably Hutsul). We sat at a small

¹⁸⁰ When I returned in early November of 2010, he had just been elected mayor of Kryvorivnia, his native village.

¹⁸¹ Shekeryk-Donykiv’s life and work is written about at length in chapter one.

cafe table as I sipped a warming infusion of local mountains herbs that I had ordered before his arrival. An hour flew by before we realized that, in the excitement of our dialogue, he had not paused to order a hot beverage, despite the fact that he had come in soaked and chilled from the autumnal rainstorm.

Zelenchuk's excitement about his work on Shekeryk-Donykiv was palpable and infectious. Thrilled that I had come (all the way from America!) to hear what he had to say, he shared his wide-ranging knowledge of Shekeryk-Donykiv's life and works. We talked over key scenes in the recently published works of Shekeryk-Donykiv, and he offered interpretations of symbols and nuances that I had struggled to grasp. I posed numerous questions about the supernatural powers afforded to musicians in the novel, and Zelenchuk affirmed that those legendary musicians still have a reputation for possessing such powers among many villagers today. He admitted that he himself believes that some musicians may possess magical powers. Then, reflecting on his earlier statement, he told me, "I know our superstitious beliefs are 'irrational,' but some part of me still wants to and chooses to believe it" (interview 10/19/2009).

Zelenchuk's desire to believe in something that he labels as "irrational" *because* it is an "authentic Hutsul belief" is a double bind. He articulates this view of Hutsul cultural intimacy with nuanced awareness – fully sensitive to the fact that Hutsuls are defined (and often diminished) by the dominant stereotype of their superstitious, 'irrational,' *wild* beliefs. Yet, Zelenchuk, a college graduate with a degree from one of the most prestigious urban institutions in Ukraine, still "wants to and chooses to believe it." Zelenchuk recognizes himself in the stereotype of the superstitious Hutsul; but it is a proud, rather than a "rueful" self-recognition, as Herzfeld would have it. Instead of distancing himself as an individual from the ethno-stereotype of his people, he expresses ambivalence: *I know this is a stereotype of our people, I know this is*

considered 'irrational' and yet, I choose to invest in it. Yet, despite all this, when I asked him to evaluate some outsider representations of Hutsuls in contemporary urban Ukrainian popular music (such as Ruslana and Perkalaba), his critique was penetrating and protective of his home community, dismissing outsiders who try to capitalize on the perceived “wildness” of his people. In my interview notes, I scribbled the observation that had become a guiding ethnographic mantra of my fieldwork experience in Ukraine: *It is never simple on the ground.*

Eventually, our conversation came to a close and it was time to face the rain again. As we stood up from the cafe table, Zelenchuk told me that our meeting had so energized him that he was impatient to return home to Shekeryk-Donykiv and maybe write a few pages himself. After we had parted, as I braced against the downpour with a flimsy umbrella, I considered the value of dialogue in the ethnographic process, the back-and-forth of simple conversation, the force of exchange in molding the texts that ethnographers make as we form our questions and assemble them in patterns that attempt to make some sense of the world. And in this very real, very current desire to deepen our knowledge, I marveled that an almost lost, nearly destroyed, ethnographer's voice could still induce such momentum — contained as it may be, but kinetic nonetheless — in the world.

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