Kuban Cossack Performance and Identity Negotiation in the Russian-Ukrainian Borderlands

by

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DEDICATION

To Mom and Carlos

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ABSTRACT

My dissertation analyzes vocal performance practices and identity politics in the Kuban region of southwestern Russia. Rural Kuban music and language is characterized by a mixture of Russian and Ukrainian features. This frustrates post-Soviet nation-building agendas, which actively attempt to push Kuban culture into one national category or the other. I examine mechanisms by which Russian and Ukrainian agents claim Kuban culture, namely through academic discourse and state-funded professional ensembles. Distinctive elements of local self-identification are distorted or lost in the efforts to pigeon-hole the regional culture into a national belonging, however, contemporary local Kuban performances continue to function as sites where residents counteract these processes and carve out a nuanced regional identity – one that embraces hybridity and avoids strict national categorization. Through close readings of rehearsals, concerts and interviews with local performers, I reveal ways in which Kubanians resist Russian and Ukrainian essentialism through their speech and song. Rural performers deploy and discuss linguistic and musical hybridity in ways that play upon the opposition between Ukrainian-ness and Russian-ness. I apply theoretical frameworks from the fields of ethnomusicology and linguistic anthropology to interpret musical and linguistic practices as social actions in which residents construct and negotiate their identities. This dissertation also examines the role of the Kuban Cossack Choir, a prestigious, state-funded Russian national ensemble that is arguably the most influential agent in Russia's claims of Kuban culture. The image of Kuban Cossacks that the Choir presents in its performances and promotional materials is one of a Russian sub-culture, not a Ukrainian one. I identify ways in which the Choir strategically alters or erases elements of rural folk music practices in order to foster an institutional

identity that is aligned with prevailing Russian national(ist) political ideology. The Choir's dominant role in professional folk music culture affects contemporary regional identity construction in opposition to the local hybrid orientation.

INTRODUCTION

I first became interested in Kuban Cossack music and language when I visited Krasnodar, Russia in 2006. As an American undergraduate, I served as a guest speaker and conversation partner for courses on American English and culture at Kuban State University (*Kubanskij gosudarstvennyj universitet*). Part of the arrangement was that I would also sit in on Kuban regional history and folk music classes. During these classes, old women from a nearby *stanitsa*[1] called Pavlovskaja[2] came to perform folk songs and offer interviews. I remember being totally mesmerized by the sounds of their music and the unique qualities of their voices. (I also remember my Russian peers appearing bored and unimpressed.) While in Krasnodar, I was living with a professor in the Department of Russian Studies and Comparative Cultural Studies, Irina Viktorovna Shel'deshova. Irina Viktorovna was also hosting the Pavlovskaja performers in her home. After dinner in the evenings, the old women entertained us with more songs and stories. As an intermediate Russian language student at the time, I wondered why I did not understand the women from Pavlovskaja as well as I understood Irina Viktorovna or her family. Later I learned of the Kuban dialect and the regional language features that make it difficult for an unfamiliar standard Russian speaker to understand.

When I returned to the U.S. and began my graduate studies, I embarked upon an academic exploration into the regional culture and music of the Kuban. Questions quickly arose: Who exactly are Kuban Cossacks, both historically and in the contemporary moment? Why is there so much

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[1] A *stanitsa* (Ukr. *stanytsja*) is a Cossack settlement or village, literally a "garrison." Many town names in the rural Kuban region retain the old Cossack settlement names and are still referred to as *stanitsy* (pl.) (Ukr. *stanytsi*), even though the military nature implied by the word no longer applies.
[2] See map of the Kuban region in [Appendix A](#) for location of Pavlovskaja *stanitsa*.

controversy about Kuban Cossacks' national identity? Why do *stanitsa* performers sing and talk the way they do? Why are investigations of regional music and language so personal and heated? What is the Kuban Cossack Choir, and why is it so influential? The more I read, the more I realized that the answers to these questions are highly contested, both inside and outside of academic discourse. Ideas about the identity of Kuban Cossacks are dependent upon one's political views, particularly in the context of post-Soviet Russian-Ukrainian relations. Both Russian and Ukrainian nation-building projects identify Kuban Cossacks as their own nation's people and Kuban Cossack folk music as an emblem of their national character.

Part of what is so complicated about defining Kuban Cossack identity is that the more general distinction of "Cossack" is itself ambiguous. The term "Cossack" has contradictory definitions, expressed in the fact that it is often called an "ethno-social" category – not quite an ethnic category, nor one in which social practice is the dominant defining element; it is generally used to describe peoples inhabiting what is now southern Russia and Ukraine who formed independent military communities (called Hosts (Rus. *vojska*, Ukr. – *vijs'ka*)) that were eventually co-opted by the tsars to protect and expand the southern border of the Russian Empire. Historians of all political bents are unanimous that the Kuban Cossack Host formed when two separate Cossack communities, the Black Sea Cossacks (who were former Zaporizhian Cossacks in the territory of what is now Ukraine) and the Caucasus Line Cossacks (former Terek Cossacks who were from the Terek River region in what is now southern Russia) migrated to the region in the late eighteenth century by the decree of Catherine II. The Empress relocated the Cossack regiments to protect the new southern border of the Russian Empire after the Russo-Turkish War. The two different Cossack groups brought with them to the Kuban their particular language practices and oral traditions, and the region came to be known for its hybrid features. One nineteenth-century regional historian, Fyodor Shcherbina comments on the "two-fold character" of the region:

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There existed the conflict of two ethnographic origins – Great Russian and Little Russian; and the population itself, under the influence of this conflict, received a hybrid, dual tinge: there developed something in the middle between the Great Russians and the Little Russians – language, everyday circumstances, several customs, and so on carry this kind of two-fold character[3] ([1888] 2007, 128).

In the second half of the nineteenth century, there emerged a new identity of Kuban Cossacks in place of what were formerly the two separate Cossack groups. The Kuban Cossack identity from its inception has reflected the intermingling of Zaporizhian and Terek cultures: speech forms, songs, and other cultural markers continue to exhibit (what are now considered to be) Ukrainian, Russian and uniquely regional features. Many qualities of Kuban culture continue to reflect its hybrid, borderland beginnings – it has long been a region of mixed heritages, a region on the periphery where the rules and standardization of the "center" do not apply.

While all agree on the basic details of the formation of the Kuban Cossack Host, the implications and particulars of its formation – as well as the legacy of these historical events for modern-day Kuban Cossacks – are greatly disputed. Those who support Ukrainian autonomy and independence view the migration of Black Sea Cossacks to the Kuban as an act of violence and a continuation of Catherine II's destruction of the Zaporizhian Sich (a sixteenth–eighteenth century Cossack polity that pro-Ukrainian sympathizers understand as a cultural ancestor to independent Ukraine). Catherine II had renamed the surviving Zaporizhians as Black Sea Cossacks, and according to many Ukrainianists, she forced their resettlement to the Kuban region in order to prevent a revival of separatist sentiment that might arise if they were to stay in their home territory. The presence of Zaporizhian folk songs in contemporary Kuban Cossack repertoires and the

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[3] "Great Russian" (*velikorusskij*) here refers to the more Russian Don Cossacks, while "Little Russian" (*malorusskij*) refers to the more Ukrainian Zaporizhian Cossacks. The "Great Russian"-"Little Russian" ethnic distinction in the 19th century eventually transformed (with some change in meaning) into the Russian-Ukrainian ethnic distinction in the twentieth century. Now the term "Little Russian" is a derogatory way of referring to Ukrainians, as it implies that Ukraine is still a part of Russia. For more on the changing implications of the term, see the article "What's in a Name? Semantic Separation and the Rise of the Ukrainian National Name" (Boeck 2004) «Шла борьба двух этнографических начал--великорусского и малорусского, и само население под влиянием этой борьбы, получило смешанную двойную окраску: образовалось нечто среднее между великороссами и малороссами--язык, бытовая обстановка, некоторые обычаи, и пр. носят именно такой двойственный характер.»

presence of Ukrainian-sounding linguistic features in the contemporary Kuban dialect are both

indicators, to Ukrainianists, of the tenacity of Ukrainian language and culture in the face of

oppression – despite the violent resettlement and restrictions on Cossack autonomy of the

eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and despite the purges, decossackization, and Russification of the twentieth century, Kuban Cossacks have

Figure 1: A Greater Ukraine that Includes the Kuban Region

managed to retain their Ukrainian-ness. Modern-day Kuban Cossacks are seen as a Ukrainian

diaspora (see Figure 1[4] for a map of "Greater Ukraine" (*Soborna Ukrajina*) that includes the Kuban

region in the lower right corner), victims now of the post-Soviet Russification that is part of

contemporary conflicts between Russia and Ukraine.

Those who support Russian-Ukrainian unity and Putin's Russian national ideology have

different interpretations of Kuban Cossack history and the contemporary manifestation of Kuban

regional language and culture. Catherine II's actions are viewed as benevolent in some ways – she

gave the Cossacks the Kuban region and allowed them relative freedom to maintain their Cossack

lifestyle and culture. Kuban Cossacks, as residents of the Russian Empire, later the Russian SFSR,

and now of the Russian Federation, have inevitably learned to consider themselves Russians or at

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[4] The map was created by the Ukrainian organization, Charitable Fund: Ukraine-Rus' (*Blahodijnyj fond: "Ukrajina-Rus'"*). For a closer look at the map, see the image link here ("Blahodijnyj fond 'Ukrajina-Rus'"" 2014).

least as members of a Russian "subethnos." Russian scholars tend to think of the Zaporizhian legacy in contemporary Kuban speech and song as a marker of the unique regional culture, but they do not consider it a sign of the Kuban's ties to the Ukrainian nation or a Ukrainian national identity. They emphasize the Kuban Cossacks' allegiance to the Russian tsars, as opposed to the ways in which Kuban Cossacks have – at various times throughout history – considered themselves to be distinct from Russian nation or ethnicity. Ukrainian-sounding elements are regarded as the quaint flair of a Russian regional culture. This aligns with a long history of the treatment of Ukraine as a part of a larger Russian entity and not its own autonomous culture or political entity. Russian agents employ the Kuban's hybrid heritage as evidence of Russian-Ukrainian unity. They use the Kuban region to promote nationalist ideals of Russian "multiculturalism" that eschew Ukrainian national autonomy.

These contrasting historical interpretations are evident in the ongoing scholarly arguments over Kuban Cossack identity and national belonging (see below). Regional language and music practices are cited frequently as "evidence" for Kuban Cossacks belonging either to Ukraine or to Russia. Scholars inevitably intersect their observations of contemporary Kuban culture with their political predispositions and interpretations of Kuban history. In addition to academic arguments for national allegiance, a major agent in Russia's claim to the Kuban is the 150-member, internationally-touring, and widely acclaimed Kuban Cossack Choir. The Choir's director, Viktor Zakharchenko, and other institutional representatives obtain musical material from ethnographic "excursions" to Kuban *stanitsy*, in which they interview local performers and record their songs. They then adapt this musical material for large-scale performances, eliminating and changing many elements of village renditions. The institution unquestionably presents a Russian national identity—not least because it receives substantial funding from the Russian Ministry of Culture.

I was curious with this project to explore the ways in which local Kuban residents, especially performers of the highly-contested Kuban Cossack folk music tradition, situate themselves in light

of the powerful, all-or-none outside claims about their national identity. If scholars and other interested parties rely on Kuban language and music to make claims about Kuban Cossack identity, then what do Kuban residents themselves say about the ways their music and language index their identities? How do they self-identify on the basis of the way they speak or what they sing? And what is it about their musical and linguistic practices that makes Kuban culture so difficult to define along the national/cultural boundaries between Russia and Ukraine? These are central questions of my dissertation. After exploring the self-identification, language use, and musical practices of elderly rural Kuban residents, I turn to the power of the Kuban Cossack Choir. Namely I investigate the ways in which its version of Kuban Cossackness interacts with (and ultimately eclipses) the alternative, hybrid regional identities that local performers embrace. The institution's widespread success allows its sanitized renditions to become the standard, "authoritative" versions. Village performers are frequently exposed to the Choir's stylized Ukrainian elements and pro-Russian image. I look at how the institution has acquired and maintained its position as the authority on Kuban Cossack culture – even as it fails to accurately represent present-day music and language practices of the people whose culture it claims to portray. Relatedly, I consider the nature of the imagined Kuban Cossack past that the Choir aims to resurrect. How do the institution's political alignment and obligations dictate the way it reconstructs Kuban Cossacks for its audiences? And how is this political alignment displayed in the Choir's performance choices and self-presentation? I then conclude the dissertation with an analysis of the implications of the Kuban Cossack Choir's success, especially for the old women and men of the *stanitsy* who take pride in their hybrid and nuanced versions of Kuban Cossack identity.

Rural Kuban identities are appropriated by powerful nation-building agendas – they are written about, argued about, zealously claimed, and are changed by the Russian and Ukrainian nation-building projects that have a stake in the region. In light of this, it is important to validate and

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seriously consider the nuanced self-identification of Kuban residents, especially because it contrasts so starkly to the crude, one-sided identities that people prescribe from outside. Another reason to attune to Kubanians' voices is that the one-sided national identities are now "winning out" and obscuring Kuban regional identities; it seems valuable to listen to the representatives of this exceptional culture and 1) perhaps identify the mechanisms by which it has long managed to retain its regional distinctness in the face of strong nationalism and nation-building, and 2) determine what is happening in this contemporary moment that is now causing the hybrid regional identities to fade.

Materials and Methodology

In order to address the above issues, I use performances of both small Kuban *stanitsa* ensembles and the Kuban Cossack Choir as case studies. For the *stanitsa* ensembles I witnessed performances and gained access to field recordings through an internship experience. For the Kuban Cossack Choir, I use publicly available performance videos as well as live performances that I attended in Moscow for the ensemble's "Great History of the Cossacks" tour. With each of the ensembles I examine in this dissertation, I look at musical, linguistic, and other features that the participants – either consciously or unconsciously – demonstrate in their performances. I am especially interested in the ways performance practices reveal certain elements about the ways individuals and ensembles understand Kuban Cossack identity. Also important to this project are the ways performers actively self-identify, both in and out of performance contexts. I therefore look carefully at the content of conversations between performers on issues of language, music, and identity. The Kuban Cossack Choir as a large commercial institution has several other methods besides performance by which it promotes itself and its version of Kuban Cossackness. In order to get a broader picture of the way the Choir positions itself to the public, I also make use of concert advertisements, the Choir's official website, albums, press releases, and articles written by its director.

In the analysis and interpretation of my primary sources, I support my arguments through the application of secondary research from the fields of Slavic studies, history, linguistic anthropology, and ethnomusicology. Ethnomusicology offers useful analytical lenses, notably the understanding of musical performance as a social practice through which identities are negotiated. Research on post-Soviet folk ensembles highlights the special salience of Kuban Cossack music as a vector of regional identity formation for both local performers and state agents (Chapters Two and Three). I use related theoretical work on rural and commercial folk ensembles to demonstrate the ways in which small *stanitsa* groups and the Kuban Cossack Choir interact with each other and inform each other's performances (Chapter Three). Additionally, ethnomusicology provides a framework for looking at the ways communities destabilize prescriptive identities through performance, enabling me to look at local music performance as a means by which rural performers avoid Russian and Ukrainian essentialism (Chapter Two). Linguistic anthropology presents useful structures for understanding identity and power in the Kuban Cossack context. For example, I analyze village performers' speech and lyrics through the linguistic anthropological framework of "bivalency," a concept that is used to discuss language forms that belong simultaneously to multiple standard languages. The Kuban dialect contains many such overlapping forms; through bivalent language, rural Kuban performers keep the Russian vs. Ukrainian debate undecided in their identity presentation (Chapter One). Finally, scholarship on the Kuban region, national identity, and the Ukrainian-Russian border helps explain the competing interpretations of the Kuban's history and cultural heritage. I employ this research to show the different historical events and policies that have shaped local understandings of Kuban identity (Chapters One and Two). It also helps me grasp the underlying causes of the Kuban Cossack Choir's choice to present such a pro-Russian image and explain why it thrives in so doing (Chapter Three).

Recordings of Kuban *Stanitsa* Performances

In 2010, I participated in an internship with Irina Viktorovna Shel'deshova, the same professor of the Department of Russian Studies and Comparative Cultural Studies at Kuban State University in Krasnodar at whose home I was first exposed to Kuban Cossack music. As a part of this internship I accompanied Shel'deshova on trips to different *stanitsy* to attend rehearsals and performances of small, amateur collective ensembles. In these excursions, she interviewed local residents, asking questions about their language, repertoires, childhood experiences with music, and the ways they identified themselves. Through this internship, I met several local performers and have access to Irina's extensive recordings of performances, rehearsals, and interviews with residents of the Chelbasskaja, Petrovskaja and Pavlovskaja *stanitsy* in the Kuban region. Irina Viktorovna also met with me regularly to discuss the particularities of the Kuban dialect and significant events of Kuban cultural history. In addition, I was able to consult with local Kuban ethnographers from the Krasnodar State Institute of Culture (*Krasnodarskij gosudarstvennyj institut kul'tury*), more specifically the Department of Folk Choral Music within the institute's Academy of Folk Culture. In the recordings and ethnographies I acquired from the internship, Kuban village performers actively discuss national identity issues, language use, and cultural heritage. Their rehearsals and performances offer pertinent examples of linguistic and musical hybridity; in the first two chapters I foreground the kinds of Kuban Cossack identities that performers of village collective ensembles (*stanichnye kollektivy*) present through their music and language. In particular I focus on two performance events that provide useful material on these themes: an informal rehearsal performance of the vocal collective from Chelbasskaja *stanitsa*, and an outdoor folk festival performance of an ensemble from Petrovskaja *stanitsa*[5].

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[5] See map in Appendix A for respective locations of these *stanitsy*.

Rehearsal Performance in Chelbasskaja

The Chelbasskaja rehearsal was an intimate affair, in which everyone present (ensemble members, my internship advisor, myself, and another student) sat around a few tables pushed together on a stage in one of their community concert venues. We, the observers, then were integrated into the rehearsal experience, and the rehearsal became a kind of "performance" for us – in addition to (and perhaps more than) it being an opportunity for them to work on their repertoire. At any rate, the performers were constantly aware of our presence, and offered commentary to us outsiders about every song they sang. Not all members of the ensemble were present – only five (four women and one man) were able to attend the rehearsal, but we were told there were not too many more who regularly participated. Irina Viktorovna had many questions for the ensemble members – about the different genres they sang, about the dialect in which they spoke, about what the regional singing tradition was like when they were younger. All the performers were older than 60 at the time, and a few were even in their 80s. They delighted in sharing stories of their childhood and reminiscing about the music of their youth. The participants often talked over each other or repeated each other's words. They attempted side conversations and would raise their voices to interrupt (without any malicious intent) another speaker. Many times the conversation organically developed into a song performance – a discussion topic would trigger a memory of a song, and one member would shout, "It goes like this…" or just start singing. Others would join in, and the conversation would temporarily pause. Thus the afternoon involved a kind of story-telling that alternated between the modes of talking and singing. Irina Viktorovna's line of questioning often led to a discussion of identity. Performers discussed what their regional identity means to them, how they consider themselves along the Ukrainian-Russian divide, what their language and music means for the ways they think of themselves. It was apparent through their statements that rural Kuban performers are very aware of the external debates about them. Often, as I will demonstrate with the

case studies in Chapters One and Two, Chelbasskaja performers – in the content of their

conversations – proudly and self-consciously wavered between their Ukrainian heritage and their ties

to Russia. They also used different forms of speech and sang a variety of songs that moved back and

forth along the Russian-Ukrainian continuum. I use recordings of conversations and song

performances from the Chelbasskaja rehearsal to argue that Kuban performers privilege a regional

identity which leaves the national identity debate unresolved.

Festival Performance by Petrovskaja Stanitsa

I encountered the vocal ensemble from Petrovskaja *stanitsa* at the International Festival of

Slavic Culture (*Mezhdunarodnyj festival' slavjanskoj kul'tury*) in the town of Slavjansk-na-Kubani[6]. This

was an outdoor festival at a park with not only music performances but also a craft fair, museum

exhibits, cooking demonstrations, and other fair experiences that celebrated Slavic cultures. There

were several stages at various locations around the park on which different ensembles performed.

Along the park paths there were interactive performances, with ensembles gathering along the side

of the "road" and performing for passersby. People could gather and listen, speak to the performers,

and ask questions. The Petrovskaja ensemble was one such group that performed in this setting.

There were several benches along a fence and abutting one of the main paths between festival

attractions. Eleven elderly performers sat on the benches and sang. Eight women and three men

performed in the group. Irina Viktorovna spoke to the ensemble for a few minutes in between

several of their songs; other observers and "audience members" gathered to listen when they were

singing and sometimes lingered when they were speaking afterwards. The air of "performance" was

noticeable, despite the informal way festival-goers could approach the ensemble. The singers and

musicians wore costumes and carried props, and there was a clear, if mobile, audience. Here, as with

the ensemble from Chelbasskaja, conversations turned to issues of language, repertoire, and

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[6] See map in Appendix A for location of Slavjansk-na-Kubani.

belonging. Performers spoke of the ways proficiency (or lack thereof) in the Kuban dialect marks speakers in terms of how long they or their families have lived in the region. Singers also discussed the ways they are aligned with Ukraine and/or Russia on the basis of their language, the songs that are a part of their musical culture, and other features. Participants tended to disagree with each other, and they weren't afraid to have loud, energetic (but light-hearted) arguments in front of the audience about whether they were more Russian or more Ukrainian. Such arguments became integrated into the performance – they often led to the next song, as singers would suggest different pieces as musical evidence for Kuban Cossacks' "true" national identity. Participants from Petrovskaja also sang songs and spoke in dialect speech that contained both Ukrainian-sounding and Russian-sounding features. Individuals adapted their speech and pronunciation depending on the audience or performance situation. They also used Russian and Ukrainian nationality-based insults in a cavalier manner throughout their performance. I analyze musical and linguistic examples from recordings of the Petrovskaja ensemble to show the specific ways in which Kuban residents play with the not-quite-Ukrainian, not-quite-Russian nature of their regional culture and take pride in confounding any essentializing claims of national identity.

The Kuban Cossack Choir

In terms of Kuban Cossack Choir performances, I primarily look at 2014 concerts of the Choir that I attended in Moscow at the Grand Kremlin Palace. Moscow was a big stop for the Choir as it made its way across Russia (all the way to Vladivostok) stopping at various cities for its "Great History of the Cossacks" (*Bol'shaja kazach'ja istorija*) tour. The tour was sponsored by the Russian Ministry of Culture, which had declared 2014 to be the "Year of Culture." Vladimir Putin issued a decree on April 22, 2013, "On the Staging of the Year of Culture in the Russian Federation" (*"O provedenije v Rossijskoj Federatsii Goda kul'tury"*) that outlined the coordination and financial support of a variety of performances and events celebrating Russian culture ("2014 God - God Kul'tury v

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Rossijskoj Federatsii" 2016). A special goal of this Year of Culture was to develop infrastructure (concert venues, cultural centers, event staff, media and publicity, etc.) for the appreciation of culture – especially in smaller Russian cities and villages[7]. An additional piece involved funding youth programs in music and the arts and offering grants to regional cultural projects. The ministry's plan did not include all the diverse cultures of the Russian territory; it was clear that this initiative was intended to support, preserve, and revive *ethnic Russian* culture. One of the biggest events of the year, for example, was a giant exhibition and festival of traditional Russian folk culture in celebration of Unity Day (*Den' narodnogo edinstva*). Ostensibly, Unity Day (November 4) is a holiday that commemorates the expulsion of Polish forces from Moscow in 1612, but it is often a day on which militant nationalist groups organize demonstrations and start riots in the name of ethnic Russian unity against non-Russians. So it was under the umbrella of this Year of Culture that the Kuban Cossack Choir staged its tour, and it certainly showed in the content and organization of the performances. The Choir was obligated to emphasize Kuban Cossacks' ties to Russian history and culture; it was also particularly advantageous to de-emphasize ties to Ukraine, given the 2014 peaks in violence between the pro-Russian separatist forces and the Ukrainian government in the Donbass region. In Chapter Three I examine the particular ways in which the Choir promoted these agendas in their "Great History of the Cossacks" performances, as well as the ways in which such agendas do not reflect the nuances of political beliefs and national self-identifications of rural Kuban performers.

In addition to the "Great History" concerts, I also look at video recordings of previous Kuban Cossack Choir performances, many of which are publicly available and hyperlinked on the Choir's official website. As with the *stanitsa* recordings, I examine the ways in which the director and

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[7] This is probably why the Kuban Cossack Choir played so many small Siberian venues late in its 2014 tour, including Ussuriysk, Birobidzhan, and Blagoveshchensk ("Kubanskij Kazachij Khor - Kontsertnyj Sezon" 2016).

individual performers speak about and sing particular songs, as well as the content of the songs they

choose for their concert programs. I break down both the live and recorded performances in terms

Figure 2: The Kuban Cossack Choir on Stage

of musical and linguistic choices – how does the Kuban Cossack Choir leverage music and language

to present its pro-Russian image of Kuban Cossacks? As I previously mentioned, the Choir is a

large, internationally-touring, commercial ensemble. This entails some performance and

organizational features that are quite different from the sparse, informal, and spontaneous

performance environments of *stanitsa* performances. Kuban Cossack Choir concerts are huge

productions with elaborate costumes, full folk orchestras, sophisticated sound equipment,

choreography, lighting, glossy programs, and large quantities of merchandise for sale (see Figure 2[8]).

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[8] This image is from one of the "Great History of the Cossacks" performances in Moscow. It is from the online photo gallery of the performance on the Grand Kremlin Palace's website ("Kubanskij Kazachij Khor: Bol'shaja Kazach'ja Istorija" 2016)

Song renditions are standardized. Singers perform carefully arranged and notated versions of Kuban folk songs; individual performers are not invited to deviate from the arrangements and carefully planned timing. In Chapter Three, I consider the implications of the Choir's performance style in terms of the way it represents the Kuban Cossack folk tradition to its audiences. I also look at the way *stanitsa* ensembles respond to the Choir's fame, professional qualities, and large scale.

The commercial trappings of the Kuban Cossack Choir communicate a lot about the ways the Choir as an institution wants to position itself. The design of album covers, the layout of concert programs, the promotional images it uses for online advertisements, the featured pages of its website – all of these contain clues about the way the Choir imagines itself. I use such materials as primary sources in my dissertation to build a comprehensive picture of the ensemble's identity-building goals and political agendas. Also important to this picture is the celebrity of the Kuban Cossack Choir's director, Viktor Zakharchenko. Zakharchenko has very calculatingly developed the Choir into the prestigious and well-supported institution that it is today. He has given countless interviews about the Choir and his own personal relationship with Kuban Cossack music. Zakharchenko is outspoken and passionate – he writes his own news and academic articles on topics of Kuban Cossack history and culture. He also edits his own anthologies and songbooks of Kuban Cossack music. Zakharchenko maintains close connections with figures from Kuban State University and other Krasnodar institutions that offer programs in regional history. In other words, Zakharchenko fully entrenches himself and has a powerful voice in multiple arenas of Kuban Cossack identity construction. His writings provide further evidence of the Choir's history, organizational structure, and political leanings; they also offer insight into the ways the Choir maintains its position as the public face of Kuban Cossackdom. Zakharchenko's writings, the performances of the Choir, and the ensemble's promotional materials all figure prominently in my project.

Contemporary Controversy over Kuban Cossacks' National Identity

My approach to the primary sources of this dissertation is greatly informed by the contemporary discourse (especially academic discourse) around Kuban Cossacks' national identity and belonging. Debates between Russian and Ukrainian regional scholars are especially fierce. National claiming projects are attentive to Kuban cultural practices, specifically musuic and language. Intense arguments about the Russian-ness or Ukrainian-ness of Kuban Cossacks are embedded in musicological analyses, linguistic studies, songbooks and histories. Ukrainian ethnomusicologists, for example, identify "purely" Ukrainian songs of Kuban village repertoire and use these songs as evidence that Kuban Cossacks are actually Ukrainians who have retained their Ukrainian culture despite living away from their homeland. Such views are taken up aggressively in Russian academic publications, whose authors admit the presence of Ukrainian linguistic and musical elements in Kuban repertoire but identify them as the local color of a culture that is ultimately Russian. Scholars' assessments of Kuban identity are rooted in the complicated history of Russian-Ukrainian relations and reflect the nations' larger proprietary disputes over language and culture. In many ways, the scholarly debates over Kuban Cossack identity are the backdrop for my interpretations of Kuban ensembles' music and language. This project developed through my consideration of the elements of *stanitsa* performances and self-identification that were distorted or lost in the scholarly and other attempts to pigeon-hole Kuban culture into a national belonging.

Ukrainian claims of Kuban Cossacks are based on interpretations of regional history that focus on the Zaporizhian heritage of Kuban language and culture. Historian Serhii Plokhy writes that Ukrainian territorial claims to regions like the Kuban are based on history – Ukraine sees itself as "fighting back" with the same weapon (i.e. the leveraging of history) that Russia uses to make territorial claims to Ukraine. Often it is a matter of which historical eras are most advantageous to privilege and which – for the sake of one's modern-day political ideology – are best to ignore

(Plokhy 1994, 148–50). Thus Ukrainian Kuban supporters cite historical phenomena that point to Ukrainian-leaning tendencies of the region, for example the presence of a strong pro-Ukrainian movement during the revolution, or the fact that the Kuban had Ukrainian schools, newspapers, and university departments in the 1920s. They also point to the close ties that Kuban Cossack groups made with Ukrainian Cossack organizations in the 1990s, or the special committee for the "Return of the Kuban to Ukraine" that was established in the region at this time. Ukrainian Cossack groups have demonstrated a vested interest in the Kuban through the organization of horse marches and other events that celebrate the region's Ukrainian heritage (Plokhy 1994, 162–64). Kuban Cossacks are seen as important descendants of the Zaporizhian Cossacks, whose seventeenth–eighteenth century independent formations are figured as the symbolic precursors of Ukrainian national consciousness and autonomy (Kohut 1994, 132). Cossack mythology is an important trope in post-Orange Revolution Ukrainian nation-building. Ukrainian separatists of the nineteenth-century generated a national mythology based on images of a glorious, independent Cossack past. The development of this mythology is largely credited to Ukrainian national poet, Taras Shevchenko (1814 – 1861). Shevchenko popularized ideas of Ukraine's heroic Cossack past in his famous 1841 poetry collection, *Kobzar*. Despite Soviet attempts to expunge Cossack mythology from Ukrainian history books, the idea of Ukrainians as successors to the Cossack hetmanate blossomed once again after Stalin's death and eventually became a key image in Ukrainian national aspirations of the 90s (Plokhy 1994, 151–59). Ukrainian nationalists view the Cossack – and more importantly the *Zaporizhian* Cossack – history of the Kuban as an instrument for fostering a sense of Ukrainian national identity in the region. As I mentioned earlier, Ukrainianists frame Catherine's liquidation of the Zaporizhian Sich as one of several instances in which an autonomous Ukrainian entity was dismantled by a Russian oppressor. According to this framework, the descendants of the Zaporizhian Cossacks – Black Sea Cossacks and later Kuban Cossacks – took advantage of their

resettlement to the Kuban region as best they could. By protecting the interests of the Russian Empire in the Kuban, they were able to preserve their Ukrainian culture and traditions in ways that were shut off to the Cossacks who remained in their Ukrainian homeland (Petrenko 2002, 9–13).

The modern-day legacy of this cultural preservation is important for Ukrainian national claims to the Kuban; supporters point to the continued presence of Ukrainian linguistic and cultural features in the practices of Kuban residents. One adherent, Bogdan Zolotarevskij, maintains it was the Ukrainian culture and memory of an independent past in their Ukrainian homeland (*bat'kivshchyna*) that made it possible for Kuban Cossacks to survive such difficult historical periods: "[…] they had to drink the entire cup of bitterness, suffer repressions, but they were able to survive until the end without losing their glorious traditions, their culture and language, which today can still be heard in the historical songs of the Black Sea Cossacks […][9] (Zolotarevskij 2009, 1)." The presence of Ukrainian features in the Kuban dialect are especially significant to Ukrainianists, who point to such features as a sign of Kuban allegiance to the Ukrainian nation. Volodymyr Kulyk explains this interpretation in his analysis of post-Soviet language attitudes in Ukraine. The newly independent nation was unable to devise language policies that encompassed the whole spectrum of Ukrainian and Russian language use among its citizens. The divide between Ukrainophones and Russophones got mapped onto the political divide between those who supported Western Ukrainian interests and those who supported pro-Russian interests – even though neither divide has clear boundaries, nor does language use directly map onto national allegiance (Kulyk 2009). The large presence of Ukrainian-sounding features in contemporary Kuban speech, then, is interpreted as a sign that Kuban Cossacks are closer to Ukrainian national identity than to Russian national identity. Linguists judge the Kuban dialect to be more Ukrainian than Russian. Philologist Ivasenko notes,

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[9] «[…] им же предстояло испить всю горькую чашу разочарованию, подвергнуться репрессиям, но суметь выжить не утратив до конца свои славные традиции, культуру и язык, на котором сегодня звучат исторические песни черноморских казаков […]»

"In reality, from a linguistic point of view, there is no distinct 'Kuban language'. All Kuban vernaculars are actually dialects of Ukrainian, which is easily verified with a Ukrainian-Russian dictionary[10] (Ivasenko 2010)." Ivasenko goes on to identify markers of the Ukrainian-ness of Kuban speech: residents use the Ukrainian fricative "g" sound (*ukrainskoe glukhoe "g"*), they use Ukrainian pronunciation conventions for Russian lexical items (he gives the examples of *gorlanit'*[RUS] - *horlanyt'* [KUB], *batogi* [RUS] - *batihi* [KUB], *elozit'* [RUS] - *jalozyt'* [KUB]), they default to Ukrainian grammatical forms like the infinitive ending *"-aty"* – all of these features in contemporary Kuban speech, combined with the history of Zaporizhian settlement in the Kuban, lead Ivasenko to the conclusion that Kuban speech patterns "were 90% formed on the foundation of the language of Ukrainian migrants to the Kuban[11] (Ivasenko 2010)."

In a similar way with regard to the musical culture, Ukrainian musicologists understand the majority of contemporary Kuban repertoires to be of Ukrainian origin. This is not unrelated to assessments of the language, as many songs are deemed to be Ukrainian on the basis of their lyrics and not necessarily their musical structure. Ukrainian ethnomusicologist and Kuban regional scholar Nadija Suprun-Jaremko identifies several folk song genres and musical practices of the Kuban that represent, in her estimation, the Ukrainian identity of Kuban Cossacks. In her monograph and songbook (2005), suggestively titled *The Ukrainians of Kuban and their Songs* (*Ukrajintsi Kubani ta jikhni pisni*), Suprun-Jaremko uses her own fieldwork to demonstrate the presence of Ukrainian genres in *stanytsja* ensembles' catalogues such as Zaporizhian historical songs ("Ukraine is not dead yet…" (*Shche ne vmerla Ukrajina*), "Farewell, my land where I was born…" (*Proshchaj, mij kraj, de ja rodyvsja*)),

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[10] «На самом деле, с лингвистической точки зрения, нет особого 'кубанского языка', все кубанские говоры фактически являются диалектами украинского языка, что легко проверить по украинско-русскому словарю.»

[11] «[…] на 90% сформировались на основе языка украинских переселенцев на Кубань.»

chumak[12] songs ("A Chumak strolled to the little market…" (*Huljav chumak na rynochku*), "I have no money for anyone…" (*Nema hirsh nikomu*)), and Ukrainian carols ("Oh, how holy are you, Christmas…" (*Oj, prysvjate ty, Rozhestvo*), "Oh, yesterday evening…" (*Oj, uchora izvechora*)). She and other music scholars also write of the legacy of Ukrainian *kobzar*[13] music in the Kuban. Suprun-Jaremko writes, "It is an indisputable fact that Ukrainian kobzardom – the national artistic phenomenon that has no analogue among any other people in the world – was brought to the Kuban at the end of the eighteenth century with the first Cossack-migrants […][14] (2005, 113)." Renat Pol'jovyj notes that it was a *kobzar* song, "Oh, That's Enough Worrying for Us" (*Oj, ta hodi nam zhurytysja*) that became the unofficial hymn of the Kuban and a favorite of Kuban Host officials in the pre-revolutionary era (2002, 97). At the end of his book, *Kubanian Ukraine* (*Kubans'ka Ukrajina*), Pol'jovyj includes a series of short bios in his "Incomplete List of Repressed Kobzar-Bandurists of the Kuban" (*"Nepovnyj spysok represovanykh kobzariv-bandurystiv Kubani"*) (2002, 179–95). Ukrainians feel a solidarity with the Kuban because of shared experiences of repression – especially repression of culture and language. Ukrainian musicologists understand the decossackization, Russification, and purges of the Kuban in the 1930s to have been a direct result of the large presence of especially Ukrainian cultural practices like *chumak* and *kobzar* songs. Ukrainians and Kubanians were co-victims of Soviet measures that aimed to destroy Ukrainian cultural identities.

So now too, Ukrainians believe that Russian attempts to claim contemporary Kuban Cossack culture as Russian and not to give Ukrainian elements their due is a manifestation of Russia's post-Soviet identity crisis and inability to fully accept Ukrainian independence. Ideologies of

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[12] *Chumak* was the name of a merchant class that operated in the territory of Ukraine from the seventeenth–nineteenth centuries. Chumaks are a popular subject in Ukrainian folklore and poetry ("Chumatstvo" 2016).

[13] *Kobzar* is a word for a traveling Ukrainian folk musician who played the *kobza* (or *bandura*) and sang historical and religious folk songs ("Kobzar" 2016).

[14] «[…] безперечним є тот факт, що українське кобзарство – це національне мистецьке явище, якому немає аналога у жодного народу світу, – було принесено на Кубань наприкінці XVIII ст. першими переселенцями-козакам […]»

East Slavic unity from the Imperial and Soviet eras still prevail in the contemporary Russian mindset (Kuzio 1998, 221). Ukrainian scholars of the Kuban region are critical of the way Russians have co-opted what to them is such a clearly separate and Ukrainian culture. Any Russian-sounding elements of Kuban Cossack language and music are presented as evidence of forced Russification and suppression of the region's true, pure Zaporizhian heritage. And again, the fact that despite the Soviet Union and Russia's best efforts to destroy the Ukrainian-ness of Kuban Cossacks, Ukrainian scholars consider it a triumph that Ukrainian features still remain in the speech and song of Kuban residents. Suprun-Jaremko writes passionately that this is the very inspiration for her research,

> The Ukrainian subethnos of Kuban lands for generations suffered a range of governmental limitations, prohibitions, and repressions. Consequently, it lost some indications of its genotype. But the fact that this Ukrainian subethnos throughout these hardships was able to maintain a core substrate of its many-faceted culture – this is a weighty argument for a renewed scholarly interest in Ukrainian-Kubanian song production as an artistic and socio-historical phenomenon[15] (2010, 88).

Many supporters of Ukrainian claims to the Kuban see their mission as one of rehabilitation and advocacy in regards to the region's long history of Ukrainian cultural practices and separatist identities.

Russian scholars focus on different historical phenomena from their Ukrainian counterparts – those that emphasize Kuban Cossacks' ties to Russianness and the Russian Empire. They concentrate, for example, much more on the influence of the former Don Cossacks (renamed the Line Cossacks) in the social and cultural make-up of the region. Kuban historian Nikolaj Bondar' contends that it was the Black Sea Cossacks' exposure to the traditional culture of a "Russian ethnographic group" (*russkaja etnograficheskaja gruppa*) that really initiated the development of the region's true character (1995a, 14). Russian scholars also point to Kuban Cossacks' service to the

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[15] «Український субетнос із покоління в покоління пізнавав на кубанських землях дію державної системи обмежень, заборон, репресій, унаслідок чого втратив якісні ознаки свого генотипу. Проте сам факт, що він за таких умов зумів зберегти корінний субстрат своєї багатоликої культури, є вагомим аргументом для пробудження наукового зацікавлення українсько-кубанською субетнічною піснетворчістю як явищем мистецьким і водночас соціально-історичним.»

tsars. Zakharchenko, in one of his academic articles, notes that Kuban Cossacks proudly thought of themselves as knights (*lytsari*) of the Empire. They were grateful to Catherine II for giving them land rights to the Kuban region in return for their military successes and faithful service (2006b, 201, 205). Zakharchenko barely mentions the destruction of the Zaporozhian Sech' – an approach that greatly contrasts with Ukrainian perspectives on the voluntariness with which Kuban Cossacks entered into imperial service.

Soviet persecution of Kuban Cossacks is regarded as a consequence, not of Kubanians' Ukrainian cultural features, but of their allegiance to the Empire and their deep-seated Orthodox Christian beliefs (V. G. Zakharchenko 2006b, 204). Russian historians also focus on the pervasive and continuing effects of Soviet-era Russification and the promotion of standard Russian in education. The Soviet system of classification recorded Kuban Cossacks as being of Russian ethnicity, and so Kuban Cossacks (the ones who survived decossackization, at least) came to think of themselves as Russians since this was what was listed in their passports (Bondar′ 1995, 40). Bondar′ identifies Kuban Cossacks as a "subethnos" (*subetnos*) that was once completely dual in nature, but has been subject to ethnic consolidation and political processes in the Soviet Union and Russia that have been pushing regional self-awareness definitively to the Russian side of the spectrum (1995a, 40).

Music and language are a part of Russian scholars' estimations of the Kuban as well. Russian-leaning linguists respond to Ukrainian supporters by identifying Russian features of Kuban speech or features that do not belong to standard contemporary Ukrainian (Tkachenko 2011). Zakharchenko likes to point out that while contemporary residents continue to "chatter" in the Kuban dialect (*"balakajut'"*) and profess their love for the poems of Shevchenko, "they respond reservedly to contemporary Ukrainian conversational and literary language and often confess that

there are many words they do not understand[16] (n.d., 4)." The establishment of Ukrainian schools, libraries, and cultural programs in the Kuban during the 1920s indigenization efforts – the same institutions that are celebrated by Ukrainian historians – are framed by many Russian scholars as a gross misinterpretation of the true linguistic proclivities of the region[17]. Petr Tkachenko calls this period "forced Ukrainization" (*nasil'stvennaja ukrainizatzija*) and laments the way Ukrainian instruction in the 20s led to the destruction of many of the region's linguistic idiosyncrasies (2011, 22). Russian musicologists place a greater emphasis on the influence of Don folklore and Line Cossack historical songs and draw attention to the more Russian-sounding lyrical and musical changes that Zaporozhian Cossack songs underwent in their transition to the Kuban (see Ratushnjak 1996; Bondar' and Zhiganova 2003).

Russian scholars often frame their approach to Kuban Cossack identity as more nuanced and balanced than that of Ukrainian researchers. They note with superiority that while they acknowledge the mixing of both Russian (Don/Line Cossack) and Ukrainian (Zaporozhian/Black Sea) Cossack cultures in the Kuban, Ukrainians err by only looking at one side of Kuban Cossack culture. Undoubtedly, Russian ethnographers regularly point out the ways Kuban residents identify themselves as something special that does not fall into either Ukrainian or Russian categories. Bondar', for example, notes a lingering proclivity for hybrid self-identification among Kuban residents and pride in using non-national designations. When he asked residents about their nationality, he encountered statements such as, "We are neither one, nor the other. We are Kubanians[18] (1995a, 23)." On the surface, the Russians' approach does seem more nuanced – they paint a broader picture of cultural influence in the Kuban, they recognize linguistic and musical

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[16] «[…] к современному украинскому разговорному и литературному языку относятся довольно сдержанно и часто признаются, что многих его слов не понимают.»

[17] For a more detailed discussion of opposing reactions to early Soviet language policies in the Kuban, see Chapter 2.

[18] «Мы ны тэ, ны сэ. Мы кубанцы.»

features from both sides of the Russian-Ukrainian divide, and they seemingly accept Kuban residents' own hybrid self-identifications.

The problem is that although Russian framings accept the presence of Ukrainian features in Kuban culture, they often do not acknowledge Ukrainian as a separate identity. We see this not only in the content of Russian arguments, but also in choice of words, e.g., using "Little Russian" or "Black Sea Cossack" and not "Ukrainian" in discussion of the early formation of Kuban Cossacks; using nationally ambiguous genre categories like "lyric songs" (for the genre that Ukrainian musicologists identify as "kobzar songs"), or talking about "southern Russian" influences in the Kuban dialect. Ukrainian features that remain in contemporary language and music are viewed as attributes that make Kuban Cossacks unique as a Russian regional culture. Whether it is Zakarchenko calling for the preservation of Kuban Cossack music as a monument to the richness of Russian folk culture (see Chapter Three), or Tkachenko opening his dictionary of the Kuban dialect with comments on the diversity of spoken idioms within the great Russian language (2011, 5–8), Russian scholars – both directly and indirectly – do in fact claim Kuban Cossacks for Russia in their academic writing.

In looking at the intense interactions between Russian and Ukrainian scholars of the Kuban and the rhetoric with which Russian scholars attack Ukrainian ones (see below), it becomes clear that Russian parties have more of a stake in claiming a clear national category for Kuban Cossacks than they perhaps let on. That is, they are less comfortable with letting Kuban Cossacks occupy a liminal cultural space and identify as "neither/nor" than they declare to be. As I show in Chapter Three, the practices and policies of Russian state agents in regard to Kuban Cossack culture and identity involve unequivocal claims that Kuban Cossacks are and always have been Russians. Russian academics may acknowledge Ukrainian influences in Kuban culture, but they do so in a

manner that refuses to admit any kind of Ukrainian autonomy or that in any way contradicts the dominant political ideology that Kuban Cossacks are a Russian people.

Russian ethnographers accuse Ukrainian scholars of being blinded by nationalist agendas in their appraisals of Kuban Cossacks. Consider this scathing comment from Zakharchenko,

> Contemporary Ukrainian folklorists, ethnographers, journalists – not to mention politicians – frequently call Kuban Cossacks "'Ukrainians of the Kuban' who have retained their history." However, such a pseudo-scholarly point of view – fully contradicting the ethnically, socially, culturally, and linguistically distinctive character of Kuban Cossacks – is profoundly untrue and completely does not correspond to reality[19] (n.d., 1).

Local ethnomusicologist, Svetlana Zhiganova, expresses similar derision toward Ukrainian scholars of the Kuban. She penned an article benignly titled, "The Traditional Musical Culture of the Slavic Population of the Kuban in the Context of the Typological Study of Regional Song Systems" (*Traditsionnaja muzykal'naja kul'tura slavjanskogo naselenija Kubani v kontektse tipologicheskogo izuchenija regional'nykh pesnnykh sistem*), an entire half of which is devoted to attacks on Nadija Suprun-Jaremko and other Ukrainian scholars' interpretations of Kuban song culture. For example, she writes:

> […] Kuban researchers' acquaintance with the work of Ukrainian ethnomusicologist [Suprun-Jaremko] has conclusively deterred them from the possibility of collaboration in this field. The politicized tone of her article aroused such a reaction in us and made one unmistakably feel the attitude of the author to the Kuban folklore tradition as if to a morsel of Ukrainian land cut off from its mother country[20] (2006, 4).

Both Zakharchenko and Zhiganova use sarcasm, scare quotes, and patronizing Ukrainian transliteration to express their contempt for scholars who identify Kuban Cossacks as Ukrainians. Ukrainian viewpoints are "pseudo-scholarly" and "politicized" – their interpretations of Kuban

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[19] «Современные украинские фольклористы, этнографы, журналисты, не говоря уже о политиках, часто называют кубанских казаков "'украйинцямы Кубани', яки запамьятувалы свою историю." Однако такая околонаучная точка зрения, полностью отрицающая этническую, социальную, культурную и языковую самобытность кубанского казачества, в корне неверна, ибо она совершенно не соответствует действительности.»
[20] «[…] знакомство кубанских исследователей с работами украинского этномузы-колога скорее разубедило их в возможности сотрудничества в данной области. Такую реакцию вызвал политизированный тон статей, который дает возможность безошибочно почувствовать отношение автора к кубанской фольклорной традиции - как к оторванному от Родины кусочку украинской земли.»

speech and song are distorted by ideology. A mistake, that according to Petr Tkachenko, Russian researchers (*rossijskije issledovateli*) do not make (2011, 34).

But Ukrainian scholars maintain that Russians too are clouded by political agendas of their own in their study of Kuban Cossack culture. People like Zhiganova and Zakharchenko want to suppress dialogue and, as Suprun-Jaremko retaliates, they want to use their power "to deny […] all Ukrainian folklorists […] the right to their own opinion on the topic[21] (2005, 53)." Suprun-Jaremko sarcastically calls Zakharchenko, "the venerable maestro" (*shanovnyj maestro*) and laments Zakharchenko's decision to turn his back on his Ukrainian heritage (2005, 55). She is critical of the way Zakharchenko has spread the practice of transcribing Kuban songs in Russian orthography and laughs at his justification that the use of Russian orthography allows for accurate representation of the dialect without equating the dialect with Ukrainian or Russian languages. To her, this is one of the many ways that Russians appropriate Ukrainian language and culture. Russian scholars, in wanting to silence the celebration of Ukrainian culture in the Kuban, are dubbed apologists of Stalinist Russification (*apolohety stalins'koji rusyfikatsiji*) who themselves are enacting a similarly egregious form of Russification in the region today (Nytchenko 1995, 7). Kuban Ukrainianist V.K. Chumachenko argues that Kuban politicians and academics ignore Ukrainian trends in the region because they want Ukraine to be unified with Russia and for things to return to the communist order (cited in Suprun-Jaremko 2005, 54).

Hypotheses and Structure of the Dissertation

Upon immersing myself in the political back-and-forth and personal attacks of Russian and Ukrainian scholarship on the Kuban, I found it difficult to ascertain from such writing what real-life contemporary Kuban Cossacks think of themselves, their culture, and their history – both on a

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[21] «Позбавивши [...] усіх нині живущих в Україні фольклористів […] права на власну думку щодо цієї проблеми»

personal level and on a group identity level. After exploring different historical perspectives as well as observing and interacting with Kuban residents during my trips to the region, I have come to some of my own conclusions. On the one hand, I believe it is going too far to call Kuban Cossacks Ukrainians, and I acknowledge that some Ukrainian perspectives on the Kuban fall into the category of extreme retroactive nation-building. But on the other hand, I also believe that several Russian agents elide or downplay certain Kuban cultural features in order to promote ideals of Russian-Ukrainian unity and to claim Kuban Cossacks as a fully Russian regional culture. Both Ukrainian and Russian scholars use contemporary cultural practices of Kuban residents to support their assertions about where Kuban Cossacks belong. Both sides use historical evidence to reconstruct an image of Kuban Cossacks that coincides with their respective national political ideologies. When national claiming projects are involved, hybrid elements and nuances of Kuban language, music, and self-identification are inevitably represented in such a way that favors a unified national category. With this project, then, one of my goals is to show the unique pieces of Kuban Cossack identity that current residents display and embrace but that are lost (or actively erased) in the images that nation-building agents present of them. I identify the Kuban Cossack Choir as the most powerful force for claiming Kuban Cossacks for a particular nation (in this case Russia), and I outline some of the misalignments between performance practices of the Choir and those of rural Kuban residents.

The chapters are broken down as follows: Chapter One examines language practices of Kuban residents and the ways residents associate qualities of their speech with their regional identities. I look at the features of the currently spoken local dialect that challenge the categorization of Kuban Cossacks as either Russian or Ukrainian on the basis of language. Chapter Two is about the musical practices of those same Kuban residents, more specifically about the ways rural performers demonstrate and celebrate the hybridity of their musical culture. In Chapter Three, I explore the performances and institutional identity of the Kuban Cossack Choir. I look at the

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mechanisms by which it has become such a dominant voice in Kuban Cossack identity politics, and I identify the ways its pro-Russian stance results in the presentation of an image that ignores several of the distinctive features of regional culture as it exists on the ground. I conclude the dissertation by examining the implications of the interplay between elderly residents' tenacious hybridity and the virtually unchecked power and homogenous identity presentation of the Kuban Cossack Choir. All of the main chapters have an internal structure in which I provide historical background and theoretical approaches before delving into an analysis of the case studies.

Notes on Transliteration and Terminology

In this text I alternate between Russian and Ukrainian versions of particular words, depending on the context. That is, if I am discussing the work of a Ukrainian scholar I will use English versions/transliterations of Ukrainian forms for terms and phrases, as they are used by the author. For example, "Zaporizhian Sich" (*Запорізька Січ*), "stanytsja" (*станиця*), "surzhyk" (*суржик*). If I am discussing those same terms in a more Russian context, I use the English versions/transliterations of the Russian forms: "Zaporozhian Sech'" (*Запорожская Сечь*), "stanitsa" (*станица*), "surzhik" (*суржик*). In some instances I find it necessary to use both versions at the same time, in which case I use subscripts to distinguish the two forms: *stanytsja*$_{UKR}$ - *stanitsa*$_{RUS}$.

Some terms, like "balachka" (*балачка*), are the same in both languages and are spelled/pronounced in the same way – or at least similarly enough that no distinction in the English transliteration is necessary. Still other terms, like "Cossack" (Ukr. *козак,* Rus. *казак*), have such a consistent and widely recognized English rendering that I do not use either the transliterated Ukrainian or Russian forms.

When transliterating the Kuban dialect or the lyrics of Kuban songs, I use English or a modified IPA notation (see footnotes to Speech Sample 1 for more details) out of a desire not to identify the dialect with either standard Russian or standard Ukrainian in my choice of script.

Others, however, do represent the Kuban dialect in either Russian or Ukrainian Cyrillic. When I cite the work of these scholars, I faithfully represent their transcription in whatever orthography was chosen in their text.

Finally, I use the transliteration "Kuban" for what is, in the Russian, *Кубань* (with a soft sign at the end). Some who write about the region in English use "Kuban'" (with an apostrophe to indicate the soft consonant), but many do not.

CHAPTER ONE - The Language Practices of Rural Kuban Performers

Introduction

In this chapter I look at the ways in which Kuban Cossack vocal performers' language use disrupts the Russian-Ukrainian linguistic and national identity binaries. I ask the question, how do village performers keep the issue of their national identity unresolved through their use of ambiguous language forms? I demonstrate – through analysis of recorded conversations from recent field research – that one way they do this in their performances is through their speech. Namely, I believe Kuban performers' discourse about language and identity as well as the language forms they employ in these interactions reflect identities that cannot be cleanly categorized as either Ukrainian or Russian. As stated in the main Introduction, performers are aware of outside attempts to push them and their language exclusively into one national category or the other. Many elderly performers have had multiple experiences of prescriptive language policies and outsiders telling them that their language (and therefore their identity) is either definitively Russian or definitively Ukrainian (depending on the political leanings and identities of the observer). Performers have developed ways of responding to nationality-related claims or queries; these ways of responding are often self-consciously and amusedly ambiguous in their semantic and linguistic content; they frustrate the idea of a single, unified nationality for rural Kuban Cossack performers.

The content of performers' speech and the content of the song lyrics are both important features that establish the residents' sense of their own hybrid, "neither/nor" identities. As I show in the examples below, performers frequently disagree on issues of Kuban Cossacks' national identity,

and often delight in loudly arguing opposite sides in the breaks between songs. The national identity conversations inspire ensembles' song choices (and vice versa), so the lyrical content of performed songs also reflects the performers' inability or unwillingness to "settle" on a national identity.

In addition to the semantic content, I also focus on linguistic phenomena in performers' speech that complicate strict categorization of rural Kuban residents as either Russian or Ukrainian. As previously stated, I analyze *stanitsa* performers' speech through the framework of "bivalency," a concept that allows me to discuss language forms that belong simultaneously to multiple standard languages. The Kuban dialect contains many such overlapping forms; through bivalent language, Kuban performers self-consciously keep the Russian vs. Ukrainian debate unresolved in their identity presentation.

Through careful analysis of language use and conversations about language and identity in Kuban vocal ensembles' performances, I highlight in this chapter the ways in which performers carve out a nuanced regional identity that embraces hybridity and avoids strict national categorization. I show how language use is part of how performers play with the not-quite-Ukrainian, not-quite-Russian nature of their regional culture and take pride in confounding any essentializing claims of national identity.

Kuban Linguistic History and the *Balachka* Dialect

The local dialect, or *balachka*, as it is called in the region, is a crucial part of performances and ensemble participants' identity expression[22]. *Balachka*, from the verb *balakaty*$_{UKR}$ - *balakat'*$_{RUS}$ (literally "to chatter"), is the conversational language of rural Kuban that is associated with Kuban Cossack identity. It is marked by the presence of Ukrainian, Russian and distinctly regional linguistic features. Petr Tkachenko, a regional author who compiled the first ever dictionary of Kuban speech,

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[22] Variants of the dialect's name include *balakachka* or *balakan'e*, both based on the same verb *balakat'*. I have encountered the term *balachka* most frequently, and so use it throughout to refer to the regional dialect.

identifies language as the central issue of Kuban culture. He describes the uniqueness and development of the Kuban dialect:

> The distinctive Kuban dialect developed historically as a result of the mixing and interpenetration of the Russian and Ukrainian languages, southern Russian and Ukrainian idioms, and also dialects of residents from other regions of Russia who migrated to the Kuban. No other region or territory of Russia has such starkly expressed unique linguistic features as the Kuban does. Throughout its history of both explicit and implicit political persecution, the Kuban dialect has nevertheless been preserved by a considerable portion of speakers in the south of Russia (Tkachenko 2011, ii).[23]

As Tkachenko implies above, settlement history and the implementation of state language policies have been major influencing factors of language development in the region. The two separate Cossack hosts that were forced to settle in the Kuban in the late eighteenth century – Caucasus Line Cossacks (*linejnyje kazaki*RUS - *linijni kozaky*UKR) and Black Sea Cossacks (*chornomors'ki kozaky*UKR - *chernomorskije kazaki*RUS) – were associated with different linguistic practices. The Line Cossacks, having originated from the Terek Cossack Host, had more Russian-sounding elements in their speech; the Black Sea Cossacks, a forced regrouping of former Zaporizhian Cossacks, brought Ukrainian-sounding linguistic elements to the region (Tkachenko 2011). The two groups of Cossacks, due to constant close contact and shared duties, began to assimilate and eventually formed the Kuban Cossack Host in 1860. This "interethnic cultural diffusion" (*mezhetnicheskaja kul'turnaja diffusija*), according to historian Nikolai Bondar', had the deepest impact on regional language (Bondar' 1995, 21). The language of this new Cossack identity was marked, as one nineteenth-century Kuban historian puts it, by its "two-fold character" (*dvojstvennyj kharakter*), or the intermingling of more Russian-sounding and more Ukrainian-sounding linguistic features (Shcherbina and Felitsyn [1888] 2007, 128).

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[23] «Самобытный кубанский диалект сложился исторически в результате смешения и взаимопроникновения русского и украинского языков, южнорусских и украинских говоров, а также диалектов постоянно прибывающих на Кубань жителей других областей России. Ни одна область и край России не имеют столь ярко выраженных языковых особенностей, как Кубань. Во все времена явно и тайно гонимый по соображениям политическим кубанский диалект всё-таки сохраннился в языке значительной части людей юга России.»

While it is anachronistic to speak of separate Russian and Ukrainian languages at this point in the mid-nineteenth century, there was definitely an on-the-ground understanding that two discrete groups with two discrete sets of linguistic practices were combining in the region. These two groups were associated with Ukraine/Little Russia (Black Sea Cossacks) and Russia/Great Russia (Line Cossacks). The language practices of Black Sea Cossacks and Line Cossacks at this time certainly cannot be equated to contemporary standard Ukrainian and contemporary standard Russian. Line Cossacks, who came from the Terek and Don regions, would have spoken a more southern Russian dialect that even at that time would have been distinct from the language spoken in Moscow or Petersburg. Black Sea Cossacks as well probably spoke a language that contained a variety of features, some of which are now associated more with standard Ukrainian, but some of which do not belong in standard Ukrainian. Still, the discreteness of the two groups and the two "languages" was palpable. From the gradual mixing of language practices, there arose a sense of a unique Kuban dialect that was the inseparable fusion of these disparate "Great Russian" and "Little Russian" elements. This was what came to be known locally as Kuban *balachka*.

In conjunction with the region's settlement history, state-imposed language policy has also affected language practices in the Kuban. Attitudes about Russian and Ukrainian languages and culture, as well as assumptions as to which language and culture the Kuban Cossacks "belong" have influenced the language policies implemented in the region. In the tsarist era, associations with Ukrainian language forms as "lowly," "rural," and "backwards" and associations with Russian as "lofty," "educated," and "elite" certainly came into play with language policy. These associations coupled with a fear of Ukrainian separatism led to policies that downplayed the distinction of Ukrainian and limited its official use. Alexander II's "Ems Decree" (*Emskij ukaz*) of 1876, for example, prohibited the use of Ukrainian in any official business, schools, theaters, etc. (Grenoble 2003, 83). The Ems Decree was a political action that drew a clear boundary between Russian and

Ukrainian languages – it ignored the reality that there are (and were) many forms of speech, like *balachka*, that have features from both standard languages (Bilaniuk 2005, 103). Ukrainian and Russian are two very similar languages of the East Slavic language branch; there have often been active attempts to delineate the languages from each other – to make them more separate or dissimilar than they are. The Ems Decree is one example of tsarist efforts to codify standard Russian and to socially mark Ukrainian as an uneducated "dialect."

These late nineteenth-century tsarist attempts at suppressing Ukrainian language were felt in the Kuban. There were particular edicts directed at the region's language and culture, as in an 1881 interdiction against "theatrical performances and readings in the Little Russian idiom, as well as the printed scripts of such plays or the printed texts in musical scores[24] (Bigdaj and Zakharchenko [1898] 1992, 12)." Such language-related edicts had an impact on the Kuban song and story-telling culture, as well as those who were attempting to document it at this time. Akim Bigdaj, an amateur ethnographer who set out in the 1890s to collect and transcribe Kuban songs, was directed to transcribe only the Kuban songs that were from the region's (more Russian) Line Cossack and Terek Cossack heritage. Bigdaj was only able to circumvent these restrictions in his work by claiming forcefully that the language of the Kuban's Ukrainian songs was not Ukrainian, but "Old Cossack" (Bigdaj and Zakharchenko [1898] 1992, 12).

In the early Soviet era, linguists proclaimed Ukrainian to be an official language and consequently enacted programs to call attention to (and sometimes create) distinctions between Ukrainian and Russian. This included the artificial creation of new words in Ukrainian that differed from Russian equivalents and the emphasis of particular grammatical features that differed from standard Russian grammar and pronunciation (Grenoble 2003, 65). The goals of creating

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[24] «сценических представлений и чтений на малороссийском наречии, а равно и печатания на таковом пьес, текстов к музыкальным нотам»

distinctions and standardizing the Russian and Ukrainian languages did not allow for sensitivity to language variants like *balachka* that involved both Ukrainian and Russian features; early Soviet language policies ignored the Kuban's overlapping language forms. In the early 1920s, Mykola Skrypnyk, a Ukrainian Bolshevik leader, worked to promote the interests of the Ukrainian people and their national development – a project that for him symbolized the proletarian revolution of Ukraine. Based on the spoken language of their residents, he considered the Kuban, as well as parts of the Voronezh, Kursk, and Rostov regions, to be a part of greater Ukraine. When he was appointed the head of the Ukrainian Commissariat for Education in 1927, he pushed for the institutionalization, standardization of, and education in Ukrainian language in all territories he considered part of Ukraine (Marchukov 2006, 410–13). Skrypnyk's initiatives aligned with the Bolshevik "indigenization" (*korenizatsija*) policies of the early Soviet era that promoted instruction in minority native languages to combat "Great Russian chauvinism" and convert the non-Russian-speaking people into the Soviet workforce (Grenoble 2003, 44). The Kuban region was officially assessed to be more linguistically and culturally aligned with Ukrainian. Thus standard Ukrainian began to be taught in Kuban schools, used in Kuban print media, and spoken in regional government work (M. G. Smith 1998, 47).

This celebration of Ukrainian language use in the Kuban region was and remains controversial. Russian scholars of the region refer to this early Soviet process of promoting Ukrainian culture and language as the "Ukrainization of Kuban" (*ukrainizatsija Kubani*) (Vasil'ev 2010); many of them view it as an unfortunate misunderstanding of the language and culture of the region. Petr Tkachenko writes, "According to Bolshevik national policy, which was to recognize and support the nationality of other, smaller cultures but to suppress or not to notice the cultures within the Russian people, there began then the "Ukrainization" of Kuban, the forceful and artificial

propagation of Ukrainian language[25] (2011, 22)." A.V. Marchukov similarly assesses the situation, "The reaction of the population of Kuban (both Cossack and non-Cossack) to the Ukrainization process was predominantly negative[26] (2006, 452)." Marchukov goes on to refer to this process as an unfair experiment which only proved that the Kuban and Central Black Sea regions truly belonged to the RSFSR (2006, 452).

From the perspective of Ukrainian scholars who write about the Kuban region, this moment in history looks quite different. The Kuban region was naturally included in the efforts to promote Ukrainian language and culture due to the high percentage of Ukrainian residents who lived there. Evhen Petrenko writes of the Kuban region in the early twentieth century: "[…] even after 134 years since the resettlement of the first Zaporizhian Cossacks to the Kuban, Ukrainians not only preserved their language, traditions, and customs, but also numerically became the largest ethnic group of the Kuban[27] (2002, 30)." The period in which Ukrainian language was promoted in Kuban educational institutions and publications is not called "Ukrainization" (which carries hints of force and injustice), but rather Ukrainian "Enlightenment" (*Prosvita*). It is framed as a linguistic/literary awakening of the already-present Ukrainian culture of the Kuban, a movement that was embraced by residents (Petrenko 2002, 33). Figures like Mykola Skrypnyk (1872 – 1933) who pushed the Ukrainian cultural movement in the region and fostered ties between the Kuban and Ukraine are celebrated as "Ukrainian patriots of the Kuban" (*ukrajinskyj patriot Kubani*) who promoted the fundamental rights of the Ukrainian nation in the early Soviet period (Pol'ovyi 2002, 77–79; Corbett 1963; "Mykola Oleksijovych Skrypnyk: Biohrafija" 2015).

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[25] «Согласно большевистской национальной политике признавать и поддерживать национальность в других народах, малых преимущественно, но не замечать и подавлять её в народе русском началась теперь уже «украинизация» Кубани, силовое и искусственное насаждение украинского языка.»

[26] «Отношение населения Кубани (причем и иногороднего, и казачьего) к проводившейся украинизации в подавляющем большинстве было негативным.»

[27] «[…] і через 134 роки від часу переселення перших запорозьких козаків на Кубань українці не лише зберегли свою мову, традиції, звичаї, а й чисельно становили найбільшу етнічну спільноту Кубані.»

The disparate interpretations of the "true" linguistic identity of the Kuban region at this time (as well as the opposite value judgments on the "Ukrainization" vs. "Ukrainian Enlightenment" of the Kuban in the 1920s) reflect not only the opposing political views on the autonomy of Ukraine or the legitimacy of the Ukrainian language at this historical juncture, but also the variegation and hybridity of language practices in the region. At a time when literacy in the "mother-tongue" was being pushed by the Soviet program, it was evidently difficult to ascertain what exactly the mother-tongue *was* in the Kuban – at least in terms of the two available options: the newly-standardized Ukrainian and standard Russian.

Following these early Ukrainian initiatives in the Kuban under the auspices of *korenizatsija*, Stalin's language advisors in the 1930s abruptly switched Soviet language policy to require the use of standard Russian in all educational and public spheres of Soviet-controlled territory. Stalin believed that a required feature of a great and stable nation-state was to have a common language. The proliferation of standard Russian was a "natural" and desirable process that would unify Soviet peoples (Grenoble 2003, 43, 57). Thus, Soviet-sanctioned instruction and public language use switched in the Kuban from Ukrainian to Russian in the early 1930s. Despite these major shifts in official language for the region, the spoken dialect today is still an inseparable mix of Russian features, Ukrainian features, and unique regionalisms. As Karasev puts it, "In *balachka* Ukrainian and Russian did not simply mix, but formed an original dialect[28] (2010, 3)." The dialect remains a marker of regional culture and a source of regional pride. Some, like Ljudmila Pashchenko, the director of the Society for Cossack Descendants (*potomstvennoe kazach'e obshchestvo*) believe the dialect ought to be actively taught in regional schools so the Kuban Cossack culture does not die out. She remarks: "A people exists as long as the language in which they speak is still alive. Cossack dialects are necessary

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[28] «В балачке украинский и русский языки не просто смешались, но и образовали своеобразный диалект.»

to study – for they are the memory of our ancestors. We cannot let the center of our spiritual culture be extinguished[29] (Karasev 2010, 2)." Many regional scholars believe that the plan should be to collect and save as many examples of Kuban speech as possible – in the form of dictionaries, transcripts, songbooks, etc. This work has been proliferating since the renewed interest in Kuban Cossack culture that arose in the 1970s and 80s. Zakharchenko, Bigdaj, and Petrusenko have created large compendia of Kuban Cossack songs[30], while others like Bojko and Tkachenko have focused on collecting regional language examples through lexicon, witty verses (*chastushki*), sayings (*poslovitsy*), etc. [31]

Standard Russian and standard Ukrainian speakers, however, socially mark the dialect as being uneducated, folksy, and plain wrong. It adheres neither to standard Russian nor standard Ukrainian. Such mixed language forms are frequently deemed as "backwards," especially in the Russian-Ukrainian context. Soviet linguists worked emphatically to standardize and codify both Russian and Ukrainian – language education involved observance of strict norms. Colloquial forms of speech that ignore or mix these norms have developed a negative reputation. *Balachka* incites fierce opinions over whether it is low-cultured, spoiled speech (Karasev 2010, 2). Boris Gasparov describes how the majority of scholarship on Ukrainian-Russian mixed language forms treat them as, "a secondary linguistic product – a grotesque distortion of both Ukrainian and Russian committed by speakers of poor education and bad taste (2006, 117)."

Some regional scholars and cultural figures nevertheless lament that the local dialect is dying out – that it only seems to be preserved among the elderly population and/or through folk culture. Igor' Vasil'ev, historian for the Kuban Cossack Choir, remarks with regret that the only people who

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[29] «Ведь народ существует пока жив язык, на котором говорят. Казачьи диалекты необходимо изучать: ведь они - память наших предков. Нельзя дать погаснуть очагу нашей духовной культуры.»

[30] See *Pesni Kubanskikh Kazakov* (Bigdaj and Zakharchenko 1992), *Kuban' v pesne* (Petrusenko 1999), *Narodnye pesni Kubani* (V. Zakharchenko 1987)

[31] See *Chastushki, pripevki, stradanija, kubanskie zastol'nye pesni* (Bojko and Zakharchenko 2002), *Kubanskij govor: balakachka* (Tkachenko 2011)

can understand the words of the older *balachka* folk songs are older persons and specialists (Karasev 2010). While some educators have attempted to revive the dialect and even teach it in regional schools ("V shkolakh Kubani mogut nachat' prepodavat' balachku" 2010), there has been considerable pushback due to the widespread negative associations with Russian-Ukrainian hybrid dialects described above. Teachers responded to the movement by bemoaning what would happen to their students if *balachka* was made a school subject, "They will begin to *shokat'* and *gekat'*, and with such pronunciation it will be difficult for them to get accepted into prestigious universities[32] (Karasev 2010, 1)." Here we see explicitly the link between use of dialect forms and lack of education and a decreased likelihood of academic success.

Theory on Language and Hybridity

Linguistic anthropologists theorize about what people are doing when they speak in hybrid language forms. Theoretical models from linguistic anthropology help when analyzing the speech forms of Kuban residents, as well as the social identity work that these speech forms enact. I believe a particularly useful lens through which to examine *balachka* is Kathryn Woolard's concepts of "bivalency" and "simultaneity." Woolard, a linguistic anthropologist, defines bivalency as a phenomenon in certain multilingual contexts, in which speakers use "words or segments that could 'belong' equally to both codes" (Woolard 1998, 7). Simultaneity refers to translingual phenomena in which language utterances simultaneously exhibit features (lexical, phonological, grammatical, and/or syntactical) from multiple standard codes. Bivalency and simultaneity offer ways of thinking about hybrid language forms like *balachka* that do not fit comfortably in contemporary standard language distinctions. Woolard's research, located primarily in Barcelona, examines utterances that

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[32] «Они станут "шокать" и "гэкать", а с таким произношением трудно будет поступить в престижные вузы.» *Shokat'* and *gekat'* are derogatory verbs that refer to more Ukrainian-sounding pronunciation features of the Kuban dialect. More specifically, *shokat'* refers to pronouncing the standard Russian word *chto* (что) as the more Ukrainian-sounding *sho* (шо), while *gekat'* refers to pronouncing the letter "g" (г) as a voiced glottal fricative /ɦ/ – also a Ukrainian-sounding pronunciation convention.

exhibit bivalency and simultaneity within the dichotomy of Castilian Spanish and Catalan, two very closely related languages that – just like Russian and Ukrainian – share many overlapping forms. If we apply the concepts of bivalency and simultaneity to Kuban speech, we can think of the two categories at play being standard contemporary Ukrainian and standard contemporary Russian[33]. *Balachka* then is distinguished by a notable presence of features that could equally belong to both contemporary standard Ukrainian and contemporary standard Russian. It is also often impossible to separate the linguistic features (grammatical, lexical, and/or phonological) of *balachka* utterances, as many forms simultaneously contain Ukrainian-sounding and Russian-sounding elements. Before getting into the longer examples, a few short samples[34] will illustrate both the mixing of features from Ukrainian and Russian, as well as the presence of bivalent and simultaneous features.

Speech Sample 1: Learning Ukrainian Language in School

The following speech sample is an excerpt from a longer conversation that I discuss and translate later in the chapter, in Interview Example 1. In this short sample a woman from Chelbasskaja *stanitsa*, Lidija Nikiforvna, recollects learning Ukrainian language in school. This speech sample demonstrates several typical features of *balachka*[35].

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[33] Again, the dialect itself is not a hybrid of contemporary standard Russian and contemporary standard Ukrainian, but rather it contains a combination of forms and usage patterns that *today* are perceived as belonging more to one standard language or the other. The categories of Russian and Ukrainian are very important to the way interested parties assess the language use and national identity of Kuban Cossacks. Woolard herself deals with the social and political importance of external categorization (based on contemporary language distinctions) rather than the actual history of language contact.

[34] For each speech sample in this dissertation, I follow the useful transcription model employed by Laada Bilaniuk in her work on Ukrainian-Russian hybrid speech: transcriptions of pronunciation using modified IPA for 1) the dialect speech example 2) standard Russian, and 3) standard Ukrainian, followed by 4) a word-by-word gloss into English and finally 5) a translation into English. IPA symbols are used only to demonstrate marked pronunciation differences, often in vowels.

[35] I would like to add the caveat that my perception of the dialect speech phonology is informed by my personal experiences (learning first standard Russian for several years and then studying standard Ukrainian) as well as my approach to this material. Others may hear the speech sounds slightly differently, depending on their language backgrounds and attitudes. The problems of bias and transcription have long been discussed by linguistic anthropologists. In my most crucial supporting examples about the Kuban dialect, I endeavor to look at the more obvious and stark (to me, at least) pronunciation characteristics.

Table 1.1 - Transcription of Speech Sample 1: Learning Ukrainian Language in School **[LISTEN]**

WOM:	Ja	pomnju	ja	do	trɛt'oɦo	klassə	khodɪla
UKR:	Ja	pam'jiataju	ja	do	trɛt'oɦo	klasu	khodɪla
RUS:	Ja	pomnju	ja	dʌ	trʲet'evə	klassə	khʌdʲila
GLOSS:	I	remember	I	until	third	grade	went
ENG:	*I remember, I went up to the third grade*						

WOM:	i	nam	prɛpodavalɪ	ukrajinskij	jazyk.
UKR:	i	nam	vɪkladalɪ	ukrajins'ku	movu.
RUS:	i	nam	prʲepʌdʌvali	ukrajinskij	jɪzyk.
GLOSS:	and	us	they taught	Ukrainian	language.
ENG:	*and they taught us Ukrainian language.*				

The speech in this example is an inseparable mix of what are now considered to be standard Ukrainian and standard Russian features. Lidija Nikiforovna uses pronunciation conventions that more closely match contemporary standard Ukrainian, such as lack of vowel reduction (*akan'e*) on unstressed *o* and *a* (***prɛpodavalɪ***), the use of a high-mid front unrounded vowel /ɪ/ when standard Russian would use the high close front unrounded vowel /i/ (***prɛpodavalɪ, khodɪla***), and use of the fricative /ɦ/ (***trɛt'oɦo***) that is rarely encountered in standard Russian; but there are also standard Russian pronunciation conventions employed at other moments, as in the vowel reduction at the end of *klassə*. Ukrainian pronunciation (*trɛt'oɦo*) is interspersed with Russian lexical variants (*jazyk, pomnju*). Additionally, with the exception of a few words (пам'ятати*UKR* - помнить*RUS*[36], викладати*UKR* - преподавать*RUS*, мова*UKR* - язык*RUS*), the lexical items in the speech sample are, to varying degrees, bivalent. That is, they are words and forms that belong equally in standard Russian *and* standard Ukrainian (я, нам, до, ходила) or have only slight variations in pronunciation and/or orthography between the two languages (украинский*RUS* - український*UKR*[37], класс*RUS* - клас*UKR*,

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[36] These are the dictionary forms of the words, written in the standard alphabets for the respective languages. They may or may not be the forms used in the speech sample, and they do not necessarily represent her pronunciation.
[37] See previous footnote.

третий_{RUS} - третій_{UKR}). Many of the words reflect the close linguistic relationship between Ukrainian and Russian with their shared Slavic roots[38] : the Ukrainian word пам'ятати (*to remember*) is based on the Proto-Slavic *рамęть (*memory*), which also contributes to the contemporary Russian word память (*memory*); the Ukrainian word викладати (*to teach*) has a secondary definition identical to the primary definition of the Russian word выкладывать (*to lay out*) that is based on the same Slavic roots. So even lexical items that are not bivalent, as they seem to clearly fall on one side or the other of the Russian-Ukrainian divide, nevertheless bear witness to the linguistic commonalities between the two languages. The bivalencies and simultaneities in Speech Sample 1 demonstrate how closely related Ukrainian and Russian are, as well as how difficult, if not impossible, it is to categorize Kuban speech as belonging exclusively to Russian or exclusively to Ukrainian. The second speech sample below raises similar issues:

Speech Sample 2: Childhood Memories of Famine

This sample is from a conversation between Irina Viktorovna and a different woman from Chelbasskaja *stanitsa*, Elena Aleksejevna. The conversation took place in an informal, non-performance situation at Elena's home (Elena is not a part of the Chelbasskaja ensemble). Irina Viktorovna asked Elena to share memories of her life. They do not speak about Kuban Cossack identity or vocal traditions. Rather, Elena offers stories from her childhood experiences of hunger and famine; she describes the different dishes her mother made to try to feed her children during the harsh food shortages. Her full statement in the recording is, "And there was a shortage of bread. So Mama, for the little ones, that was Petja and Dima, baked a kind of griddle-cake, little rolls, straight on the stove. Not in a skillet, but straight on an ordinary stove." I include this sample because it

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[38] I derived information about Slavic roots as well as Russian and Ukrainian lexicon from a combination of sources, including *Russian Root List with a Sketch of Word Formation* (Gribble 1981), *Workbook to Russian Root List* (Browning 1985), *Slovar' ukrajinskago jazyka* (Hrinchenko [1909] 1958), *The Oxford Russian Dictionary* (Thompson 1997), as well as online sources such as *Vikislovar'* (ru.wiktionary.org) and *Vikislovnyk* (uk.wiktionary.org).

further demonstrates the complexities of the Kuban dialect and its bivalent/simultaneous forms. I also want to provide an example of Kuban speech in a non-performance context to demonstrate that the *balachka* used by Kuban singers in performance is not a totally exaggerated language variant that is wildly different from the day-to-day language use of many residents.

Table 1.2 - Transcription of Speech Sample 2: Childhood Memories of Famine **[LISTEN]**

WOM:	A	khlibə	zh	nɛdostatok	bulo.
UKR:	A	khliba	zh	nɛdostatnʲo	bulo.
RUS:	A	khlʲebə	zhɛ	nʲɪdʌstatək	bil.
GLOSS:	And	bread	[emphatic]	shortage	was.
ENG:	*And there was a shortage of bread.*				

Here again, we see the co-presence of Ukrainian lexical variants (khlibə, bulo) with Russian ones (nɛdostatok). Ukrainian vowel pronunciation conventions are used with Russian lexicon (nɛdostatok). Elena uses the Ukrainian form of past-tense "to be" here. Kateryna Kent, in her analysis of the morphosyntax of the hybrid Ukrainian-Russian language called *surzhyk*,[39] found that in Ukrainian-Russian mixed language variants, the Ukrainian past-tense forms of "to be" are often used – even when all other lexical items are supplied from Russian (2012, 95). While Kent would likely not consider *balachka* to be a form of *surzhyk*[40] (2012, 35), several of the linguistic features she encountered in her fieldwork in various regions of Ukraine frequently apply to the *balachka* examples included in this dissertation. It is important to note that Kuban speech is flexible with many of these features: employment of a Russian feature in a particular way often does not preclude the Ukrainian equivalent from being used in a future utterance, and vice versa. Furthermore, Kuban residents purposefully shift along the Ukrainian-Russian continuum as the addressee, social situation, or conversation topic dictates. This will be seen in the longer examples later in this chapter.

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[39] Though the definition of *surzhyk* is debated, Boris Gasparov gives a good general description of *surzhyk* as "mixed Ukrainian-Russian (or Russian-Ukrainian) speech that is characteristic of certain social strata of the population in eastern and central Ukraine and southern Russia (2006, 118)." The word itself is Ukrainian and literally refers to a grain mixture of wheat and rye.

[40] As will be outlined in greater detail below, the notion of what "counts" or "doesn't count" as *surzhyk* is contested.

This is another reason, in fact, that Woolard's theories about bivalency work in the situation of Kuban *balachka*: Woolard describes bivalency as a *strategy* that speakers employ to keep contrasting elements in tension. She bases this idea, in part, on Bakhtin's notion of heteroglossia, and the idea that language forms can be "both/and" and not just belong neatly to one of two mutually exclusive standard codes (Woolard 1998, 4). She uses code-switching research as a starting point for her analysis of bilingual speech practices. However, Woolard and others realized through their fieldwork and observations that code-switching as a framework was too limiting – that it treats bilingual utterances as a "performance that respects the discreteness of languages and their hard-edged boundaries, in contradistinction to the messy and aberrant chaos of interference and other interlingual phenomena (Woolard 1998, 6)." From even the two short examples above, we can see that Kuban speech cannot be characterized as "code-switching" between discrete codes. Often it is only a slight difference in the vowel pronunciation or the grammatical marker at the very end of a word that indicates to which contemporary Slavic language the speech is "leaning." A word can be lexically standard Russian but also phonologically sound Ukrainian, and then the very next word can be the reverse of this. Woolard brings in this kind of language interference as another type of linguistic simultaneity. She defines interference as the set of instances when two systems are simultaneously relevant in the categorization of a linguistic item (as in the recognition of phonological patterns that belong to one language in the pronunciation of a lexical item that belongs to another language). She asserts that cases of interference are "not readily segmentable" and thus, like the use of bivalent forms, suppress linguistic oppositions. Even when all lexical items in an utterance belong to one or the other language, the semantic, syntactic, or phonological interference from a different code can prevent one from definitively asserting a standard code in which the speaker is speaking (Woolard 1998, 14–15). The combination of interference *and* bivalency in Kuban speech is especially disruptive to the assignation process. For example, if an uttered word belongs

lexically to both standard Ukrainian *and* standard Russian, with a standard Russian grammatical ending but standard Ukrainian pronunciation, then how can one assess that a Kuban speaker is employing either Russian or Ukrainian in a given utterance?

Woolard uses her theories of bivalency and simultaneity to call for a new understanding of bilingualism and the linguistic/social significance of hybrid language practices. She maintains that bivalent language activates and challenges the opposition between linguistic codes, especially in language situations where the two standard codes are subject to ideological controversy (1998, 11). This is definitely the case in the post-Soviet Russian-Ukrainian language context. Linguistic boundary-marking has become an urgent endeavor for both Ukraine and Russia. Post-Soviet nation-building has been marked by language standardization and Herderian trends of equating language use with national identity (G. Smith 1998, 15–17). Residents of Ukraine and Russia along the Russian-Ukrainian border who speak hybrid language forms engender a range of controversy. Research that deals specifically with sociolinguistic and political analysis of Ukrainian-Russian mixed language forms offers context for why Kuban speech becomes such a marker of Kuban Cossack identity. It also highlights the ways in which political views affect one's understanding of the development and implications of contested borderland language variants like *balachka*.

Surzhyk and Ukrainian-Russian Mixed Language Forms

Contemporary Ukrainian linguists and cultural scholars have done a lot of research on language that mixes Ukrainian and Russian features. Linguist Boris Gasparov explains this phenomenon by the fact that Ukraine, since its independence, has been particularly concerned with the legitimacy and power of Ukrainian as a national and literary language (Gasparov 2006, 11). Mixed languages like *surzhyk* are thus derided by standard Ukrainian speakers (Bilaniuk 1997, 105). Larysa Masenko similarly notes, "[…] the majority of Ukrainian linguists […] consider *surzhyk* to be a destructive phenomenon that negatively affects the Ukrainian literary language (2011, 52)."

Surzhyk, to the Ukrainian nation-building project, represents Russian and Soviet imperialism, or the infiltration of Russian into the Ukrainian domain. As Gasparov colorfully puts it, "the 'bastardized' Suržyk emerges as an unwanted child of a forced and unequal linguistic union (2006, 118)." Due to the legacy of Russian language dominance in the Soviet Union and the fervor with which the Soviet education system imposed the teaching of standard Russian, Russia is not so threatened by Ukrainian-Russian mixed language forms spoken within its territory. To be sure, standard Russian-speakers and Russian language policy makers still view mixed language forms as lesser, uneducated, and unofficial. In contrast to the threat they pose to Ukraine, however, these forms are used instead by the Russian nation-building project as "evidence" for what many standard Russian speakers already believe: that Ukrainian is simply "bad" Russian, or that Ukrainian is just a dialect of Russian.

Among the recent research publications on this topic are those that attempt to create a typology of Ukrainian-Russian mixed language forms. Explanations and justifications for typologies of these hybrid forms reveal the underlying political ideologies that produce contrasting interpretations of Kuban *balachka*. Linguists and historians make judgments about the development of – and distinctions between – hybrid dialects, and these judgments become very important in (national) categorizations of the people who speak particular variants. The Ukrainian-Russian language variant called *surzhyk* is especially contested – debates about the term *surzhyk* (what it is, why it exists, who speaks it, where the boundaries are between *surzhyk* and standard Russian or standard Ukrainian) expose several of the major points of contention in arguments about non-standard language variants of the Russian-Ukrainian border. As I discuss further below, some give the word *surzhyk* a stricter definition and develop a more specific explanation for the phenomenon, while others treat *surzhyk* as a word that generally refers to all Russian-Ukrainian mixed language forms, including *balachka*, that result(ed) from language contact. Gasparov, for instance, believes that *surzhyk* can be used to refer to all language forms that involve both Russian and Ukrainian features;

the ratio of one to the other shifts according to geography – a more Ukrainian *surzhyk* in central and

eastern Ukraine and southwest Russia (the Kuban), and a more Russian *surzhyk* in the Russian region

of Rostov and far Eastern regions of Ukraine (2006, 118–19). In the same vein, Michael Flier

considers there to be two main types of *surzhyk*: Russian-Ukrainian (a Russian base with Ukrainian

elements) and Ukrainian-Russian (Ukrainian base with Russian elements) (Flier 2008 in Kent 2012,

30). In these interpretations, *balachka* is considered to be a variant of *surzhyk*.

Some believe that the word *surzhyk* and the language-mixing it describes only apply to the

Ukrainian context. In other words, *surzhyk* only happens in Ukraine, and whatever Russian-

Ukrainian language-mixing that occurs in the territory of Russia – however linguistically or socially

similar it may be[41] – is fundamentally something else and should be called something else. According

to Kateryna Kent, there is only one kind of *surzhyk*: "Ukrainian-based with admixture of Russian

elements" (2012, 30). Her analysis of speech samples from various regions of Ukraine is rooted in

the understanding that *surzhyk* is a consequence of Russian colonialism of Ukraine. Consider this

statement: "[…] the proximity of Russia and Ukraine as well as the historical subjugation of Ukraine

created favorable conditions for fostering linguistic contacts which resulted in pervasive bilingualism

of the Ukrainian population and Russian borrowing into Ukrainian (Kent 2012, 35)." Salvatore Del

Gaudio interprets this stance that there is only a Ukrainian *surzhyk*; he asserts that Ukrainians negate

the existence of Russian *surzhyk* because it admits language influence going in the other direction –

Ukraine cannot frame itself as the constant victim of Russian language influence if there is evidence

that Ukrainian influence also affects speakers in the Russian territory (2010, 244–45). It becomes

clear from these analyses of *surzhyk*, then, that Russian-Ukrainian (or Ukrainian-Russian) language

variants are not defined solely by their linguistic features (many of which overlap between *balachka*

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[41] See my breakdown of Speech Sample 2 for an example of a grammatical feature of *balachka* that matches Kent's
linguistic analysis of *surzhyk* grammar.

and certain *surzhyk* varieties), but rather by the historical, political, and social experiences of observers.

The Ukrainian-American linguistic anthropologist, Laada Bilaniuk, recognizes the social and political underpinnings of the interpretation of Ukrainian-Russian mixed language forms. She has noted that it is difficult to devise a unanimously accepted description of *surzhyk* due to the different perceptions of speakers and hearers – the definition of what kind of speech is or is not *surzhyk* changes according to the social identities and language practices of the person whom you ask (1997, 97). She later came up with her own typology that included five categories of *surzhyk* with five corresponding language contact situations: 1) "Urbanized-Peasant" - working-class urbanized Ukrainian peasants since the nineteenth century, 2) "Village Dialect" - Ukrainian villagers in contact with Russian administrators and media since the nineteenth century, 3) "Sovietized Ukrainian" - codified Ukrainian with planned Russian influence from the 1930s Soviet language policies, 4) "Urban Bilinguals" - urban dwellers who speak both Russian and Ukrainian as native languages, 5) "Post-Independence" - urban Russophones who now use Ukrainian in public (2005, 126). Bilaniuk maps these five types onto Peter Auer's system of categorizing language interaction. Auer positions "code-switching" and "fixed lects" as two extremes of language interaction, with "language mixing" used to refer to language interaction that is somewhere in the middle. In "code-switching," the languages are more discrete and it is clear when the speaker switches between the codes. "Language mixing" is next on the continuum, when the language alternation is not functional, nor a matter of preference to the speaker. The language mix has itself become a "code" for a particular group of people. And finally, "fixed lects" are language mixes that have become solidified, regular, and have developed set grammatical constraints (Bilaniuk 2005, 122–23). So coming back to her typology, "Urbanized Peasant" and "Village Dialect" *surzhyk* are more "language mixing" leaning toward

"fixed lect," while "Urban Bilingual" and "Post-Independence" *surzhyk* can more aptly be described as "code-switching" with some "language mixing" (2005, 126).

While none of Bilaniuk's five *surzhyk* variants apply specifically to Kuban residents or the kind of language contact that occurred in the Kuban region, her analysis is useful for its examination of the nuances of variation in mixed Ukrainian-Russian speech and in thinking about the different historical events that led to mixed speech along the Russian-Ukrainian border. She brings to the fore the idea that different groups of speakers, depending on region and language situation, vary in terms of their level of conscious and active code-switching or language mixing. Moreover, different forms and usages can have different historical, social, and political implications in the contemporary moment depending on the context of the language use. This is especially relevant to the language situation in the Kuban, in which performers – as will be seen in the case studies below – demonstrate a high level of awareness of their speech and the ways in which different Russian and Ukrainian speakers perceive it. Also, it is apparent (and she herself acknowledges this) that Bilaniuk's political leanings as a Ukrainianist shape her analysis of hybrid language forms – she only considers *surzhyk* as the set of hybrid language varieties spoken within the territory of Ukraine, and she explains many of her variants with language contact situations that entail aggressive, outside Russian influence. In a similar vein, many Ukrainian scholars believe that *balachka* is a result of unjust and forceful Russification of Zaporizhian Cossacks in the Kuban – the influence of Russian language dominance on a people who are desperately trying to hold on to their Ukrainian language and culture.

The association of *surzhyk* exclusively with speech phenomena in the territory of Ukraine complicates the transfer of linguistic observations from *surzhyk* research to the Kuban context[42].

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[42] Unless, as some pro-Ukraine groups and figures do, you consider the Kuban region as a Ukrainian diaspora or part of Greater Ukraine. See Introduction.

There is pushback for associating speech in the physical territory of Russia with *surzhyk*. However, I observed several of the same linguistic patterns in Kuban speech that Bilaniuk, Kent, and others have discovered in their research on *surzhyk*. Existing *surzhyk* research helps with the identification of phonological, lexical, and grammatical features of language like *balachka* that involves elements of both Ukrainian and Russian – even if Kuban *balachka* cannot (or should not) be considered *surzhyk*. More importantly for my project, research on *surzhyk* really highlights the ideological import of mixed language forms in the Ukrainian-Russian context. *Balachka, surzhyk,* and other borderland language forms are contested, evaluated, measured, and scrutinized for "just how much Russian" and/or "just how much Ukrainian" they contain. The speakers who use these language forms are assigned labels and identities based on their speech. Distinctions regarding speaker awareness and a speaker's proficiency in (and ability to switch effortlessly) to a standard variant become very important in the discussion of Kuban Cossack identity – both in self-identification discussions of residents themselves and in categorizations of Kuban Cossacks from without.

Surzhyk research also addresses the different contexts in which speakers use mixed language as well as the variation in awareness that speakers have over the ways they speak and the ways audiences perceive their speech. Bilaniuk observed from her interviews that some speakers were confident about their language use while others were insecure about their speech. Many *surzhyk* speakers were very concerned about language purity and the ways their speech might be perceived. Informants presented "pure" language as the ideal, even as they themselves used mixed language features in their speech (2005, 144). She has also investigated the use of *surzhyk* in performance-based contexts and creative work, observing the way *surzhyk* can bring "gritty realism" to a literary piece or represent countercultural attitudes in Ukrainian pop music and rap lyrics (Bilaniuk 2005, 159–63). Gasparov similarly notes the different levels in awareness and the varying "effects" that *surzhyk* speech might have. He claims that *surzhyk* speakers of low educational level speak in *surzhyk*

unconsciously and would not necessarily perceive themselves to be speaking a mixed language. More educated or urban *surzhyk* speakers, he writes, "may be well aware of the fact that they speak a less-than-perfect Ukrainian and/or Russian; they may even consciously use this flawed speech for certain situational and stylistic purposes[43] (Gasparov 2006, 120)." Kent writes on *surzhyk* and group identity, about the low "ethnolinguistic vitality" of the *surzhyk*-speaking community in Ukraine – speakers are aware of the low status of *surzhyk*, the stigmatized demographics of *surzhyk*-speakers, and the lack of institutional support for mixed languages (2012, 41–42).

These kinds of discussions about speaker awareness, group identity, and style offer useful paradigms for examining Kuban speech. They all relate to the context in which speakers use language and the ways in which speakers consciously or unconsciously alter their speech according to that context. The longer speech examples I examine later in the chapter are marked by a high degree of speaker consciousness and a high level of awareness of the socially marked nature of *balachka*. The context of performance allows for a pride in their use of *balachka*, which might otherwise be a cause for embarrassment or shame. Kuban performers demonstrate a keen understanding of the attempts to categorize Kuban Cossacks on the basis of their language – they have much to say about this, and they say it in a way that seems to reflect an active shunning of strict national categorization; at the very least, they say things about language and identity in a way that (consciously or not) keeps the Ukrainian vs. Russian tension unresolved.

Theory on Language Use in Performance Contexts

While an exhaustive account of all the research on language and performance is outside the scope of this dissertation, there are a few key ideas on performance and "performing" identity through language that really get at the ways Kuban residents promote inclusive, hybrid regional

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[43] Even in the writing of someone who speaks with relative equanimity about *surzhyk*, there are clear negative judgments that it is "less-than-perfect Ukrainian and/or Russian" and that it is "flawed speech."

identities through their speech. As numerous scholars have pointed out, it is fundamental to understand that language forms index social groups. Linguistic anthropologists Irvine and Gal more specifically state, for example, "[…] linguistic features are seen as reflecting and expressing broader cultural images of people and activities (2000, 37)." Their work on language ideology and linguistic differentiation emphasizes the functions of language varieties and the ways identities emerge through language forms that problematize cultural boundaries. Irvine and Gal also build on work from the subfield "ethnography of speaking" that focuses on the ways speakers' ideas about linguistic difference and the attachment of meanings and identities to their speech affect the ways they deploy codes in a particular context (2000, 75). Kuban speakers who are aware of the linguistic features that index Kuban Cossack identity are intentional in the ways they deploy these forms in performance. Additionally, their recordings establish that performers are aware of the Ukrainian-Russian linguistic boundary – they reflect on the ways their regional identity and language "fit" or "don't fit" into Russian or Ukrainian national categories, and they acknowledge the ways *balachka* is tied to "Kuban-ness."

Bilaniuk reports that mixed Ukrainian-Russian speech can vary depending on how closely speakers are monitoring their language. In formal situations where people feel they are being evaluated, they adjust their language to be more "standard," whereas in informal situations with friends and family, people are more likely to use mixed forms unreservedly (1997, 105). In the case of performance, however, the motivation to use (or not use) hybrid language forms revolves around different parameters. In the Kuban context, it is the hybridity of *balachka* that indexes the Kuban Cossack identity. In performances at regional folk festivals and discussions with outsiders (like myself) about Kuban Cossack heritage and culture, performers seem particularly motivated to demonstrate their cultural belonging through use of *balachka*. *Balachka* is a marker of group identity, and speaking in *balachka* is an indicator of belonging.

Many write about this role of language in the stylized content of folklore performance. Dell Hymes' idea of performance as a "cultural behavior for which a person assumes responsibility to an audience (1981, 84)" leads to an understanding of language in performance as *doing* something for the identity creation of the performer. Hymes asserts that a speaker uses language in performance "to assume the identity of [the] tradition's authentic performer"; the language of oral tradition performance, he then claims, helps establish what the tradition is (1981, 86). Kubanians, when they self-consciously use *balachka* in performance and speak proudly about their language as a cultural marker, are creating and maintaining certain notions of what the Kuban Cossack vocal tradition is, as well as what it means to speak and act like an "authentic" carrier of this tradition.

Richard Bauman and Charles Briggs expand upon this relationship between performance and the social construction of reality. In their comprehensive article, "Poetics and Performance as Critical Perspectives on Language and Social Life" (1990), they agree that performance is a "mode of communicative action" and maintain that the artful use of language in performance is "socially constitutive and efficacious (79)." They warn, however, against treating the speech in performance events as isolated units of analysis. Rather, we should always consider three issues: 1) the ways speech in performance is linked to historical systems of language relationships and discourse, 2) the ways in which language used in performance is embedded in larger social structures, and 3) the manner in which "artful speaking" in performance is related to other modes of language use. In so doing, language researchers and ethnographers are able to think more holistically about the ways performances contribute to the "production and reproduction of social life" (Bauman and Briggs 1990, 79–80). In analyzing the longer recorded examples of Kuban speech, I treat the language of rehearsals and performances as "socially constitutive" and consider the ways history, social structures, and contrasting modes of language use interconnect to shape the meanings and identities that Kuban performers produce through their language.

I bring together the above theoretical frameworks and approaches in my textual/sociolinguistic analyses of Kuban speech. In summary, Woolard's concept of bivalency helps me to consider the disruption that hybrid language forms such as *balachka* can pose to the standard language opposition of Russian vs. Ukrainian. Her work is useful for thinking of speakers as actively and strategically deploying bivalent language forms to keep these oppositions in tension. Furthermore, bivalency helps explain an alternative to code-switching that gets at the nuances of non-standard languages which include features from two very closely related languages. Relatedly, research on *surzhyk* and other non-standard language forms of the Ukrainian-Russian border offers valuable insight on the language ideologies and histories of language use for the region. It provides models for analysis of the grammatical, phonetic/phonological, and lexical features of hybrid language forms and the comparison of these forms to contemporary standard Ukrainian and contemporary standard Russian. *Surzhyk* research also emphasizes the way politics affect interpretation and categorization of hybrid language forms. *Surzhyk* researchers categorize different types of non-standard languages on the Russian-Ukrainian border and think historically and politically about the circumstances in which different types arose. Finally, frameworks from linguistic anthropology dealing with language, identity, and performance help interpret the particular speech contexts of Kuban Cossack vocal performers and the identity-building that transpires through their use of *balachka*. Linguistic performance theory explores the ways in which the language of performances can have unique forms and functions while also being embedded in fuller historical and social contexts of language use that inform its interpretation.

Language Case Study 1 - Chelbasskaja *Stanitsa*

In this first case study, I analyze interactions between performers of the Chelbasskaja *stanitsa* in order to show some of the ways Kuban performers keep the arguments about their national identity unresolved. I focus on the content of their conversations about language and heritage as

well as the ambiguous language forms with which they express their views. I argue below that in both content and form, rural performers' discussions present a version of "Kuban Cossack-ness" that is more hybrid and nuanced than the versions that Ukrainian and Russian nation-building agents promote and prescribe.

Interview Example 1 - Performers Discuss Heritage

The following interview example is a translation of one conversation excerpt from the Chelbasskaja rehearsal[44]. In this particular pause in the singing, four members of the ensemble emerge as participants in the conversation; their speech often overlaps as they contribute different remarks and anecdotes. My internship advisor, Irina Viktorovna Shel'deshova, began asking questions about their repertoire and heritage. The conversation segment below begins with a specific question from Irina Viktorovna about a song the ensemble had just sung about the Danube River in Ukraine.

Table 1.3 - Transcription of Interview Example 1: Performers Discuss Heritage **[LISTEN]**

PARTICIPANT KEY:	IV - Irina Viktorovna Shel'deshova LV - Leonid Vasil'evich LN - Lidija Nikiforovna LJa - Lidija Jakovlevna MF - Melan'ja Fjodorovna	
IV And tell me, excuse me, why the Danube – there the second song, Danube?		
		LJa Because we are almost connected with Ukraine […] because we settled here, the majority of us, from Ukraine.

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[44] In the transcription, the symbol *[…]* is used to indicate instances where the speech is indecipherable or is interrupted by the speech of another participant. Irina Viktorovna speaks in contemporary standard Russian throughout, except when she is imitating the Kuban dialect – these parts are shown in quotation marks. The performers speak in *balachka*; I analyze their speech below. At one point, one of the performer's speech leans more toward standard Russian when she quotes standard Russian speaker, Viktor Zakharchenko (ethnographer and artistic director of the Kuban Cossack Choir). In the translation, all instances of the word *chatter* correspond to *balachka* (or its verb form *balakat'*/*balakaty*) in the original. The term *shape-shifter* in the translation corresponds to the word *pereverten'* in the original speech, but does not fully represent the word's meaning. I will say more about this term in the textual analysis.

	LN Immigrants. My grandma by birth was a pure Ukrainian. […]
	LV All are from Ukraine […]
	LN I remember, I went up to the third grade, and they taught us Ukrainian.
	LV Just as I studied Ukrainian.
	LN And then, for some reason, they forbade it […] but mostly my grandma […]
IV But you, do you consider yourselves Ukrainians or Russians?	
	LJa Zakharchenko told us, "Why are you Russians? You are Ukrainians." […] But we ourselves are Russians, yes.
IV You yourselves believe that you are Russians?	
	LJa Of course.
IV My grandmother and I went around the region and recorded, and they say, "How are we Ukrainians? We are *shape-shifters*."	
	LN *Shape-shifters, shape-shifters*, yes. [laughter] […]
	LJa We go to Ukraine they can't listen enough to us. On the bus […] and without fail, how we *chatter*, this kind of talk is almost theirs. […]
	LN They [Ukrainians] ask us, "What are you doing? Don't talk, *chatter*! As we are, so are you. We understand you, and you us."
	MF […] My father's year of birth was seen written in Ukrainian, and they arrived here in '33. I am Russian.
	LJa Well, you were already born here.
	MF Yes.
IV So you were born here, that means you are Russian?	
	MF Yes.

From the translation above, we can see that the participants do not hesitate to discuss their ties to either Ukraine or Russia. The speakers present various kinds of connections to a national identity: they talk of birthplace, language, education, and ancestry as associations they have with either of the two nations. Irina Viktorovna incites the national identity conversation by asking about a song in their repertoire that is focused on Ukrainian geography. Three of the participants respond with answers about the settlement history of the Kuban – that many of their families settled in the region from Ukraine. They could be referring to the early Zaporizhian Cossack settlements that occurred at Catherine the Great's bidding in the late eighteenth century, but are most likely speaking of the several later waves of immigration from the Ukrainian territory that took place throughout the nineteenth century[45]. Lidija Nikiforovna and Melan'ja Fjodorovna both speak of parents or grandparents who were "pure" (*chista*) Ukrainian.

Two of the participants remember studying Ukrainian language in school when they were young. Here they are sharing personal experiences of the Ukrainian movement that happened in the Kuban in the early Soviet period, during which Ukrainian language was taught in Kuban schools. The comment "And then, for some reason, they forbade it" of course refers to the termination of the indigenization movement in the 1930s, when many members of the Ukrainian intelligentsia were purged, and Russian-language instruction became required throughout the Soviet Union. Despite these changes in language education, Lidija Jakovlevna and Lidija Nikiforovna both comment on the closeness of the spoken dialect to Ukrainian – about how Ukrainians "can't get enough of" listening to Kubanians speak in *balachka*, and about the mutual intelligibility between Ukrainian and *balachka*.

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[45] Settlers from the Poltava, Chernihiv and Kharkiv regions arrived in the Kuban region in various waves throughout the early-mid 19th century. For more information on Ukrainian settlement of the Kuban, see *Zvidky i chomy z'javylysja ukrajintsi na Kubani* (Petrenko 2002) and *Na Kuban'!* (Bilyi 1994, 23–28) for Ukrainian interpretations and *Massovaja krest'janskaja kolonizatsija i ekonomicheskoje razvitije Kubani* (Ratushnjak 1996, 336–47) for a Russian interpretation of these migrations.

Irina Viktorovna brings up a term she encountered in her previous field research, *pereverten'*. Local historian and ethnographer Nikolaj Bondar' has also observed the use of this term in his interviews with local residents. He describes, "To the 'provocative' questions about national belonging, residents of the former Black Sea villages noted the genetic connection with Zaporozhian Cossackdom, and about themselves said, 'We are *perevertni*,' clarifying that language and other cultural realia had substantially changed[46] (1995a, 23)." Above, I have translated the word as "shape-shifter," but the word has a variety of meanings and connotations[47]. In standard Ukrainian, *pereverten'* is literally the word for "werewolf." The verb form *perevertaty* carries meanings of "reverse," "overthrow," "distort," "change," "convert," or "transform" (Popov and Balla 2001, 358). In contemporary standard Russian, *pereverten'* can, interestingly, be used to refer to a textual palindrome ("Pereverten'" 2000). Russian Wikipedia, however, has a detailed socio-cultural definition and explanation of usage that relates more closely to Bondar''s interpretation above:

> *Perevertni* – a nickname, more rarely a self-designation, of Russified Little Russians who resettled in the Steppe region in the 17th–18th centuries over the course of the joint and amicable Russian-Ukrainian colonization. In Ukrainian publications, the term *pereverten'* can also be used as a designation for a Ukrainian who has betrayed his or her culture[48] ("Perevertni" 2015).

The remarks about the "joint" and "amicable" cross-cultural colonization of the seventeenth – eighteenth centuries would no doubt make Ukrainian historians bristle – many of them use words like "conscription," "dislocation," "abolition," "destruction," and "liquidation" to describe the forced migration of peasants and Cossacks from the Ukrainian territory into the more eastern

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[46] «На "провоцирующие" вопросы о национальной принадлежности жители бывших черноморских станиц отмечали генетическую связь с запорожским казачеством, а о себе говорили - "мы пэрэвэртни", поясняя, что и язык, и другие культурные реалии существенно изменились.» (When Bondar' quotes the residents here, he demonstrates an example of the way the Kuban dialect is transcribed in Russian Cyrillic, with misspellings to indicate the non-standard pronunciation differences – 'пэрэвэртни' instead of 'переверти'.)
[47] Thanks to Lubomyr Hajda for his suggestion of this translation for *perevertni*.
[48] «Перевертни — прозвище, реже самоназвание, обрусевших малороссиян, переселившихся в районы бывшего Дикого поля в 17-18 вв. в ходе совместной дружественной русско-украинской колонизации. В украинских изданиях термин перевертень может быть также использован для обозначения украинца, предавшего свою культуру.»

regions of the Russian Empire[49]. Nevertheless, this definition gets at connotations of cultural change, movement, and conversion that explain the term's usage in Kuban residents' self-identification. As Bondar' notes, the term represents recognition of Ukrainian heritage in combination with acknowledgement of the linguistic and cultural changes that occurred from settlement in a more Russian environment.

While the *Vikipedija* article mentions the negative undertones *perevertni* might have in the Ukrainian context – "betraying" the culture of one's heritage (i.e. Ukrainian) to assume the culture of the oppressor (i.e. Russian) – there is no shame in the way Kubanians use the word to describe themselves. When Irina Viktorovna mentions the term in the Chelbasskaja rehearsal, participants laugh and agree that they are indeed *perevertni*. There is a certain pride and glee associated with words that communicate the hybridity and "in-between-ness" of Kuban language and culture. Throughout the interview excerpt, there are matter-of-fact concessions in the tone of, "Well, yes, our ancestors were from Ukraine," or "Well, yes, we were born in Russia," but it is the idea of being *perevertni* that excites them, causes laughter and universal agreement. The tendency of *stanitsa* performers to take pleasure in hybrid or ambiguous classifications contrasts completely with the ways powerful state agents present Kuban Cossacks. I describe in Chapter Three the unambiguous, exclusively Russian national identity and allegiance that the contemporary Kuban Cossack Choir proclaims for the region. I also show in the third chapter the evidence that the Kuban Cossack Choir, in its recent performances and promotional materials, has been cagey and tentative (sometimes overtly reluctant) in communicating any ties that Kuban Cossacks or the Kuban Cossack vocal tradition has to Ukraine.

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[49] See *Unmaking Imperial Russia* (Plokhy 2005, 178), *The Cossack Myth* (Plokhy 2012, 43), *Russian Centralism and Ukrainian Autonomy* (Kohut 1988, 191–238), *Vid Malorosiji do Ukrajiny: paradoksy zapizniloho natsijetvorennja* (Rjabchuk 2000, 53) for examples of such terms being used in descriptions of this time period.

In the Chelbasskaja interview, however, as participants go back and forth between talking about ties to Russian language/culture and ties to Ukrainian language/culture, they are completely open and unashamed about their mixed associations: they sing songs about Ukraine because their ancestors are from Ukraine; they learned Ukrainian language in school; researchers come and tell them they are Ukrainian, but Lidija Jakovlevna and Melan'ja Fjodorovna say that they are nevertheless Russian; Ukrainians love to listen to the Kuban performers speak because the language is so similar to Ukrainian; information about performers' ancestors was recorded in Ukrainian, but the performers themselves were born in Russia and thus are Russian. Within this back-and-forth, there is an awareness of outsiders' perceptions of them ("Zakharchenko told us, 'Why are you Russians? You are Ukrainians.'"), as well as the outside "need" for Kuban residents to have an official national classification whether it fully applies or not. Identity markers that are typically associated with nationality – ancestry, spoken language, written language, language of one's education, place of birth, and folk culture – are, for the participants, not homogeneous, but instead have layers of both Ukrainian and Russian associations. Moreover, the interviewees use modifiers that further suggest a lack of homogeneity among residents. For example, one singer said, "We settled here, the majority of us, from Ukraine," – implying that although the majority are from Ukraine, some are not. One singer also expressed the notion that some features do not fully belong to either national category when she said, "how we chatter, this kind of talk is almost theirs." The way they speak is close to Ukrainian, in other words, but not quite.

Speech Sample 3: Lidija Jakovlevna Self-identifies as Russian

Even the unequivocal self-identification statements that Lidija Jakovlevna and Melan'ja Fjodorovna make ("But we, we are Russians, yes.", "I am Russian.") become more ambiguous when

considering the language they used to utter these statements[50]. Analysis of speech samples from the interview will draw attention to the ways Kubanians' speech maintains the Ukrainian-Russian tension – even in statements that ostensibly resolve said tension[51]. Let us explore this linguistic ambiguity by looking first at Lidija Jakovlevna's utterance: "Zakharchenko told us, 'Why are you Russians, you are Ukrainians?' But we ourselves are Russian, yes."

Table 1.4 - Transcription of Speech Sample 3: Lidija Jakovlevna Self-Identifies as Russian **[LISTEN]**

LJa:	**Zʌkharchɪnko**	**nam**	**skazaw,**	**"Pʌchɪmu**	**vɨ**	**rus'ki?"**	
UKR:	Zakharchɛnko	nam	skazav,	"Chomu	vɪ	(rus'ki)?"	
RUS:	Zʌkharchɪnkə	nam	skʌzal,	"Pʌchɪmu	vɨ	ruskije?"	
GLOSS:	Zakharchenko	to us	said,	"Why	you	Russian?"	
ENG:	*Zakharchenko told us, "Why are you Russian?"*						
LJa:	**"Vɨ**	**ukrajintsi."**	**A**	**sami**	**mɪ**	**rus'ki,**	**da.**
UKR:	"Vɪ	ukrajintsi."	A	sami	mɪ	(rus'ki),	tak.
RUS:	"Vɨ	ukrʌjintsɨ."	A	sami	mɨ	ruskije,	da.
GLOSS:	"You	Ukrainain."	But	ourselves	we	Russian,	yes.
ENG:	*"You are Ukrainian." But we ourselves are Russian, yes.*						

The chart above demonstrates again the closeness of standard Ukrainian and standard Russian. Many forms above are identical or nearly identical in orthography and/or pronunciation for both standard languages, especially the high-frequency pronouns and conjunctions. These terms like нам, вы$_{RUS}$ - ви$_{UKR}$, а, сами$_{RUS}$ - самі$_{UKR}$, мы$_{RUS}$ - ми$_{UKR}$, we can say are bivalent – they simultaneously belong to both standard codes. Non-identical standard forms can still have a high degree of similarity and be based on the same Slavic roots: сказать$_{RUS}$ - сказати$_{UKR}$, почему$_{RUS}$ - чому$_{UKR}$, русский$_{RUS}$ - руський$_{UKR}$. With high numbers of bivalencies it becomes impossible to parse out a

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[50] I by no means reject the participants' self-identification as Russian; it is not my position to make a value judgment about Kubanians' self-identification. My goal in this section, rather, is to highlight the ambiguities that are present in these self-identification statements – especially because these ambiguities are often fiercely ideologized by both Ukrainian and Russian nation-building projects (see Chapter 2).

[51] Transcription of the original speech will continue to be in a simplified IPA format – for consistency and ease of analysis, but also so as not to visually link Kuban speech to either Russian or Ukrainian through use of a particular Cyrillic alphabet.

single standard code that is at play in any given moment of the utterance. Furthermore, some words in the sample above have more qualities of standard Russian, while others have more qualities that match standard Ukrainian. For example, Lidija Jakovlevna uses the Russian word *почему*, with fairly standard Russian pronunciation of the word (vowel reduction of unstressed *o*, soft *e* in the second syllable, etc.). In other instances of pronunciation, as in that of the family name, *Захарченко*, she uses a combination of Russian and Ukrainian pronunciation norms: unstressed *a* is reduced in the first syllable (standard Russian pronunciation feature), but the unstressed *o* of the last syllable is pronounced fully (a pronunciation feature of standard Ukrainian) [52].

What is most interesting in terms of the national identity question, is that Lidija Jakovlevna uses a form that matches the standard Ukrainian version of "Russian" when she says, "We ourselves are <u>Russian</u>, yes." The Russian form that would be used in this grammatical setting is *русские* (ruskije), while the Ukrainian form would be *руські* (rus'ki) [53]. Lidija Jakovlevna clearly pronounces the soft sign, *ь*, after the *c*, and she uses the Ukrainian-style one-letter nominative plural grammatical ending *-i* as opposed to the Russian two-letter nominative plural ending *-ие*. Similarly, when Melan'ja Fjodorovna says, "I am <u>Russian</u>" later on in the interview, she uses a form that more closely matches standard Ukrainian (*руська*) than standard Russian (*русская*). So even in statements of national self-identification that are semantically unambiguous, the language forms used to utter these statements can underscore associations with the other Slavic nationality and thus keep the identity issue

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[52] Presence or absence of vowel reduction cannot exclusively be mapped on to standard Russian versus standard Ukrainian, as other Slavic dialects also exhibit these features. For example, other Russian dialects in the south (and the north) contain the feature of unreduced, unstressed "o". The point is that key Ukrainian and Russian stakeholders in the region who work to claim *balachka* use such features as evidence of national belonging in the Ukrainian versus Russian context.

[53] Sort of. In contemporary standard Ukrainian, it is politically incorrect to use the term *руські* to refer to Russians. This usage essentially claims that Russians (and not Ukrainians) are the inheritors of Kievan Rus'. The Ukrainian term to use now when referring to Russians is *росіяни*, a term that more closely indicates "citizens of Russia" as opposed to "ethnic Russians." Hrinchenko's Ukrainian dictionary of 1909 notes that the term *руський* was used in Galicia and Bukovyna to refer to "Little Russians," or Ukrainians. Elsewhere in Ukraine, it was used to refer to "Great Russians," or Russians ([1909] 1958, 89). There is no doubt, however, that the grammatical and phonetic features of the word that Lidija Jakovlevna uses belong to standard Ukrainian.

unresolved. Furthermore, ethnographers have noted that Kuban residents typically answer "Russian" when given the two options, Russian and Ukrainian[54]. But, when pushed about their ties to Ukraine, or when asked more open-ended questions about their identity, they will respond that they are Kubanian. For example, take Zakharchenko's description of performers' responses on the national identity question. Here he describes his own experience of the conversation that Lidija Jakovlevna is narrating ("Zakharchenko told us…"):

> During recording I posed the question: whom do you consider yourselves to be in terms of national belonging – Russians or Ukrainians? And the majority of respondents affirmatively answered: "Russian." Then it was necessary for me to remind them about the history and genetic roots of Kuban Cossackdom, after which performers said: "That was our great-grandfathers who were, at one time, Ukrainians and Zaporozhians, but we already long ago became "Kuban Cossacks"[55] (V. G. Zakharchenko n.d.).

So here, when offered the binary choice between Ukrainian and Russian, the respondents choose Russian. However, when reminded of their Ukrainian heritage[56], they do not continue insisting that they are Russian. Rather, they explain the dual sense of their national identity by focusing on their regional identity as Kubanians or Kuban Cossacks. Lost in the English translation above is Zakharchenko's representation of the Kuban dialect. He, too, received responses that used the more Ukrainian-sounding dialect form for the word "Russian" (he transcribes it using Russian Cyrillic as *руськыми*). In other words, others have noted the same linguistic ambiguities and proclivity towards a regional self-identification. Furthermore, the Zakharchenko example shows again the way residents present Kuban regional identities as distinct from either Ukrainian or Russian national identities. Or,

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[54] This is likely due in large part to the legacy of Soviet nationality policy, in which Kuban residents were assigned official Russian nationality in their passports.

[55] «Во время звукозаписи исполнителям песен мною ставился один и тот же вопрос: кем вы считаете себя по национальной принадлежности--русскими или украинцами? И основное число опрашиваемых утвердительно отвечало: "руськымы". Тогда мне приходилось напоминать им об истории и генетических корнях кубанского казачества, после чего исполнители говорили: "Це наши прадиды булы колысь украйинцями та запорожцями, а мы уже давно сталы 'кубаньскымы козакамы'."»

[56] Zakharchenko pushes Ukrainian heritage and identity here. I do not know the date of publication for this short article ("O samoidentifikatsii Kubanskikh Kazakov"), but given its Ukrainian sympathies and the fact that Zakharchenko cites sources that only go up to the year 1995, I assume that he wrote this piece sometime in the late 90s or early 2000s. It is definitely before the mid-2000s when he switched to proclaiming a more Russian nationalist agenda and Russian national identity for Kuban Cossacks. I discuss this transition in Zakharchenko's public political ideology in Chapter 3.

more precisely, the Kuban regional identity is put forth as a separate layer of identity that explains how Kuban residents can both self-identify as Russian but also have strong cultural and ancestral ties to Ukraine.

The speech sample of Lidija Jakovlevna above, despite a few crucial Ukrainian features, still contains many "Russianisms" in terms of pronunciation and lexicon. Perhaps this is because she is quoting a standard Russian speaker (Viktor Zakharchenko), or because she is aligning herself and Kuban residents with a Russian nationality. Elsewhere in the interview, she uses speech that falls much farther on the Ukrainian side of the spectrum; interestingly, it is when she remarks that Ukrainians love listening to Kuban speech because it is so similar to Ukrainian. Here the subject matter swings more towards the Kuban region's closeness to Ukrainian language and culture, which might be a reason for her use of more Ukrainian-sounding speech (as if to emphasize her point and demonstrate, "Yes, see, our dialect really *is* close to Ukrainian."). Bondar' observed that this ability to change their speech is a self-conscious practice among Kuban residents. He encountered responses from his informants such as, "We know three languages: Russian, Ukrainian, and Kubanian[57] (1995a, 23)." Dialectologist O.V. Matveev has also noted Kuban residents' ability to switch speech according to the context, "Speakers of the traditional idiom use dialectal words in their daily life, but literary-language parallels and synonyms are present in their passive vocabulary. Under certain conditions […] this literary language emerges from their memory[58] (2002, 311)." The flexibility that Kubanians have in altering their speech along the Ukrainian-Russian language spectrum is another way they obfuscate national identification processes.

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[57] «Мы знаем три языка: русский, украинский, и кубанский.» An interesting point about this quotation is that "Kubanian" is presented in contradistinction to either Russian or Ukrainian – not just as a mix of two, but its own special kind of speech.

[58] «Носители традиционного говора в повседневной жизни подчас пользуются диалектными словами, но их литературные параллелы и синонимы находятся как бы в пассивном словарном запасе. В определенных условиях […] они легко извлекаются из памяти.»

Speech Sample 4: Lidija Jakovlevna Comments on Kuban Dialect

Lidija Jakovlevna uses even more Ukrainian-sounding *balachka* later in the conversation. She speaks about Ukrainians' positive reactions to Kuban speech and asserts that such reactions are due to the closeness between Ukrainian and Kuban speech. The language forms Lidija Jakovlevna uses here certainly reflect the linguistic closeness she describes in the content of the utterance.

Table 1.5 - Transcription of Speech Sample 4: Lidija Jakovlevna Comments on Kuban Dialect **[LISTEN]**

LJa:	**Vonɪ**	**namɪ**	**nɛ**	**naslukhajutsə.**
UKR:	Vonɪ	namɪ	nɛ	naslukhajut'sə.
RUS:	ʌni	nami	nʲe	nʌslushajutsə.
GLOSS:	They	with us	not	listen one's fill
ENG:	*They can't listen enough to us.*			
LJa:	**ob'jɪzatel'no**	**jak**	**mɪ**	**balakajɪm,**
UKR:	obov'jazkovo	jak	mɪ	balakajemo,
RUS:	ʌb'jɪzatʲɪl'nə	kak	mɨ	bʌlakajɪm,
GLOSS:	without fail	how	we	chatter,
ENG:	*without fail, how we chatter,*			
LJa:	**jakɪj**	**ɦovor**	**poshtɪ**	**jikhnij.**
UKR:	takɪj	ɦovir	majzhe	jikhnij.
RUS:	tʌkoj	govər	pʌchti	ikh.
GLOSS:	such	talk	almost	theirs.
ENG:	*this kind of talk is almost theirs.*			

When comparing this dialect speech sample to the contemporary standard Ukrainian notated just below, there are a high number of similarities. High-frequency pronouns and adverbs favor forms that match the Ukrainian versions (вони, як, який, їхній) as opposed to the Russian versions (они, как, такой, их). Lidija Jakovlevna pronounces fully bivalent words like the negative particle *не* and the instrumental case pronoun *нами* with Ukrainian-style vowels (nɛ, namɪ), as opposed to the Russian-style use of palatalizing vowels for these words (nʲe, nami). We also see instances of interference: the more Russian lexical items are pronounced with a Ukrainian-sounding absence of

vowel reduction (**poshtɪ**, **ob**'jɪzatel'**no**). In addition, there are very marked Ukrainian lexical variants (**naslukhajutsə**) and pronunciation norms (as in the voiced glottal fricative /ɦ/ in ɦovor)[59].

In addition to the high level of "Ukrainian-ness" of her speech, Lidija Jakovlevna seems to think favorably about the closeness of *balachka* to Ukrainian. It is not something to be ashamed of, but rather something that results in positive attention from Ukrainians when Kuban performers travel on festival tours. Lidija Nikiforovna picks up on this as well in the following statement, "They [Ukrainians] ask us, 'What are you doing? Don't talk, *chatter*! As we are, so are you. We understand you, and you us.'" They celebrate mutual intelligibility and unabashedly emphasize closeness to Ukrainian identity. The Kuban dialect is very similar to Ukrainian, but still, to them, remains distinct. Zakharchenko notes this as well, "in spite of the recognition of their genetically Ukrainian roots, they consider […] their native language to be Kubanian, and not Ukrainian[60] (n.d., 4)."

One might call Lidija Jakovlevna's ability to alter her speech to sound "more Russian" or "more Ukrainian" as a kind of code-switching. Not in the strict sense of switching clearly between two discrete, standard codes, but rather a movement back and forth along the Ukrainian-Russian linguistic spectrum. Woolard interprets this practice as "allowing a speaker to invoke a dual relationship or dual set of role obligations, or to create, invoke, or strategically maintain ambiguity between two possible identities (1998, 16)." Kuban speakers are able to invoke both Russian and Ukrainian identities through their speech. The linguistically ambiguous features in their speech enable them to remain in this space that cannot ever be completely categorized as either Russian or Ukrainian. This ambiguity between two possible national identities, in fact, *is* their regional identity.

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[59] The /ɦ/ phoneme enters into one of the most politicized differences between Ukrainian and Russian pronunciation. In the contemporary standard languages, the letter г indicates /g/ in Russian and /ɦ/ in Ukrainian. In early twentieth-century Ukrainian orthography, the separate letter ґ indicated the /g/ phoneme. The letter was banned in the 1930s, as it was not a part of Russian orthography. The differences in pronunciation of the letter г, then, became a socially marked difference between Russian and Ukrainian pronunciation norms (Bilaniuk 2005, 137).

[60] «[…] несмотря на осознание своих генетических украинских корней, считают, например, своим родным языком кубанский, а не украинский.»

Kuban Cossack-ness is defined, for them, by this "in-between-ness," this "neither/nor"; their language forms reflect this "in between" and "neither/nor" identity. The preferred code for Kuban residents is the hybrid and fluid *balachka* that includes both Russian and Ukrainian features.

Language Case Study 2 - Petrovskaja *Stanitsa*

In this second case study, performers from Petrovskaja *stanitsa* demonstrate just how closely Kuban residents index their identity by language use. I include conversation excerpts that reveal playful, casual attitudes about language and the interplay of Ukrainian and Russian cultural influences in the Kuban. With the outdoor festival format, the performance context here is much more public and boisterous than the Chelbasskaja rehearsal. Singers rib each other, tell funny anecdotes, and toss around light-hearted insults as they discuss Kuban identity in front of the audience. Petrovskaja residents, just like the residents of Chelbasskaja, are quite frank and open about their hybrid heritage and language. I offer this second case study as both a contrast in tone and as further evidence (from a different *stanitsa*) of the ways Kuban singers present hybrid images of Kuban Cossacks through the language they use in performance. Petrovskaja performers express their views about identity using language forms that themselves mirror the unresolved arguments about the relative "Ukrainian-ness" or "Russian-ness" of the Kuban region and its residents.

Interview Example 2 - Heritage Distinctions

The transcript below[61] is of two excerpts from a conversation with Petrovskaja performers in which Irina Viktorovna inquires about heritage and language use. In particular, the conversation is

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[61] In contrast to the Chelbasskaja interview, I do not know the names of these performers. I indicate different speakers with "M1, M2,…" for "Man #1, Man #2,…" and "W1, W2,…" for "Woman #1, Woman #2,…". Several times there are many speakers shouting the same thing at once, and for these instances I write "ALL". I assign statements to individual participants as best I could discern: there was a large amount of background noise in the outdoor festival environment (as can be heard in the recording). Furthermore, as before, multiple performers tended to speak at once and often attempted to yell over each other.

about distinctions in the heritage of different ensemble participants and whether one can be considered Kubanian if one was not born in the region.

Table 1.6 - Transcription of Interview Example 2: Heritage Distinctions **[LISTEN]**

IV	Tell me, please, in your ensemble, are you all native Kubanians, or maybe not…		
		ALL	No, no…
		M1	Here a *billy-goat* sits.
		W1	I'm a *billy-goat*.
		M2	No, I'm not a *billy-goat*.
		W1	He's not a *billy-goat* […]
		W1	I, for example, I am from the Trans-Baikal area […] my roots, my dad.
IV	That means, you have only, it turns out, native-born, native-born… [points]		
		ALL	Native-born, native-born [people point]
IV	Native-born, okay.		
		W2	And over there is a native-born man

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IV	Tell me, here is my question: you have local, native people, and you have non-local people. Which language do you speak? Russian? Or in the *chatter*?		
		ALL	In the *chatter*! We *chatter*!
IV	You *chatter*.		
		M1	[…] *Billy-goats chatter.* […]
		W4	It's a local speech…
		W3	When you socialize, for example. How many, she's 30 years in Kuban [points]. I speak to her and I *chatter*, and I begin to *chatter*, and they always correct me.
		W1	And I […] when I arrived here, they asked me, "Do you know how to *chatter*?"
		M1	[…] from the Poltavskaja region settled Kuban, and what is that? Ukrainians.

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	From there come all these last names, all with "-ko"
W5	*Topknots*!
W6	*Topknots*?! Ulechka, Ulechka, Ukrainian is a far cry from the Kuban. […] I will tell you something in Ukrainian now, and you won't understand anything.
W3	That's just it, you know, there *are* a lot of words of course…like that song, "I Throw the Bobbin on the Shelf"
M1	Bobbik? [mishears]
ALL	Bobbin! Bobbin! [song begins]

From the conversation we learn that some members of the ensemble are "locals" (*mestnyj*) and/or "native-born" (*korennoj*), while others are more recent arrivals from different parts of Russia[62]. These members refer to themselves – and are referred to by other members – as *katsapy*, here translated as *billy-goat*. The word *katsap* is a derogatory word used by Ukrainians to describe Russians. There is some debate about the word's etymological origin. Some say the word comes from an elision of *kak tsap*, or "like a billy-goat," and refers to the beards characteristic of "Great Russians." Others suggest that the word evolved from the Arabic *qassab* meaning "butcher" or "skinflint"[63]. Regardless, it is an offensive nickname for Russians that in this context is used rather lightly and unashamedly. Similarly, the word *khokhol*, here translated as *topknot*, is a derogatory term that Russians use to refer to Ukrainians. Literally it refers to the crest of a bird, but it came to describe the topknots that Ukrainian Cossack men wore. Petrovskaja performers use it casually in conversation as a way of emphasizing the Ukrainian heritage of the Kuban region. Both derogatory

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[62] Hege Toje, who conducted fieldwork in the Zakubanskaja *stanitsa* in the early 2000s, observed three categories that have special salience in the region: *priezhye* (arrivals), or those who have recently moved to the *stanitsa* and are identified by the place they migrated from; *mestnye* (locals), to describe people who have resided in the *stanitsa* for several years; and *korennye mestnye* (native-born locals), or residents who are descendants of the first inhabitants and founders of the *stanitsa*. This last identity, *korennoj mestnyj*, is the only one that depends on both kinship and place of residence (2006, 1071).
[63] For more on the debate over the origin of *katsap*, see the word's entry in Ukrainian Wikipedia ("Katsap" 2016).

terms, *katsap* and *khokhol*, are used in this recording as identifiers for members of the ensemble. Speakers employ the terms in the back-and-forth discussion about identity and heritage. The matter-of-fact usage of these offensive terms has a history in the Kuban region. Bondar' observed from field materials that in the late nineteenth – early twentieth centuries the non-Cossack populations of the region began calling former Black Sea Cossacks *khokhly* and former Line Cossacks *katsapy* or *moskali* (1995a, 23). The performers' light-hearted usage of these terms diffuses the tension otherwise associated with the words *khokhol* and *katsap*, and it highlights, again, the pride in this liminality where participants can nonchalantly toss both derogatory national epithets around in public conversations.

There is quite a diversity among the group in terms of heritage and birthplace. Some are native-born Kubanians or locals. One originated as far away as the Trans-Baikal region, while others remark that their ancestors settled in the Kuban from the Poltavskaja region in Ukraine. Yet all of these participants, regardless of origin, "belong" in the ensemble and have been accepted as "one of us" for the purposes of communing and performing Kuban music and culture. Historically, the acceptance of different kinds of people into the Kuban community has a precedent. As Bondar' remarks, "Kuban Cossackdom is multi-ethnic at its roots. Into it flowed not only a predominant Slavic component (Russians, Ukrainians, Montenegrins, Serbs, and others), but also a small quantity of representatives from other ethnic groups (Circassians, Greeks, Gypsies, and others)[64] (1995a, 9)." Ukrainian scholars also note the multi-ethnic nature of early Kuban settlements. Ivanys et al. describe the major settlements of Ukrainian Black Sea Cossacks and Russian Line Cossacks, but they also note the mid-nineteenth century populations of Caucasian mountain peoples as well as refugee serfs who had fled oppressive conditions and overcrowding. Some of the serfs even officially

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[64] «Кубанское казачество - полиэтнично в своей основе. В него вливался не только славянский компонент - преобладающий (русский, украинский, черногорцы, сербы и др.), но и незначительное количество представителей других народов (адыги, греки, цыгане, и др.).»

became Kuban Cossacks (1988, 689). Assimilation of new settlers into the Kuban Cossack ranks of the nineteenth century entailed the members' adoption of the Cossack values, duties, and way of life. From the interview excerpt, we gain insight into what the contemporary requirements for assimilation entail.

One woman who is a relatively recent arrival to the region describes how she has learned to use *balachka*: "When you socialize, for example. How many, she's 30 years in Kuban [points]. I speak to her and I chatter, and I begin to chatter, and they always correct me." When she speaks with her friend who has been in the Kuban for 30 years, she speaks *balachka*. When she begins to speak in the dialect, her long-time Kubanian friend and others correct her dialect use. Then another woman who had moved to the region relatively recently shares right after, "…when I arrived here, they asked me, 'Do you know how to *chatter*?'" These remarks suggest that using the local speech is a significant marker for regional identity. Newcomers quickly realize that *balachka* indexes regional social groups and communities; they endeavor to adopt the speech in order to join these groups. Length of time spent in the Kuban and ancestral heritage are still status markers, but non-locals are valued members of the ensemble and do not seem to be set apart in any way for their outside origins – they are assimilated fully into the group when they learn to speak in *balachka*.

It is remarkable that performers talk about *balachka* as a speech that has to be learned. New speakers of the dialect can be *corrected* in their use of the dialect. *Balachka* might then belong to the same category as the more settled, "fixed lect" language variants that Bilaniuk describes, in which Ukrainian-Russian dialect forms have become solidified and regular – systematized in such a way that there can be a "right" and "wrong" way of using the dialect. Karasev notes that many standard Russian speakers of the region who judge *balachka* as merely the "excessive use of word parasites" (*zloupotreblenije slov-parazitov*) fail to realize how fixed and systematic *balachka* really is: "Hardly anyone realizes that the Kuban dialect has its own phonetic and grammatical regularities, its own vocabulary.

And that is why speakers of the dialect can easily determine those who do not have sufficient

mastery of it but are still trying to *chatter*[65] (2010, 2)." Despite the presence of widely accepted usage

patterns, *balachka* users still exhibit a great deal of variation in their speech – both between different

speakers and within the speech of a single person (as shown in the two speech samples from Lidija

Jakovlevna from Chelbasskaja).

If we think of *balachka* as a non-standard "fixed lect" then, it is interesting to compare the

positive language attitudes *balachka*-speakers have toward their speech in contexts of performance

with the negative ways standard language speakers characterize hybrid dialects. As Bilaniuk and

others have noted, so-called "pure" language use has a lot of social and political value in both Russia

and Ukraine, and it is seen as the ideal (2005, 144–45). Criticisms of *surzhyk*, for example, abound in

Ukrainian academic and popular discourse; *surzhyk* is characterized by a range of negative

associations, including:

> […] bad manners, lack of education, cognitive degradation, a moral and ethical evil, a perversion of
> the laws of nature, a crisis of civilization, a bastard, a genetic admixture, spiritual plebeianism,
> absence of aesthetics, linguistic evidence of being colonized, and a *sovkova mova* – embodiment of
> Soviet oppression and degraded culture (Bilaniuk 2005, 146).

Many speakers of fixed-lect, Ukrainian-Russian hybrids have internalized this criticism, which has

contributed to language-based insecurities and shame. The Petrovskaja ensemble members, in

contrast, demonstrate great pride in their version of a fixed-lect, Ukrainian-Russian hybrid speech.

When Irina Viktorovna asks the (albeit leading) question, "Which language do you speak? Russian?

Or in the *chatter*?" the participants respond unanimously and enthusiastically, "In the *chatter*! We

chatter!" Those who moved to the Kuban from other regions express an eagerness to practice, learn,

and ultimately become proficient in *balachka*. In contrast to the self-critical and ashamed ways in

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[65] «Мало кому известно, что в казачьем диалекте есть свои закономерности в звуковом и грамматическом строе,
свой словарный состав, поэтому сами носители диалекта легко узнают того, кто не владеет им в достаточной
степени, но пытается 'балакать'.»

which some hybrid language speakers discuss their speech, *balachka*-speakers here embrace their dialect and celebrate it as a marker of their regional identity – an identity in which they take great pride. This is not to say that *balachka* is without critics or negative associations in the Russian context. Standard Russian is still largely the ideal in terms of social prestige and power.

There are interrelated circumstances at play that encourage the village ensemble members' pride in the Kuban group identity and its associated speech. The first circumstance has to do with the revived prestige of the Kuban Cossack identity and Kuban Cossack folk music since the 1970s and 80s. Zakharchenko's success with the Kuban Cossack Choir has helped create a space in which the expression of Kuban Cossack identity (and the language that marks it) is imbued with respect and distinction. Many view the members of small village ensembles (like the Chelbasskaja and Petrovskaja) as authentic bearers of the regional culture, and thus the local residents can be proud of their proficiency in the Kuban dialect, their knowledge of Kuban repertoire, and their unique musical and vocal style. Village singers are quite aware of their worth as both authentic cultural representatives and official "informants" for the Kuban Cossack Choir. This understandably engenders among performers a sense of being both desirable and exceptional; I believe this is one significant reason why Kuban residents demonstrate pride in (the otherwise "lowly") *balachka* as a marker of their regional uniqueness and authenticity. It is also why new arrivals might strive to learn *balachka* – to be "a part of the action," so to speak, and to join a prestigious cultural tradition.

A related reason for the proud and unreserved use of *balachka* among performers has to do with the context of performance itself. Coming back to Dell Hymes' work on language in folklore performance and the idea that speakers use language in performance "to assume the identity of [the] tradition's authentic performer" (1981, 84) – the language that represents the authentic performer in this case is *balachka*. Ensemble members create a notion of the authentic Kuban performer as one who speaks in a dialect that can be characterized neither as Ukrainian nor Russian. The "other-ness"

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of Kuban identity is performed through speech that has "other-ly," un-categorizable qualities. Just as Bilaniuk describes the way performance contexts allows Ukrainian rappers and other artists to unapologetically brandish *surzhyk* in their shows, the context of performance affords Kuban residents a platform in which their dialect speech – judged negatively in other contexts – becomes the ideal.

In addition to the proud use of non-standard, hybrid *balachka* in performance, Kuban performers embrace hybridity through the content of their conversations on language and identity. We saw this in the Chelbasskaja example with the oscillation between statements that emphasized connections to Ukraine and statements that emphasize connections to Russia. This play upon oppositions is also present in the Petrovskaja example. For instance, let us look more closely at the conversation segment when the topic turns to the qualities of *balachka* and how close *balachka* is to Ukrainian language. The earlier discussion of the dialect and Kuban residents' Ukrainian heritage elicited the "*Khokhly!*" descriptor, which in turn prompted one woman to disagree and offer a counterargument, "Ulechka, Ulechka, Ukrainian is a far cry from the Kuban." Then soon after she again cuts through, "I will tell you something in Ukrainian now, and you won't understand *anything*." Here, as in the first interview example from Chelbasskaja, performers make emphatic statements about national belonging, but there is never unanimous, unfettered agreement. There seems always to be some kind of dissent, or caveat, or "No wait, but what about…" Here, upon hearing the Ukrainian epithet *khokhly*, the woman disagrees with the use of that identity marker for Kubanians by proclaiming how different the Kuban dialect is from Ukrainian.

Speech Sample 5: Woman on Kuban Dialect versus Ukrainian

The language forms of her statement present other ambiguities. I transcribe[66] and translate a

portion of it below to show again the way hybrid language forms can destabilize even unequivocal

statements like, "Ukrainian is a far cry from the Kuban. I will tell you something in Ukrainian now,

and you won't understand *anything*."

Table 1.7 - Transcription of Speech Sample 5: Woman on Kuban Dialect versus Ukrainian **[LISTEN]**

WOM:	…do	ukrajinskofo	dal<u>ɛ</u>ko	Kubani.
UKR:	…do	ukrajins'kofo	dal<u>ɛ</u>ko	Kubani.
RUS:	…dʌ	ukrʌinskəvə	dʌli<u>ko</u>	Kubani.
GLOSS:	…to	Ukrainian	far away	for the Kuban.
ENG:	…*Ukrainian is a far cry from the Kuban.*			

In the above speech sample, the woman is saying that the Kuban (and accordingly the dialect that is

spoken in the Kuban) is "far away" from Ukrainian language. However, she makes this statement

using a speech that is nearly identical to standard Ukrainian (full-value vowels, use of the glottal

fricative /ɦ/, and Ukrainian stress patterns). Her following statement ("I will tell you something in

Ukrainian now, and you won't understand *anything*.") indicates (or at least claims) that she is

proficient in Ukrainian and could conduct a kind of experiment to see how well Kubanians

understand "real" Ukrainian. So perhaps, in the earlier statement, she is consciously manipulating

her speech to sound more Ukrainian in order to emphasize her point, a sort of, "Look, I'm speaking

Ukrainian now, doesn't this sound different from the Kuban dialect?" Consciously or not, her

speech maintains a tension: the meaning of her words claims that the Kuban dialect is far from

standard Ukrainian, but the phonology of her words reflect a speech that is very close to standard

Ukrainian.

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[66] Transcription method remains the same, with the addition of underlined portions to indicate stressed syllables for words that have stress variation between standard Ukrainian and standard Russian forms.

A different woman then interjects about how there really *are* a lot of Ukrainian words in Kuban speech – here, again, is the "play on oppositions" in which participants keep a definitive resolution at bay through disagreement and counterarguments. This different woman supports her statement with musical "proof" by citing a Ukrainian folk song the ensemble has in their repertoire, "I Throw the Bobbin on the Shelf" (*Kynu kuzhil' na polytsju*)[67]. After which, the accordionist takes this as his cue and begins to play the Ukrainian song. Other singers and musicians continue chatting about the song, but the conversation gradually dies out as one singer begins the first line, "I throw the bobbin on the shelf," at which point all the other female singers join in with the next line, "I go out onto the street…" (*Sama pidu na vulytsju*). The transition from speech to song here reflects a performance pattern I often observed: performers sing a song, then offer commentary on that song (its history, its meaning, its relation to Kuban culture). The conversation then develops until it prompts a member to think of another song (similar to the previous one, or in contrast, or particularly notable). At which point that new song begins and the pattern repeats itself. This sort of organic transition from conversation to song was also a part of the performance structure for ensembles from other *stanitsy*, including the Chelbasskaja rehearsal from the first long example.

The mode of transition from speech to song in the above example is notable. The mention of the song "I Throw the Bobbin on the Shelf" – and the subsequent performance of that song – effectively ends the identity conversation and the verbal back-and-forth about the Kuban's ties (or lack thereof) to Ukraine and Ukrainian. Music serves as a "resolution," or more accurately an "anti-resolution" – a temporary end to a conversation that has no conclusive, "winning" position. The dialogue on language and identity seems only to develop insofar as it moves the performance forward and "launches" the next song, at which point, performers are happy to leave the debate (at

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[67] Amusingly, the Ukrainian words of the title cause some confusion for a male performer who does not understand or mishears – immediately fulfilling the first woman's prediction that Kubanians would not understand Ukrainian if it were spoken to them.

whatever point it may be) to join enthusiastically in the music-making. I discuss the role that music plays in both maintaining and transcending the tension between Ukrainian and Russian national identities in the next chapter.

Conclusion

As I demonstrated in my analysis of the above examples, Kuban dialect speech confirms Woolard's concept of bivalency and other forms of simultaneity (interference and code-switching) in which the two standard codes of Ukrainian and Russian are simultaneously invoked. Woolard notes that bivalency in the context of performance "does not go unnoticed." She remarks, "[…] it is useful to consider well-received and increasingly frequent public occurrences of bivalency as strategic aspects of performance where oppositions are played upon (1998, 14)." The hybridity of *balachka* does not go unnoticed, least of all by the performers themselves. Kuban singers deploy *balachka* and openly discuss language in ways that play upon the opposition between standard Ukrainian and standard Russian speech and, by extension, the opposition between Ukrainian and Russian national identities. Their language, which they themselves describe as distinct from both Russian and Ukrainian, reflects a regional character that has both Russian and Ukrainian characteristics, but is nevertheless its own separate identity – one that cannot be encapsulated by a non-hybrid national identity like "Russian" or "Ukrainian."

CHAPTER TWO - The Musical Practices of Rural Kuban Performers

Introduction

My goal for this chapter is to demonstrate some of the ways rural Kuban performers present nuanced images of Kuban Cossacks through their musical practices. Music, just like language, is a powerful index of identity. Kuban *stanitsa* singers express similar inclusive attitudes toward the hybridity of their musical repertoires as they do toward their hybrid and fluid language use. As the musical examples in this chapter show, rural ensembles sing a great variety of songs, from old Ukrainian-language Zaporizhian folk songs to Soviet-era propaganda verses sung in Russian. Moreover, performers embed quite contrasting songs (in terms of language, origin, age) in stories of their childhood and memories of collective singing. Ensembles include, juxtapose, and speak intimately about songs from both Russian and Ukrainian national categories. This helps create an image of Kuban Cossacks as not-quite-Russian and not-quite-Ukrainian. Rather, Kuban Cossacks are ones who can effortlessly shift between more Russian-sounding and more Ukrainian-sounding songs – they are proficient in and have deep personal histories with both. Just as the earliest Kuban Cossack singers musically positioned themselves with hybrid repertoires of both the more Russian Line Cossack and more Ukrainian Black Sea Cossack songs, contemporary Kuban Cossack singers continue this musical legacy in the ways they embrace songs across national boundaries.

It is often difficult to determine a discrete national heritage for songs in *stanitsa* ensembles' repertoires. Kuban historian, Valerij Ratushnjak, writes of the variegated nature of Kuban folk

culture, "The folklore of the Slavic-speaking population of Kuban is a phenomenon that is complicated in all aspects – historical, genre, and ethnic[68] (1996, 306)." The editors of published Kuban songbooks clearly struggle with the groupings of songs; categorizations often reflect the compilers' political views more than actual musical, lyrical or historical demarcations[69]. Sometimes origins and heritage of songs are clear, or at least some songs are undisputedly "assigned" as either Russian or Ukrainian on the basis of language and/or content. For example, a Ukrainian-language song about Zaporozhian Cossack history will be consistently identified in histories and songbooks as "Ukrainian," whereas a more recent "Cossack romance" (*kazachij romans*) based on Russian-language poetry will be identified as exclusively "Russian." Village ensembles enjoy singing both the Russian-language verses of Pushkin and the Ukrainian-language verses of Shevchenko, the Russian and Ukrainian "national poets," respectively (Bondar′ 1995, 23); such pieces are also categorized along national lines without much argument. Many songs of *stanitsa* repertoires, however (as I discuss in more detail in the case studies within this chapter), exhibit a variety of influences – both through time and across cultural boundaries – that make it difficult to assign them national categories.

Certain musical practices of *stanitsa* ensembles further complicate such attempts to classify particular songs along ethnic or linguistic lines – and relatedly to classify Kuban Cossacks' national identity on the basis of their musical culture. For one, the lyrics of both Ukrainian and Russian songs often contain alterations that reflect local Kuban regionalisms in terms of dialect and content. So *stanitsa* performers might modify a song or make up completely new verses; they might sing in the

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[68] «Фольклор славяноязычного населения Кубани--явление, сложное во всех отношениях--историческом, жанровом, и этническом.»

[69] Some songbooks, like Akim Bigdaj's *Pesni kubanskikh kazakov* ([1898] 1992), organize Kuban songs based on their themes or roles (e.g. Historical Songs (*istoricheskije pesni*), Military Activity and Marching Songs (*vojenno-bytovyje i pokhodnyje pesni*), or Wedding Songs (*svadebnyje pesni*). Other songbooks, like Ilya Petrusenko's *Kuban' v pesne* (1999) have an organization based on national identity. Petrusenko's song categories include suggestive headers such as "How Russian Songs Found their Way to the Kuban" (*Kak pesni russkije na Kuban' popali*) and "How Ukrainian Songs Found their Way to the Kuban" (*Kak pesni ukrainskije na Kuban' popali*). He also has separate sections for Adyghe songs (*Adygeja – Pesnja moja*) and uniquely "Kubanian" songs (*Tsveti, Kuban'!*).

balachka dialect or insert regional vocabulary in a so-called "Russian" or "Ukrainian" song; they also might mix idioms, as it were, and combine lyrics from different genres into the same song. So some songs whose national belonging might otherwise be clear, will – as part of a village ensemble's repertoire – assume ambiguities and other layers of identity.

In this chapter I also point out musical qualities and other performance practices of *stanitsa* ensembles that differ from more commercial or mainstream performing groups, especially other groups that strictly define themselves as either Ukrainian or Russian national folk ensembles. For one, *stanitsa* performances are marked by attention to events in regional history and strong ties to a regional identity. Rural performers favor themes of regional uniqueness and separateness; national patriotism or alignment with a national belonging can be notably absent. For example, the song from Petrovskaja *stanitsa*, "We Are From Petrovskaja, We Live in the Kuban" (*My s Petrovskoj, na Kubani zhivjom*), which I describe in further detail below, proclaims a pride in *stanitsa*-level and regional identities – both of which seem to be more salient to rural performers than national identities. In contrast, more commercial ensembles are very interested in representing national allegiance with both their repertoire choices and the ways in which they categorize or introduce particular songs. This phenomenon relates to another difference that I highlight in this chapter: *stanitsa* performers do not feel the need to label songs as Russian or Ukrainian. Instead, they introduce songs in the context of their own personal experiences with them. When pressed, they can speak of the origins or language of songs, but they still do so in a way that blurs national distinctions. They more naturally gravitate towards categorization of songs in terms of the situations, traditions, or times of their lives in which they typically sang the songs as they grew up in the region. Ukrainian and Russian folk ensembles actively frame the same songs in terms of national categories; they employ language, instrumentation, costumes, etc. that emphasize national heritage and claim the songs for a certain nationality.

Other significant features of *stanitsa* ensembles' performances that I explore in Chapter Two relate to specific musical practices. I foreground musical features that reflect the identities of performers and the organizational structure of the ensembles. *Stanitsa* performers are not just Kuban Cossacks, but they are also people "of a certain age," quite often women; this affects not only repertoire choices (such as a tendency toward songs with a first-person female narrator) but also musical qualities such as timbre, pitch, vocal quality and tempo. I observed the organizational structure of *stanitsa* ensembles to be quite democratic – the performers often interactively and cooperatively decide which songs to sing. Individual singers have a say not only in *which* songs they will perform but also in *how* those songs are performed. During performance, one can hear individual singers add improvisatory flourishes; push and pull on the tempo, pitch, and volume; and sing lyrics with different emphases and pronunciation patterns. Certain qualities of the music reflect heterogeneity and a communal structure. Such musical features – in addition to the ones that signal age, gender, class and other social identities – set the *stanitsa* ensembles apart from other vocal groups that engage with the same songs or claim to represent the Kuban Cossack tradition in their performances. My analysis of unique musical features in *stanitsa* performances sets the stage then for the third chapter, in which I focus on the ways the music and performance practices of the Kuban Cossack Choir (a large, commercial, Russian national ensemble) do not align with the way the tradition is performed and experienced by contemporary rural performers.

To support my arguments, I again look at recordings from the Chelbasskaja rehearsal and the Petrovskaja performance in Slavjansk-na-Kubani. In contrast to the emphasis on language in Chapter One, I concentrate here on performers' dialogues about music and repertoire, as well as the renderings and sequences of particular songs. I attune to the ways performers describe and introduce certain songs or genres, and I also pay attention to musical and extramusical practices that signify social identities and ensemble structure. Musical and interview examples help me to

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demonstrate the ambiguous and distinctive ways in which *stanitsa* singers engage with Kuban

Cossack identity in their music performance.

Music and Kuban Cossack Identity

Prior to the twentieth century, it was Cossacks' paramilitary roles, independent self-

governance, horsemanship, and border-defending prowess that largely defined Cossack identities,

but since the beginning of the Soviet era, music – especially choral song – has been a dominant

marker of Kuban Cossack culture. Pre-revolutionary historians of Kuban Cossackdom did of course

remark upon the musical traditions of the region, and they recognized the importance of music in

Kuban Cossack life. But during the decossackization initiative when Soviet authorities persecuted

Kuban Cossacks and ultimately destroyed their border-defending, paramilitary roles, music became

one of the only ways residents could express their regional identity. The history of vocal

performance and the changing role of music in the Kuban region helps explain both why music is

such an important marker of Kuban identity for contemporary residents, and also why music is

currently such a contested domain for scholars of Kuban Cossack culture.

Two major themes emerge in almost all histories of early Kuban Cossack music: one is the

centrality of music to the Kuban Cossack way of life, and the other is the presence of multiple,

hybrid influences in the development of Kuban Cossack musical culture. Petr Tkachenko, for

example, writes of the importance of music for the newly-formed Kuban Cossack Host, noting:

"Already [in the 1880s] song had become not just a form of recreation, but also a philosophy for

life[70] (2011, 14)." Others have written of the importance of music to Cossack settlers of the region

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[70] «Песня становилась уже не только отдохновением, но и философией жизни […].»; Tkachenko emphasizes the importance of song in the maintenance of the Kuban dialect, especially in the absence of a *balachka*-based literary tradition: "The underdevelopment of the literary tradition led to the human soul's search for other means of embodiment. It ultimately found the outlet of folk music (2011, 14)." («Неразвитость литературной традиции приводила к тому, что дух человеческий отыскивал иные формы своего воплощения, выливаясь в основном в народную песню.»)

even before there was such a thing as a Kuban Cossack. Analyses of the region's pre-Kuban-Cossack musical traditions often focus on the mixing of Cossack groups and the co-presence of those Cossack groups' different musical cultures. V.N. Ratushnjak, for example, writes about how the vocal music traditions of the Black Sea Cossacks had a great deal of "Little Russian" (*malorossijskij*) influences; that is why we see the presence of Chumak songs and folk ballads, as well as the works of lyric poets (*liriki*) and Ukrainian folk minstrels (*kobzari*) in Kuban Cossack repertoire. The music culture of Line Cossacks was also influential in the region. Line Cossack music reflected more southern Russian traditions and showed the influence of Don and Terek folklore, especially in the genre of historical songs (Ratushnjak 1996, 306–7).

Earlier historians also recognized both the importance of music and the presence of hybrid features. Ivan Kijashko, an early twentieth-century Kuban music historian and *yesaul*[71] of the Kuban Cossack Host, focuses on the way separate Cossack groups brought different musical traditions to the Kuban. He remarks on the "Little Russian" and Ukrainian influences and about the strong ties to music that the former Zaporozhian Cossacks brought with them when they were relocated to the Kuban region:

> A love of singing and music is an integral part of nearly every Little Russian's soul, and nowhere, it seems, was there such richly developed folk poetry as in Ukraine. The whole history of the long-suffering people clearly poured into the whole collection of folk songs, epic songs, and epic poetry. […] Their songs and epics include all the emotions and values of the Zaporozhian: love for God, Orthodoxy, homeland, camaraderie, one's mother, sisters, and brother-Zaporozhians, as well as

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[71] *Yesaul* (Ukr. *osavul*) was a military administrative post (and rank) within a Cossack host that was similar to an aide-de-camp.

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bravery, gaiety, and pride […]. […] The Zaporozhians brought this very love of music and singing with them to the Kuban […][72, 73] ([1911] 2006, 6).

Kijashko draws a direct connection between the Kuban and a cultural heritage in which folk songs and singing embodied the deepest values of the people and preserved the most important events that shaped the people's history. For the Zaporozhians, says Kijashko, music was inseparable from their identity; this feature of Zaporozhian culture was then inevitably brought to the Kuban with Catherine the Great's resettlement program, and it remained as a feature of the developing Kuban Cossack culture.

Contemporary scholars echo this assessment that music has historically been and remains a way to express Kuban Cossack values. Regional historian Natal'ja Korsakova notes in her analysis of early twentieth-century (ca. 1911) vocal and musical ensembles of the Kuban that music was intertwined with the daily needs and activities of Kuban Cossack communities, and so vocal and instrumental ensembles had special value within the hosts. Music-making was tied very closely to the core values and military roles of Cossacks. Korsakova, like Kijashko, Tkachenko, and many others, asserts that songs constituted the spiritual center around which Kuban Cossack identity was formed and maintained. She writes:

> In the structure of the Kuban Cossack Host the vocal and instrumental ensembles occupied a distinct position. First in terms of cultural activities that called for the performance of musical works: participation in church services at the Host cathedral and preservation of Cossack fighting songs and folk songs. And second, they acted as a special, spiritual core that reinforced the military duty, the special role of the Cossack – as defender of the Fatherland and the Cossacks' family and historical values. The Host choir took part in the most important life events and history of Kuban

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[72] «Любовь к пению и музыке есть неотъемлемая принадлежность души почти каждого малоросса, и нигде, кажется, не была так богато развита народная поэзия, как в Украине. Вся история этого многострадального народа ярко вылилась в целом ряде народных песен, дум и былин. Всякий период их истории, всякое важное историческое событие, всякое славное казацкое имя — записано в этих песнях и думах. […] Их песни и думы заключают в себе все чувства и понятия запорожца: любовь к Богу, православию, Родине, товариству по куреню, матери, сестрам, братьям — запорожцам, храбрость, веселость, гордость […]. […] Эту же любовь к музыке и пению запорожцы перенесли с собою и на Кубань […].»

[73] Kijashko's exclusive focus on Ukraine as the true cultural font from which Kuban musical traditions developed is noteworthy – it certainly points to the contemporary controversy over the national belonging of Kuban identity and musical culture. See Introduction.

Cossackdom: at military and secular holidays, at the dedication of historical monuments, in parades with the Cossack regalia, and in formal ceremonials[74] (2006, 191).

Korsakova recognizes music as the key means by which the Kuban Cossack Host preserved and propagated its values and identity, its sense of community and cohesiveness. Musical performances were part of the structure of everyday life, and Kuban Cossacks sang songs for a wide range of military, religious, and secular activities and celebrations (Korsakova 2006, 191–92).

Many of these pre-revolutionary functions of music-making disappeared with the revolutions of 1917 and subsequent civil war. Cossack hosts had for many generations served as the border guards of the tsars and had begun experiencing an identity crisis with the abdication of Nicholas II. Kuban Cossacks, although they were attached to their function as military frontiersmen in service to the Russian tsar, nevertheless felt separate and distinct from the Empire as a whole. As Olga Andriewsky writes, the Kuban Cossacks had both a strong "spirit of particularism" as well as an attachment to their land and independent self-government which led them actually to declare independence in February 1918 and align themselves with the nascent (and also short-lived) Ukrainian People's Republic (1979, 30, 40). This independence was short-lived, however, and with the victory of the Red Army, the Bolsheviks issued a "decossackization" (*razkazachivanie*) decree in 1919 that effectively removed any power or autonomy from the Cossack hosts and liquidated Cossack regiments. Furthermore, rapid collectivization resulted in the man-made famine of 1932–33 that decimated the population of what is now Ukraine and southern Russia, including the Kuban

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[74] «В структуре Кубанского казачьего войска певческий и музыкантский хоры занимали особое положение. Во-первых, как учреждения культуры, призванные исполнять музыкальные произведения, участвовать в богослужении в войсковом соборе, сохранять строевые и народные казачьи песни. А во-вторых, это особый духовный стержень, который укрепляет воинский долг, особую роль казака – защитника Отечества, своих семейных и исторических ценностей. Войсковой певческий хор принимал участие в главных событиях жизни и истории кубанского казачества: войсковых и светских праздниках, освящении исторических памятников, в парадах с выносом казачьих регалий, торжественных церемониалах.»

region[75]. World War II also, of course, took an extreme toll on the region. Suffice it to say, there were many events of the early twentieth century that devastated Kuban Cossacks and their way of life, and this had a direct effect on musical practices. Bondar' writes, "These tragic events in the history of Kuban Cossackdom could not have had more of an impact on its culture. Churches closed, meaningful community events and holidays were forbidden, and even many historical songs were banned[76] (1995a, 25)." The Kuban Cossack identity was essentially demilitarized, and Kuban Cossack culture survived publicly in the Soviet Union only in the form of officially sanctioned folk ensembles (Derluguian and Cipko 1997, 1489). Hege Toje explains what this meant for Kuban Cossack identity, "[…] the Cossacks were assigned a kind of folkloristic museum role where the only accepted display of their traditions was in publicly organised song and dance performances" (2006, 1067). Throughout the Soviet era, music – especially singing – came to be the primary signifier for Kuban Cossack regional identity. Toje continues, "[…] the local identification with Cossackdom became more associated with songs and rituals, rather than with the previous socio-economic livelihoods combining farming and military skills[77] (2006, 1068)."

Kuban Cossack songs and singing acquired new contexts and settings now that they were divorced from their military associations. Although there were now official Soviet folk ensembles dedicated to the performance of Kuban Cossack music, these ensembles were strictly regulated and frequently suffered from periods of dissolution due to purges and restrictions (see Chapter Three). So the existing song culture in the region, which had been public and largely masculine, now became connected with a private, more feminine sphere. Women, who were more likely than men to survive

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[75] For more on the experience of the 1932 – 1933 famine in the Kuban region, see the collection of testimonies in *Istoricheskaja pamjat' naselenija juga Rossii o golode 1932-1933 gg.* (Bondar' and Matveev 2009).

[76] «Эти трагичные события в истории кубанского казачества не могли не отразиться на его культуре. Закрывалась храмы, запрещались общественно-значимые обряды и праздники, под запретом были даже многие исторические песни.»

[77] What Toje describes here in the Kuban Cossack context matches a larger trend with Soviet nationalities policy, in which regional and national folk cultures were stripped of any ideological import that might inspire separatism or threaten Soviet dominance. See Chapter Three.

the traumas of decossackization and the early twentieth-century wars preserved the Kuban Cossack identity through the preservation of pre-revolutionary stories, song texts, and musical practices (Toje 2006, 1064). Toje writes in detail about the feminization of Kuban Cossack culture:

> Old women may thus be described as the main carriers and communicators of Cossack history, which has influenced the shaping of the representations of the local past. Women were, to a greater extent than men, tied to the local community. A common feature of the local stories is that they all revolve around issues such as household organisation, family relations, love and infidelity. The military duties, stories from battle, or the way the *stanitsa* was organised by the Cossack administration are not a part of these stories. These were spheres to which women had limited access, and therefore, little knowledge (2006, 1064).

Regional figures like Konstantin Perenizhko (*zamatamana*[78] of the contemporary Kuban Cossack Host) and Nikolai Bondar' (professor and ethnographer at Kuban State University) believe that women singing in the home is the key reason why the Kuban Cossack identity even still exists today (Appleby 2010, 859). Women's song and story-telling traditions, in fact, have played a crucial role in both the re-establishment of Kuban Cossack music in the public sphere and the restored prestige that the identity enjoys in the region.

Towards the end of the Soviet era, Kuban cultural scholars, historians, and musicologists developed a renewed interest in Cossack identity. They initiated the Kuban Cossack "revival"[79] through the formation of clubs and organizations that promoted Cossack cultural traditions. *Glasnost'* allowed for access to archives and an expanded tolerance for the exploration of Cossack history (Skinner 1994, 1018). In the late 80s and early 90s, the special interest clubs led to the

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[78] An *ataman* (Ukr. *otaman/hetman*) is the title of a leader and military commander of a Cossack host. In today's context, the *zamatamana* or *zamestitel' atamana* (deputy *ataman*), is a kind of minor representative of the host. For example, Appleby refers to Perenizhko as the "cultural spokesman" of the Kuban Cossack Host (2010, 863). And indeed, Perenishko is known for appearing on regional talk shows and local media interviews to share and promote the Host's traditional values and conservative views on immigration. See examples of this in *Vzgljad* (Kostjukova and Ivanov 2012) and on local news channel Kuban24 ("Zamatamana Kubanskogo kazach'ego vojska Konstantin Perenizhko: zhenshchina dolzhna khranit' domashnij ochag, a muzhchina--okhranjat' porjadok" 2015).

[79] Barbara Skinner (1994) and Brian Boeck (1998) use the term "revival" to describe the renewed interest in Kuban Cossack identity that began in the 1970s and 80s and has grown throughout the 90s and today. Some who use "revival" (like Boeck), have chosen this term because it indicates the political and national overtones that they believe are present in the movement. Others use phrases like "Kuban Neo-Cossack Movement" (Derluguian and Cipko 1997) and "contemporary Cossack movement" (Toje 2006).

(re-)institution of local festivals and regional museums, as well as the creation of song and dance folklore groups. Ethnographic research in the region began to flourish, and many cultural scholars affiliated with Kuban State University in Krasnodar conducted excursions to surrounding *stanitsy* to record and catalogue songs and other cultural traditions (Boeck 1998, 641–42).

The State Academic Kuban Cossack Choir (*Gosudarstvennyj Akademicheskij Kubanskij Kazachij Khor*) has been a major force in the Kuban Cossack revival, both musically and more generally. In the late Soviet period, Zakharchenko and the Choir were heavily involved in traveling around *stanitsy* and collecting material from the small, primarily female ensembles – this material formed the foundation of its repertoire. Although it was subject to Soviet censorship, the Choir, as a state-sponsored folklore ensemble, was able to perform Cossack culture publicly in a way that no other institution could at the time (see Chapter Three). In the 1970s and 80s the choir enjoyed significant popularity in the Soviet Union and abroad, recorded several albums, and even made major television appearances. Boeck notes the significance of the Choir's success: "The mere existence of the Choir and its dynamic director Zakharchenko ensured that some officially sanctioned memory of Cossack culture was kept alive (1998, 641)."

This legacy of music as the central (and practically only) means for promotion and perpetuation of Kuban Cossack culture is apparent in contemporary regional identity formation. Vocal music performance continues to be a major site through which rural Kuban residents express and negotiate their identity as Kuban Cossacks. While the post-Soviet era has seen the Kuban Cossack identity become re-militarized, re-masculinized, and more youth-oriented (as through the reinstatement of the Kuban Cossack Host in 1990 and the integration of male Cossack organizations into local politics[80]), many still see the elderly, mostly female singers of the *stanitsy* as the more legitimate and

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[80] For more about these processes and the ways they coexist and compete with other kinds of Kuban Cossack identity in the region, see Cossack Identity in the New Russia: Kuban Cossack Revival and Local Politics (Toje 2006) and The

"authentic" bearers of Kuban Cossack traditions. As Toje succinctly puts it, "The local dialect and the Cossack songs are often presented as the most genuine expression of Cossackdom (2006, 1072)." She noted, in her fieldwork in the Kuban in the early 2000s, that the majority of her informants on Kuban Cossack identity – even ones associated with the new masculine, military Cossack groups – cited their grandmothers as the main source of their information about the region's past (2006, 1064).

The music history of the Kuban region offers context for the manner in which elderly *stanitsa* performers discuss their personal experiences with music in this chapter's interview examples, as well as the zeal with which they preserve Kuban vocal traditions and the pride they take in expressing their identity through song. It also explains the reasons for which institutions like the Kuban Cossack Choir value rural performers as informants and bearers of what they see as authentic Kuban Cossack musical culture.

Theory on (Folk) Music and Identity

In addition to a consideration of regional music history, recent ethnomusicological theory that explores the connections between folk music, identity, community, and politics is useful to this project for a number of reasons. One, it highlights the power of music in the processes of community and identity creation. Two, it acknowledges identity creation through music as an ongoing, ever-changing process; contrary to previous folk music scholarship, recent research recognizes the mutability of folk repertoires and the agency of performers to change and develop repertoires according to their understandings of themselves within larger social and cultural contexts. Three, it attends to the ways in which regional identities, as represented through folk music performances, interact with cores/peripheries, and consequently the ways folk performances can

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Kuban' Cossack Revival (1989 – 1993): The Beginnings of a Cossack National Movement in the North Caucasus Region (Boeck 1998).

both problematize cultural boundaries and impend hybrid identities. Lastly, it privileges folk performers' claims about music-making, its social significance in their lives, and its role in their self-identification and community belonging – as opposed to the more prescriptive bent that the study of folk music has typically entailed.

Julian Gerstin, through his work on the traditional musics of Martinique, has developed useful models for considering the ways in which folk performances offer opportunities for participants to (co-)construct identities and reputations for themselves. He builds upon previous ethnomusicological scholarship that asserts "the actual power of music, as a socially constructed symbolic discourse, to shape other socially constructed discourses such as those of politics, history, and identity (Gerstin 1998, 385)." He also emphasizes the treatment of music as a process rather than a product, and the idea that the process of music-making is always guided by performers' ideologies about cultural and social issues. His major contribution is in recognizing the identity- and reputation-building work that is achieved in the micro-contexts of individual performances; the small, face-to-face interactions between performers – both in and about what he calls a "musical scene" – are crucial sites in which individual and community identities are negotiated and affirmed. And, especially significant to the context of Kuban *stanitsa* ensembles, they are also sites in which larger-scale ideas about belonging and cultural identity are played out in the day-to-day lives of performers. Gerstin more eloquently states, "[…] performers typically filter ideas about identity and politics – ideas drawn from high-profile, public realms of discourse such as nationalist ideology, oppositional movements, and the media – through this immediate context (1998, 387)."

I use Gerstin's approach to examine *stanitsa* performers' conversations about repertoire, specifically the ways performers arrive at decisions about which song to sing next, the ways they discuss the history/origin of songs, and the appraisals they make about the musical prowess and legitimacy of the ensemble. These micro-contexts in performance reveal much about the range of

songs that Kuban ensembles claim as "their own" and the ways these songs are constructed by performers as being iconic of Kuban Cossack identity. It is a way of interpreting the musical content of performances – in intersection with the linguistic content – as integral to Hymes' process of "assuming the identity of the tradition's authentic performer (1981, 84)." Gerstin asserts that ideas of "We are the X and this is our music" are strategic, aspirational, and collaboratively determined (1998, 408–9). I look at recordings and transcripts with the aim of exploring the Kuban Cossack identity aspirations that performers exhibit through their dialogue about and performances of ensemble repertoires.

On the subject of repertoire, ethnomusicologist Philip Bohlman, in *The Study of Folk Music in the Modern World* (1988), offers expedient observations on the flexibility of folk repertoires and the ways oral tradition repertoires can enact the constantly-developing identity intentions of performing groups. Folk repertoires are, he says, "a measure of a community's sense of itself, its boundaries, and the shared values drawing it together (1988, 14)." Variations among performance sets, as well as the changes made to them over time, reflect psychological, cultural and social factors. Previous theories of folk music have only attributed oral tradition change to negative, passive processes – for example, a song's lyrics change because performers forget the "correct" lyrics, or a melody is misperceived by performers and then is sung "inaccurately" in future iterations. Bohlman, in contrast, advocates a more active and intentional interpretation of change and variation in folk repertoires. He describes concepts such as "consolidation," "substitution," and "addition" as patterns of musical and textual change that all reveal a community's self-identification choices and, relatedly, performers' current sense of what belongs or fits in the community's repertoire (1988, 19–24). He also expands the concept of "forgetting" as a mode of change in folk songs and repertoires; the forgetting of songs or features can be negatively interpreted as degenerative, but it can also be positively interpreted as creative – insofar as "mistakes" and "forgetfulness" can engender new versions of songs or allow for

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new additions to the repertoire that better reflect the cultural needs of the community. Bohlman considers all these patterns of change as part of the process of "communal re-creation" that occurs in folk music transmission – songs are gradually reworked and adapted by individuals or small groups, but these reworkings are subject to the judgment of the larger performing community. Folk performance involves dynamic, communal negotiation among performers about what constitutes the tradition and the ways in which it relates to salient cultural contexts (Bohlman 1988, 25).

The dialectical and ever-changing qualities of oral tradition make classification of its elements (song origins, language, melodies, vocal style, etc.) a thorny and controversial process. The patterns of change inherent to folk repertoires can overlap and combine over time in such a way that boundaries and categories become blurred. An ensemble might substitute new lyrics into an existing song or adapt preexisting text to a borrowed melody. A stylistic flourish might be adopted from a neighboring group's performance practices. Some songs might combine, or certain stanzas might fall out of use. In short, these mechanisms invite hybridity and ambiguity, for a concrete element like a song can exhibit overlapping histories and a variety of influences. A folk repertoire has a stable canon, but it is a canon that is constantly interacting with the boundaries of the tradition and absorbing new elements and cultural functions. As Bohlman remarks, "The dialectic between canonic core and boundary accounts for both the stability necessary if a folk music tradition is to have meaning for a community and the changeability required to withstand, encourage, or transform influences outside the community (1988, 31)." Moreover, what to do about a canonic core that was fundamentally hybrid (and understood as hybrid) from its very inception? That is, given Ratushnjak, Shcherbina, and others' appraisal of the way two discrete groups' (the Line Cossacks and the Black Sea Cossacks) musical traditions combined in the very formation of the earliest Kuban Cossack musical groups, then a discussion of a Kuban ensemble's canonical repertoire is immediately and inherently complicated by ideas of boundaries and multiple influences.

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Bohlman develops the discussion of core and periphery by turning to the forces that contribute to the social meaning of folk music, that is, the sense of community and sense of place that an oral tradition can cultivate. In terms of social organization, performers respond to the internal, community-building needs of the group, but they also must reconcile external forces connected with political boundaries, national/regional ideologies, and other geographical categories such as urban vs. rural (Bohlman 1988, 53–55). When these external forces are fraught with controversy and involve competing ideologies, Bohlman recognizes that performers make choices about the ways they respond to such forces and thus take part in the assertion of cultural boundaries for the group. These choices, he writes, are not necessarily conscious or based on self-identity – although they can be. More prevalent are choices inherent to the constant flux and "dynamic interrelation of core and boundaries" resulting from the social basis and performative nature of folk music (1988, 67).

I use Bohlman's typology for folk repertoire change to investigate the songs and song sets of *stanitsa* ensemble performances. Although my exposure to songs and other musical elements is largely synchronic, Bohlman's typology allows me to interpret a song or performance set as a convergence of a great variety of influences. A particular execution of a song is a product that is underlain by a whole history of change processes and performance decisions, and it is part of the dynamic, ongoing negotiation of cultural boundaries. Despite the fact that songs and features in the repertoires of Kuban Cossack ensembles are often pigeon-holed into discrete and limiting categories (i.e., "This song is Ukrainian" or "This song format is Line Cossack" or "Those lyrics are Russian"), the songs or features in actuality are manifold, multi-layered, and nuanced. I look at songs that have entered ensemble repertoires more recently (ensembles continue to absorb new content and features), but I also look at songs with a much older history in the repertoires. Even old songs about Zaporizhia and "standard" Russian or Ukrainian folk songs were perhaps at one point more "cut

and dried" in terms of origin, language, musical style, etc., but in their current instantiations they exhibit "Kuban Cossackization" – nuances to the lyrics and music that have arisen from the changes and alterations that Kuban performers have made over the years.

As previously mentioned, there are also songs in ensembles' repertoires that are uniquely "homegrown" Kubanian and were developed since the formation of the Kuban Cossack Host – some even quite recently. The lyrics of these songs are often more fully in *balachka*, while musical styles and melodies can contain a variety of features associated with both/either Slavic culture(s). Moreover, different *stanitsy* have different performance practices depending on the make-up of the ensemble (for example, the number, gender, or age of performers), the performance situation, the proclivities of the *stanitsa*, etc. These songs also exhibit change processes, variation, and overlapping influences that can be difficult (or even impossible) to parse. Bohlman's model of change, then, is a way of looking at the "simultaneity" or "bivalency" of musical features. It promotes reflection on the unfeasibility of separating out "Ukrainian" or "Russian" items in an ensemble's repertoire.

Martin Stokes, an ethnomusicologist who writes on globalization and the politics of world music, recognizes music performance as an important way in which persons continually "relocate" themselves in a particular place and within certain social identities. He writes emphatically, "The musical event […] evokes and organises collective memories and present experiences of place with an intensity, power, and simplicity unmatched by any other social activity (1994, 3)." Stokes also acknowledges the power of hybrid musical forms as a "force undermining the oppressive identity-producing apparatus of the nation-state." Musical forms that represent hybrid, "hyphenated" identities put into play more open-ended notions of identity and belonging (Stokes 2003, 303). Kuban Cossack songs maintain a hybridity that keeps the Ukrainian-Russian dichotomy at bay and betrays the dichotomy's constructed nature. I identify elements of musical hybridity in contemporary village performances that resist the Ukrainian and Russian identity-producing apparatuses.

Similarly to Stokes' ideas about the place-defining and political work that music does, sociologist Tia DeNora (2000) writes about music and individual agency. She describes music as a "technology of self" – when people engage in musical practices, they "regulate, elaborate, and substantiate themselves as social agents (2000, 47)." This echoes Gerstin's ideas about the ways identities are negotiated in a musical scene. DeNora, however, looks at specific musical qualities – not just the micro-contexts of performers' discourse *about* music – as representations of emotional and identity aspirations. Rhythms, vocal gestures, harmonies, and styles can reflect performers' "self-conscious articulation" of themselves (2000, 53). DeNora's work is especially pertinent, as she adds a layer to this discussion about music and memory. Elderly Kuban performers speak often about songs as parts of their personal histories and the way they "used to sing" them or the way they "always sang" them. DeNora postulates that when original experiences of music are deeply associated with a particular time and place, then the recollection or re-instantiation of that same music – with all its familiar rhythmic, harmonic, and stylistic features – is "a device for unfolding, for replaying, the temporal structure of that moment, its dynamism as emerging experience (2000, 67)." In other words, musical memories of the past can contribute to powerful self-identification processes in the present. The kinds of music and the manner in the singers perform it – as well as the eagerness and pleasure with which singers recollect and perform these "remembered" songs – all reveal the ways performers construct their contemporary social identities. DeNora's concepts of music, memory, and the technology of self coincide with Stokes' understanding of performance as a practice that "encourage[s] people to feel that they are in touch with an essential part of themselves, their emotions, and their 'community' (Stokes 1994, 13)."

Gerstin, Bohlman, Stokes, and DeNora's respective models are useful for thinking about how Kuban Cossack performers – through their repertoires, conversations about music, and performance choices – assert their social identities and the cultural boundaries of Kuban

Cossackness. All four scholars explore ideas of agency and music that are useful to my interpretations of the kind of social and political *work* that Kuban singers engage in when they perform. Performers – when they talk about music, choose music, and perform music in certain ways – are negotiating their identities and the cultural boundaries of their group. The above ethnomusicological theories encourage me to consider the ways in which Kuban song performances interact or respond to the internal social needs of the performers as well as to the external ideological forces that prescribe (national) identities to the group. They furthermore urge reflection on the intertwining of personal and political self-positioning that occurs through music performance. Thus, in my case studies, I look at the ways ensembles' choices generate identity stances, and the ways these stances can be seen as incongruous to nationalizing trends. I privilege performers' reflections on the musical practices and cultural significance of the singing tradition in which they partake. And overall, I examine song performances and performers' conversations with an understanding of musical practice as a profoundly personal and identity-creating social action.

Music Case Study 1 - Chelbasskaja Performance of "Come Out, Hryts'ko"

This example consists of the Chelbasskaja ensemble's "lead-up" conversation and performance of a song entitled, "Come Out, Hryts'ko, onto the Street" (in their rendition, *Vyjdy, Hrytsju, na ulytsju*). The dialogue immediately preceding the singing presents intriguing examples of Gerstin's "micro-contexts," in which participants negotiate their cultural histories and identities and collaboratively decide which song to sing next. Such small-scale, co-determined decisions about "what song to perform next" are also assertions of "We are Kuban Cossacks, and this is our music." The song the Chelbasskaja performers sing here, "Come Out, Hryts'ko," is a particularly contested song in terms of its national belonging. Their pre-song conversation embeds this and other contested songs in their lived experience and I consider it to be an occurrence of both repertoire and identity negotiation.

The manner in which they decide on the song in this recording is highly representative: loud, ardent, overlapping banter; reminiscences of their childhood or heritage; several members add, change, or affirm certain details; eventually the conversation inspires someone to mention a song; then both verbal and musical confirmation – others nod and repeat the song title, while someone else interrupts by singing the first line; talk lingers through the opening verse, but ultimately conversation comes to a halt as the time approaches for all voices to join in the song. A similar process took place in the Petrovskaja example from Chapter One, and it seems to be a regular performance practice for *stanitsa* ensembles. Caroline Bithell, an ethnomusicologist who examines performance practices of the traditional music of Corsica, has noted these phenomena as common features of traditional or folk polyphony. The fact that there is continuing background noise or conversation is inconsequential to a singer's decision to begin a new song. And, Bithell writes, "As a singer, you 'launch' a [song] because you feel moved to do so: spontaneity and a sense of complicity are essential to [the genre's] spirit (1996, 61)." This performance practice, Bithell claims, is part of how folk traditions become associated with collective activity, rusticity, and communal experience (1996, 40–43).

The performance of the song itself in this example demonstrates many of the qualities Bohlman describes – the Chelbasskaja ensemble's execution of "Come Out, Hryts'ko" differs considerably from other notated and performed versions of the same song. Musical, textual, and stylistic dissimilarities set the Chelbasskaja rendition apart from more mainstream or catalogued versions and point to the constantly changing nature of an active oral tradition. Comparative analysis of different versions reveals some of the ways in which performance choices index performers' ideologies about their individual identities and the identities of the groups they (claim to) represent. To this end, I will explore two mainstream renditions of "Come Out, Hryts'ko": one rendition by the Ukrainian folk ensemble "Cherry" (*Vyshnja*) directed by Adam Dzjuba and operating out of

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Vinnytsja, Ukraine[81] (Maestroclass1 2013); and the other rendition by the preeminent Kuban Cossack Choir – self-identified as a Russian folk ensemble and operating out of Krasnodar, Russia (Alexus7373 2012). Nuances of the Chelbasskaja performance point to hybrid identity assertions and a positioning of Kuban Cossackness as neither fully Ukrainian nor fully Russian. Additionally, there are musical features of the Chelbasskaja performance that reflect the ensemble's collaborative organizational structure and highlight other social identities and personal histories of the performers that differ considerably from the organizational structures of professional/commercial performing groups and the social identities/personal histories of their members, respectively.

Interview Example 3 - "Young people gathered"

In the interview transcript below, three Chelbasskaja performers reminisce about meeting in the evenings as young women and men to sing songs together. When Irina asks a clarifying question about what kinds of songs they sang in those situations, the performers then begin to think of examples. Members respond enthusiastically to one suggestion, "Come Out, Hryts'ko," and after a bit more talking, one singer loudly begins the song.

Table 2.1 - Transcription of Interview Example 3: "Young People Gathered" **[LISTEN]**

PARTICIPANT KEY:	IV - Irina Viktorovna Shel'deshova	LN - Lidija Nikiforovna
	LV - Leonid Vasil'evich	LJa - Lidija Jakovlevna
		[End of song, "Little Tart Cherry, Little Sweet Cherry"]
	LJa	At that time, in the evenings we gathered just outside the yard and sang that song and a lot of others
	LV	Yes, and young people gathered on the street corners.
	LJa	On the street corners.
	LV	On the street corners we gathered and…

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[81] See map of Ukraine in Appendix B for location of Vinnytsja.

		LJa	And […] the accordion, played on the accordion. And we were satisfied because we are dancing and singing, both little witty verses and those kinds of songs like we just sang.
IV	Like that one, yes?		
		LJa	Yes, and say, for example…
		–	What?
		LJa	"He Plays the Reed Pipe"
		LN	"Come Out, Hryts'ko"
		–	"Come Out, Hryts'ko" [others affirm]
		LN	"Come Out, Hryts'ko, onto the Street" Do you know it? [to Irina]
IV	Well, I've heard it, the Kuban Choir sings it.		
		LJa	Well we have… [interrupted by first verse of song]

At the end of the preceding song "Little Tart Cherry, Little Sweet Cherry" (*Vyshen'ka-Chereshen'ka*), the performers immediately launch a conversation that includes this song and others in happy memories of their youth. Performers give histories and lived experiences of "Little Tart Cherry, Little Sweet Cherry," "He Plays the Reed Pipe," and "Come Out, Hryts'ko, Onto the Street." They once gathered as teenagers to socialize, dance, and make music, especially to sing witty songs (*shutochnye pesni*) about romance. Performers associate these songs with time markers (in their youth, "in the evenings") and local place markers ("outside the yard," "on the street corners") as well as with particular practices ("we gathered…and sang," "played on the accordion," "we are dancing and singing") and feelings ("we were satisfied"). All these associations serve to connect "Come Out, Hryts'ko" to performers' identities as people who are of a certain generation, who grew up in this place – the Kuban region – learning and singing these songs. The conversation participants collectively construct a past that includes these songs. The real or imaginary nature of

this past is unimportant compared to the understanding that the kind of past they describe says something about the social identities they embrace in the contemporary moment. The conversation advocates and affirms multiple layers of belonging: as singers in the ensemble, as residents/natives of Chelbasskaja, and as members in a social group of seniors who have shared memories and experiences and like to reminisce about the past.

The collaborative structure of the conversation is also noteworthy. There is much repetition and affirmation, as when participants immediately echo and express agreement with statements (e.g. "in the evenings we gathered" - "Yes, and young people gathered on the street corner" - "On the street corners" - "On the street corners we gathered"). Participants' voices overlap and repeat – in this manner the Chelbasskaja ensemble members gradually and collectively build a narrative that joins their pasts and these songs. It is also the way they determine the next song to sing. The members are bouncing ideas off each other about other songs that fit the context. Lidija Jakovlevna proposes "He Plays the Reed Pipe," but then Lidija Nikiforovna interjects forcefully with the suggestion "Come Out, Hryts'ko." This option receives affirmation in the form of nodding and repetition of the song title. Lidija Nikiforovna gives it extended attention when she asks Irina Viktorovna if she knows the song. All this adds up to a kind of "cue" for one of the singers to interrupt the conversation by singing the first line of "Come Out, Hryts'ko." Performers, then, interactively and communally determine the next song to sing.

An analysis of the language of the song text reveals some of the ways Kuban renditions of folk songs reflect hybrid linguistic influences and resist classification on the basis of standard languages or national identities. The transcript in Table 2.2 contains a rough transliteration and translation of the four verses that the Chelbasskaja ensemble sings in their performance. I explain the untranslated words and other interesting lexical phenomena in the section following, and I also

look at pronunciation idiosyncrasies that can be heard in the recording but are not represented in the transliteration below.

Table 2.2 - Transcription and Translation of Song Lyrics from Chelbasskaja Version of "Come Out, Hryts'ko"

[LISTEN]

Vyjdy, Hrytsju, zhe na ulytsju,	*Come out, Hryts'ko, onto the street,*
Vyjdy, vyjdy, kovalen'ko.	*Come out, come out, son of the blacksmith.*
Zahraj meni v(i) sopilochku,	*Strike up a song for me on the little* sopilka,
Z tykha, z tykha pomalen'ku.	*Quietly, quietly, little by little.*
Sopilochka z derevtsja,	*The little* sopilka *is made from a tree,*
Dubovoje den'tse.	*from the trunk of an oak.*
Jake v tebe (li) molodtsja	*How you in your youth have,*
Take, take shchyre serdtse.	*A heart so very, very genuine.*
I jak ja moloda,	*And so I, being young,*
Z vechera ranen'ko,	*From the earliest evening,*
Vyjdu, hljanu zhe sjuda-tuda,	*Will go out and look this way and that,*
Chy-jde, chy-jde kovalenko.	*To see if the son of the blacksmith is coming.*
Kovalenko ide,	*The son of the blacksmith is coming,*
Stupaje dribnen'ko.	*He treads so lightly.*
Chym ni parin', ni chym ni bravyj,	*Isn't he a handsome lad, isn't he brave,*
Dyvys', dyvys', moja nen'ko.	*Look, look, my mother.*

The majority of linguistic features in the lyrics more closely resembles contemporary standard Ukrainian than contemporary standard Russian. For example, there are lexical items such as *dribnen'ko*, *kovalenko,* and *shchyre*. Grammatical features such as use of vocative case (*Hrytsju, nen'ko*) and single-letter adjectival endings (*take, shchyre*) combine with phonetic features such as fricative /ɦ/ (*Hrytsju, hljanu*) to make the song text both read and sound like standard Ukrainian. This does not preclude such features from also legitimately belonging to southern Russian dialects like *balachka*, whether historically or in present language practices. However, the "Ukrainian-sounding-ness" of song texts, like that of "Come Out, Hryts'ko," contributes heavily to the arguments of

those who believe this song is Ukrainian and that Kuban Cossacks are subsequently Ukrainians by ethnicity and/or nationality (see examples from such arguments below). In Kuban Cossack songbooks targeted at a standard-Russian-speaking audience, editors feel the need to define several words in the song text for the reader. Bigdaj's songbook, for example, includes an extensive "Dictionary of Local Dialect Words and Expressions" (*Slovar' mestnykh dialectnykh slov i vyrazhenij*) in an appendix. For his version of "Come Out, Hryts'ko" the glossary includes several words from the lyrics, such as *kovalenko* ("son of a blacksmith"), *sopilochka* (diminutive of *sopilka*, "a wooden fife"), *dribnen'ko* (diminutive of *dribno*, "delicately"), and *nen'ka* (affectionate term for "mother") ([1898] 1992, 431–434). A contemporary standard Ukrainian speaker would not need such terms defined, as they are a part of standard Ukrainian lexicon. Words like *Hryts'ko* (Ukrainian diminutive form of Gregory and typical "male suitor" name in Ukrainian folk songs[82]) and *sopil(och)ka* further associate the song with Ukrainian folklore. *Sopilka* is a Ukrainian word for a folk instrument that resembles a fife and is made of wood ("Sopilka" 2016). It is often closely associated with Ukrainian folklore, although similar flute variants like the *dudka* (wooden/reed fife) that is mentioned in a song title above are considered to be more generally East Slavic ("Dudka (muzykal'nyj instrument)" 2016).

The lyrics of the Chelbasskaja recording differ in important ways from fully standard Ukrainian. The text does contain more ambiguous forms. For example, the Chelbasskaja singers use *ulytsju* for "street," which has features found in both standard Ukrainain (*vulytsju*) and standard Russian (*ulitsu*) accusative case forms of the word; the Chelbasskaja singers use *sjuda-tuda* for "back and forth," which is more Russian-sounding than the standard Ukrainian *sjudy-tudy*; and the Chelbasskaja singers do not use vocative case for *kovalenko* (which, interestingly, disrupts the rhyme, as it no longer rhymes with *pomalen'ku*), and use the more Russian-sounding word *paren'* for "young

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[82] See for example, "Oh, Don't Go, Hryts'ko" (*Oj, ne khody, Hrytsju*), "I Don't Love Stets'ko or Hryts'ko" (*Ta ne ljublju ja ne Stets'ka, ne Hryts'ka*), and "Hryts'ko, Hryts'ko, Go to Work" (*Hrytsju, Hrytsju, do roboty*)

man" instead of *khlopets'*. There are linguistic nuances in the Chelbasskaja performance, then, that strike contemporary standard speakers' ears as not completely Ukrainian.

Musical Example 1: Chelbasskaja Version of "Come Out, Hryts'ko"

The music itself and the manner in which the song is sung reflect certain identity features of the performers and the group as whole. I use the musical transcription below to point to certain unique musical qualities of the Chelbasskaja performance and to highlight the inability of Western musical notation to capture many of the nuances of rural Kuban Cossack vocal performances.

Table 2.3 - Musical Transcription of Chelbasskaja Version of "Come Out, Hryts'ko" (First Two Verses)

[LISTEN]

In terms of the music, the Chelbasskaja ensemble sings "Come Out, Hryts'ko" in a different key (B minor), with a much lower-pitched melody and harmonization than many other versions (see Table 2.4). Songs in *a cappella* village performances are often sung in whichever key the initial singer begins the song – there are no pitch pipes or set keys for songs. Rather, a singer begins the song in a range that is comfortable for him/her, and the rest follow with the harmonization in that key. This means that the same song can be performed in a variety of keys, depending on the pitch choice of the initial singer in that particular performance. The husky vocal timbre used, in combination with the old age of the performers (in their 60s-80s), means that village ensembles consistently sing songs in much lower keys than in commercial performances of the same songs. In the case of "Come Out, Hryts'ko," the tempo is slower as well, and there is far less of the solo female voice that we will see is so characteristic of commercial recordings. The initial "soloist" only sings the first line individually; after that the whole ensemble collectively sings the entire rest of the song. Performers often do not sing perfectly in time, and different individual performers can be heard pushing or pulling on the tempo throughout the performance. Musical features like vocal embellishments (e.g. glissandi) and dynamics changes – unlike the planned and uniform features of professional performances – are sung by Chelbasskaja performers at slightly different moments and to varying degrees. The listener really gets the sense that individual singers' choices *matter*, that all the singers sitting around the table have a "say" in the way the song is sung. Through non-verbal communication during the performance singers play off each other in terms of tempo, volume, and other musical features. It is a truly communal and social experience.

Several of the above features that we hear in the recording are not represented in the standard Western musical notation above. The pattern of individual singer vs. the ensemble; the ways in which individual singers uniquely and freely contribute embellishments, tempo changes, and dynamics changes; the vocal quality and the way the voices blend (or do not blend) together – all

these are absent in standard transcriptions. I even notated the key of the piece to be B minor in the transcription, when really those are just the closest standard pitches to the ones with which the opening singer started the song. In the upcoming Musical Example 2 I look at versions of "Come Out, Hryts'ko" in songbook transcriptions and in more mainstream performances of the song. When folk songs are removed from the oral tradition and notated in sheet music, they become standardized and settled. We see in the next musical example that performing groups which rely on musical notation end up performing the song in the same way every time, with uniformity in the singing styles, key, tempo, embellishments for all performers. Many of the unique elements of the Chelbasskaja performance do not carry over.

The unique musical, linguistic, and stylistic features really give the sense that the Chelbasskaja rendition of "Come Out, Hryts'ko" is a convergence of of different changes and micro-decisions that have gradually shaped the structure and content of the song. Individual performers inject their own performance preferences (key choice, tempo, embellishments, dynamics). The near standard Ukrainian of the lyrics is nevertheless peppered with hybrid-sounding dialect forms. The lyrics and music also differ substantially from both "standard" commercial versions and other notated versions of the song (see below); this corroborates the idea of the Chelbasskaja singing community gradually and collectively making changes to the text and musical setting – a slow process of personalization that truly grounds their version in the place of Chelbasskaja.

Musical Example 2: Melody Comparison for "Come Out, Hryts'ko"

The significance of the above observations and the self-positioning that performers enact in their conversation become clearer through analysis of other versions. In particular, I will look at contrasting categorizations of the song and stylistic differences in other performed and notated

versions[83]. The discourse surrounding this song exemplifies the extremely contested nature of Kuban Cossack ensembles' repertoires, and it sheds light on the hybrid and ambiguous identities that the Chelbasskaja performers manifest, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Specific features of the Chelbasskaja song performance become meaningful through close readings of more commercial and widespread performances of the song by both Ukrainian and Russian folk ensembles – Cherry and the Kuban Cossack Choir, respectively.

Below in Table 2.4 I juxtapose transcriptions of melodies for "Come Out, Hryts'ko" from Akim Bigdaj's songbook, *Songs of the Kuban Cossacks* ([1898] 1992, 309) and Viktor Zakharchenko's songbook, *Folk Songs of the Kuban* (1987, 1:135–36). I also include my own transcription of the melody from the Cherry and Kuban Cossack Choir performances (Maestroclass1 2013; Alexus7373 2012), and I add my own transcription of the melody from the Chelbasskaja rehearsal at the end for reference.

Table 2.4 - Musical Transcriptions of Different Versions of "Come Out, Hryts'ko" (Main Melodies)

Melody from Bigdaj's Songbook [Tempo Marking: "At a leisurely pace" (*netoroplivo*)] **[LISTEN]**

Melody from Zakharchenko's Songbook [M.M. = 60] **[LISTEN]**

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[83] There are several other notated and performed versions of "Come Out, Hryts'ko" that I do not discuss in this section but that also differ from the Chelbasskaja version in terms of melody, text, and other musical, linguistic, and performance features, for example, the 1986 Ukrtelefil'm version sung by the Cherkass Folk Choir, or the 2013 performance by folk ensemble Veremij. (Viktor Ostafeychuk 2013; "Ansambl' Starinnoj Kazachjej pesni 'Veremij' (g. Mytishchi)" 2016). I chose the Cherry and KCC versions to examine more closely in this section because of the contrasting national claims of the song, the similarities between their performances, as well as the year of production and similar staged qualities.

c Melody from Ukrainian Folk Ensemble "Cherry" / Kuban Cossack Choir [M.M. = 95] **[LISTEN]**

Melody from Chelbasskaja Rehearsal [M.M. = 50] **[LISTEN]**

Different sources variously categorize and attribute the song "Come Out, Hryts'ko." Bigdaj, in his songbook, puts the song in a group called "Humorous and Dancing Songs" (*shutochnyje i pljasovyje pesni*), and credits his melody and text to an individual informant from Gorjachij Kljuch[84] ([1898] 1992, 426). Zakharchenko, in his two-volume song book, groups the song into a category called "Lyrical Songs, Ballads, and Songs of Literary Origin" (*liricheskije, ballady, pesni literaturnogo proiskhozhdenija*). His transcription is based on a 1984 recording of a female folk ensemble from Leningradskaya *stanitsa*[85] (1987, 1:308, 313–14). Nadija Suprun-Jaremko lists the piece under the thematic category "Songs About Love" (*Pisni pro kokhannja*), which is nationally ambiguous until you look at the name of the whole anthology: "Ukrainians of the Kuban and their Songs" (*Ukrajintsi Kubani ta jikhni pisni*) (2005, 630). In performances, the Kuban Cossack Choir calls it a "Forest Cossack Song" (*lesovaja kazach'ja pesnja*) and states that their version hails from Umanskaja *stanitsa*[86] (Alexus7373 2012). In a recent set of albums entitled "A Musical Offering for Ukraine" (*Muzykal'noje prinoshenije Ukraine*), the Choir includes "Come Out, Hryts'ko" on the disc dedicated to "Black Sea Folk Songs of Kuban *Stanitsy*" (*Narodnyje Chernomorskije pesni Kubanskikh stanits*) (Kuban Cossack

[84] «Получена от Удовенко из Горячего Ключа»; See map in Appendix A for location of Gorjachij Kljuch.
[85] Interestingly, the members of this women's folk ensemble who served as informants for this recording are described by the following statement in the source information for the song: "All performers are Russian, old residents of the *stanitsa*, who speak in the Ukrainian dialect." («Все исполнители русские, старожилы станицы, говорят на украинском диалекте.») (V. Zakharchenko 1987, 1:308); see map in Appendix A for location of Leningradskaja *stanitsa*
[86] "Umanskaja" was the name for the Leningradskaja *stanitsa* until 1934. See map in Appendix A.

Choir 2013). The Ukrainian ensemble, "Cherry," describes the song as a "Ukrainian folk song" (*Ukrajins'ka narodna pisnja*) (Maestroclass1 2013).

Debate about the "true" national identity of the song can be fierce – the comments on the YouTube video of the Kuban Cossack Choir's performance mirror the intensity of larger arguments about Kuban Cossack repertoire and identity. Ukrainian sympathizers, for example, post categorical comments such as "Kubans are NOT Russians. Kubans are ethnic Ukrainians. This song is in Ukrainian language. And song is Ukrainian song." To which one dissenter responded colorfully, "What the hell do you mean by that, mister? Come to the Kuban and tell Kuban Cossacks that they aren't Russians. For that they will cut your head off – or perhaps that useless thing that hangs between your legs[87]." Such exchanges abound on YouTube videos of Kuban Cossack Choir performances. They reveal how sensitive the issues of categorization and attribution of some of these songs can be. They also demonstrate how public discourse on Kuban Cossacks mirrors the personal exchanges and arguments of academic discourse (see Introduction).

National claiming of songs happens in both subtle and explicit ways. The Cherry and Kuban Cossack Choir performances of "Come Out, Hryts'ko" exemplify this. The Cherry ensemble plainly names "Come Out, Hryts'ko" a Ukrainian folk song, but they also make national claims on the song in other ways. Their version of the song text contains more standard Ukrainian forms: *vulytsju* for "street," the vocative form *kovalenku, khlopets'* for "young man," etc. Performers wear traditional Ukrainian dress – *vyshyvanki*, or stitched pattern shirts, and women wear *vinky*, or Ukrainian flower-wreath folk headdresses. The singers are accompanied by *bandura* (Ukrainian folk string instrument) and *sopilka* players. And the video of the performance is presumably shot in the Ukrainian woods

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[87] «Что ты в этом понимаешь, мистер? Приедь на Кубань и скажи кубанским казакам, что они не русские. Они тебе за это оторвут если не голову, то то, что у тебя между ног без дела болтается.»

near a village hut. All of these gestures firmly and unanimously root the song in a Ukrainian national belonging.

The Kuban Cossack Choir performance makes claims as well. The introduction of the song is spoken in standard Russian by a speaker who does not natively speak the Kuban dialect[88]. Instrumentalists play the *balalajka* (triangular Russian folk string instrument) and the transverse *dudka* (wooden fife), two folk instruments more associated with Russian-ness. The Kuban Cossack Choir fails to use the word "Ukrainian"(or even "Little Russian"[89]) to describe this highly Ukrainian-sounding song with Ukrainian folk themes and likely (Ukrainian) Zaporizhian Cossack origins. Instead, it is called a "Forest Cossack Song" or a "Black Sea Folk Song" – epithets that make room for Russian national claims. The manner in which the Kuban Cossack Choir makes such claims, especially in the contemporary moment, will be described in detail in Chapter Three. Suffice it to say here that songs such as "Come Out, Hryts'ko" are cited as evidence of a Russian multiculturalism that precludes any possibility of Ukrainian autonomy or Ukrainian national claim to its folklore.

Opposing national claims of "Come Out, Hryts'ko" on the part of Cherry and the KCC are even more compelling with the observation that lyrically and musically, their two versions are nearly identical – very few differences in the text; the melody, key (E-flat minor), harmony, tempo (M.M. 95-100), and call-and-response structure of the two versions are the same (see the videos of Cherry performance, KCC performance, and the musical transcriptions in Table 2.4). Regardless of the origins of this particular manner of singing "Come Out, Hryts'ko," it is clear from the similarities across commercial and/or mainstream performances, both Ukrainian and Russian, that the song has become static and standardized. Indeed, the Kuban Cossack Choir has a history of singing "Come

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[88] When she announces the song title, she misplaces the stress in *vulytsju* (in a way that matches standard Russian stress for the word, but does not match standard Ukrainian nor any *balachka* rendering of the word I have heard). Many performers in the Kuban Cossack Choir are professional singers who are not native *balachka* speakers. Several are not even originally from the Krasnodar area or Kuban region. More on this in Chapter 3.

[89] In another turn-of-the-century songbook collection compiled by G.M. Kontsevich, "Come Out, Hryts'ko" is included in his volume entitled "Little Russian Songs" (*Malorusskije pesni*) (1907, 3: 43)

Out, Hryts'ko" in the same way every time; the version on the album mentioned above (2013), which is made up of archived recordings of the Choir's performances from 1978 – 1994, and the YouTube video of their 2008 performance at the 42ⁿᵈ Annual Festival of Art "Kuban Musical Spring" are the same. There is none of the dialogic development or negotiation between canonical core and boundaries that is characteristic of a living oral tradition – in these commericial arenas the song has become commodified, a product, and therefore something that can be permanently classified and claimed. The performers do not contribute to the development of the song, nor can they cite a personal past with the song, which very much contrasts with the Chelbasskaja performers' presentation of "Come Out, Hryts'ko."

The kinds of national claims and categorizations that are made by these professional ensembles are absent in the Chelbasskaja performance. The Chelbasskaja ensemble has little need to classify "Come Out, Hryts'ko" or its origins beyond the fact that it is a song they sang in their youth and now continue to sing. The fact that this song is a part of their personal pasts and a living process in their community positions the performers in a liminal space – "Come Out, Hryts'ko," a very Ukrainian-sounding song, is maintained in their repertoire, and their unique rendering of it helps them assert their hybrid cultural, musical, and linguistic identities as residents of Chelbasskaja, a region geographically located within Russia. The absence of nationally-marked instrumentation or "produced" features such as costumes or choreography also contributes to the ambiguity that the Chelbasskaja ensemble presents when they perform the song. The collaborative and personal way in which the song is discussed, chosen, and performed points to Bohlman's process of communal identity re-creation. Musical features also highlight this, with individual performers able to improvise and add their own flair to the performance. The participants foreground their personal and regional identities, as opposed to overtly national ones. They position themselves musically as Chelbasskaja

residents who remember, embrace, and continue to perform their own unique (and mutable) version of "Come Out, Hryts'ko."

Music Case Study 2: Chelbasskaja Performance of *Chastushki*

The Chelbasskaja ensemble does not only perform songs like "Come Out, Hryts'ko" which fall on the Ukrainian side of the linguistic and cultural spectrum. They also perform quite Russian-sounding pieces. Russian-language *chastushki*[90] performances and commentary from the Chelbasskaja rehearsal further indicate the hybrid self-positioning that performers enact. They are comfortable and secure in claiming both newer "Russian" genres (like *chastushki*) and older "Ukrainian" genres (like Zaporizhian folk songs) as their own – indeed, this repertory variety, as revealed in their comments below, is a source of pride and a symbol of belonging for Chelbasskaja residents.

Interview Example 4 - "We switched to Russian"

In the interview transcribed below, Chelbasskaja performers discuss the genre of *chastushki* and the situations in which they regularly sang *chastushki* verses. Irina asks the ensemble for examples examples from this genre that are a part of their local history and culture. Performers are happy to oblige and individual performers begin reciting and singing *chastushki*. In between the mini-performances, the singers engage in further discussion about the Russian language used in *chastushki* and other types of songs that they sing in Russian as opposed to *balachka*. At the end of the conversation, Lidija Jakovlevna comments on the flexibility with which Chelbasskaja performers switch between genres and languages. The excerpt below was part of a larger conversation between Irina and the ensemble about different genres and their performance contexts.

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[90] *Chastushki* are four-line, humorous, rhymed verses ("Chastushka" 2016). The word *chastushka* comes from *chasto*, or *chastit'* and refers to either the frequency with which they are performed or the rapidity with which they are performed. *Chastushki* can be sung or recited. They can be accompanied or unaccompanied by musical instruments. *Chastushki* are part of a relatively new folk genre that arose, in part, as a means of Soviet propaganda dissemination (see Melan'ja Fjodorovna's Red Army themed *chastushka* below).

PARTICIPANT KEY:

	IV - Irina Viktorovna Shel'deshova	LN - Lidija Nikiforovna
	LV - Leonid Vasil'evich	LJa - Lidija Jakovlevna
	MF - Melan'ja Fjodorovna	

LN *Chastushki*, we sang dancing *chastushki.*

LJa *Chastushki…*

IV And did you sing *chastushki* around the table? Or did you sing them at celebrations?

MF As a kind of dance…

LJa Around the table? No. Like in the yard, or also during harvest time it was possible to sing *chastushki.*

IV So we have songs associated with ceremonies, songs associated with conversation, yes? When everyone gathered?

LN "Around-the-table" songs

IV Yes, "around-the-table" songs. And there were also songs for fun times, when you also gathered together and sang together. Let's hear some of those "festival songs," those *chastushki.* Try to sing something…

[Brief conversation about *chastushki* songbook collections]

LJa *Why doesn't the lamp burn?*
There is no kerosene.
Why hasn't my love come?
He is not at home.

Like that, yes? You can figure out the rest.

We can thresh
We can separate out the grains
We can grab your balls
And "turn out your pockets."

– [laughter] […]

IV	[…] a bit vulgar. Huh, I wonder, why is it not sung in Kubanian? It's not in *balachka*, why? It's in Russian.	
	LJa	Exactly. It's in Russian because they started to sing them with the *bajan*, and a *bajan* performs in Russian.
IV	In Russian.	
	LJa	In Russian. You see, this *chastushka* came to us in Russian
	LN	[…] two-line verses are also in Russian.
		[…]
	LJa	They just weren't sung that way. [i.e., in *balachka*]. They were all like this.
	LN	Or when there's a *balalajka,* if there isn't an accordion. *Balalajka.*
	LJa	*Balalajka.* We also spoke in Russian for that.
	LV	We also to the *balalajka* spoke in Russian…
	LJa	*The little balalajka plays,* *The little balalajka thrums,* *The little balalajka has forced* *The handsome man to love.* To the *balalajka* in general…
	MF	Listen carefully, I will sing for you a *chastushka* really splendidly.
	LN	Well sing it!
	MF	*Field, poppies, cornflowers* *Bobbing their heads* *Red Army fighters* *Have become very skilled* *My batiste headscarf,* *I don't want to tie it around my head.* *I will send it to the front,* *To bind up the fighters' wounds.*
IV	And what's next?	
	MF	God knows. [laughter]

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IV Interesting. Just now you sang songs, yeah? And all the songs were "ours," that is, Cossack, local songs, in the dialect. Yes, but here…	
	LJa And we switched immediately into Russian and it's nothing to us…but then immediately we switched back into our common tongue.

Here again are statements by performers that embed songs and genres in their personal histories. *Chastushki* were sung to accompany dance, they were sung in the yard, during harvest time, and as Irina Viktorovna summarizes, while people were hanging out or reveling (*pesni na guljan'ja*[91]). Just as with "Come Out, Hryts'ko," the conversation frames *chastushki* as part of performers' bygone pasts. But (also as with "Come Out, Hryts'ko) the songs are nevertheless still a living part of the ensemble's current repertoire. Irina Viktorovna herself emphasizes the past when she asks questions about the songs using past-tense verbs ("*Did* you sing…," "when you also *gathered* together and *sang*"). From both Irina Viktorovna and the performers, there is a nostalgic sense that "things aren't what they used to be" in terms of the way songs are performed. This fits the perception that rural village ensembles are performers of a "dying art," but it also grants an authenticity to the performers as legitimate bearers of the tradition. The main point, however, is that many different kinds of songs were sung in the day-to-day lives of the participants in their younger days; the now-elderly participants remember these different songs and their contexts, and they recall these contexts as they give contemporary performances. Thinking back to DeNora's suggestions about music and memory – the contemporary renderings of songs simultaneously serve as means of both reliving past experiences and constructing present identities. The fact that both Russian-sounding *chastushki* and Ukrainian-sounding folk songs like "Come Out, Hryts'ko" belong to singers' cherished musical histories and are still embraced today is saying something about the nature of Kuban Cossack

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[91] The word *guljan'ja* literally refers to walking/strolling, but here indicates "festivities," "jamboree," or "street parties."

culture, as these performers see it. A closer analysis of the statements in this interview reveals some thought-provoking attitudes toward their hybrid repertoire.

After a few recitations of *chastushki* in nearly-standard Russian, the performers are questioned about why the verses are not sung in *balachka*. Lidija Jakovlevna's explanation (which is supported by other members) is that the *chastushki* belong to the *bajan*[92] genre, or are typically accompanied by the *bajan*. She clarifies that when a *bajan* is playing, the song is sung in Russian. Others agree and further clarify – Lidija Nikiforovna adds that similar two-line verses are also sung in Russian. The *balalajka* is another instrument that the Chelbasskaja performers associate with Russian-language songs. Lidija Nikiforovna and Leonid Vasil'evich employ interesting phraseology here – when they describe the *balalajka* as an instrument to which they sing/recite in Russian, they use the word *razgovarivat'*, which literally means "to converse." Here they use it in contradistinction to the verb form of *balachka,* or *balakat'* (literally, "to chatter"). So "to chatter," or to speak in the local dialect (*balakat'/balakaty*), is set apart from the grander sounding "to converse," or to speak in standard Russian (*razgovarivat'*).

From this conversation we learn that certain genres (*chastushki*, two-line verses) and instruments (*bajan, balalajka*) are associated with Russian language and perhaps more Russian themes (as in the Red Army *chastushka* that Melan'ja Fjodorovna sings at the end of the above clip). The language of a song is also dictated by tradition ("They just weren't sung that way [i.e. in *balachka*]") and understandings about the song origin ("this *chastushka* came to us in Russian"). Despite the fact that the texts of the *chastushki* more closely resemble standard Russian, performers switch to more hybrid-sounding dialect speech when they talk about the *chastushki*. Lidija Jakovlevna, for example, follows her near-standard-Russian *chastushki* performances with standard-Ukrainian statements like, *"Tak vony ne spivalysja"* ("They just weren't sung that way"). Within the *chastushki* performances

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[92] A *bajan* is a form of Russian accordion, developed in the early twentieth century and named after Bojan, a bard who is described in the 12th-century Old Slavic epic, *The Tale of Igor's Campaign* (*Slovo o polku Igoreve*) ("Bajan" 2016).

themselves, while the text is indeed Russian, there are still dialectal pronunciation features (fricative /ɦ/ in _горит_, _гремит_) that give the *chastushki* a regional tinge.

The performers are remarkably straight-forward and aware of the ways they switch between idioms for different performance situations (see Lidija Jakovlevna's matter-of-fact response, "Exactly. It's in Russian because they started to sing them with the *bajan*, and a *bajan* performs in Russian."). Irina's observation of their Russian language use is not at all threatening to their identity. Neither, as was also the case with the Chelbasskaja performers in Interview Example 1, are any observations related to their Ukrainian-sounding speech. Rather, they seem to be proud of the effortlessness with which they can move between idioms ("And we switched immediately into Russian and it's nothing to us…but then immediately we switched back into our common tongue."). Part of their unique identity as Kuban – and more specifically Chelbasskaja – residents is the inclusion of both "Ukrainian" and "Russian" song genres in their repertoire. In the conversation, Irina Viktorovna makes a distinction between "our" songs ("Cossack, local songs") and songs sung in standard Russian. And performers probably agree on some level with this distinction, especially since they talk about *chastushki* "arriving" to the region within their lifetimes[93]. But still the sense from the performers is that they enjoy performing a variety of Ukrainian, Cossack, local, Russian, and other songs, and that they all have a place in the ensemble's repertoire. From the interview and musical examples in Chapters One and Two, we see that many different kinds of songs were a part of performers' childhoods and are affectionately remembered and performed today. Performers

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[93] Kuban historian Nikolaj Bondar' observed residents' distinctions between older and newer genres. He writes in his essay, "A Model of Traditional Kuban Cossack Culture," of song categories he encountered in his fieldwork: "Russian and Ukrainian songs of later origin, arriving to the Kuban at the beginning of the twentieth century in the pre- and post-war years were considered to be just that – Russian or Ukrainian. But pieces that were brought in the previous centuries by the first settlers, no matter their obviously Russian or Ukrainian origin, are considered as our 'Kuban' songs, our 'Cossack' songs (1995b, 58)." («Русские и украинские песни более позднего происхождения, проникавшие на Кубань в начале XX в., в предвоенные и послевоенные годы так и воспринимались – как русские или украинские. А произведения, занесенные в прошлых столетиях первопоселенцами, несмотря на очевидное русское или украинское происхождение, воспринимаются как свои "кубанские", "казачьи".»)

"own," so to speak, both Ukrainian-sounding and Russian-sounding songs. The paths that songs and verses have taken as they "arrived" (to quote Lidija Jakovlevna) and developed in Chelbasskaja are manifest in the textual, phonetic, musical, and performative idiosyncrasies of the ensemble's renditions. The song performances contain a variety of hybrid musical and linguistic features. As Stokes corroborates, "[…] musicians often appear to celebrate ethnic plurality in problematic ways. Musicians in many parts of the world have a magpie attitude towards genres, picked up, transformed. and reinterpreted in their own terms (1994, 16)." And important to my thesis is the fact that singers seem to embrace and even revel in their ability to move easily back and forth between more Ukrainian-sounding and more Russian-sounding language and genres. In thinking back to Stokes' ideas about the ways musical hybridity can create more open-ended identities, I believe that rural ensembles' inclusion of multiple song genres, idioms, and themes into their musical and linguistic repertoires is a way in which performers offer alternative ideas of belonging that counteract the flattening Russian and Ukrainian nation-building agendas. Stokes aptly describes this phenomenon, "[…] musical performance can […] enact in a powerful, affective way, rival principles of social organization (1994, 13)." The rival principles in this case are regional identities that are special and contain both Ukrainian and Russian features. Chelbasskaja singers can perform both Russian-ness and Ukrainian-ness, and they do so easily, enthusiastically, and with pride. Moreover, having both Russian and Ukrainian features in their language and repertoire is part of what makes them authentically Kubanian.

Music Case Study 3: Petrovskaja Introductory Verses and First Song

It is not only the Chelbasskaja ensemble that performs both Russian-ness and Ukrainian-ness as part of their regional identity presentation. The Petrovskaja ensemble also offers telling instances of musical hybridity that further support my understanding of music and language as means of resisting external homogenizing national identification. The example below demonstrates

the way performers privilege the expression of regional identities as well as the ways in which contrasting genres and language practices are juxtaposed in rural performances.

Musical Example 3: "We are from Petrovskaja"

This musical example features an introductory "ditty" recited by a solo female performer and used as a lead-in for the ensemble's opening song, "In the City There are Thistles" (*V horodi budjak*). In the casual festival environment of Slavjansk-na-Kubani, the Petrovskaja ensemble waited for a critical mass of festival attendees to gather around, whereupon they launched their set. The ditty below literally introduces the group to the audience – it offers information about the location, qualities, and famous products of Petrovskaja *stanitsa*. The woman performs in near standard Russian, which is remarkable in contrast to the very Ukrainian-sounding folk tune that immediately follows (as well as her claims of using *balachka* in conversations with local residents[94]). Towards the end of her intro, a male performer begins on the accordion, and the group raucously sings the Ukrainian-sounding song, "In the City" (the first verse of which I translate and include in the transcript).

Table 2.6 - Transcription of Introductory Verses and Lyrics of First Song **[LISTEN]**

[Woman recites]
     We are from Petrovskaja, we live in the Kuban,
     Come on over, we call everyone our friends!
     This is a stanitsa *of work, it is pure and proud,*
     Come on over to our region forever!
     From Sad-Gigant[95] *to the Sea of Azov, our fields spread out,*
     And Petrovskaja's peppers and salo[96] *are known through the whole country!*

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[94] The woman who performs the verses is the same woman who, in the Petrovskaja ensemble's heritage discussions from Chapter 1 (see Table 1.6), identifies herself to be a more recent arrival to the Kuban and remarks on how other local residents often correct her *balachka* use.

[95] Literally, "Garden-Giant," *Sad-Gigant* is the name of a large agribusiness (the largest in Europe) that is located in the Kuban region near the southern border of Petrovskaja and is famous for its fruit production ("OAO Sad Gigant" 2016; "Slavjansk-na-Kubani" 2016).

[96] *Salo* is cured pork fat that is eaten in many Eastern European countries; it used to flavor soups and other dishes, as well as eaten plain on bread. While the dish is certainly pan-Slavic, it has come to be associated with Ukraine in Russian jokes and folk anecdotes.

> [Laughter from audience]
> > *Woo-oooh!*
> [Accordion and percussion music picks up]
> [Two women sing]
> > *In the city, there is thistle*
> > *A clerk has fallen in love with me.*
> [All other female performers join in]
> > *He bought me some dainty shoes,*
> > *The heels squeak when I walk.*
> [Song continues…]

The introductory verses communicate information to the audience about Petrovskaja *stanitsa* and the group's self-identification. In a festival setting, when several groups are performing simultaneously, it becomes important to set oneself apart – to introduce oneself and "advertise" one's group to attract and sustain the attention of festival-goers. And so this woman does, loudly proclaiming Petrovskaja's place in the Kuban region, and detailing in verse the *stanitsa*'s values (friendliness, hospitality, hard work, purity, pride), geographical features (the "giant gardens" of *Sad-Gigant,* the Sea of Azov, fields), and "claims to fame" (peppers, *salo*). The song focuses on regional and local uniqueness – the *stanitsa* name "Petrovskaja" and the region name "Kuban" are both mentioned explicitly in the first line, whereas Russia is unnamed and only referenced obliquely in the last line (…*through the whole country!*) – merely as a way of conveying the scope of Petrovskaja's renown. *Stanitsa* and regional pride are foregrounded over national pride, which is interesting given that the event is an international festival of Slavic culture (*Mezhdunarodnyj festival' slavjanskoj kul'tury*) with acts from Slovakia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Belarus, and Ukraine[97]. While the focus on *stanitsa* and regional identity may not be that significant (the festival, after all, takes place in Russia, with

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[97] See the festival's *VKontakte* page for more details. Also information about and reviews of previous years' festivals on the EuroVision website. ("Mezhdunarodnyj Festival' Slavjanskoj Kul'tury | VK" 2016; "Festival' Slavjanskoj Kul'tury 'Slavjansk 2013' | EuroINvision.ru" 2016)

local Russian citizens comprising the majority of the audience), it all the same aligns with Bondar"s observations that local residents prefer regional identity markers over national identity markers in their self-identification (1995, 23).

The language of the opening verses is quite standard-Russian-sounding, with standard Russian vowel reduction, grammar, lexicon, and even the velar stop /g/ in *горда* and **Гигант**. The woman performing later identified herself as a more recent arrival to the Kuban, and her speech is generally more standard-Russian-sounding throughout. Perhaps she was chosen to perform the intro in order to appeal (and be intelligible!) to the largely standard-Russian-speaking audience. Regardless of the reason, her Russian speech is the mode for the introduction to the ensemble's performance. Thematically, the verses emphasize the openness, both literal (large farms and fields, the sea), and figurative (welcoming and accepting nature) of the *stanitsa* and its residents. They corroborate the widespread notions of Russia's south as fertile, friendly, expansive, and plentiful.

Immediately following the introductory verses, the singers launch a raucous opening song, "In the City." There was no discussion among participants immediately prior about which song to sing, and the instrumental music even begins as the introductory verses are still being recited – evidence that this song was agreed upon and chosen ahead of time to be the opening number. The song itself is a lively piece with a repetitive structure (four-line verses, each new verse beginning with the last two lines of the preceding verse), fast tempo, and bouncy rhythms. In terms of the lyrics, it seems to be an amalgamation of several different folk song texts, more specifically several different Ukrainian "joke songs" (*zhartivlyvi pisni*)[98]. The text itself is quite standard-Ukrainian-sounding, as the first stanza can illustrate: *Na horodi budjak,/ poljubyv mene djak./ Купув мени cherevychky,/ zakabluchky*

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[98] I found verses from their performance of "In the City" in the following other songs (listed in all their respective sources as Ukrainian folk songs): *На городі будяк* , *Стукалка-Грюкалка* , *Сватай мене, мужичок*. (Zakharii 2013; "Narodna - Stukalka-Hrjukalka / Detali Zapysu" 2016; Nikolaj Rozhkin 2013) With all these songs, the text coincides with the Petrovskaja version for a verse or two, but the remaining parts diverge considerably. The music is also quite different.

rypljat'. Grammatically, lexically, and phonetically, the text is very closely aligned with contemporary standard Ukrainian. The conspicuous contrast between the Russian introductory verses and the Ukrainian opening song is meaningful – both the Russian verses and Ukrainian song in effect *present* the Petrovskaja ensemble to the crowd. They are both part of the first performance moments in which the festival audience is figuring out what this ensemble is all about. The juxtaposition of both Russian and Ukrainian texts in the performance opener is a powerful "this is who we are" statement that privileges hybridity and ambiguity along the Ukrainian-Russian divide.

Musical Example 4: Melody Comparison for "In the City there is Thistle"

Just as with "Come Out, Hryts'ko," the Petrovskaja version of "In the City" is quite different from both mainstream and notated versions. This demonstrates the flexibility of folk repertoires and the ways individual rural performers and ensembles can change or develop pieces to meet their needs. In his songbook, Bigdaj includes "In the City" under the category "Humorous and Dancing Songs" ([1898] 1992, 317); the source of the song is attributed to "Cossacks from the Ekaterinodar regiment"[99], and a variant of the song is simply marked as "recorded on the streets of Ekaterinodar"[100] ([1898] 1992, 426). But while the ostensible title (*Na horodi budjak*) and the first verse are the same as in the Petrovskaja rendition, the rest of the songbook version differs considerably from the Petrovskaja ensemble's performed version. The melody and key are different as well (see Table 2.7), with the songbook version in D Major and the Petrovskaja version in B-flat minor. Both versions have the same tempo "at a fast pace" (*podvizhno*), and both have the same phrase lengths. But beyond that, they sound like completely different songs. This, again, gets back to Bohlman's perception of folk songs as living artifacts that reflect a number of communally-driven change processes. As seen here with "In the City," the most entrenched, "identifiable" features of

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[99] «Записана от казаков Екатеринодарского полка.»
[100] «Записана в г. Екатеринодаре "на улице".»

the song (title, first line/verse, basic musical structure) remain over the years, while many other features (continuing verses, melodic lines, key, singing style) are highly mutable and reflect possible processes of consolidation, substitution, addition, and forgetting[101]. The Petrovskaja ensemble, as with the Chelbasskaja ensemble and "Come Out, Hryts'ko," have truly made this song their own.

Table 2.7 - Transcription of Contrasting Melodies for "In the City" (Bigdaj and Petrovskaja)

Melody from Bigdaj's Songbook ([1898] 1992, 317) [Tempo Marking: "At a fast pace" (*podvizhno*)] **[LISTEN]**

Melody from Petrovskaja Performance [M.M. = 132] **[LISTEN]**

Similarly to the Chelbasskaja rendition of "Come Out, Hryts'ko," the significantly lower-pitched melody of the Petrovskaja performance indexes the ages of the performers and contrasts with other versions. In the performance of this song, the two male ensemble members played bass drum and accordion, respectively, while the female performers sang and kept time by clapping or using small percussion instruments. Individual voices can clearly be heard, despite the ensemble singing in unison – individual vocal timbres, tempi, and pronunciation nuances emerge and reveal the collective, collaborative nature of the ensemble. As DeNora posits, specific musical features represent identity aspirations of performers and are modes of self-articulation (2000, 53). Here the musical features mirror the dialogic and egalitarian manner in which the ensemble chooses the next

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[101] I do not want to imply that the Bigdaj version (or any other version) is in any way the "true" or "original" version of the song. Relatedly, I do not mean to say that the Petrovskaja singing community has slowly made alterations on the *Bigdaj* version in arriving at its current performance practice – the directionality and origin of changes are often unclear with oral traditions. Rather, I want to observe common patterns of variation among different versions to illuminate the musical and textual features that are especially subject to gradual, communal change.

songs to sing (see performers' conversation in Table 1.6, Table 2.1, and Table 2.5). Individuals interject their own unique voices and performance decisions into the music, just as they interject their memories and ideas into conversations about repertoire and identity. In both conversation and song, different individual voices burst through at different moments, and all voices are accommodated – even when they offer ideas or vocal features that do not fully align with each other. Voices overlap, repeat, meld with each other, corroborate, and interrupt.

Conclusion

In rural Kuban ensembles, both talking about songs and performing songs are social actions that communicate a group identity rooted in community, solidarity, friendly one-upmanship, and a flexibility with markers of national belonging. As demonstrated in the case studies for both Chapter One and Chapter Two, a range of speech styles equally "belong" to the group, from more Russian-sounding to more Ukrainian-sounding to uniquely Kubanian dialect forms. Moreover, individual performers can occupy different spaces along this linguistic spectrum and even move back and forth along it – openness to linguistic flexibility is a defining characteristic of the group. Correspondingly, for the musical examples, we see that different types of songs are a part of *stanitsa* ensembles' repertoire – songs with Ukrainian origin and themes, songs that combine different Ukrainian-language joke songs, Russian-language *chastushki,* and other Russian rhymed ditties. A layer on top of this repertoire variety is that ensembles' performances of these songs exhibit processes of collaborative change--individuals "have a say" in the performance practices and help shape and develop the musical and textual qualities of the songs. This means that songs assume local *stanitsa-*level qualities in terms of melody, text, pronunciation, length, vocal style, structure, key, and so on. Performers explicitly situate these unique song renditions and linguistic varieties in their personal histories as both residents of the region and as musicians who belong in a Kuban Cossack vocal ensemble. The above features of rural Kuban ensemble performances and performers are in stark

contrast with those of the Kuban Cossack Choir – the large, Russian, state-funded, Krasnodar-based commercial institution that is widely considered to be the "face" of Kuban Cossack culture. In the next chapter I take a closer look at the Kuban Cossack Choir and the consequences of its successful promotion of a certain – very different – brand of Kuban Cossackness.

Chapter Three - The Kuban Cossack Choir

Introduction

The Kuban Cossack Choir (KCC), or officially the "State Academic Kuban Cossack Choir" (*Gosudarstvennyj Akademicheskij Kubanskij Kazachij Khor*) is a large, state-sponsored folk music institution in Krasnodar, Russia. The artistic director and main conductor, Viktor Zakharchenko, raised the organization from obscurity in the 1970s – contributing greatly to the nascent Kuban Cossack cultural revival of the 70s and 80s. The Choir has steadily grown in numbers and in reputation, especially since the 1990s when the "Neo-Cossack Movement," as some scholars call it[102], really took off. The choir currently tours all across Russia as well as internationally, and since 1992 has even operated a "gifted and talented" boarding school that trains children in various regional folk arts ("Srednjaja Obshcheobrazovatel'naja Shkola-Internat Narodnogo Iskusstva Odarennykh Detej Imeni V.G. Zakharchenko" 2016). The Choir has won numerous high-profile awards, and was chosen to be the "Voice of the Sochi 2014 Cultural Olympiad" by the Sochi 2014 Organizing Committee[103]. The Kuban Cossack Choir claims to transmit Kuban Cossack folk culture in its performances and recordings. The combination of such claims with the Choir's abundant prestige and success means that Zakharchenko and the Choir hold considerable power in the arena of Kuban Cossack identity politics. As scholars of the Kuban, George Derluguian and Serge Cipko, assert, Zakharchenko is "indisputably the most gifted and renowned propagator of Kuban Cossack folk culture (1997, 1490)." To give this sentiment a slightly different spin, the version of "Kuban

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[102] See "The Politics of Identity in a Russian Borderland Province: The Kuban Neo-Cossack Movement, 1989-1996" (Derluguian and Cipko 1997)

[103] See announcement on Sochi 2014 website, archived here ("Kubanskij kazachij khor stal golosom Kul'turnoj Olimpiady 'Sochi 2014' - Zimnije olimpijskije igry Sochi 2014" 2011)

Cossackness" that Zakharchenko and the Choir present is the most dominant and visible both within the region and outside of it.

In this chapter, I analyze ways in which the Kuban Cossack Choir demonstrates its commitment to the preservation and promulgation of a certain kind of Kuban Cossack identity in its performance practices and autohistoriography projects. To this end, I look at recordings, performances, histories, press releases, and promotional materials of the Kuban Cossack Choir. In November 2014, I conducted a research trip to Moscow to attend performances of the choir's "Great History of the Cossacks" (*Bol'shaja kazach'ja istorija*) national tour. My observations and the promotional materials I collected from this trip figure prominently in my analysis of the Kuban Cossack Choir's identity presentation. As in my analyses of performance/interview examples in the previous chapters, I look at both linguistic and musical qualities in performance settings as well as verbal and written statements about the nature of Kuban Cossack identity that Zakharchenko and other Choir representatives have made. Zakharchenko, for example, acts not only as the KCC's music director, but also as a prolific scholar and ethnographer of Kuban folk culture. He publishes articles, edits song collections, and writes books on the history of Kuban Cossack vocal music and dialect[104]. Other organizational decisions also reflect ideas about regional identity and the institution's priorities. Zakharchenko and the KCC perform at civic and national events, and they enjoy business relationships and partnerships with Russian industrial groups (*Bazovyj Element*), charitable organizations (*Vol'noje Delo*), national and local media outlets (*Gazeta Kul'tura*, *Retro FM*, *Vol'naja Kuban'*), and even regional food and drink companies (*Karavaj Kubani*, *Kuban'-Vino*)[105]. The

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[104] See for example, *Narodnyje pesni Kubani: iz repertuara Gosudarstvennogo Kubanskogo Kazach'ego Khora* (V. Zakharchenko 1987), *Pesni Kubanskikh kazakov* (Bigdaj and Zakharchenko [1898] 1992)*, Poet Kubanskij Kazachij Khor: Narodnyje Pesni, zapisannyje v stanitsakh Krasnodarskogo kraja v obrabotke dlja narodnogo khora* (V. G. Zakharchenko 2002), *Iz istorii Kubanskogo kazachego khora* (V. G. Zakharchenko 2006a), *O samoidentifikatsii Kubanskikh Kazakov* (V. G. Zakharchenko n.d.), and many others.
[105] For official citations of these websites see ("Bazovyj Element: O Nas" 2016; "Vol'noje Delo - O Fonde" 2016; "O Nas - Gazeta 'Kul'tura'" 2016; "Istorija - Retro FM 88,3" 2016; "Gazeta Vol'naja Kuban' - O Gazete" 2016; "O Kompanii | Karavaj Kubani" 2016; "Kompanija Kuban'-Vino" 2016).

Kuban Cossack Choir is involved, then, in the curation of Kuban Cossack identity and culture in a multitude of overlapping domains – artistic, academic, educational, political, and commercial.

After exploring both the features of the KCC version of Kuban Cossack identity and the mechanisms by which Zakharchenko and the ensemble promote it, I then look at the ways this dominant identity version interacts with the self-identification of local *stanitsa* performers. How do rural singers react or respond to the Kuban Cossack Choir's success and performance practices? How do they understand the relationship between their own, small-scale, amateur music-making and the professional, commercial productions of the Choir? I turn back to Irina's interviews with performers in order to gain some answers to these questions. Local performers cannot but be aware of the Kuban Cossack Choir and its versions of regional songs; many have even had personal interactions with Viktor Zakharchenko or other KCC emissaries who have spent time in the *stanitsy* collecting musical material and making field recordings. Ethnographers and other scholars of the region also offer insight on the role of the Kuban Cossack Choir and the effects that the institution's fame has on local performers. Using these sources, I analyze the degree to which local Kuban Cossack identities align (or do not align) with the Choir's version of Kuban Cossack identity, but also the degree to which the KCC version of Kuban Cossackness – regardless of misalignments with rural performers' identities – is difficult to counteract. I identify some of the key regional identity features that are left out or "erased" in the Choir's self-identification. I also speculate on the reasons for the absence of particular features from the Choir's identity presentation, and remark upon some of the consequences of their absence for both indigenous performers and the greater popular understanding of the Kuban region.

Theoretical Frameworks

Before delving into more detailed historical background and performance practices of the Choir, I want to outline the theoretical frameworks with which this chapter engages. Research from

the field of ethnomusicology grapples with the questions and issues described above and certainly informs the manner in which I interpret the institutional history and performances of the Kuban Cossack Choir. Ethnomusicological fieldwork related to the legacy of former Soviet folk ensembles helps me understand the authority that the Kuban Cossack Choir has in shaping and maintaining regional identity – both prior to and since the fall of the Soviet Union. Research on the commercialization of European folk musics offers insight into the kinds of musical and structural changes that are made when folk music is repackaged for national and international audiences, as well as what effects these commercial versions have on local performers. Also useful are investigations on the ways governments and state-sponsored institutions attempt to control both folk music performance and the perhaps problematic identities that folk performances (re)produce. Scholars examine the extent to which "official" ensembles succeed in these attempts, but also the ways musical meanings and local folk identities can elude their reach. Finally, I make use of a theoretical concept from the field of linguistic anthropology to examine the differences between the ways the Kuban Cossack Choir presents Kuban Cossackness and the ways village residents self-identify; I extrapolate from research on linguistic differentiation to investigate the ways that the *cultural* differentiation and hybridity of village residents are incompatible with the goals of the Choir.

Ethnomusicologist Andy Nercessian (2000) has explored the concept of "national culture" as mediated by former Soviet folk ensembles in Armenia. He has found that former Soviet folk ensembles are granted a special salience as bearers and communicators of national identity in the post-Soviet era (Nercessian 2000). Kuban Cossackdom is not a nation in the contemporary, Western sense[106], nor does the history of the Kuban Cossack Choir exactly mirror that of the Aram

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[106] Significant arguments were made in the 1990s and 2000s about the potential for a Kuban Cossack nation forming after the fall of the Soviet Union. See *The Kuban' Cossack Revival (1989–1993): The Beginnings of a Cossack National Movement in the North Caucasus Region* (Boeck 1998), *From the Verge of Extinction to Ethnic Distinction: Cossack Identity and Ethnicity in the Kuban' Region, 1991-2002* (Boeck 2004), *Uninvited Guests in the Communal Apartment: Nation-formation Processes among*

Merangulian Ensemble in Armenia (the object of Nercessian's research), but there are nevertheless some important parallels that make Nercessian's work especially useful for my project. While the Kuban Cossack Choir (contentiously) claims a 200-plus year, uninterrupted history that pre-dates the Soviet era, several of its musical ancestors *were* Soviet-created or Soviet-sponsored institutions. Nercessian advocates a perception of (folk) music as "an instrument of social restructuring, an active demarcator of social boundaries, and a constructor of seemingly old, but usually new places (2000, 79)." Here he points to the fact that in contemporary times, former Soviet folk ensembles can present identities that are quite different from the Soviet or pre-Soviet versions of identity that the ensembles previously espoused. He also underscores the power of these musical institutions – despite identity inconsistencies – to shape common understandings of place and culture in post-Soviet space.

In determining the origin of former Soviet folk ensembles' identity-shaping power, Nercessian looks at the history of Soviet folk ensembles and the assumptions about identity that underlay their formation. Early Soviet folk ensembles were closely shaped and monitored – they were used to "safely" promote the distinctive subcultures of the multiethnic Soviet nation in ways that eliminated any associated separatist political or military ideologies. As Nercessian maintains, these folk ensembles gave "visual, acoustical, and aesthetic substance" to the nationalities of the Soviet Union (2000, 81). Early Soviet folk ensembles were created and/or supported in accordance with Lenin's policies of *korenizatsija*, which promoted national self-expression in language, art, and music. Crucially, folk ensembles of this time were shaped by an assumption that (national) cultures were preexisting phenomena, and that members of a particular culture shared a distinct, inherent,

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Unrecognized Soviet Nationalities (Appleby 2010). Kuban Cossack political groups, including the Kuban Cossack Host, have since aligned themselves more exclusively with Russian nation-building processes, and this conversation has largely subsided.

homogenous identity. A folk ensemble was thus not thought of as a nation-building agent, but rather as a presenter of a people's musical culture "as it already was" (Nercessian 2000, 83).

In reality, these Soviet state-supported ensembles made many changes to existing folk music and performance practices. Nercessian describes several changes that were made in the Armenian context, many of which echo the observations of Toje, Derluguian, and Cipko (described in Chapter Two) – about the "museumification" of Kuban Cossack music that coincided with the development of Soviet-sponsored Kuban folk ensembles. For one, the idea of a single director/conductor who stands in front and leads the ensemble was a foreign idea to many folk music traditions. The introduction of this Western organizational concept into official Soviet folk ensembles resulted in a drastically different "feel" for performances. Another related change had to do with notated music – many rural performers were (and still are) not able to read music, nor do they rely on notated text for the lyrics of songs. With official Soviet folk ensembles, however, came the new need for participants to read and play notated parts. As Nercessian describes, "The music performed by folk orchestras were essentially folk tunes which were collected and 'harmonised' by a classically trained composer who also acted as the conductor of his pieces and the orchestra (2000, 84)." The new performance contexts for folk musics, then, required coordination, deference to the desires of a conductor/arranger, as well as a musical and textual consistency that were otherwise not present in the cooperative, improvisatory, and spontaneous music-making of the tradition's casual, rural performers. In other words, music was taken out of its original contexts; it was standardized and formalized to fit the needs of the Soviet ideologues. This meant divorcing folk music from any nationalist political associations and then leveraging it to emphasize (a sanitized) cultural diversity within the framework of a unified socialist order. All of the subsequent musical and performance changes, Nercessian observes, point to an understanding of Soviet folk ensembles as representatives of carefully crafted – *not* inherent – cultural identities; repertoires were curated and adjusted,

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participation was supervised, quality and "musicianship" were controlled (2000, 84). Many of these features (single director/conductor, trained musicians, arranged pieces, notated music, etc.) remain in contemporary ensembles, including the Kuban Cossack Choir.

Official attitudes regarding *korenizatsija* changed with Stalin, whose policies regarding language and folklore reflected a strong desire for Soviet unity and thus emphasized Russification and standardization according to "progressive" ideals. This meant that folk song was suddenly seen as "backward," and folk elements were discouraged in favor of a classical aesthetic. Nercessian notes that despite this ideological shift, many *korenizatsija*-era institutions remained – as well as the ideologies that "nation" and "culture" were preexisting, homogenous categories. What happened then during this transition, was that existing folk ensembles were encouraged to embed folk tunes into a classical framework. This meant that in the 1930s, Soviet folk ensembles displayed even more carefully manipulated and manufactured sounds, as the prevailing Socialist Realist aesthetic encouraged folk ensembles to play folk arrangements in the "progressive" classical style as well as avoid any songs with negative sentiments that would not reflect "happy Soviet people" (2000, 86). During the 1950s and 60s, Soviet folk ensembles began to perform abroad. This encounter with the non-Soviet "other," Nercessian claims, led to special awareness of one's culture and a growing pride in the uniqueness and appeal of one's (national) folk music (2000, 87). The other side of this is that it also provoked the fear of losing the distinct cultures that folk ensembles represented, as well as the fear that a folk culture could become tainted by outside influences. For Soviet folk ensembles, these fears resulted in an emphasis on only performing "pure" music from the culture and endeavors to be as "authentic" as possible. Mechanisms by which folk ensembles achieved this included: zealous participation in ethnographic research and the recording of rural performers (to obtain the most authentic musical material); promotion of the folk ensemble in public media and academia as fully embedded in the people's historical narratives (to demonstrate that the ensemble has always "been a

part of things" and represents the true musical expression of the people's experience); and increased participation in public parades, commemorative events, and folk festivals (to intertwine the ensemble's performances with other popular expressions of identity). Nercessian portrays the above phenomena in the Armenian context, but these practices – as I will demonstrate later in this chapter – also aptly describe the activities of the Kuban Cossack Choir (or earlier forms of it) in the 1960s and 70s. In addition, the practices point to the success and popularity of former Soviet folk ensembles in post-Soviet identity formation. As Nercessian astutely observes, these institutions were not rendered obsolete with the fall of the Soviet Union – quite the contrary. Former Soviet folk ensembles gained new purpose in the restructuring and frantic nation-building processes of the 1990s and beyond. Folk ensembles now received attention from previously isolated diaspora communities, and they began to ground their musical practices in ideas of glorious, "untouched," pre-Soviet pasts (Nercessian 2000, 81, 89).

Nercessian explores useful explanations for the sustained interest in folk ensembles in contemporary times. One theory he supports is the idea that former Soviet folk ensembles help bridge the widening gap between urban and rural populations. A prevalent notion of folk music is that it "belongs" to rural communities (whereas other types of music like pop and classical are culturally located in urban settings). With the drastic and rapid urbanization in the late Soviet and post-Soviet period, there were (and are) large proportions of first-generation urban-dwellers who maintain(ed) closeness with the "rural spirit" through their affinity for folk traditions. Processes of cultural revival, Nercessian emphasizes, are predominantly associated with the city, and it is urban initiatives that especially focus on cultural preservation – even as urbanized people depart further and further from the actual rural folk cultures in their daily lives. The ultimate function of the contemporary folk ensemble, Nercessian maintains, is to unite urban identities with an "authentic" (i.e., rural) culture. He summarizes,

> It is precisely the role of the folk ensemble in reconciling these two cultures that makes it an effective medium of ethnic consolidation, and helps give the idea of national culture some substance. In short, the folk ensemble serves both the requirements of the newfound urban identity and the attempt to keep one's traditional culture 'intact' (2000, 91).

The former Soviet folk ensemble offers a convenient, ready-made mode of identity expression that dovetails nicely with the post-Soviet identity-building needs of former Soviet cultures. Soviet ideology had laid the foundation for the sense of particularism that people needed as they found their footing in the post-Soviet upheaval. The ensembles apply a balm to the urban, post-Soviet identity crisis by granting urbanites access to a unifying, "authentic" culture. Post-Soviet states have embraced and supported the former Soviet ensembles as powerful nation-building tools. Due to the effectiveness of *korenizatsija* and the post-Thaw cultural revivals of the Soviet era, both the authenticity and authority of folk ensembles as culture-bearers go almost entirely unquestioned – even when their musical and other practices do not fully align with those of living, rural performers.

Caroline Bithell (1996) examines in detail the ways commercial ensembles display musical and performance practices radically different from amateur, rural performers. When combined with Nercessian's reflections on the preeminence of the (now often quite commercial) former Soviet folk ensembles, Bithell's observations point to some of the effects that ensembles like the KCC may have on the rural constituents they claim to represent. Bithell compares and contrasts village field recordings with commercial recordings of the same Corsican vocal tradition; she has identified several differences in terms of the motivations and ideologies that inspire rural vs. commercial sounds. She describes Corsican programs of cultural reconstruction in the 1970s that are similar to the situation in the Soviet Union – in which commercial ensembles promoted a return to rural authenticity and a move away from the more classical sounds of the previous decades. Many musical and performance characteristics of rural singing in this Corsican tradition, however, do not readily fit with the typical needs of commercial performances or recordings. She names several such features of rural Corsican performances, the majority of which can also be observed in the music-making of

Kuban Cossack *stanitsa* ensembles, namely: absence of a strict meter or tempo, "staggered entry of the voices," "varying degrees of melismatic ornamentation," "the use of notes outside the even-tempered scale," improvised texts, and the idea that the act of singing is "primarily for the benefit of the participants themselves" (1996, 43). In other words, rural folk music is characterized by unpredictability, inconsistency, and a lack of regard for many standard, Western musical conventions – none of which "play nicely" with commercial aspirations to perform, record, and disseminate the tradition to a wide audience.

Commercial ensembles thus make conscious choices about content, style, and presentation that better reflect their own identity-building and promotional goals. As Bithell writes, "There is often a clear intention to promote something, with an associated discourse which is not necessarily fully stated […] (1996, 47)." She goes on to outline the ways in which these (at times obscured) intentions are cultivated in commercial ensembles. Performance sets are decided upon beforehand, and not by the musicians themselves. Prior to the actual performances, song sets are rehearsed and polished until they are exactly what the ensemble leadership desires. Bithell also notes that a certain "degree of originality" must accompany performances and recordings; often concerts have new and original themes or special occasions to justify their occurrence[107]. Ensemble members are required to be "artists" who have proven their skills via auditions and reviews, but tellingly they are not required to be residents of the villages, have heritage (or even close ties) with the community, or speak the associated dialect. In these ways, Bithell maintains, a commercial performance can be viewed as a carefully crafted product in ways that a field performance cannot (1996, 47–49).

Given the extensive reflection and top-down regulation that characterize commercial performances, we can analyze such performances in terms of the institutions' official perception of

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[107] Cf. performances of the Kuban Cossack Choir, where song sets are organized by themes like the "History of the Cossacks" or based on special events like anniversaries (of the choir's existence, of Zakharchenko's directorship, etc.).

the tradition and the ways that key figures want to present the tradition to the public. Bithell invites us to consider the "political and aesthetic considerations" that inform performance choices (1996, 49). She presents several of her observations in relation to the Corsican tradition – some of which, I believe, are quite helpful when examining the Kuban Cossack Choir's identity presentation. For example, Bithell notes the fact that commercial ensembles tend to exaggerate distinctive musical elements that are seen to be "quintessential" to the singing tradition. Such elements are, in turn, represented in media and academic publications as the unique features which must be "preserved at all costs." Preservation discourse can be more prescriptive than descriptive, and exaggerated elements become hardened in musical practice (1996, 49–51).

Commercial groups are concerned with sounding professional, and musically this results in what Bithell coins as the "smooth[ing] out [of] tonal and harmonic idiosyncrasies (1996, 51)." Commercial ensembles do not want their music to be perceived as disjointed or out of tune, and so melodies and harmonies are made to fit firm and familiar patterns. Relatedly, there are conscious decisions about voice placement and timbre that differ considerably from village performances. Commercial ensembles put effort into making their music sound "palatable" and accessible to large, outsider audiences; they eschew the rougher, more "primitive" sounding timbres of village singers. Voice placement is affected by extramusical considerations – professional singers often perform while standing. This and the regular use of microphones and other audio technology reflect concerns about vocal projection in large performance spaces – an issue that is not critical for rural performers who often casually sit and even slouch when they sing (1996, 53–54).

A final relevant performance choice that Bithell observed has to do with stylization. Field recordings, she notes, reveal a proclivity toward stanza variation and a flexibility with musical elements such as melodic changes, ornamental flourishes, or the timing/manner in which voices enter. Commercial ensembles, however, privilege identical stanzas that are "rehearsed and

reproducible" (1996, 54). The often comparably larger sizes of commercial ensembles is negatively correlated with variation – the more singers for a particular part, the less feasible it is to allow individual singers to improvise at will. Bithell evaluates this commercial tendency toward simplification and uniformity – she says it leads to an impression of greater sophistication. Field performances are viewed as suboptimal, fragmented, and/or primitive versions. Commercial ensembles thus frequently see their role as restorative – as saviors of the tradition who "return" the folk songs to their "original glory" (1996, 54–55).

Bithell hesitates to place a value judgment on the performance decisions of commercial groups. She asserts that innovations in a tradition should not inherently be censured – that all traditions are constantly changing and developing (1996, 63–64). She does, however, note some of the reactions and attitudes of elderly, indigenous performers. Questions of authenticity and faithful representation arise. Older singers, for example, might hear commercial performances on the radio or television and deem them unrecognizable from the versions sung in villages. Professional groups can be seen as "producing art rather than popular music" or are accused of only being in it for the money (1996, 56). In the Corsican context, Bithell claims, ownership of the repertoire by village performers is not threatened by commercial ensembles, because it is only considered "the real thing" if it is sung by indigenous residents who learned the tradition in the village. Nevertheless, there are still significant concerns about the loss of characteristic nuances and inflections. Additionally, the national and international marketing of commercial ensembles (tours, recordings, and other promotional endeavors) means that commercial versions more readily become the "public face" of the tradition to outside listeners (1996, 56–57).

Still, Bithell shuns the accusations that commercial ensembles are "ruining" the tradition with their redefinitions and alterations. While some indigenous performers may indeed feel their tradition is being usurped, Bithell reminds her readers about the positive consequences of

commercial folk ensembles' success: young people have greater access to the tradition, there is increased awareness of the tradition by non-local audiences, and positive responses to commercial performances have helped improve the status of traditional music in the region (1996, 62). The style of singing has – largely through commercial ensembles – become a symbol of pride and liveliness as opposed to merely a practice of country bumpkins. As the author notes, "Commercial recordings are a crucial component in the documentation of the process whereby indigenous music has been pulled from the brink of the grave and grown to take its place as a national emblem (1996, 63)." In the Corsican context, the nature of this "national emblem" may be relatively uncontested, contributing to Bithell's positive (or at least neutral) interpretation of commercial ensembles' resurrectionary activities. I agree with Bithell that traditions are constantly changing, and that the changes commercial folk ensembles make to their sound are not inherently negative. In the Kuban context, however, regional identities are the subject of much controversy, and the Kuban Cossack Choir is essentially the "one and only" commercial ensemble representing Kuban Cossack identity in the manner that Bithell describes. Due to the Kuban Cossack Choir's dominance and the extent of its commercialization, its decisions about what kind of Kuban identity to represent (and what kinds *not* to represent) are much more consequential and overriding in the region's identity discourse than the decisions of the smaller-scale (and, significantly, *multiple*) Corsican commercial ensembles.

In my analysis of the rural identity elements that are not a part of the self-presentation of the Kuban Cossack Choir, I turn again to the field of linguistic anthropology for my theoretical approach. I consider the Choir's performance practices and organizational identity in terms of Judith Irvine and Susan Gal's (2000) concept of "erasure." Irvine and Gal developed this concept through their examination of the ways homogenizing ideologies confront linguistic differentiation. Many nation-building ideologies are threatened by linguistic differentiation and so engage in processes that seek to denigrate and decrease differentiation while promoting linguistic homogeneity. "Erasure" is

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one process through which linguistic flattening occurs. Irvine and Gal define it from a sociolinguistic standpoint:

> *Erasure* is the process in which ideology, in simplifying the sociolinguistic field, renders some persons or activities (or sociolinguistic phenomena) invisible. Facts that are inconsistent with the ideological scheme either go unnoticed or get explained away. So, for example, a social group or a language may be imagined as homogeneous, its internal variation disregarded. Because a linguistic ideology is a totalizing vision, elements that do not fit its interpretive structure – that cannot be seen to fit – must be either ignored or transformed (2000, 38).

They offer two primary case studies – French regulation of Wolof dialects in Senegal (Irvine) and language-based territorial claims of Macedonia (Gal) – to demonstrate the ways in which national ideologies handle "problematic" linguistic variation. Linguistic heterogeneity, they note, does not match up with Western ideologies about the nation or social and ethnic boundaries. Linguistic and ethnographic diversity, then, is often equated with "disorder and an uncivilized past (2000, 64)." When, in their case studies, linguistic practices and social categories of peoples diverged from national(ist) expectations, Irvine and Gal noticed instances of erasure – when outside observers represented regional language in ways that missed or erased the local logic of language and identity. Linguistic usage patterns that did not fit into the totalizing national categories of the modern imagination were ignored (2000, 65–67). Subjective views of hybrid language as "simple" or "an irritating kind of pidgin," rather than as a legitimate group marker in itself, contributed to tendencies toward erasure in these outside representations (census reports, linguistic maps, official policies, education, etc.) (2000, 69–70). Irvine and Gal discuss erasure, then, as a social and ideological process that drives linguistic change. They believe that the direction and motivation of this change can be identified by looking at the ideologization of language and the subsequent reconfiguration of language varieties through processes like erasure (2000, 77).

I believe Zakharchenko and the Kuban Cossack Choir engage in a process of cultural erasure – the elements of rural Kuban Cossack identities that do not fit the ideologies to which the choir subscribes are ignored or transformed to suit their own visions of what Kuban Cossacks are

(or *should* be). This includes, as I demonstrate below, the specifically linguistic erasure that Irvine and Gal describe, but also musical erasure and a broader cultural identity erasure. The Choir, due to the political ideology of its major funding sources, its ties to regional and national government bodies, as well as increasingly turbulent Russian-Ukrainian relations, has had to adjust its self-presentation to match a Russian nationalist agenda – in spite of the fact that Zakharchenko and the Choir have previously supported a more nuanced approach. The hybridity of rural Kuban linguistic, musical, and self-identification practices is not fully represented in the Kuban Cossack Choir's performances or promotional materials. This has great ramifications given the Choir's notoriety and claims to authenticity. Linguistic and musical differentiation are either markedly absent or are carefully leveraged by the Choir to promote ideas of Slavic unity that undermine both Ukrainian autonomy and the unique, Ukrainian elements that are a part of Kuban Cossack culture and history.

The observations of Nercessian and Bithell help illuminate the structures through which the Kuban Cossack Choir maintains and exercises its authority as bearer of Kuban Cossack culture. Nercessian and Bithell also offer helpful remarks on the implications of this authority for rural performers, but I largely expand upon Irvine and Gal's notion of linguistic erasure to interpret the implications of the Choir's dominance. I keep the above theories in mind as I examine the institutional history of the Choir as well as its current practices and configuration. These theories are also helpful as I explore the interactions between the Choir and rural performers in conjunction with the disconnects between their respective identity presentations. I also continue to turn to the theoretical foundations of the previous chapters, namely ideas that hybridity and bivalency do not go unnoticed and are often heavily politicized (Chapter One), and understandings about music, identity, agency and the political/self-defining agendas that can be enacted through music performance (Chapter Two). While in the earlier chapters I use these theories to analyze *stanitsa* ensembles, I apply them now in this chapter to the practices of the Kuban Cossack Choir.

The Kuban Cossack Choir: 1811 – Present?

As the question mark in the section header suggests, there are some issues with claiming a 200-plus year existence for the current Kuban Cossack Choir. Despite official acknowledgement of a few "minor" interruptions and restructurings, this is exactly a claim that the Choir makes – it is a very important claim for their public image. This is not unusual – many cultural institutions construct long, interrupted histories for themselves in order to promote a sense of legitimacy and venerability. The Kuban Cossack Choir constructs an origin story that is worth a closer look, as it reveals much about the way the contemporary Choir wants to present itself to the public.

In Viktor Zakharchenko's 2006 compendium[108] of historical articles about the Kuban Cossack Choir, "From the History of the Kuban Cossack Choir: Materials and Observations" (*Iz istorii Kubanskogo Kazach'ego Khora: Materialy i ocherki*), the author writes of the Choir's earliest ancestor and clearly states the succession:

> In the year 1811 in the Black Sea Host, later renamed the Kuban Host, at the request of the holy enlightener of the Black Sea region, archpriest Kirill Rossinskij, were created two choruses: the Singing Chorus – for church services in the cathedral, and the Musicians' Chorus (that is, the religious, but later symphonic orchestra) – for leading Cossack holidays, parades, and Kubanians' musical celebrations. October 14, 2006, the Feast of the Intercession of the Theotokos, marked 195 years to the day since the founding of the Singing Chorus and its successor – the State Kuban Cossack Choir[109] (2006a, 2).

We can glean a lot of information from this statement in terms of the Kuban Cossack Choir's identity aspirations. For one, the Choir's earliest ostensible predecessor belonged to the Black Sea Host (the more Ukrainian, former Zaporizhian Cossacks) and predated the formation of the Kuban

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[108] This collection is, in its entirety, available for download in the <u>"Library" section</u> of the Choir's official website. The date of publication is unstated, but most sources cite 2006 as the year of issuance. The introduction speaks of the 195th anniversary celebration of the Kuban Cosssack Choir ("Kubanskij Kazachij Khor - Biblioteka" 2016).

[109] «В 1811 году в Черноморском войске, позднее переименованном в Кубанское, по прошению духовного просветителя Черномории протоиерея Кирилла Россинского было создано два хора: Певческий – для церковного богослужения в храме, и Музыкантский, т. е. духовой, а позже симфонический оркестр – для проведения казачьих праздников, парадов, музыкального просвещения кубанцев. 14 октября 2006 года, на Покрова Пресвятой Богородицы, исполнилось 195 лет со дня основания войскового Певческого хора и его правопреемника – Государственного Кубанского казачьего хора.»

Cossack Host or the solidification of the Kuban Cossack identity. Zakharchenko is quick to point out, however, that this entity was renamed the Kuban Host[110]. This Black Sea Host Singing Chorus was founded at the behest of the Black Sea Host's religious leader, Kirill Rossinskij, who asked the Host administration for a small sum to support a group of church choristers. The Singing Chorus was quite small, with initial financial support for only one choirmaster, two basses, two tenors, two altos, and two descants (Kijashko 1911, 3–4). The Black Sea Singing Chorus of 1811 had quite a different set-up and role from the large, commercial, vocal *and* instrumental Kuban Cossack Choir. Zakharchenko downplays these differences in the above statement by emphasizing a religious connection for both the Black Sea Singing Chorus and the Kuban Cossack Choir – the contemporary Choir celebrated its "195th" anniversary on the Orthodox Feast of the Intercession; this links the Choir to the religious origins and purpose of the Black Sea Chorus. In actuality – while Zakharchenko is outspokenly religious, and the Choir has been known to perform for religious observances – the ensemble is largely a commercial, secular endeavor, whose role in today's Kuban society more closely resembles that of the Black Sea Host Musicians' Chorus. Moreover, Zakharchenko's comments overlook the 70 years of Soviet secularism and religious restrictions, as well as the purges and decossackization of the early Soviet period – both of which, as mentioned in Chapter Two, had drastic consequences for Kuban Cossack music ensembles and the Kuban Cossack identity. Any kind of seamless (especially *religious*) trajectory between the Black Sea Chorus and the current Choir is misleading, but the fact that Zakharchenko sees the KCC as fulfilling the

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[110] In his later and current writings, he ambiguously refers to the 1811 institution as simply the "Host Singing Chorus" (*Vojskovyj pevcheskij khor*). See quotation from Zakharchenko's 2006 article "Slovo o sud'be…" below. This blurs the lines – especially for those who do not know their Kuban history – between the cultural practices of the Ukrainian Black Sea Cossacks (in contrast to the Russian Line Cossacks who were also settled in the region) and the different, hybrid category of Kuban Cossacks that did not emerge officially until 50 years after the formation of the Kuban Cossack Choir's earliest "ancestor" institution.

legacy of the Black Sea Chorus reveals that he wants to align the Choir's identity with a pre-Soviet, historically rooted, deeply authentic, and Orthodox aesthetic[111].

Other sources do not dispute the Kuban Cossack Choir's claim to be the descendant and "torch-bearer" of the Black Sea (and later Kuban) Host Singing Chorus[112], but many offer an understandably more haphazard and interrupted history than Zakharchenko indicates, especially in regard to the Soviet period. Kuban historian, Valerij Ratushnjak (2008), includes an entry on the State Academic Kuban Cossack Choir in his comprehensive encyclopedia of Kuban Studies (*Kubanovedenie ot A do Ia*). The entry-writer, Natal'ja Korsakova, indeed also recognizes the 1811 choir as the true ancestor of the contemporary organization. But the entry describes how in 1921, the then-named Kuban Black Sea Singing Chorus was "abolished" (*uprazdnjen*), or in other words destroyed. This corresponds to the program of decossackization (*razkazachivanie*) in which Cossacks were labeled enemies of the state and it became illegal to publicly promote Cossack identity. Representations of Cossack symbols, including uniforms, medals, banners, and cultural symbols like music were forbidden. Many Cossacks were killed, exiled, or themselves fled the country (Toje 2006, 1067). Stray choristers in exile formed a small choir in Serbia in the mid-1920s that they called the Kuban Host Choir[113]. A separate group formed later in Krasnodar in 1936 by the presidium of the

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[111] The rise of Russian Orthodoxy in contemporary times has been strongly linked to post-Soviet Russian identity formation in a way that is both exclusionary and intimately tied to Russian nationalist politics. See *Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent: Faith and Power in the New Russia* (Garrard and Garrard 2008).

[112] The name change for the Chorus ("Black Sea Host Singing Chorus" to "Kuban Host Singing Chorus") that occurred in 1861 after the official formation of the Kuban Cossack Host was understood to be just that – only a name change, but not a substantial change to the ensemble. This is indicated by the "100th Anniversary" celebrations and commemorative photos that took place in 1911 ("Kubanskij Kazachij Khor - Istorija" 2016). It is easier to see the uninterrupted trajectory between the 1811 and 1911 choirs than it is to see the seamless connection between either of those ensembles and the contemporary Kuban Cossack Choir.

[113] Korsakova (2006) writes in her article "Kuban Cossack Choirs in Emigration" (*Kubanskije kazach'i khory v emigratsii*) that some representatives of the Kuban Black Sea Singing Chorus managed to escape to Serbia in 1920 – 1921. These representatives organized their own choir in order to continue Kuban Cossack historical traditions. They were able to bring with them several pieces of memorabilia from the old Chorus: the choral library, musical instruments, and transcripts of the speeches that were given at the 100th anniversary of the Black Sea Host Singing Chorus. These items and other Kuban Cossack Host regalia eventually made their way to the Kuban Cossack museum in New Jersey (2006). Here they were housed until 2009 – 2010 when they were controversially and ceremoniously returned to the reinstated Kuban Cossack Host in Russia (ITAR-TASS Ural 2010).

Azov-Black Sea executive committee and named the Kuban Cossack Choir. After only a few local performances, the choir's director was arrested and executed (*repressirovan i rasstreljan*) at the hands of Soviet authorities. The 1930s Stalinist paranoia about separatism, in addition to the complicated ideological shift about the merits (or lack thereof) of folk music made this a difficult time to develop a new choir centered upon Kuban Cossack folk music; thus the 1936 choir did not thrive. The ensemble was in disarray for a few years until it came under new state-approved direction and was renamed the (much "safer"-sounding) State Ensemble of the Songs and Dances of Kuban Cossacks (*Gosudarstvennyj ansambl' pesni i pljaski kubanskikh kazakov*). Official Soviet sponsorship was key here in setting Kuban Cossack folk ensembles on the path of state support and control that eventually led to the sense of renown and legitimacy that Nercessian describes. In 1960, the State Ensemble of the Songs and Dances of Kuban Cossacks was disbanded. Nine years later, a new group was formed, named again the Kuban Cossack Choir. This group began winning awards, including top prize at the Burgas Folk Festival in 1971. In 1974 it came under the direction of Viktor Zakharchenko, who gradually led the ensemble to the prestigious position it holds today – winning first prizes in the All-Russian Choral Competitions of 1975 and 1984, earning the Order of the Friendship of Peoples (*Orden Druzhby narodov*) in 1987, acquiring the title of "Academic" in 1993[114]. Korsakova closes the entry with glowing praise, "The art of the State Academic Kuban Cossack Choir occupies a place of well-earned prestige both in Russia and abroad[115] (2008, 112–13)."

Even from this short summary of Korsakova's encyclopedia entry, it is easy to see the complicated trajectories of different Kuban choral groups and their often troubled relationships with the state, particularly following the Civil War. Apparent as well are the problems with identifying a

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[114] This represents a partnership between the Kuban Cossack Choir and Kuban State University in Krasnodar – mutual support, communication, and joint courses and research between choir representatives and scholars of Kuban State.
[115] «Искусство Государственного академического Кубанского казачьего хора пользуется заслуженным успехом в России и за рубежом.»

point-by-point unidirectional ancestry for the contemporary Kuban Cossack Choir. At multiple times there were no official Kuban singing groups in existence, and new groups that were formed – often for political reasons – distanced themselves from previous ensembles in terms of structure and aesthetic. For example, the government-controlled State Ensemble of the Songs and Dances of Kuban Cossacks formed in 1937 promoted a more "museum-like" image of Kuban Cossacks than the doomed 1936 Kuban Cossack Choir that was the result of grassroots efforts from regional enthusiasts. And again, what cannot be ignored when looking at the contemporary Choir is the fundamental transition that occurred after the decossackization of the early '20s, whereby the "official" Cossack vocal ensembles ceased to be intimately connected to the daily rituals and practices of actual Kuban Cossacks. Instead (with the exception of the obscure exile choirs and the incredibly short-lived 1936 choir), the official Kuban ensemble became forever associated with state support, national and international competitions, non-local musicians, and a degree of distance from rural bearers of the tradition. This is still the case today, despite Zakharchenko's personal claims to Kuban Cossack heritage or the enthusiastic efforts of the institution to link itself to pre-revolutionary Kuban ensembles.

In order to get a better sense of how Zakharchenko and the Kuban Cossack Choir position themselves in relation to the Soviet period and the different historical Kuban choirs, it is useful to take a closer look at the writings and promotional materials of Zakharchenko and other Choir representatives. The Choir's official "take" on its own institutional history is quite revealing of the present image it aims to promote, as well as the extent to which the Choir is intertwined with state-sponsored goals and Russian nationalism. This pro-state, pro-Russian agenda, while not inherently bad, undermines the legitimate Ukrainian claims to Kuban Cossack heritage and folk music; it also ignores the troubled history of Ukrainian settlement in the region and the tense political situation

between Ukraine and Russia today. Most importantly for this project, it discounts the hybrid, not-exclusively-Russian features by which real Kuban residents and folk music practitioners self-identify.

Viktor Zakharchenko's Writings & Interviews

Viktor Zakharchenko, in addition to being the artistic director of the Kuban Cossack Choir, is also a prolific writer, editor, and arranger. On the Kuban Cossack Choir's official website, Zakharchenko is playfully described as "an academic *and* a Cossack" (*i akademik i kazak*) ("Kubanskij Kazachij Khor - Zakharchenko, Viktor Gavrilovich" 2016). He has written numerous articles about Kuban Cossack culture and folk music, and he has written even more introductions, forwards, epilogues, and other shorter pieces as part of Kuban Cossack folk songbooks, anthologies, histories, etc. Especially in his publications since the early 2000s, Zakharchenko's writings have demonstrated ardent Russian patriotism, assertive opinions on the role of folk music in modern society, Orthodox beliefs, and alignment with local, regional, and national levels of the Russian government. His role as a regional cultural figure is tremendous, and his presence in all kinds of folk culture writings, news pieces, and regional events is ubiquitous. Common in his writings are preservation narratives in which he speaks to the utmost importance of protecting and maintaining Kuban folk culture. The underlying beliefs that inform his opinions on this can be found in his introduction to the republication of Akim Bigdaj's *Songs of Kuban Cossacks* (1992). Zakharchenko writes:

> Every people has its own unique Soul – its own faith, language, cultural traditions, historical memory. As long as this Soul is alive, so is the people. In Krasnodar (former Ekaterinodar[116]) the Centre of Kuban Folk Culture has been founded for the study, preservation and renaissance of our cultural heritage. Its integral part is the world-famous Kuban Cossack Chorus[117] (1992, 27).

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[116] Zakharchenko strongly believes that Krasnodar should once again be given its pre-Revolutionary name, Ekaterinodar, and often urges residents to support the re-naming of the city in his writing and speeches. See for example his article, "Slovo o sud'be…" (2006b)

[117] This excerpt is, surprisingly, in English in the original. For some of the more promotional songbooks, Zakharchenko includes a longer Russian-language introduction as well as a shorter, more accessible English-language introduction. The

Zakharchenko expresses a belief in the previously mentioned *korenizatsija* ideologies about an "inherent" culture that must be preserved in order for the people to survive. Here also is the conviction that "culture" is a static, historical phenomenon – something pre-existing that can be preserved or revived in the contemporary moment, but not a living process that is created or developed in the present. Such ideas about culture certainly have an effect on the way Zakharchenko and Choir representatives interact with local performers. As evidenced in the previous two chapters, there are living, breathing performers who carry out and adapt the singing tradition, a tradition that is still a central part of the Kuban residents' everyday lives and identities. It is not just a lifeless thing of the past that they are preserving, unchanged from some imagined pre-Revolutionary state. Contemporary, local performers themselves engage in processes of change and development to suit their performance needs and realities. But Zakharchenko's focus is nevertheless on saving what existed *before now*, as close to its "original" state as possible – revival is one of the primary goals of the Kuban Cossack Choir. As described above in the section on Bithell's commercialization processes, Zakharchenko feels a strong need to actively *return* Kuban music to this "original" state – that is to say, the songs as they are currently performed in the *stanitsy* are insufficient and damaged, and Zakharchenko needs to intervene and change the music so as better to reflect its "original glory."

Consistent with the "every people has its own unique Soul" rhetoric, Zakharchenko regularly sympathizes with a fear of outside influence. He speaks about these fears in terms of folk music, but his views on musical purity often swirl seamlessly into contemporary conversations about the negative impact of the immigration of non-ethnic Russians to the Kuban region. Zakharchenko's reverence for purity and preservation are in contradiction to the observations from Chapter Two,

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point for the latter becomes clear when looking at the introductions' closing statements such as "We would be most grateful to those who may wish to support the Centre materially. They can do that by sending their donations to the foreign currency account of the Centre of Kuban Folk Culture (1992, 28)…" followed by bank account information.

that Zakharchenko himself and the Kuban Cossack Choir make *drastic* changes to the musical,

lyrical, and performance features of folk songs as they are performed by local residents.

Zakharchenko, due to his deeply-held preservation narratives, does not see his alterations as

belonging to the same "threat" of change/outside influence. Some changes are seen to "elevate,"

"preserve," and "maintain" the tradition, whereas others are negatively depicted as "invasive,"

"destructive," and "alien." Western European influence is seen as especially threatening –

Zakharchenko, in his epilogue to *From the History of Kuban Cossacks* (*Iz istorii Kubanskikh kazakov*),

supportively cites the words of Ivan Kijashko:

> With the inundation into Ekaterinodar of foreign residents and with the development of life here in
> general, there has arisen the need for musical pieces of an earlier time […] The very appearance since
> the '60s of German, Czech, and Italian choir directors <u>definitively removed music from the native,
> Little Russian type, and that is quite a shame, as even the best foreigners shouldn't be able to
> interfere and make us forget our own music</u> (emphasis Zakharchenko's)[118] (Kijashko as cited in
> Zakharchenko 2006b, 204).

Immediately following the above statement, Zakharchenko "agrees" by interjecting a biblical

quotation from the Gospel of Matthew (11:15), "Let anyone with ears listen" (*Imejushchij ushi da*

uslyshit)[119]. Zakharchenko's public stance about European influence seems somewhat paradoxical.

Yes, Zakharchenko himself is a Kuban Cossack native and so has personal claims to the tradition,

but nearly all the differences in content and style that the KCC exhibit in their performances

(described in Chapter Two), are *Western European* musical practices – presence of a conductor, neat

harmonies, notated vocal arrangements, rehearsed precision, large-scale production elements,

classically trained musicians, etc. Note also that Zakharchenko is fine supporting Kijashko's remark

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[118] «С наплывом же в Екатеринодар иногородних жителей и с развитием жизни вообще, явилось требование и на пьесы другого времени […] Появление же с шестидесятых годов во главе музыкальных хоров капельмейстеров из немцев, чехов, и итальянцев <u>окончательно отклонили музыку от родного малоросийского направления, что очень жаль, так как не мешало бы, пользуясь лучшим иноземным, не забывать и своего.</u>»

[119] As will be seen in the following sections, a regular trope of Zakharchenko's writing is the use of biblical imagery, quotations, prayers, and other religious references. This hearkens back to pre-Revolutionary Cossack Orthodoxy, and also embeds the Kuban Cossack Choir in the post-Soviet Russian Orthodox revival.

that the "native" (*rodnoj*) culture of the Kuban is "Little Russian" (*malorosijskij*). Here again the designation of "Little Russian," while it emphasizes the Ukrainian/Zaporizhian musical heritage of the Kuban, is nevertheless a term that fits safely within the contemporary Russian nationalist political outlook – one in which Ukrainians and their predecessors are categorized as a Russian subtype. In the upcoming analysis of Kuban Cossack Choir performances, we will see how this fear of outside influence, call for purity, and advocacy for a return to "Little Russian" musical roots all tie easily into contemporary anti-immigration views (primarily against Transcaucasian and North Caucasian immigrants), as well as a Russian nationalism that subordinates Ukrainian culture.

Zakharchenko often focuses on the value – specifically for the Russian nation – of preserving Kuban folk culture, which he articulates in both subtle and explicit ways in his writings. Explicitly, he writes of the multi-cultural Russian nation, and how national self-consciousness – in the form of preserving and appreciating national folk musics like Kuban Cossack music– helps strengthen the nation (2006b, 208). He presents a plea to his readers,

> Dear readers, the conversation about the composition and fate of national cultures of our country should, without a doubt, begin with Russian culture, as the Russian people are related to national development and are the most numerous native people of Russia […] Today Russian traditional culture in all its forms and genres are in a tough position[120] (2006b, 208).

Zakharchenko then calls for Russia's national cultures to be presented more frequently on television, radio, and other media; he also exhorts ethnic Russians to take a greater interest in national cultures, especially "Russian" ones. He clearly considers Kuban culture to be a subcategory of Russian national culture and even speaks of Kuban culture as part of the Russian soul and the Kuban Cossack Choir in particular as a crucial figure in the struggle to preserve Russian folk culture:

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[120] «Уважаемые читатели, разговор о состоянии и судьбе национальных культур нашей страны должен, несомненно, начаться с русской культуры, так как русский народ является государствообразующим и самым много-численным коренным народом России […] Сегодня русская традиционная культура во всех ее формах и жанрах находится в тяжелом положении.»

> The Kuban Choir in pre-Revolutionary, Soviet, and post-Soviet time has contributed much to the collection, study, preservation, popularization, and creative development of the traditional song art of Kuban Cossacks. The preservation of traditional cultures of the Russian people and Cossackdom is not only the concern of the Kuban Choir and specialists […] but of all true lovers of this nation, for whom the smoke of the Fatherland is "sweet and pleasant"[121] (2006b, 207).

All true lovers of Russia, then, ought to support the preservation initiatives of the KCC and uphold the same values and goals. Zakharchenko places great emphasis on national purity: "Russia is not only a geographical entity, but above all it is a spiritual one. Russia without Russians – that is no longer Russia[122] (2006b, 210)!" This statement transitions into praise for Vladimir Putin's support of folk cultures, including the president's specific support of the Kuban Cossack Choir, in the effort to "preserve Russia for Russians." Putin issued a mandate (*poruchenije*) in 2006 in which the preservation and development of traditional Russian folk culture was stated as a priority. For the Kuban Cossack Choir, this equaled more governmental financial support as well as increased face time in the state-controlled national media; Zakharchenko is gushing in his gratitude and never fails to commend Putin in his writing and during performances.

Zakharchenko favorably mentions Putin, but he also drops a wide variety of other names, including local and regional officials (the governor of the Krasnodar region, the mayor of Krasnodar), Russian Orthodox Church figures (both nineteenth-century ones like Rossinskij, and also the contemporary patriarchs of the ROC), nineteenth-century Russian composers (especially those such as Glinka who incorporated Russian folk themes into their classical compositions), Kuban historians (Kijashko, Shcherbina, Bondar'), and even Russian tsars[123]. All of this name-

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[121] «Кубанский хор в дореволюционное, советское и постсоветское время много делал и делает для собирания, изучения, сохранения, популяризации и творческого развития традиционного песенного искусства кубанских казаков. Сохранение традиционной культуры русского народа и казачества волнует, конечно же, не только Кубанский хор и специалистов, занимающихся этими проблемами, но и всех истинных родинолюбцев, для которых дым Отечества «сладок и приятен».»

[122] «Но Россия не только географическое понятие, а прежде всего — духовное. Россия без русских — это уже не Россия!»

[123] Zakharchenko often has a section in his prefaces in which he reminds readers of all the benevolent decisions that czars made regarding the Kuban Cossacks and the Choir. He praises Alexander III, for example, who visited

dropping is a perhaps more subtle way of rooting the Kuban Cossack Choir firmly (if not somewhat artificially) into the "great, noble history" of Russian music, religion, and politics. It is also a means by which Zakharchenko adheres to the traditional agenda of the Russian Cossack revival – he fits very tightly with the contemporary Russian vision of Cossack identities and history. Barbara Skinner (1994), in her article "Identity Formation in the Russian Cossack Revival" names three basic themes of promotional materials and Russian Cossack revival writing: "service to the Russian state, traditional Cossack social values, and victimisation under Soviet rule" (1994, 1024). Zakharchenko pledges his and the Choir's allegiance to the Russian state, in part, through his positive references to government officials. He speaks unrestrainedly and disparagingly of the horrors of the Soviet era and decossackization for the Kuban region.

In terms of traditional Cossack social values, Zakharchenko often references Russian Orthodox values and world views. As seen already above, Zakharchenko is eager to make the link between pre-Revolutionary Orthodox beliefs and values and what he sees as the contemporary Orthodoxy-compatible mission of the Kuban Cossack Choir. Besides biblical quotations and references to Russian Orthodox officials, the director also frames the Choir's role in some very intense religious views. For example, he writes,

> A great duty has fallen upon our lot: to save for the ages our national spiritual and cultural shrine – the Host Singing Chorus – the State Academic Kuban Cossack Choir. And to protect it from all misfortune, persecution, encroachment, replacement, dissolution, which have more than once been a part of the history of the Choir and which may very well lurk in wait in the future. For dark, demonic forces do not sleep. […] Dark forces – this is not a euphemism, but a cruel reality not just of the past, but also of our time. The world, according to the word of the Gospels, lies in evil. The battle of Good and evil, Light and darkness, gets stronger with every passing day. The true citizens of our Fatherland, guided by the Holy Mother and the legion of Russian saints, in the Russian land of holy

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Ekaterinodar in 1888 and wrote a special letter expressing his gratitude to the Host Singing Chorus for a "wonderful music program." But he even goes back to Catherine II, praising her for giving Kuban land to the Black Sea Cossack Host (2006b, 201). He ignores the fraught history of this land gift and the forced resettling of Black Sea and Don Cossacks that led to it – nor does he acknowledge the complicated service requirements that were attached to it.

ones, ought to oppose the forces of evil and falsehood with good and benevolent deeds[124] (2006b, 202).

Thus, to Zakharchenko, the Choir does not only play a role in reviving and preserving Kuban folk culture – it also plays a role in the Battle of Good and Evil! It is fighting against "demonic forces," and it is doing so in the name of Russia, the "Fatherland." Here, explicitly, the causes of Orthodoxy are tied to the Russian nation. The writing almost becomes a sermon – he prescribes the actions and holy legacy in which true Russian citizens ought to take part.

There is little room in all this rhetoric of Orthodoxy, Russian citizenship, and cultural purity for acknowledgement of the hybrid beginnings and continued hybrid features of Kuban Cossack folk culture. Zakharchenko mentions Ukrainian influence in his publications since the early 2000s. There is no recognition of Ukrainian autonomy, and there is little attention to the role of Cossacks and the Kuban Cossacks' Zaporozhian ancestors in Ukrainian culture and history. This is surprising for some who pegged Zakharchenko as a local "Ukrainophile" in the early '90s. Derluguian and Cipko (1997), who write about competing national interests in the "Neo-Cossack Movement" of the early post-Soviet period discuss Zakharchenko's role in the minority Kuban Ukrainian movement. This movement is generally of the idea that Kuban Cossacks are a Ukrainian diaspora that managed to retain their unique culture despite imperial and Soviet Russificiation processes. In 1997 Derluguian and Cipko described Zakharchenko as an "open Ukrainophile" who promoted interests that were at times in opposition to those of the reinstated Kuban Cossack Rada and other government bodies (1997, 1490). For example, the Ukrainophile movement challenged the Rada's

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[124] «На нашу долю выпал высокий долг: сохранить на века национальную духовную и культурную святыню — войсковой Певческий — Государственный академический Кубанский казачий хор. И беречь его от всех бед, гонений, посягательств, подмен и расформирований, которые не раз были в истории хора и которые вполне могут подстерегать впереди, ибо темные, бесовские силы не дремлют. […] Темные силы — это не образное выражение, а жесткая реальность не только прошлого, но и нашего времени. Мир, по Евангельскому слову, лежит во зле. Борьба Добра и зла, Света и тьмы усиливается и нарастает с каждым днем. Истинные граждане нашего Отечества, окормляемого Богородицею и сонмом Русских святых, в земле Российской просиявших, силам зла и лжи должны противопоставить добрые и благие дела.»

understanding that Kuban Cossacks are a "subethnos" (*subetnos*) of the Russian people (Derluguian and Cipko 1997, 1494). In 1991, the Kuban Ukrainian Cultural Society elected Zakharchenko as its leader, a role he performed until a few years later when the Society encountered pressure from unsympathetic local officials, which led to Zakharchenko's resignation (Derluguian and Cipko 1997, 1494). Increasingly the Neo-Cossack Movement (or the Kuban Cossack Revival, or whatever one wants to call the early '90s resurgent interest in the Kuban Cossack identity) became more homogenous, with the dominant faction emerging as strong supporters of both the Russian state and a strictly Russian Kuban Cossack identity. Zakharchenko, as a leading figure in the Kuban Cossack movement, one whose organization seems to receive more and more government financial support each year, has gradually shifted the kind of opinions he proclaims about Kuban Cossack identity. As one Ukrainian discussion board commenter wrote of Zakharchenko in 2007,

> I spent a lot of time with him in 1991 […] At that time he was very pro-Ukrainian, and very disappointed in the loss of so many Ukrainian cultural artifacts in the Kuban and the brutal manner in which the language was beaten out of them. However at the same time, he was also a patriotic Russian citizen. […] He knows where his paycheck is coming from. It is the Russian government that is actually paying the bills, and Viktor Havrylovych knows that well ("Talk: Kuban Cossacks" 2014).

The implication in both academic and more popular analyses, then, is that Zakharchenko has adapted to the uniformly pro-Russian political climate by being more reserved about his Ukrainian sympathies.

Zakharchenko still speaks of the Ukrainian elements of Kuban culture, but he has adjusted his Ukrainian references to be wholly palatable to dominant Russian nationalist trends. When writing or speaking to the press about Ukraine – particularly about the recent conflict between Ukraine and Russia, Zakharchenko employs language of Slavic unity and expresses his profound emotional regret for the violence. He cites the importance of Ukraine and Ukrainian songs in Kuban Cossack culture and repertoire, but he does so in a way that – from my perspective – primarily serves to impart authority and legitimacy to his opinions about the Ukraine Crisis rather than to communicate the

complicated, hybrid heritage of Kuban Cossacks or (as he previously did) to support the preservation of distinct Ukrainian language and cultural features in the Kuban. In February 2015, Zakharchenko was a guest at the Press Café of the Union of Kuban Journalists. The Union compiled an article of Zakharchenko's interview statements in the subsequent issue of *Vol'naja Kuban'* (Union of Kuban Journalists 2015). They preface Zakharchenko's response about the Ukraine Crisis with a description of the artistic director's role as the co-chair of the regional office of the All-Russia People's Front (*V serossijskij narodnyj front*)[125] as well as a member of the Culture Committee (*Sovet po kul'ture*) of Russia's Federation Council (*Sovet Federatsii*). His positions with the All-Russia People's Front and the Federation Council indicate to the reader the extent to which Zakharchenko has Russian political interests in mind, since he is an influential part of several Russian governmental institutions led by Putin and his party. Then the journalists introduce the topic at hand: "It was impossible at this meeting [with Zakharchenko] to avoid the stinging wound of the situation in the Ukraine. The concerts of the collective [the KCC] have been cancelled there since April, and Zakharchenko himself has become persona non grata in the once brotherly country[126] (2015, 3)." Zakharchenko, in his response, relates his personal anguish and experiences with the situation, and his ultimate conclusions are that Russia and Ukraine are "one people" and thus the violence and the rejection of the KCC by Ukrainian concert venues are both absurd:

> What is going on right now there causes me personal and intimate pain. Because of the fact that we supported the annexation of Crimea, tours in Ukraine have been cancelled. In an address to the collective I was even showered with threats: "If you come here, we'll rip you a new one" and the like…It is bitter for me to recall such ugly comments! But however much they want to make a joke at

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[125] The All-Russia People's Front, or ONF, is a coalition founded in 2011 by Vladimir Putin to extend the influence of his party, United Russia (*Edinaja Rossija*), into broader cultural and political spheres. All-Russia People's Front works closely with Russian NGOs that fight corruption, promote women's issues, fight for pensioners' rights, etc. Putin is now the leader of the ONF ("Obshcherossijskij Narodnyj Front" 2016).

[126] «Не могли на встрече обойти саднящую рану--ситуация на Украине. Там с апреля отменили концерты коллектива, а лично Захарченко стал персоной нон грата в некогда братской стране.»

our expense, The Kuban Cossack Choir historically is very closely related to Ukraine. We are one people. We sang and always will sing Ukrainian songs – they are ours, our own[127]... (2015, 3)

His way of speaking about the situation in Ukraine and the Ukrainian heritage of Kuban Cossacks is quite revealing. For one, Zakharchenko openly (and not surprisingly, given his position), admits his support for the 2014 annexation of Crimea – the highly controversial and forced Russian "reclaiming" of the Crimean peninsula from Ukraine. By itself, support for the annexation demonstrates Zakharchenko's political position as antithetical to the Ukrainian national idea; it denies the Ukrainian nation's right to territorial integrity. Zakharchenko then goes on to take the "high road" after being insulted, presumably by the formerly scheduled Ukrainian concert hosts. He mentions the close historical ties that the Choir has with Ukraine, and he uses these historical ties to bolster his ultimate conclusion that Ukraine and Russia – "we" – are one people. Ukrainian songs, which he admits to being a distinct category, have been and will continue to be a part of Kuban Cossack repertoire. He concludes with succinct assertions that Ukrainian songs rightfully and natively belong to Kuban Cossack culture: "[…] they are ours, our own" ("[…] *eto nashe, rodnoe…*"). Zakharchenko, with these words, promotes the belief that Ukraine does not (or should not) exist as a separate entity from Russia. The presence of Ukrainian songs in the KCC repertoire is cited as a blanket justification for the "one people" claim – painting broad strokes about the unity of the Russian and Ukrainian nations without reflecting on the historical peculiarities (importantly, the subjugation of Zaporizhian Cossacks by the Russian Empire) that put Kuban Cossack culture in a unique position along the Ukrainian-Russian cultural border. He does not consider the aggressive Russian imperial expansion that caused the prevalence of Ukrainian songs in the Kuban – the same kind of aggressive expansion that Ukrainian state-supporters have been decrying in the recent

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[127] «То, что сейчас там происходит, --это и моя личная боль, сердечная. Из-за того, что мы поддержали присоединение Крыма, гастроли по Украине отменены. В адрес коллектива и меня посыпались угрозы: 'Порубаем до седла, если приедете' и прочее...Такие безобразные комментарии вспоминать горько! Но как бы ни хотели нас выставить в дурном свете, Кубанский казачий хор исторически очень тесно связан с Украиной. Мы-- единый народ. Мы пели и всегда будем петь украинские песни--это наше, родное...»

Russian-Ukrainian conflict. While Zakharchenko has been celebrated in Ukraine for preserving Ukrainian culture in his work with the Choir, his recent political moves and alignment with the Russian national government have aroused the ire of many Ukrainians who were once his supporters. Statements like the one above help explain why those who support Ukrainian nationhood and autonomy have changed their tunes about the Kuban Cossack Choir and its director.

I examine Zakharchenko's performance behavior and persona and the way he adapts his discussion of Ukraine to the Russian nationalist agenda below. First I look at the Kuban Cossack Choir's other institutionally sanctioned promotional materials, namely: the choir's official website, album liner notes, concert program booklets, concert advertisements, and press releases. The content and style of these promotional materials is significant, as they are a major means by which the Kuban Cossack Choir promotes a particular version of Kuban Cossack identity to the outside world. All of these materials echo or reinforce the Russo-centric, state-supporting positions that Zakharchenko himself publicly proclaims.

The Kuban Cossack Choir's Promotional Materials & Performances

Official Website

The Kuban Cossack Choir's official website ([kkx.ru](kkx.ru)) is chock full of pro-Russian sentiment and imagery, and it repeatedly aligns the mission of the Choir with the mission of the Russian nation. One way the website promotes an exclusively Russian image for the Choir – and by extension, for Kuban Cossacks – is by prominently displaying images of major (the biggest, in fact) supporters of the Russian state on its main page. This includes Russian companies and organizations like Bazovyj Element, Bank Sojuz, Gazeta Kul'tura, and the Kuban Cossack Host, but also individuals, as can be seen in Figure 3, a "Famous People are Saying" section in which words of praise for the Choir are displayed from both contemporary and historical figures: Vladimir Putin

(current President of the Russian Federation), Alexander III (Czar of Imperial Russia from 1881 – 1894), Kirill I (Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church), Dmitrij Medvedev (former President and current Prime Minister of the Russian Federation), Veniamin Kondratyev (Governor of Krasnodar Kraj since 2015), and Nikita Mikhalkov (a Russian nationalist film director and strong Putin supporter). Just the presence of these figures alone as the featured "famous people" is enough to point to the Russian nationalist sentiment with which the institution aligns itself. There are no statements here from famous Ukrainians or cultural figures who do, in fact, positively and publicly recognize the work of the Choir[128]. But the glowing words of praise that these exclusively Russian figures have for the Kuban Cossack Choir even more strongly entrench the Choir in the web of Russian nationalism, Russian Orthodoxy, and exclusively Russian nation-building. Take, for example, Kirill I's statement, "How the Kuban Cossack Choir sang at today's Holy Liturgy – Russian Cossackdom should be so harmonious!" Or Nikita Mikhalkov's, "I feel Russian only at concerts of the Kuban Choir. In every Russian man, there is a

ИЗВЕСТНЫЕ ЛЮДИ ГОВОРЯТ

– Юбилей Кубанского казачьего хора – важная веха в истории российской культуры. подробнее..

– Много я слышал замечательных хоров, но такого профессионального – по содержанию и голосам – не припомню.

– Как сегодня на Божественной литургии пел Кубанский казачий хор – таким же слаженным должно стать российское казачество!

– С момента основания в вашем хоре объединились лучшие творческие силы щедрой Кубанской земли подробнее..

– Именно в песне передается от поколения к поколению то, что заповедали нам предки: жить по совести, по душе, по сердцу. Это и есть те корни, от которых питается искусство великого маэстро и питает нас. подробнее..

– Если вдумаетесь в смысл песен Кубанского казачьего хора, то поймёте, что в них нет ни одного пустого слова. Этот коллектив – величайшее наше достояние, неотъемлемая часть быта и культуры России. подробнее..

Figure 3: "Famous People are Saying"

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[128] The Choir has received official praise from Leonid Kuchma, former President of Ukraine, who valued the presence of Ukrainian folk songs in the Choir's repertoire; Igor Likhovyj, Ukraine's Minister of Culture and Tourism (*Ministr kul'tury i turysmu Ukrajiny*), who recognized the Choir for the popularization of Ukrainian culture and art; Dmytro Pavlychko, the director of the Ukrainian World Coordinating Council (*Ukrajins'ka vsesvitnja koordynatsijna rada* – an NGO whose goal is to protect Ukrainian national, cultural, linguistic, and artistic interests worldwide), who thanks the Choir for the preservation of Ukrainian song traditions; the Choir receives considerable acclaim from Ukrainian political and cultural figures, and it is the 1990 Laureate of the Shevchenko National Prize – the highest Ukrainian state prize for culture and the arts. See http://www.kkx.ru/nagradi/.

Cossack spirit, and that means survival for the unbroken and holy Rus' […] This collective [the KCC] is the greatest of our assets, an indispensable part of the life and culture of Russia[129]." The Kuban Cossack Choir is, in these statements, linked to Russian Cossackdom (never mind the KCC's strong ancestral ties to Ukrainian Cossack vocal ensembles); Russian national identity, pride, spirit and soul; and Russian Orthodoxy. The Kuban Cossack Choir is a national treasure of Russia, a cultural emblem of Russia and Russian-ness – even as its roots are firmly embedded in the folk culture of Ukrainian Cossack groups who settled the region and brought Zaporizhian musical practices with them. Turning back to Kijashko and other late nineteenth and early twentieth-century historians and cultural scholars, the musical heritage of vocal groups in the Kuban was unanimously understood to be from the Ukrainian – or "Little Russian" – Cossack population in the region (Kijashko 1911). And while the more Russian Line Cossacks had their own songs and style that contributed to the musical culture of the region[130], the Ukrainian elements from the Black Sea Cossacks are hugely prominent in the tradition that the Kuban Cossack Choir inherited – the Choir even openly (if somewhat furtively) claiming Black Sea Cossack ensembles as its oldest musical ancestors.

One of the reasons why Russian nationalist fans of the Choir are so easily able to reconcile the Kuban's Ukrainian heritage with Russian national identity has to do with the dominant and long-standing sentiment that Ukraine is not (or should not be) an autonomous nation and does not have a language or culture that is independent or separable from Russian language and culture. The Ukrainian elements of Kuban Cossack music, then, are simply part of the great, multi-faceted Russian national culture. And, in the larger picture, the history of Ukrainian and Kuban Cossack

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[129] «А я чувствую себя русским только на концертах Кубанского хора. В каждом русском человеке есть казачий дух, а значит, переживание за непокоренную и святую Русь. […] Этот коллектив – величайшее наше достояние, неотъемлемая часть быта и культуры России.»

[130] As mentioned in Chapter 2, most Kuban Cossack songbooks and collections have separate, smaller sections for the more Russian-sounding folk songs that hailed from the musical culture of the Line Cossacks.

groups – even ones that profoundly disidentified with Russian national identity – are subsumed into Russian national history. So in the contemporary moment, it is no problem for Nikita Mikhalkov to claim transcendent experiences of Russian-ness when he listens to the often quite Ukrainian-sounding songs of the Kuban Cossack Choir. Ukrainian folk heritage is, after all, just a "flavor" of Russian folk heritage. The problem is that Ukraine or the Ukrainian heritage – or even the safer "Little Russian" or "Black Sea Cossack" heritage – of Kuban Cossacks and Kuban folk music is almost never mentioned explicitly by any official representative of the Choir, and it is largely absent from the official website. There is no mention whatsoever in any of the quotations from "famous people" of any kind of hybridity, nor is there acknowledgement of the Ukrainian national interests, claims, or heritage that are very much a part of the contemporary discourse about Kuban Cossacks.

This marked absence is also present in other sections of the Choir's website. The "History" section, for example, opens with statements about Russian pride and uninterrupted history: "The State Academic Kuban Cossack Choir is the oldest and most influential national Cossack collective of Russia. It is the only professional Russian folk arts collective that has an unbroken history of succession dating back to the beginning of the nineteenth century[131] ("Kubanskij Kazachij Khor - Istorija" 2016)." The Black Sea Singing Chorus is mentioned in the context of the 1861 name change to the ensemble, but the heritage of the Black Sea Cossacks or the Zaporizhian musical and linguistic features they brought with them to the Kuban are not written of. Ukraine is mentioned in passing a few times: "[…] in 1990 it [the Choir] became a laureate of the Ukrainian State Shevchenko Prize […]," "[Zakharchenko] is a folk artist of Russia (1984) and Ukraine (1994)," "November 2011 - As part of its Jubilee Program, the Kuban Cossack Choir performed on the stage

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[131] «Государственный академический Кубанский казачий хор – старейший и крупнейший национальный казачий коллектив России. Единственный в России профессиональный коллектив народного творчества, имеющий непрерывную преемственную историю с начала XIX века.»

of the National Palace 'Ukraine' in Kiev [...][132]." But the reasons why the KCC – a Russian national choir – would even be an eligible candidate for the highest national artistic prize of Ukraine, or why Zakharchenko would be named a national folk artist of Ukraine, or why the ensemble would perform in the Ukrainian capital during the celebration of their Jubilee Year, are not explained in any way in the site's "History of the Choir" pages.

In general, the website de-emphasizes the hybrid, "shape-shifter" qualities of Kuban Cossack language and culture – despite the fact local residents celebrate these features and proudly

incorporate them into their song-making. Instead, the website promotes exclusive ties to Russia and Russian culture: concerts in the Kremlin and Bolshoi are prominently advertised (see Figure 4), images of awards and thank you

Figure 4: Front Page Pop-Up Ad for Concert at Bolshoi Theater

letters from the Russian Ministry of Culture are featured on the front page[133] (see Figure 5); the site may be viewed in Russian or English, but not Ukrainian – all Ukrainian lyrics or quotations are transliterated into Russian Cyrillic, and they are often embedded as quaint little asides in larger bodies of Russian text; and pro-Russian articles that support Russian-Ukrainian unity are featured on the "Press" page ("Kubanskij Kazachij Khor - Pressa" 2016). There is little to no acknowledgement of the hybrid origins of Kuban Cossackdom or the stakes that Ukrainian cultural groups might have

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[132] «в 1990-м он становится лауреатом Государственной премии Украины им. Т. Г. Шевченко»; «народный артист России (1984) и Украины (1994)»; «ноября 2011 года - С юбилейной программой Кубанский казачий хор выступил на сцене Национального дворца «Украина» в Киеве»

[133] Tellingly, the most prominently featured of these is a letter from the Minister of Culture, Vladimir Medinskij, who thanks the Choir for its "personal contribution to the preservation of Russian cultural heritage in the Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol" – in other words, thanking the Kuban Cossack Choir for their help in justifying the Russian annexation of Crimea and the categorization of Crimea as a culturally Russian territory.

Figure 5: Thank You Letter from Russian Minister of Culture

in claiming Kuban music. Ukrainian national interests in the Kuban Cossack Choir are erased and ignored; "close ties" to Ukraine are employed as justification for unification narratives and alignment with the Russian state, even though earlier Kuban Cossack organizations have used those ties and hybrid qualities as justification for Kuban Cossack separatism and as proof that Kuban Cossack culture was distinct from Russian culture. In short, the KCC official website leaves no doubt as to the alliances of the institution to the Russian state, Russian Orthodoxy, and the United Russia political party. The site represents the Choir as a true, authentic propagator of Russian national culture – a Russian national culture that fully subsumes Ukrainian folk songs and the hybrid language practices of the Kuban.

Albums

Imagery and rhetoric supporting Russian-Ukrainian unity and exclusive Russian claims of Kuban Cossackdom are also present in Kuban Cossack Choir albums and other merchandise. But the Kuban's strong ties to Ukraine and Ukrainian heritage are difficult to ignore; the Choir and its supporters find ways to present Ukrainian heritage without giving too much credence to Ukrainian national autonomy or putting Ukrainian culture in a separate, superior position in comparison to Russia's. We can see attempts to reconcile a display of Russian patriotism with an expression of Ukrainian heritage in one of the Choir's most successful recent albums – a 2013 four-disc collection entitled "A Musical Offering for Ukraine" (*Muzykal'noje prinoshenije Ukraine*). It is an assemblage of

Figure 6: Disc 2 of "A Musical Offering for Ukraine"

fully restored archival recordings of the Choir from 1978 – 1994, and all the songs are related to the Ukrainian influences (musical, literary, linguistic) in Kuban culture. Disc 1 is dedicated to "Black Sea Songs of Kuban *Stanitsas,*" Disc 2 is "Black Sea Folk Songs of Kuban *Stanitsas,*" "Disc 3 is "Songs to the Verses of Ukrainian Poets," and Disc 4 is "Songs of Viktor Zakharchenko and Black Sea Folk Songs of Kuban *Stanitsas*[134]." The album covers of each disc (see [Figure 6](#)) feature the cursive title "A Musical Offering for Ukraine" suspended between two waving banners, on the left side is a banner of the Russian flag, while on the right side is a banner of the Ukrainian flag. The album title, in effect, joins the two flags together. Even on an album completely dedicated to Ukraine and Ukrainian song, there must be some representation of Russia – the Russian-ness of the Choir cannot be absent. Russian-Ukrainian unity is clearly promoted by this image. Other features on the album emphasize the Russian-ness of the ensemble. All of the text is in Russian, and song titles – even ones based on the poetry of Ukrainian national poet, Taras Shevchenko, are approximated in Russian Cyrillic (for example, Disc 2 Track 2 is notated as "Ой, чого ж ты почорнило, зэлэное полэ" instead of the Ukrainian original "Ой чого ти почорніло, зеленеє поле"). The logos of the two biggest Russian business partners of the Kuban Cossack Choir (*Bazovyj Element* and *Vol'noe Delo*) are featured in the top corners of the album cover. Ukrainian songs may be featured on these albums, but the Russian identity of the Choir is still made quite clear.

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[134] In the original Russian: «Черноморские песни Кубанских станиц» диск 1, «Народные Черноморские песни Кубанских станиц» диск 2, «Песни на стихи Украинских поэтов» диск 3, and «Песни Виктора Захарченко и народные Черно-морские песни Кубанских станиц» диск 4.

The liner notes written by Viktor Zakharchenko also reflect the calculated nature in which

the Kuban Cossack Choir claims its unique Ukrainian heritage in today's Russia. Zakharchenko

describes his childhood growing up in the post-war years in Djadkovskaja *stanitsa* – he uses italics

and Russian Cyrillic transliteration to set apart the Ukrainian phrases from his otherwise standard

Russian writing. For example, "From my earliest childhood in the difficult war and post-war period,

when we were all naked and barefoot, I was constantly delighted by the songs of the Black Sea

(Zaporozhian) Cossacks – they moved me to tears. Women sang as they rode early in the morning *to*

the steppe to work[135] (2013)." Here and throughout, quaint references to simple times ("when we were

all naked and barefoot") or rural places ("to the steppe") are written in approximated Ukrainian,

while the surrounding "sophisticated" text remains in standard Russian. He goes on to write openly

about the Black Sea Cossacks bringing Ukrainian music, language, and traditions to the Kuban, "The

Black Sea Cossacks brought to the Kuban not only their Cossack *kurens*[136] and *stanitsas*; and not only

my native tongue, Shevchenko's Ukrainian language, as well as songs and traditions; but they also built

dozens of Orthodox churches, shrines, and cathedrals[137]." Here Zakharchenko, admits to his native

language being Ukrainian – and not even the hybrid Kuban dialect, but "Shevchenko's Ukrainian"

(i.e., standard literary Ukrainian). The "songs and traditions" presumably also come from this strictly

Ukrainian cultural place. This admission and several other features of the liner notes reveal that

perhaps some of his earlier Ukrainophile sentiments have not completely gone away. Other notable

Ukraine-positive moments in the liner notes include Zakharchenko's laudatory descriptions of the

"21 […] songs based on the verses of T. Shevchenko, L. Ukrainka, O. Pchilka, and Kuban Ukrainian

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[135] «С самого раннего детства в лихую военную и послевоенную годину, *колы мы вси булы голи и боси*, я постоянно наслаждался песнями черноморских (запорожских) казаков, трогавших меня до слез. Ехали рано утром женщины *на стэп* работать – пели.»
[136] A *kuren* (Ukr. *kurin*) is the word for a unit of Zaporizhian Cossack troops
[137] «Черноморцы привезли на Кубань не только названия своих куреней и станиц; и не только *ридный для мэнэ* шевченковский украинский язык, песни и обряды; но и построили десятки православных церквей, обителей и храмов.»

poets A. Piven', A. Savitskij, […] and Evgenij Marchuk[138]" that he himself composed and arranged

for this album collection. In the liner notes Zakharchenko is also consistent in his use of "в

Украине" (*v Ukraine*) instead of "на Украине" (*na Ukraine*). The use of the preposition "в" (*"v"*)

with the country name reflects an attitude that Ukraine is autonomous and separate from Russia.

The preposition "на" (*"na"*) with the country name, reflects a relational understanding – it is a way

of talking about Ukraine in relation to Russia, or as the "border" of Russia. This is best translated

into English with the difference between "in Ukraine" vs. "in the Ukraine." The use of "v" vs. "na"

is highly politicized. At the end of all this pro-Ukrainian text, however, Zakharchenko closes with a

paragraph about the Kuban Cossack Choir and the significance of the Russian national idea.

Zakharchenko concludes by stating definitively that his homeland (*Rodina*) is Russia, and he is

"indebted to her for everything" (*ej ja objazan vsem*). Russia gave him the ability to realize his creative

abilities and achieve his dreams: he is the director of the oldest professional Cossack choir in Russia,

and he can spread national folk songs throughout the world in his work with the Kuban Cossack

Choir.

The liner notes are a good example of how the Kuban Cossack Choir acts as an agent for

Russian-Ukrainian unity and Russian national claims of Ukrainian culture. Zakharchenko, as a high-

profile Russian patriot who identifies with a Ukrainian musical, linguistic, and literary heritage, is in a

sense "living proof" that Ukraine and Russia are, as the director himself asserts, "one people" or

"one nation" (*edinyj narod*). In the Kuban Cossack Choir's albums, Zakharchenko is more effectively

and credibly able to justify Ukrainian-Russian unity because of his Kuban identity, and as such, he is

an important figure in the Russian nationalist political agenda. Zakharchenko writes in the liner

notes that his musical arrangements of Ukrainian songs and musical settings of Ukrainian poetry

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[138] «21 […] песня на стихи Т. Шевченко, Л. Украинки, О. Пчилки, кубанских украинских поэтов А. Пивня, А. Савицкого, и […] Евгений Марчук»

"enrich the folk music treasury of Ukraine" (*priumnozhit' narodnuju muzykal'nuju sokrovishchnitsu Ukrainy*). One gets the sense from such comments, and from the concept of the album set in general, that Zakarchenko and the Choir believe they "do" Ukrainian culture better than Ukrainians themselves do it. By producing such Ukrainian-themed albums while at the same time espousing a pro-Russian stance, the Kuban Cossack Choir builds an image of itself as a Russian national ensemble that is also a successful, legitimate, and authentic bearer of Ukrainian culture.

As indicated in the Introduction to this dissertation, there are many pro-Ukrainian figures (politicians, scholars, artists) who denounce the Russian-Ukrainian unity as presented by the Choir and believe that the Ukrainian elements of the Choir's history and repertoire are not given their due recognition. I often agree with them, even though some of their claims are a bit extreme. But it does seem that the Kuban Cossack Choir uses its Ukrainian elements as a pro-Russian political device more than as a representation of the real hybridity of the regional culture. Zakharchenko does not see a problem with the coexistence of his Ukrainian heritage and Russian patriotism – neither do many local Kuban residents. I see two real issues with the pro-Russian rhetoric of Zakharchenko and the Choir. First, that it presents a unified, Russian nationalist image of Kuban Cossacks that claims to (but does not in actuality) represent the whole of Kuban Cossack identity and sentiment. The Choir, as a former Soviet folk ensemble, has enormous power in defining Kuban Cossack identity, and it does not present any nuanced viewpoints or allow for any dissent in its characterizations of Kuban Cossack culture and history. The second issue is that the pro-Russian, Russian-Ukrainian unity rhetoric has the effect of patronizingly turning the Ukrainian elements of Kuban Cossack culture into "local color" – Ukrainian language and Ukrainian songs in the Choir's output assume a commodified, artificial quality. We see this in items like the album liner notes, in which cute phrases are interjected in transliterated Ukrainian – this certainly does not match the unaffected, genuine use of Ukrainian-sounding linguistic elements in the speech of Kuban *stanitsa*

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residents. Most notably, however, the cheapening of Ukrainian musical and linguistic elements is exhibited in the Kuban Cossack Choir's performances. Due to several structural features and performance practices of the Choir, the display of Kuban Cossack culture does not match the hybridity and in-between-ness that is embraced, performed, and lived by Kuban *stanitsa* performers – the authentic culture-bearers that the Kuban Cossack Choir claims to represent.

Performances

In performances of the Kuban Cossack Choir, many fundamental differences emerge between the structure, identity presentation, language use, and musical practices of the Choir versus those of *stanitsa* ensembles. In this section I look at examples of such divergent performance features that I observed in person at the KCC's concert tour "Great History of the Cossacks" (*Bol'shaja kazach'ja istorija*) in 2014, in addition to ones I noted in official recordings of the Choir's 200th anniversary 2011 Jubilee concert tour "The Best for 200 Years" (*Luchshee za 200 let!*) (2013). The performances I attended, as well as the one on the Jubilee DVD, all took place in Moscow, at the Grand Kremlin Palace (*Gosudarstvennyj Kremlevskij Dvorets*). This location certainly had an effect on the language use and the extent and content of pro-Russian political sentiment expressed by Choir officials during the performances. Moreover, the "Great History" tour was heavily funded by the Russian Ministry of Culture, as the Choir was a performing artist of the Ministry's 2014 "Year of Culture" programming. This, too, no doubt had an effect on the kind of Kuban Cossack identity that was presented. To contrast these more recent performances in the Russian capital, I also look at video recordings of older concerts (90s and early 2000s) of the KCC that took place in other parts of Russia and Ukraine[139]. In comparing older concerts with more recent ones, it becomes clear that the ensemble has shifted some of the ways in which they present their identity over time. The changes

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[139] Several videos of past performances are available on the "Video" page of the Choir's official website ("Kubanskij Kazachij Khor - Video" 2016).

help highlight the shift toward a unified, one-dimensional, pro-Russian image for Kuban Cossacks that the Choir has come to promote – an image that, again, does not align with the identities of real Kuban residents. There are some identity presentation elements that have changed from earlier performances to now, but other features – ones that also differ considerably those of *stanitsa* ensembles – have remained fairly consistent during Zakharchenko's reign as artistic director. This especially includes the features that both Nercessian and Bithell describe as the somewhat inevitable divergences from small, local performing groups that former Soviet folk ensembles and commercialized folk ensembles exhibit. Features such as the ensemble's large size, the overwhelming participation of young, non-local, classically trained performers, the top-down organizational hierarchy, the use of notated music, etc. have all been consistent elements of the Kuban Cossack Choir for several decades. These are also important aspects to consider when looking at the ways the KCC presents a Kuban Cossack identity that is different from the identities of local performers. It is not just the political/national identities that differ in consequential ways, but also many other interrelated identity categories like age, (dis)ability, musical skill/literacy, class, gender, language, education, social organization, and so on. Disparities between the political and social identities of the Kuban Cossack Choir and *stanitsa* ensembles help explain the reasons why the Kuban Cossack Choir has so much more power in defining Kuban Cossack identity to regional, national, and international audiences – even though the Choir's musical informants perform and identify themselves in different or more nuanced ways. It is also important to look at the features of rural Kuban Cossack identity and performance that the Choir feels it cannot or will not represent faithfully and authentically to the larger public. In the vocabulary of Irvine and Gal (2000), what does the Choir erase in order to repackage Kuban Cossack musical and linguistic practices for its enormous, primarily Russian audiences?

Political and national allegiance is announced in a variety of ways – both literal and figurative – during KCC performances. The "Great History" concerts, for example, began with a pre-show hand-shaking ceremony in which Viktor Zakharchenko emerged early from backstage to greet military, governmental, and Russian Orthodox officials who were seated prominently in the front rows (the audience clapped at every handshake). During breaks between songs, special thank you letters to the Choir were announced – from the Russian Ministry of Culture and from the mayor of Moscow. The loquacious Zakharchenko replied with gratitude of his own, thanking government officials of Krasnodar as well as "our great president, Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin" (2014a). Interspersed among the Kuban songs were hymn arrangements by Russian classical composers (Rimsky-Korsakov's version of *Otche Nash* ("Our Father")) and Zakharchenko's musical settings of works by well-known Russian poets (*Kraj ty russkogo naroda* ("You, the Land of the Russian People") by Fyodor Tyutchev and *Kak nyne sbirajetsja Veshchij Oleg*[140] ("How Now Oleg the Seer Prepares") by Alexander Pushkin). Between songs there were descriptions of Cossack history that were peppered with quotations from other famous Russian authors, including Leo Tolstoy's "The Cossacks made Russia[141]." At the beginning of a more Ukrainian-sounding song, Zakharchenko or a singer usually provided an introduction marked by strong admonishments pertaining to the situation in Ukraine. Here, notably, Zakharchenko used "*na Ukraine*" and adopted what, to me, was a condescending tone. He uttered statements such as "Our church prays for the Ukrainian people" and went on to proclaim that Ukrainians had lost God – "a people without God is a nation of rabble[142] (2014a)."

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[140] This lines for the song titles are, respectively, from an 1855 Tyutchev poem entitled "Eti bednyje selen'ja…" ("These poor settlements…") that is a call for the Russian people to be proud of and love their land and their faith, and Pushkin's 1825 *Pesn' o Veshchem Olege* (*The Song of Oleg the Seer*), about Oleg of Novgorod, 10th century ruler and uniter of Kievan Rus'. Both are interesting song choices, as they promote pro-Russian sentiments in regard to Russian-Ukrainian territorial disputes and arguments over Kievan Rus' and historical lands, many of which were again rising to the surface during the time of these performances.

[141] The full quotation is "The border begot Cossackdom, and Cossacks made Russia" («Граница породила казачество, а казаки создали Россию.»)

[142] «народ без Бога, нация-толпа»

Figure 7: Backdrop Screens for "Great History" Tour

These religious explanations of the Ukraine crisis deny the presence of any legitimate political motivations for the actions of Ukrainian Euromaidan supporters. Ukrainians, according to Zakharchenko, have simply lost touch with God and so deserve the prayers (and perhaps military response) of the Russian nation.

Pro-Russian ideas were heavily proclaimed in the "Great History" performances through the combination of songs with particular images and video clips that were projected on giant screens behind the singers as they performed. The backdrop screens were fashioned to look like the pages of an enormous history book (see Figure 7[143]), and they would display various images and videos as the concert progressed. An all-male contingent of the Choir sang the former national anthem, *Bozhe, tsarja khrani* ("God Save the Tsar") to images of Catherine II and Nicholas II. At one climactic point in the second half, Viktor Zakharchenko invited members of the Sevastopol Black Sea Fleet Choir onto the stage for a guest performance. The guest performance was a surprise element of the

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[143] Image is from a photo gallery of the performance on the website of the Kremlin Palace ("Kubanskij Kazachij Khor: Bol'shaja Kazach'ja Istorija" 2016)

evening that was not listed in the program. The Black Sea Fleet Choir sang *Vozrodis', Otechestvo* ("Rise Up, Fatherland"), and the background screens showed images of Sevastopol with crowds of people holding Russian flags and signs that read "Stop Ukrainian Fascism" and "Putin is Right." Towards the end of the song, video clips were displayed of Putin and Medvedev signing the annexation papers. The crowd at the Moscow performances clapped and cheered as these clips were being shown. The pro-Russian side of the Crimean annexation is clearly favored in these performances. Indeed, the pro-Russian side of every issue is privileged throughout. The contested nature of Kuban Cossacks' history and heritage is ignored; instead Kuban Cossacks (and Cossacks, more broadly) are presented as faithful, unwavering border guards for the tsars – a people who never had any reservations about their Russian national identity. The Choir presents the tsars as magnanimous rulers who favored the Cossacks, when in reality, the relationship between the Russian Empire and Cossacks – Kuban Cossacks, in particular – was quite complicated and at times antagonistic. Furthermore, the role of Ukrainian heritage or separatist Ukrainian or Cossack identities in the "Great History of the Cossacks" are not brought up. All such identities or unique features are incorporated into the "one people" narrative in which a Russian national identity prevails.

This presentation of a uniform, uncontested Russian identity for Kuban Cossacks combines with the composition and other performance habits of the KCC; this results in a presentation of Kuban Cossack identity that does not match historical experiences nor the proclaimed identities of *stanitsa* performers. The Choir is made up of a combination of regional native and non-native, classically trained, and relatively young performers. Zakharchenko himself, a true native of the Kuban, received formal musical training at the Novosibirsk Conservatory. This formal education, he

states, is part of what draws the talented, professional singers to the Kuban Cossack Choir. In an interview with Guide Magazine Zakharchenko remarks,

> And so I graduated from the Novosibirsk Conservatory, and after ten years of work as the main choir director of the State Siberian Folk Choir I returned to the Kuban Cossack Choir as a man – you might say – armed with knowledge of authentic folklore, with knowledge of the foundations of professional work. This was my calling. And it is this very calling that draws talented people to the Kuban Cossack Choir[144] (Chaikina 2015, 25).

Zakharchenko speaks about the importance of his Kuban heritage, but he also emphasizes his formal musical education and his extensive experience with large professional ensembles. Members of the Choir, then, are drawn because of the folk music, but also because the KCC is a large and prestigious ensemble led by a distinguished conductor; it is an avenue by which they can demonstrate their own formal training and musical prowess. Many members of the Choir received formal musical education of some kind, even those who were born and raised in the Kuban region. One local Kubanian and renowned soloist of the Choir, Aleksandr Dedov, studied at the Krasnodar Musical Pedagogical College (*Krasnodarskij muzykal'no-pedagogicheskij kolledzh*). Dedov writes of his education, "I quickly surpassed my peers in coursework on harmony and solfege, and when in the third year they took us to auditions for the Kuban Cossack Choir, Viktor Gavrilovich said to me, 'Well, okay then, young man, finish school and come on over[145] (Pugina 2014).'" Dedov remarks that he would never have been accepted into the Choir without a musical education; his memory of Zakharchenko's response about finishing music school confirms this – training in the formal aspects of music is almost a necessity for acceptance in the KCC.

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[144] «И вот я окончил Новосибирскую консерваторию, а после десяти лет работы в качестве главного хормейстера Государственного Сибирского народного хора приехал в Кубанский казачий хор челевеком, так сказать, вооруженным знанием подлинного фольклора, знанием основ профессиональной работы. Это было мое предначертание. Именно такое предначертание и приводит талантливых людей в Кубанский казачий хор.»
[145] «Я быстро догнал своих сверстников в плане гармонии и сольфеджио, и когда на третьем курсе нас водили на прослушивание в Кубанский казачий хор, Виктор Гаврилович сказал мне: «Ну, давайте, молодой человек, заканчивайте училище и приходите».»

The overwhelming number of classically trained musicians in the ensemble has a dramatic effect on the style and quality of the music that the Choir performs on stage, and it makes for a very different sound than that of the small, local *stanitsa* ensembles. Practiced voice placement, clear timbres, metrical and synchronous entrances, and precise intonation are unmistakable features of KCC performers' singing; these are all skills that are taught and encouraged in conservatories. Such qualities contrast markedly from the rough timbres, uneven timing, and varied tuning that characterize *stanitsa* performances. The latter musical characteristics, while a matter of pride and uniqueness for local Kuban performers, are seen as "too rustic" and inappropriate for the professional stage – no matter how authentic they may be. With the KCC performances, in other words, nuances of the local musical culture are lost in the polished, uniform, and classical sounds of professional singers. Due to the hierarchy and audition structure of the KCC, there is no sense that performers are collectively remembering and singing songs from their childhoods. Rather, songs are musically and lyrically arranged by Zakharchenko and other higher-ups, vocal parts are assigned and then learned, memorized, and practiced by choir members. Musical embellishments (scoops, yips, claps, etc.) and dialect-related idiosyncrasies are carefully planned and synchronized, not improvised. Highly dissimilar from *stanitsa* collectives, there is no room in KCC performances for individual expression or improvisation (except in formal solos), and there is no room for general ensemble members themselves to make or suggest changes to verses, music, or performance practices. This means that many Choir performers must consciously assume or "put on" many of the particularly "Kubanian" aspects of the music and lyrics – even those performers who have a native familiarity with Kuban Cossack folk music from their childhoods. The studied and practiced qualities of the performances, which, as Bithell describes, are inherent to large commercial ensembles, are part of what makes the unique Kuban Cossack features of the music and lyrics feel somewhat artificial or contrived in the context of KCC performances. To be sure, the *stanitsa* performers use exaggerated

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dialect forms and overstated musical embellishments as performance devices. But even the exaggerated dialect forms are still not too distant linguistically from the everyday speech of many elderly Kuban residents; the musical embellishments, melodies, harmonies, and styles were not acquired through an academic, trained study of the genre, but through their own lived experiences as residents who learn by listening and imitating. More importantly, neither the dialect language nor the music forms are taught or assigned to performers as in the top-down approach of the KCC. The *stanitsa* ensembles may have unofficial leaders or organizers, but ultimately all performers have a say in how the music is performed as well as the manner in which they discuss the music with their audiences. Performers operate from memory and must negotiate harmonies, lyrics, and entrances themselves – often (as the examples from Chapter Two demonstrate) in the very moment in which they are sung.

The result of the Kuban Cossack Choir performers' formal education is that certain features of authentic *stanitsa* ensembles' performances come across in KCC performances as mere entertainment devices or contrived showpieces. Often this entails the more Ukrainian-sounding linguistic and musical features of Kuban Cossack culture. The formal musical education of KCC performers also inherently involves formal education more generally, in which standard Russian language is privileged. In KCC concerts, when the next song is introduced by a performer, it is in flawless standard Russian, with only the title of the song in a dramatized dialect pronunciation that is carefully set apart from the rest of the announcer's speech (see the video of woman announcing the KCC's performance of "Come Out, Hryts'ko" from Chapter Two). Dialect speech is "othered" by performers and even Zakharchenko himself. In the "Great History" performances in Moscow, Zakharchenko closed with a heartfelt monologue in standard Russian about the power and importance of music. He began speaking about the Kuban Cossack tradition, and then paused and interjected in a more *balachka* or Ukrainian-sounding speech, "I cannot not listen to this music" ("*Ja

ne mozhu jiji ne naslukhaty”) – after which the audience chuckled at his use of "unsophisticated" language (2014a; 2014b). The more Ukrainian-sounding or hybrid forms of Kuban language and culture, then, are turned into the "local color" that, in effect, "sell" the audience on the authenticity of the ensemble. The standard Russian language that frames each song, as well as the standard Russian hymns and songs that bookend each KCC concert performance[146], serve to present the ensemble as – at its core – a truly Russian national choir that merely has some "quaint," unique Kuban and Ukrainian pieces in its repertoire. The hybridity and ambiguity of Kuban culture are not given the weight or legitimacy in KCC performances that would more accurately reflect the lived experience and identities of the local Kuban performers that the ensemble claims to represent.

This was not always the case in the Choir's performances. Videos of older KCC concerts from the early 90s reflect a political orientation and identity presentation that accords hybrid and Ukrainian features a more legitimate and primary position. A 1992 concert in the city of Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine[147], for instance, includes a main introduction and song introductions in language that leans toward *balachka* dialect and pronunciation conventions (Aleksandr Kovalenko 2014). Speeches and award presentations are made in Ukrainian, and the program includes exclusively Kuban Cossack songs sung in *balachka*. Performers speak openly and solemnly of the great musical legacy of the Zaporizhian Cossacks, and they describe a long-standing historical unity between the Ukrainian Zaporizhian Cossacks and the Kuban Cossacks. Such sentiments are clearly

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[146] The Moscow "Great History" concerts, for example, began with "The Our Father" (*Otche Nash*) and "God Save the Tsar" (*Bozhe tsarja khrani*), and ended with the Russian folk song "Homeland" (*Rodina*) and another Russian classic "My Homeland" (*Moja Rodina*). All of these opening and closing pieces are patriotic or religious songs whose lyrics are in standard Russian. "My Homeland," for example, includes such lyrics as "The Russian language has still not been suppressed, / We are still able to save the language of Pushkin!" («Еще русская речь не задушена, / Еще сможем сберечь слово Пушкина!»)

[147] See map in Appendix B.

not present in contemporary performances due to the shift toward a patriotic Russian identity that coincided with the changing political environment and funding structure of the Choir.

Gendering Kuban Cossack Music

Unlike the late 90s/early 2000s shift in political and national identity presentation, some elements of the Kuban Cossack Choir that diverge from local Kuban vocal groups have been fairly consistent since Zakharchenko entered the scene. Many have to do with the qualities of the performers. In addition to the formal music education and tendency toward standard Russian of the Kuban Cossack Choir performers, there are other important differences between the identities of KCC members and *stanitsa* ensemble members. The KCC performers are all relatively young ([the majority in their 20s, 30s, and 40s](#)) compared to the *stanitsa* ensemble members who are all at least older than 60, many of them in their 70s and 80s ("Khorovaja Gruppa Gosudarstvennogo Akademicheskogo Kubanskogo Kazach'ego Khora" 2016). Another stark difference is the gender composition – the KCC is a majority male ensemble, with large male-only contingents that break off and perform the military Cossack songs. It also has a prominent male-only instrumental ensemble that accompanies the singers. While this matches romantic historical images of Cossacks and the all-male Kuban Cossack vocal groups of the nineteenth century, it certainly does not correspond with the gender ratios of contemporary *stanitsa* ensembles – nor does it correspond with the gender of the majority of those who have been seen as the true culture-bearers of the Kuban Cossack vocal tradition throughout much of the twentieth century. Many rural Kuban vocal collectives are solely made up of elderly female performers, like the [Sudarushka Ensemble](#) from Bzhedukhovskaja *stanitsa* (Anton Platonov 2008). The ensembles from Chelbasskaja and Petrovskaja *stanitsy* in the recordings from the previous chapters have only one male participant (out of five) and three male participants (out of eleven), respectively. In addition to age and gender, the differences in socioeconomic class between KCC and *stanitsa* performers are also consequential. The Kuban Cossack Choir is made up

of highly educated, urban-dwelling, professional singers, whereas many *stanitsa* ensembles involve participants who live in rural areas, have access to fewer amenities, and are living off of small pensions and/or the support of family members.

The effects that the above identity differences have on the quality of the music performed are immense. The sounds of an 8-12 person ensemble of elderly female voices are quite different from the sounds of a much larger ensemble of young, majority masculine voices. Vocal quality, timbre, and range are all affected by differences in age and gender. Not to mention lifestyle – the professional singers of the Kuban Cossack Choir have the ability and privilege from a young age of "protecting" their voices. They have made lifestyle choices in order to cultivate and maintain pure, professional-sounding voices. This kind of vocal quality is not possible for the *stanitsa* performers and is likely not even desired. Rural ensembles favor the kind of edge-of-control, gruff, unpolished, loud vocal sound with which they often sing. Repertoires in the *stanitsy* tend toward gender-neutral songs and songs with female perspectives or female first-person narratives (like "Come Out, Hryts'ko"). The Kuban Cossack Choir performs more masculine, military songs, such as "We are the Famous Sons of Kuban" (*My syny Kubani slavni*) or "When We Were at War" (*Kogda my byli na vojne*) (2014a; 2014b). The Choir, then, is not performing the tradition as it exists now – or even as it existed for most of the twentieth century, in the realm of small, female, household-based ensembles. Instead, they perform a highly reconstructed version of the tradition, a version that combines images of Kuban Cossackdom from an imagined past with modern-day professional and commercial music standards, and one that fully aligns with contemporary Russian nation-building efforts.

Reactions and Interactions

Local reactions to the way the Choir repackages the Kuban Cossack tradition in its performances are mixed. Many fans and critics appreciate what Bithell acclaims as the greater accessibility to the tradition that a famous commercial ensemble creates. The polished, professional

sounds and more Western performance structures (tight arrangements, presence of a conductor, formally trained musicians) help a wider audience have access to and appreciate Kuban Cossack culture. The city of Krasnodar certainly values the notoriety and prestige that the KCC brings to the region's culture. The discrepancies between the music and performance practices of small local ensembles and the Kuban Cossack Choir are either dismissed or even openly valued. One critic, Natal'ja Pugina, writes effusively in a review for the newspaper *Kul'tura* (a business partner of the Choir), "How many times did he [Zakharchenko] hear: folklore must be performed in a way that exactly copies authentic performers. But he determined a formula according to which staged folk art can be shown ever so much more vividly – because it is passed through the heart of a professional[148] (Pugina 2014)." In other words, the "filter" of Zakharchenko's heart is what truly makes the tradition worth listening to – the authentic versions performed in the *stanitsy* are lacking, not as sharp or vivid (*jarkij*).

Others believe that the Kuban Cossack Choir's performances help unite *stanitsa* residents throughout the region. Ian Appleby reports that this view is supported by preeminent Kuban historian Nikolaj Bondar', "Bondar' argues that when one district hears its own songs being performed by the Choir alongside those from a *stanitsa* from the other end of the region, this facilitates the imagining of a community spread throughout the *Krai* (2010, 856)." So according to Bondar', it is not just fans and audience members who benefit from the Choir's success – the widespread and highly publicized performances of the Choir help *stanitsa* residents feel a connection to other local performers from all across the Kuban region.

But as the Choir diverges more and more, it seems, from the music, language, and self-identifications of regional performers, there are some who fear the consequences. Appleby writes

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[148] «Сколько раз он слышал: фольклор надо исполнять, в точности копируя аутентичных носителей. А он вывел формулу, по которой на сцене народное искусство смотрится гораздо ярче, потому что пропущено через сердце профессионала.»

that one of the costs of the Kuban Cossack Choir's success is that this single ensemble gets to establish the "canonical" versions of particular songs. *Stanitsa*-specific variations become lost as local residents hear the professionally arranged rendition of a song that is performed in the same way each time, over and over again in the Choir's public performances (2010, 856). Besides the loss of variation, local residents express reservations and disconnects they experience as they watch Kuban Cossack Choir performances on television. Lidija Jakovlevna from the Chelbasskaja ensemble remarks on the experience of viewing the large commercial ensemble perform Kuban Cossack songs: "And when they perform, I say, you know, the show on television. We didn't pump up our voices like that at all. We sang, really, the way we learned. No one taught us. Our mothers, yes. Our mothers would sing, and we would sing with them. And such voices there were [on TV], such 'real artists', and what?" (**[LISTEN]** to her comments). Lidija Jakovlevna and other ensemble members who agree with her throughout this short monologue are aware of the stark dissimilarities between themselves and KCC performers and consequently, of the dissimilarities in performance practices. Lidija describes the different qualities of professional singers' voices and acknowledges that the discrepancies in vocal sound are a result of the contrasting manners in which professional singers and *stanitsa* singers access the tradition – whereas *stanitsa* singers learned the tradition by singing with and imitating their mothers, Lidija correctly implies that someone must have taught the professional singers to sing the way they do with their "pumped up" (she uses the verb *nakachyvaty* (Ukr.)/ *nakachivat'* (Rus.)) voices. At the end, Lidija speaks somewhat derisively of the vocal quality and comportment of the professional singers – they are "real artists" (in her words, *artisty nastojashchi*), but so what? Later in the conversation, she describes the more natural way in which she and her friends gathered – after the war, when the *kolkhozy* (collective farms) let out, young people would join together and sing "without any instruments or anything under the songs" ("*ni muzyka, nichjo ne pid jazyk*"). There is pride in her voice as she describes the way they, as young people, developed and

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performed the tradition themselves, without any official directors or overseers: "In the evening we go there [to the club], and we sing the songs on our own, we dance on our own" (*"my vecherom idem tuda, samy hrajem my jazyk, samy pljashem"*). The freedom they had as youths to sing songs the way they learned from their mothers, to sing songs as they pleased, is apparent. And this is still a freedom they have in the small *stanitsa* ensembles, but it is markedly absent in the performances of the Kuban Cossack Choir with their orderly, clean, and conductor-directed song renditions.

Zakharchenko observes and laments these differences. He describes the same distinction, albeit in a characteristically lengthier and more expansive way:

> Folklore performers, as is well-known, sing for themselves and not for the audiences. And for that reason they do not only sing simply the notes and words, but they pour their souls into the song with abandon. Song for them is like prayer, a means for collective, heartfelt confession. […] how rarely, unfortunately, does that happen for us sinful professionals. Folk performers do not posture, they are not jealous of one another, they have no arrogance or excessive pride. There is no striving for honors or titles. They have none of the marks of a performer. […] But for us, the professionals, alas! It frequently turns out that everything is exactly the opposite of this[149] (V. G. Zakharchenko 2002, 8).

Professional performers are even labelled as "sinful" (*greshnyje*) when compared to the virtuous, faultless *stanitsa* singers who regularly join together for their communal, musical confession (*ispoved'*). Zakharchenko's strongly worded lament leads him to then remind professional singers and choir directors that they have "something to learn" (*chemu pouchit'sja*) from rural performers. Young people should also keep connections strong with older performers, or else the spiritual and cultural connections to the past will be lost (2002, 8). The observations about the differences in musical quality and performance motivations, however, have not prompted any changes to the structure or performance practices of the Kuban Cossack Choir that would make the ensemble closer to *stanitsa*

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[149] «Фольклорные исполнители, как известно, поют для себя, а не для зрителей. И поэтому они поют не просто ноты и слова, а самозабвенно изливают в песне свою душу. Песня для них--как молитва, как средство для коллективной сердечной исповеди. […] как это редко, к сожалению, бывает у нас, грешных профессионалов. У народных исполнителей нет позирования, нет зависти друг к другу, нет амбиций и непомерного самолюбия. Нет стремления к почестям и званиям. У них нет исполнительных штампов. […] У нас же, профессионалов, увы! часто бывает всё в точности 'до наоборот'.»

ensembles in any of the above respects. If anything, since Zakharchenko's above 2002 statements, developments with the Choir have moved it more to the "exactly the opposite" side of the spectrum: concerts and tours have become larger-than-life productions in all the most prestigious venues and for several high-profile audiences; standards for musicianship and professionalism remain quite high and formal for ensemble initiates; and Zakharchenko continues to cultivate a powerhouse image of himself as a Russian folk choir demi-god and distinguished political and academic figure in contemporary Russia. The Kuban Cossack Choir is only gaining in prestige – it has recently celebrated huge jubilee years, it represented Russia in the 2014 Sochi Olympics, and it continues to be invited by prominent politicians and Russian Orthodox religious groups to perform at major events. This notoriety makes the Choir ever more able to spread its version of Kuban Cossack identity and related political leanings to wide audiences, both national and international. The versions of songs in the KCC repertoire become more and more the sound of the Kuban Cossack vocal tradition. While many Kuban songs arrived in the KCC repertoire through Zakharchenko's recordings of authentic *stanitsa* ensemble performances, the pieces have since been musically/linguistically arranged, sterilized, standardized, and Westernized in such ways that they now only vaguely represent the living, dynamic, deeply hybrid, and variegated versions performed by *stanitsa* ensembles.

Conclusion

The Kuban Cossack Choir engages in a process of erasure, in which certain elements of *stanitsa* performers' music, language, and identity presentation are strategically absent or altered in the Choir's performances. Many of these divergent elements are simply consequences of the large, commercial nature of the Choir: young, professional musicians; top-down hierarchy with a conductor figure; limited improvisation and performer input; complete standardization of songs; Western musical notation – all of these features are part of how folk music changes in the transition

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from small, rural, informal, amateur ensembles to the large, urban, professional ensemble that performs on a big, international stage. Other features are more tactical, political decisions in contrast to the typical qualities of large, commercial ensembles mentioned above, for example its increased use of standard Russian and patriotic Russian songs in performances, its developing of political ties to the United Russia party and the Russian Orthodox Church, its funding structure in which a large amount of support comes from the Russian Ministry of Culture, and the institution's public and vocal stances denigrating Ukrainian autonomy. These are, arguably, "side effects" of being a large, famous cultural institution in today's Russia, but they involve a conscious self-positioning on the part of the Choir. Zakharchenko and other Choir officials have attained and maintained a prestigious position for the Choir by negotiating advantageous connections and presenting an image of Kuban Cossacks that aligns with the political views of the powerful. They have also leveraged both the Choir's legacy as a former Soviet folk ensemble and Zakharchenko's Kuban Cossack heritage to foster an impression of profound authority on Kuban Cossack culture and identity. Even if the Kuban Cossack Choir's representations do not accurately reflect the nuances and hybridity of the lived tradition, identities, or musical/linguistic practices of Kuban Cossack *stanitsa* performers, it is the Choir that ultimately has the biggest say in defining Kuban Cossackness to regional, national, and international audiences.

CONCLUSION

I have shown in this dissertation some of the ways that rural Kuban performers resist homogenous and essentialist claims about their national identity. They delight in using speech forms and singing songs that are difficult – if not impossible – to categorize neatly as either Ukrainian or Russian. Furthermore, they self-awaredly discuss their language, music, and complicated heritages in a way that demonstrates a pride in straddling the culture border, as well as in being proficient in linguistic idioms and musical genres from both sides of the Russian-Ukrainian spectrum. These very abilities are what makes them unique as Kuban Cossack performers; such qualities are markers of belonging. Much of the ensemble participants' self-identification revolves around hybridity: around personal histories that include both Ukrainian and Russian language instruction ([Interview Example 1](#)), both Ukrainian and Russian ancestry ([Interview Example 1](#), [Interview Example 2](#)), and deep-seated memories of both Ukrainian and Russian songs ([Interview Example 3](#)).

Local singers are aware of the outside claims about their national identity, as well as the ways the Kuban Cossack Choir represents their music to the public ([Interview Example 1](#), [Interview Example 3](#), [Lidija Jakovlevna's Comments on the Choir](#)). The political bents of Kuban historians, linguists, musicologists, and cultural figures certainly influence the approaches they take in interpreting Kuban Cossack identity. Russian and Ukrainian scholars argue passionately about the "true" national category of Kuban Cossack culture. The Kuban Cossack Choir, while once an advocate for a more nuanced representation, has in recent years been performing exclusively pro-Russian images of Kuban Cossacks. The Choir – as with many prominent cultural institutions in Russia – has fallen under the purview of political bodies that require adherence to dominant national
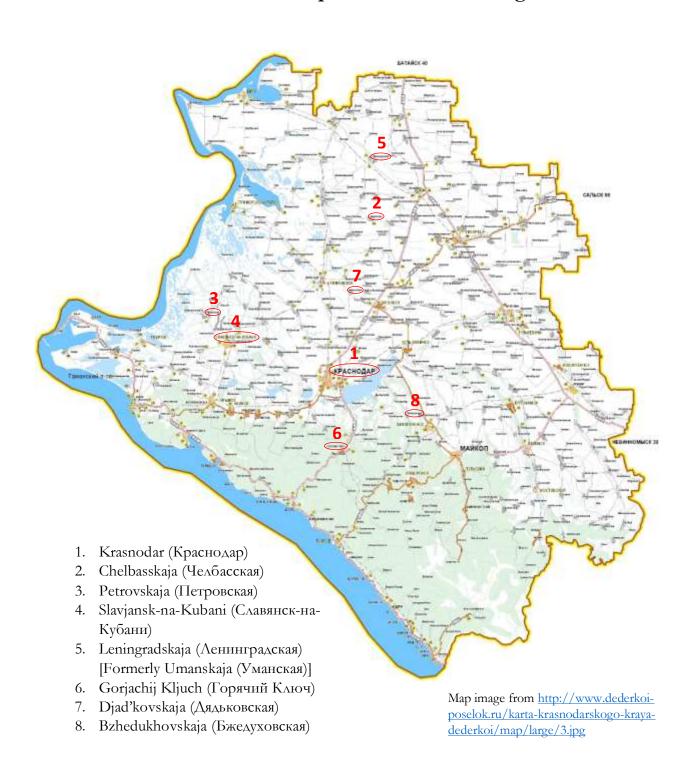
ideology. This means that the Choir is obligated to proclaim certain ideas and to focus on certain elements of Kuban Cossack history which align with the efforts of the United Russia party. The Choir, in its contemporary performances and promotional materials, glorifies the imperial era, emphasizes ties to Russian Orthodoxy, and campaigns for a Russian-Ukrainian unity that negates Ukrainian national autonomy. Zakharchenko (as a Kuban native and a charismatic, savvy director) and the Choir (as a state-funded former Soviet folk ensemble) have a powerful voice in Kuban Cossack identity politics. Performance practices like the incorporation of pro-Russian, masculine, military anthems; the singing of Orthodox prayers and musical settings of classic Russian poems; the use of standard Russian in song introductions; the failure to credit the Ukrainian heritage of Kuban songs; and the patronizing interjection of Ukrainian or dialect phrases – all serve to construct an image of Kuban Cossacks that is unreservedly pro-Russian and that relegates hybrid cultural features to the realm of quaint local color. Kuban Cossacks are claimed for Russia, and this is the image that is most visible to national and international audiences.

The result of this is that the truly unique, hybrid features of rural Kuban performers are inaccessible to the public as they are overshadowed by the Choir's representations. The Choir – even though it acquires its Kuban Cossack repertoire from *stanitsa* ensembles and celebrates rural performers as the ideal – is both unable and unwilling to faithfully represent many of the nuances with which its informants live and perform Kuban Cossack culture. Even though *stanitsa* performers are critical of the Choir's commercial renditions ([Lidija Jakovlevna's Comments](#)) and continue to embrace their own versions of Kuban Cossackness in small-scale community performances and folk festivals, their voices are being eclipsed by the Kuban Cossack Choir's totalizing vision. Consistent with the trends for many regional folk cultures in the age of globalization, the elderly rural performers of the Kuban region have struggled to pass along their singing tradition to younger generations. It seems that as these culture-bearers pass away, so too may their genuinely hybrid

language and music practices pass into obscurity. The Kuban Cossack Choir, on the other hand, is only rising in fame and prestige. So too then does its pro-Russian political agenda increasingly overwhelm other perspectives on Kuban Cossack identity. In future exploration of this topic, it will be fascinating to observe the way the Choir positions itself as Russian politics and Ukrainian-Russian relations develop. The Choir's standardized song renditions will no doubt have a growing effect on rural performance practices as local song variants and dialect forms pass out of residents' lived experience and memory – this will also be interesting to monitor.

I believe that my investigation of Kuban residents' music and language is important because it offers a window into the nuances of a contested borderland culture – one that is caught in the middle of aggressive and essentializing nation-building agendas. In my analysis of the Kuban Cossack Choir, I show some of the ways in which the institution leverages music and language in their presentation of a one-sided Kuban Cossack identity. The differences that I identify between *stanitsa* and Kuban Cossack Choir performances reveal the language- and music-related mechanisms that nation-building agents employ in their struggles to claim borderland cultures. As political forces promote homogenous national identities, I feel it is important to privilege the voices of those, like the Kuban *stanitsa* singers, who continue to embrace their hybridity and in-between-ness.

APPENDIX A - Map of the Krasnodar Region

1. Krasnodar (Краснодар)
2. Chelbasskaja (Челбасская)
3. Petrovskaja (Петровская)
4. Slavjansk-na-Kubani (Славянск-на-Кубани)
5. Leningradskaja (Ленинградская) [Formerly Umanskaja (Уманская)]
6. Gorjachij Kljuch (Горячий Ключ)
7. Djad'kovskaja (Дядьковская)
8. Bzhedukhovskaja (Бжедуховская)

Map image from http://www.dederkoi-poselok.ru/karta-krasnodarskogo-kraya-dederkoi/map/large/3.jpg

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APPENDIX B - Map of Ukraine

1. Vinnytsja (Вінниця)
2. Zaporizhzhja (Запоріжжя)

APPENDIX C - List of Recordings

All audio files have been uploaded to Box and are accessible via the URLs in the table below. Files are listed in the order that they appear in the dissertation. The link to the entire folder of audio files is: https://umich.box.com/s/7ciypcru39kv0uf5i8bio1kn0zv3ngi0

Learning Ukrainian Language in School	https://umich.box.com/s/zav3n3wid09o8ol369x1ldstqfm4rdhh
Childhood Memories of Famine	https://umich.box.com/s/10no4k5qcjfp8tohaxsm7v11eshe49oz
Performers Discuss Heritage	https://umich.box.com/s/b7u601ibxsbqeogfisr8rzm4v6xj88o2
Lidija Jakovlevna Self-Identifies as Russian	https://umich.box.com/s/2cgw9vsigozb17lhoammk4rt8rhxrxza
Lidija Jakovlevna Comments on Kuban Dialect	https://umich.box.com/s/oafq0awgcgnkli6wrgvj2ty8p8ujrows
Heritage Distinctions	https://umich.box.com/s/vno1qa8743t168lidg0zu7iwbxuhu1fb
Woman on Kuban Dialect versus Ukrainian	https://umich.box.com/s/mqqvwsqteh9v08mg9636wj1004y3lb7u
"Young People Gathered"	https://umich.box.com/s/92zyv2gb1gpysk67so0n7rgyi9nkyvmd
Chelbasskaja Version of "Come Out, Hryts'ko"	https://umich.box.com/s/7wqk5b2qzh7pvqpoa1zh2giugj0m73ol
Musical Transcription of "Come Out, Hryts'ko" (First Two Verses)	https://umich.box.com/s/68xym49zlyb53bawpv7bz8s5g7btsron
"Come Out, Hryts'ko" Melody - Bigdaj's Songbook	https://umich.box.com/s/iq1zrbljnm59hyz7avxyyff24olfvaje
"Come Out, Hryts'ko" Melody - Zakharchenko's Songbook	https://umich.box.com/s/l7seebps2vhyg6bfm2t2m5mea5dod0gm
"Come Out, Hryts'ko" Melody - Ukrainian Folk Ensemble "Cherry" / Kuban Cossack Choir	https://umich.box.com/s/4dkw5vp0078k3uas8foagx8hcbwjt81e
"Come Out, Hryts'ko" Melody - Chelbasskaja Performance	https://umich.box.com/s/n9mf2ppek6f5l4v6n7t9ela9mm51pstv
"We switched to Russian"	https://umich.box.com/s/ht428bwpyxajuegplpq6jlxsv1ti4uot
"We are from Petrovskaja"	https://umich.box.com/s/yz397bwyiwlethu72f5fhyb1dyys3xjn
"In the City" Melody - Bigdaj's Songbook	https://umich.box.com/s/wc8vvae1kmv1mgcyqbht5jngcew96xkd
"In the City" Melody - Petrovskaja Performance	https://umich.box.com/s/twio742zvy8ktl1hn3y2zoxh58oy01s9
Lidija Jakovlevna Comments on the Kuban Cossack Choir	https://umich.box.com/s/vma3zu2sq415tm6bewllkygrkahjt56d

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