

MUSIC AND POLITICS IN THE CROATIAN-CANADIAN
COMMUNITY

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by

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Abstract

This thesis explores musical performance in an Ontario-based Croatian-Canadian community in the early 21st century. It assumes that since such performances both reflect social values and help to constitute them, musical activity then serves to negotiate identity.

The 1990s saw the breakup of and subsequent armed conflict between the states of the former Yugoslavia. This time of political and violent struggle impacted Croatian diaspora communities: nationalist rhetoric of the homeland resonated with and was promulgated throughout the diaspora in Canada. Over 15 years have passed since Croatian independence, yet diaspora activities continue to invoke references to nationalist themes. Why is this so?

Examining community musical activities raises a number of questions: Where do nationalist themes appear? What forms do they take? Why are these choices made, who makes them, and to what end? Case examples of musical performance include a 2006 folklore festival and a homeland folklore performance tour, supplemented by data from Internet discussion room postings (an important setting where alternative and dissenting viewpoints may be expressed in an anonymous fashion).

The study finds that nationalist themes are welcome if not encouraged in certain circumstances. In cases where such themes appear, notions of “Croatianess” (“being Croatian”) draw from the 1940s Independent State of Croatia and ultra-nationalist movements of the 1990s, including symbols and references pertaining to the maintenance of a perceived “enemy,” selective tellings and interpretations of history and culture, and

glorification of war criminals. I have found that such themes are often part of community activity as efforts to portray a homogenous or united understanding of what it means to be “Croatian” and thereby alleviate perceived threats posed by discord within the community and assimilation into mainstream Canadian society.

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Introduction: Summary of Chapters

Chapter one presents the field and methods of the study, followed by comments on challenges encountered by the researcher in the field, and recent scholarship related to the topic. An introduction and explanation of terminology used in the project also incorporates a brief history and general description of the Croatian-Canadian community.

Chapter two provides descriptions of two events: the May 2006 Canadian-Croatian Folklore Festival in Brampton, Ontario, and the July 2006 folklore performance tour of Croatia by the Hrvatsko Selo ensemble of Hamilton, Ontario.

Chapters three and four discuss where and why nationalisms rooted in periods of conflict from Croatian history are invoked during community activities, using examples encountered during the events described in chapter two. Chapter three discusses themes from the recent period of conflict (the “Homeland War” of the 1990s), and chapter four focuses on themes relating to the 1940s Independent State of Croatia.¹

In chapter five I present possible reasons for the continued occurrence of right-wing nationalist expressions.

I conclude by presenting my findings.

¹ NDH (*Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*) or “Independent State of Croatia” (1941-1944)

Chapter One

1.1 Aim

This project deals with ideas of community, culture, homeland, and belonging, which are encountered and negotiated by all who are part of the Canadian and other multicultural societies. These ideas also play a role in the formation of Croatian-Canadian individual and community identities. Over a decade has passed since Croatian independence from Yugoslavia and the end of armed conflict with Serbia; yet nationalist ideologies continue to be expressed through community activities. The independence of the “homeland” has been declared and the “enemy” defeated: why then do nationalist sentiments continue to appear in diaspora cultural performance?

In answering this question, I intend to point towards deeper issues at play, rather than viewing nationalist references as deployed solely for the purpose of promoting associated ideologies. I attempt to describe a community wherein individual members maintain a level of identification with the homeland (the Republic of Croatia) yet hold diverse notions and experiences of “Croatianess.”² Tension occurs when heart-felt desires to maintain a sense of Croatian identity encounter different ideas of what exactly “Croatianess” means, how Croatians behave, and what their culture looks like and sounds like. I argue that in negotiations of why and how a person or group embodies and expresses “Croatianess,” nationalist references are invoked with the aim to promote a

² A term that I invoke throughout the study is “Croatianess” (see also Svanibor Pettan, 1998:16, 26), a term that I feel captures the very subjective nature of individual or group identity. “Croatianess:” how “Croatian” is an object, an activity, or a person? To what extent is one or does one feel “Croatian”?

homogenous and therefore unified sense of community the face of threat, with the hopes that unified understandings will thereby result in cultural continuity.

I look specifically at messages conveyed in musical performances that surround young people in the community, most of whom were teenagers, children, infants, or in some cases not even born when Croatian independence and the armed conflict of the 1990s took place.

1.2 Field and Method

The data came primarily from participant-observation of two events: the May 2006 Canadian-Croatian Folklore Festival held in Brampton, Ontario, and the July 2006 folklore performance tour of Croatia by the Hrvatsko Selo ensemble, a folklore performance group associated with the Holy Cross Parish of Hamilton, Ontario. These data were then supplemented and broadened by information from interviews, a popular Internet discussion forum, and previous fieldwork. Analysis of the data was enhanced by further interviews and findings from scholarly sources.

Though historical, sociological and anthropological work has been performed within the Croatian-Canadian community (Grabovac et al. 1995; Rasporich 1994, 1999, 2006; Sopta and Scardellato 1994; Winland 1998, 2002, 2005), little exists beyond descriptive data (Ganza 1994) about the role of cultural performance in the formation of individual or group identities.

The choice of a Hamilton-based ensemble was partly happenstance. At the time the project was proposed, there was only one group from Ontario with definite plans to

tour Croatia in 2006. It was a fortunate coincidence that the same group planned to participate in the 2006 Brampton Festival.

Data collection from the 2006 Festival (see Chapter Two) took several forms. Observation of the festival events included the Sunday morning Holy Mass, two evening *zabava* (“fun time”) parties and two afternoon folklore performances (staged performances of arranged instrumental playing, singing and choreographed dancing). Observations were supplemented by interviews and conversation before, during and after the festival with several dancers, one former dancer/teacher of the Hrvatsko Selo group, and the founding teacher of the Hrvatsko Selo group, as well as printed materials and official Festival videos (made available for purchase). Interviewees during the festival event were Selo members, primarily in their late teens and early 20s.

Information concerning the summer tour came from the footage I filmed on the tour, observation at performances, and interviews with Selo dancers, parents of dancers, adult participants, the head dance instructor, and the tamburaši leader. Interviewees included 15 young people in small-group (two or three people) or one-on-one conversations, six parents of ensemble members (some of whom were also participants or teachers), one grandparent, two teachers, and the founding teacher of the ensemble. All interviewees are identified using pseudonyms.³ Other more casual conversations took place over the course of the tour, either in private or in one case between myself and a

³ Since some interviewees were concerned that their parents or fellow community members would perhaps react adversely to their opinions, and given that several under-age people shared their thoughts with me, I decided on a policy of anonymity for all involved.

group of young people. In addition, questionnaires were distributed among parents and grandparents, which related to the family's region of origin and extended-family visits.

Questions for the youngest children (between the ages of 5 and 12) were of a general nature and casually posed: What kind of music do they listen to for fun? What is their favorite Croatian dance? What are they looking forward to on their trip? Questions for youth (aged 12 to 19) were similar; however responses were more in-depth and lengthier than with the younger group. Queries for parents were more personal in nature and inquired about motivations for sending their children to folklore group, including what they were hoping their children would gain from the summer tour. Teachers and one grandparent were asked about the purpose of folklore ensembles in Canada, why they invested time and energy in this endeavor, and about their hopes for the young people participating in ensembles. The interview with a grandparent who participated on the tour and who was active on the costume committee provided an account from the perspective of the first-generation immigrants to Canada.

The founding dance instructor of the Hrvatsko Selo ensemble shared an alternative view of many issues with me. After Selo, this same gentleman – who possessed years of experience leading music groups both within and outside of the Croatian community – went on to found, teach, and provide workshops for many other ensembles in Ontario.

Film footage, field notes, and sound recordings were gathered during a one-week spent with the group during tour preparations and rehearsals and during my participation as a fellow traveler on the tour. These materials were supplemented by publications made

available during the tour (itinerary distributed by the travel agent, pamphlets and brochures at historic sights). Finally, follow-up email questionnaires were distributed to all participants under the age of 25; however, very few responded.

In this study, face-to-face interaction during air-travel and virtual contact via the Internet helped establish relationships that impacted identity formation. Virtual communication via discussion forums and file sharing played a role in shaping political positions and building transnational communities during the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s (Stubbs 1998), and the Internet continues to be a forum for Croats worldwide to discuss diaspora and homeland affairs (Winland 2002: 699) by providing opportunities for political expression among younger generations as an “equally valid location,” instrumental in the “profound elimination of privileged locations of nationalist politics” (Skrbiš 2001). Internet sources uncovered opinions that were more varied than personal interviews offered, helped expand and “deterritorialize” (Appadurai 4) a geographically-bound definition of “the field,” and also considered the importance of increased access to rapid communications in transnational and diaspora community identities (Appadurai 2005). Furthermore, employing Internet sources for this study better reflects the everyday life of young people in Canada, for whom computer and Internet technology is a daily activity that “provide[s] resources for self-imagining as an everyday social project” (Appadurai 4).

Musical activities of the Croatian diaspora have been affected by Internet technology. Whereas in the past young people depended on acquiring Croatian music through tapes and CDs collected during trips, brought to Canada by family visitors, or

imported by a local specialty shop, now music can be shared and downloaded within seconds.⁴

I chose to focus on activities on the website Crowworld.ca. Many of the site moderators, sponsors, viewers and participants are based in Ontario. Website contents include advertisements, community announcements, downloadable Croatian music, and discussion forums.⁵ Forum categories include “Jobs,” “Politics,” “History” and “Music.” Under each category there is a list of topics, established by moderators and users. For each topic, people may post opinions and respond to other postings. The site is open to anyone; however, in order to browse and participate in the discussion forums one must sign up and obtain a username and password. At the time of research there were approximately 4,000 registered users, and over 22,000 posts.

Despite the fact that the Crowworld.ca web forum is accessible to the general public, the choice to utilize personal postings from it brought up issues of power relations and my position as researcher. While conflicted about being the “lurker, an unseen, silent witness” (Senjković and Dukić 46), I felt it was important to include the candid nature and diversity of viewpoints expressed in the virtual field. The anonymity and freedom of expression allowed by website forums seemed to promote a wider array of opinions and expressions than face-to-face conversations and formal interviews I had conducted. I therefore took my example from a study by two Croatian ethnologists of the

⁴ Within a day of its release in Croatia, I noticed music from the newest album of singer Marko Perković Thompson available on several websites, including Crowworld.ca.

⁵ Moderator, advertiser, or forum participant locations are either indicated or are identifiable through forum participant statements. The forums allow people to express themselves freely. A minimal amount of moderation does take place, although it is unclear to me what situations warrant or result in a posting being withdrawn by site moderators.

Crnalegija.com website (see Senjković and Dukić), and registered for the purpose of viewing posts but did not participate in the threads.

Throughout this document, people who shared information through personal interviews, conversations, or emails are identified using pseudonyms indicated by quotation marks (“John” or “Mary,” etc.). Crowworld.ca users are identified using names chosen by the users themselves and are not indicated with quotation marks (they are presented exactly as they are specified on the website by the users). Further details (dates of personal interviews and dates and thread postings) are provided in the works cited list.

Experience in the community acquired prior to this study provided a fuller understanding of the topic. This experience included collecting Croatian and Croatian-Canadian printed materials (church bulletins, festival programs, newspapers), exploring Internet websites (personal and group), attendance at community calendar celebrations (Easter Mass, Velika Gospa), and interviews (see Wiens 2004). I have also drawn from “hands-on” participant experiences, including two years dancing in a Croatian parish folklore ensemble in Montreal, participating in folklore festivals in London, Ontario (2003) and Montreal, Quebec (2005), and two trips to Croatia (2004 and 2006) that included work experience, attendance at a variety of cultural and musical events, and attendance as a student at the *Matica Hrvatska* summer Folklore School.

1.3 Research Challenges

"Nice people don't mention such things"

This statement by exiled journalist Dubravka Ugrešić (236) describes her experience of Croatia's social and political climate of the 1990s, and reflects an attitude I encountered during interaction with community members. "Nationalism" carries negative connotations for some people, and my interest in this topic was not always greeted with a positive response. By the varied reactions I encountered, I detected that it was inappropriate to notice or ask questions about nationalist expressions, especially as an "outsider." As long as the questions I posed stayed within "safe" topics, responses were positive. Questions such as "Why do you do folklore?" "How much do you like folklore?" and "Are you excited to go to Croatia?" could be easily answered and would reveal only positive or glowing reviews of community life. Any attempt to probe further or "penetrate the bedrock of the community's social ideology" (Sugarman 21) was often cause for skepticism, save for in a few cases in which challenging questions were welcomed by interviewees. I encountered a community "highly suspicious of outsiders who poke into their affairs," asking "Are you a friend of Croatia's or are you critical?" (Hockenos x). It was, therefore, a challenge to remain within acceptable boundaries of questioning so as not to be dismissed as an outsider looking to "dig up dirt" or who simply "[doesn't] understand us" (Ugrešić 78). In general, and understandably so, people were protective of their community and saw certain topics as unsuitable for discussion with outsiders.

The work of an insider for such a study would have been privileged by familiarity with the dynamics of the community. I did not grow up within this community, was neither actively involved nor interested in wartime events during the 1990s, and did not experience friend or family tragedy that resulted from that situation. From a different perspective, I feel that my status as an outsider was one that allowed me the opportunity to recognize and question words, actions, and symbols that an insider might take for granted and risk having “disabled the critical voices within” (Petrović 22)⁶ for one reason or another. An absence of opinion or personal allegiance based on experience or involvement in the community during war-time events allowed me to continually re-evaluate how I understood and approached the subject and my informants.

Despite insider sensitivity towards such topics, Croatian ethnologists have been calling attention to war-time cultural expressions and events, with results that move beyond descriptive ethnology towards profound explorations of symbols and myths within these expressions (Ceribašić 2000; Rihtman-Auguštin 2004; Senjković 2002; Žanić 2007). These works ask why “truths originating from the centers of power [are] repeatedly accepted, and why do they become practice?” (Ceribašić 1998: 42). They propose neither “examining myths⁷ [as] good or bad,” nor proclaiming “open hunting season on myths,” but rather to “research, uncover and identify those for whom the

⁶ “Thus *our* texts have been partly impregnated with the rhetoric of national media. *Croatian authors* have been speaking about the *Patriotic war* and the *enemy*...Our authors deliberately did not deal either with the social pathology of the war or with the guilt and crimes committed by *our* people...The Croatian ethno-anthropologists have not been free from either political bias in our interpretation of the field research. To us, the war was just Serbian aggression....We noticed only that the right of a nation to have its symbols has been used by the Serbian propaganda against us. We did not perceive that some Croatian leading politicians, and not only the extremists, participated in provoking the conflict.” (Rihtman-Auguštin 99, 100-101).

⁷ The author refers to myths of nationalism, some of which have or will be pointed to in this study, such as primordialist myths and the matter of the Drina river boundary.

appearance - once again - of ethnomylths serves for concrete political purposes” (Rihtman-Augustin 78). Finally, they invite “critically disposed ethno-anthropologists to study the birth of what is regarded today as national tradition (which, nota bene, is a contemporary social fact) and to do research into who utilizes it today and to what purpose, who manipulates and concocts it to what end” (Čapo Žmegač xvi).

My project deals exclusively with a group-based activity: performances in public. From my private conversation with some community members, and from discussion threads on Croworld.ca, it appears that there are people from all age groups who have initiated efforts towards shaking xenophobic definitions of “community” or right-wing nationalist ideas of Croathood. Several organizations promote interaction with non-Croatian groups in Canada. A paper focusing on individuals who do not align themselves with the nationalist memory, value, myth, and symbol complexes which I examine here, would paint a different picture of how the war was understood and how it continues to affect personal identity in this particular diaspora community.

There were moments when my outsider status did not help my research. As described previously, I was often perceived with circumspection and found that young people did not want to share aspects of their upbringing that they found confusing. Several interviews I conducted took place in small groups, and young people tended to correct one another if they felt that an opinion being expressed was not appropriate or “true.” They wanted me, an outside researcher, to know and understand only the best of

what the community had to offer. Peer pressure shaped responses, but also attuned me to the importance of “public face” in this community.⁸

1.4 Current Scholarship

Political developments in Central and Eastern European states have received much attention and analysis during the last half-century. Historians, sociologists, anthropologists, journalists and writers have tried to make sense of and explain the events surrounding the breakup of former Yugoslavia. Nationalist struggles for independence captured the attention and imagination of people from within and outside the conflicts, and have been analyzed from a myriad of perspectives and by an endless list of people and parties (Bellamy 2003; Benson 2001; Glenny 1992; Goldstein 2000; Hayden 1992, 1996; Hislope 1997; Holbrooke 1999; Tanner 1997).

Cultural expression played many roles in the emergence of small nation-states from Socialist governance. Mark Slobin’s 1996 book *Retuning Culture* looks at how music became a central part of identity construction for new nation-states and for people aspiring to independence. In 1998, nine Croatian scholars contributed to *Music, Politics, and War: Views from Croatia*, a collection of “distinctively personal” (Pettan 1998: 5) essays on music during times of conflict in Croatian history. The essays explore examples from the 17th to the 20th century, and several articles focus on music in nationalist-minded movements of the 20th century.

⁸ In her study of former Yugoslav immigrants in Canada, Edit Petrović found that public-setting activity (churches, clubs) tends to compartmentalize and promote prejudice according to ethnicity, whereas domestic-setting friendships and activities were more inclusive of different ethnicities from former Yugoslav states.

Several authors have focused on music during the breakup of former Yugoslav states (Bonifašić 1998; Ceribašić 2000; Gordy 1999; Laušević 2000; Longinović 2000; Maners 2000; Pettan 1998; Vuletic 2007; Simić 2000; Žanić 2007). These authors reflect on how musical activity “became a battleground” and “a key component of citizens consciousness” (Slobin 1996: 8) in right-wing nationalist causes. Meanwhile, activities connected with the breakup and conflicts were taking place in diaspora groups. Studies examining wartime and post-war Croatian diaspora community activity (G. Brown 2004; Hockenos 2003; Winland 2002) and media (Durić 2001; Skrbish 1999) indicate that war-related themes were and continue to be a part of individual and group identities among diaspora communities, despite their geographic distance from the Homeland (Australia, Canada, and the United States). At this point, little attention has been paid to relationships between politics and cultural performance in the diaspora, aside from case studies (Senjković & Dukić 2005) or passing references (Bonifašić 1998; Pettan 1997).

1.5 Terminology

Performance

My project borrows ideas developed in the study of social and cultural performance. “Cultural performance” draws from Milton Singer’s idea of a “definitely limited time-span, a beginning and an end, an organized program of activity, a set of performers, an audience, and occasion of performance” (Singer xiii). A folklore festival, holy mass, and tour performances described in this study share these attributes. These events are times of “discontinuum... among the same collection of people, culturally

made possible by setting aside times and places for cultural performances [as] equally part of the ongoing social process - the part where those people become conscious, through witnessing and often participating in such performances, of the nature, texture, style, and given meanings of their own lives as members of a sociocultural community” (Turner 22).

Embedded within “cultural performance” are complex “culturally coded patterns and behaviors” (Carlson 4). No one act is exclusively “Croatian” or “Canadian:” within a folklore festival event, both English and Croatian are spoken from the stage and between participants, Croatian and non-Croatian foods are eaten, Croatian and North American pop music is danced to. For many young people, grabbing a *tambura* (short-necked lute) and breaking into collective song-making is a normal part of “being Croatian” whether it is in a formal or informal setting. Within the Festival and tour performance events, acts of a day-to-day nature are played out: friends gossip and laugh, parents talk about daily worries, and young people play pranks and make mischief. While Soyini Madison tells us that “social performances are not aware that their enactments are culturally scripted” (xviii), a division between staged “cultural” and everyday “social” performances in these settings is vague at best, and this is recognized and played on by young Croatian-Canadians. Whether dressed in jeans or in an elaborate hand-stitched costume, structured and spontaneous acts intermingle and overlap in ways that performers themselves are often very aware of and revel in. For example, part of the fun of being in costume might be going to the local fast-food joint on the way to a folklore performance, in part to enjoy the attention of outsiders but also to revel in the disjuncture created by eating an

industrially-produced cheeseburger while dressed in a historically inspired (or sometimes actually historical) hand-made costume.

The term *Folklore* is used within the Croatian-Canadian community to encompass many styles of music and dance performance. Organized groups of *folklore ensembles* that rehearse and perform music and dance are casually referred to by several different names: “folklore group,” “group,” or just “folklore” (a person “does” or “goes to” folklore). Folklore involves a wide array of music making, including dancing, playing tambura (a group of players is called the *tamburaši* ⁹), and singing (a capella, accompanied by a tambura ensemble, or as a part of dancing). A *participant* may engage in one activity or in a combination of singing, dancing, or tamburaši. Dancing, the main substance of folklore festivals, is inspired by historical village-based practices and usually based on notated, choreographed and stylized performances found in text and video sources from the homeland. Music choices may also include composed or arranged songs and choreographed dances in folkloric styles.

Folklore performance is not limited to festival stages, and ensembles frequently perform at Holy Mass and community events. In addition, some folklore repertoire is played by non-folklore groups such as *zabava* bands.¹⁰

An important aspect of folklore performance is *nošnje* (singular *nošnja*): region-specific costumes representative and imitative of hand-made original clothing from rural or urban Croatian populations. Usually formal attire used for Sunday activity, a few

⁹ The tamburaši play various sizes/voices of tambura, a long-necked plucked chordophone. The sizes of tambura in the group range from the highest to the lowest voices: *prim*, *brač*, *čelo*, *bugaria*, and the bass voice *berda*). A tambura ensemble may also be referred to as a *tamburica*, a diminutive term for tambura.

¹⁰ The word *zabava* means party or a time of amusement.

examples are also representative of daily work clothing. In the study, I tend to use the term “costume,” although the English “costume” and Croatian “nošnje/nošnja” are used interchangeably.

A *zabava* is an event associated with but not exclusive to festival weekends. *Zabavas* (a typical anglicized plural form of *zabava*) occur throughout the year as fundraisers in community halls, church halls, or rented clubs. They feature one or more hired bands made up of several young Croatian-Canadian men who play an array of instruments: different sizes of tambura, electric guitars, percussion instruments, and accordion may all be a part of the band. Band repertoire spans several genres, discussed in more detail in Chapter Two.

Croatian Identity and “Croatianness”

Identity is difficult to speak of, as it has been at times an ill-defined and perhaps over-used concept. As discussed in this project, individual or group identity is understood as “a feeling of belonging to a social group, a strong connection with a social category, and as an important part of our minds that affects our social perceptions and behavior” (Korostelina 15).

A *Croatian-Canadian* will be loosely defined as a person who resides in Canada and who has one or more ascendants of Croatian ethnicity. Within this group of people, members may self-identify as Canadian, Croatian, Canadian-Croatian or Croatian-Canadian. Varying from individual to individual, such self-references suggest different understandings and degrees of association with “Canadian” or “Croatian” identity. For

simplicity's sake I have chosen Croatian-Canadian to refer to individuals and the community.

The 2001 Canadian census counted 97,045 people in Canada of ethnic Croatian origin (based on census respondents' claiming Croatian origin for themselves or their parent(s) (StatsCan).¹¹ Of these, 62,325 live in Ontario, and 9,715 in Hamilton (StatsCan).¹² It should be noted that these census-based statistics rely on terms of identification often decided and re-worked by families, community media, and community organizations (for example, clubs or churches).¹³

Identity may be shaped by factors such as the circumstances under which a person's family left for Canada, if they came from urban or rural areas, if they left from Croatian territories, from Hercegovina, or other European locations, at what age they arrived in Canada, and what level of education they came with. Further themes of identity proposed by Edit Petrović (12-13) include:

Culture, Identity, Ethnicity, Citizenship, Nationalism, Patriotism, War,

¹¹ <<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/products/standard/themes/RetrieveProductTable.cfm?Temporal=2001&PID=62911&APATH=3&GID=431515&METH=1&PTYPE=55440&THEME=44&FOCUS=0&AID=0&PLACENAME=0&PROVINCE=0&SEARCH=0&GC=99&GK=NA&VID=0&VNAMEE=&VNAMEF=&FL=0&RL=0&FREE=0>>

¹² *ibid.*

¹³ Being and feeling Croatian are more complex issues that are put forward using self or community-determined categories of identification. Statistics may reflect an approximate number of people who claim Croatian heritage, however such categorization has not always been neutral, and is certainly an example of how "presenting" and "representing" may actually help produce what is claimed to be represented. Previous to and during the 1990s, marked efforts towards specific terms of self and community categorization took place in the diaspora (as "Croat" instead of "Yugoslav"), influenced by community and family-fostered ideologies. One example was a campaign organized by the *Fraternalist* (a Croatian-American publication with a wide circulation among Canadian Croats) in the early 1990s advising "every American citizen of Croatian origin to declare him/herself a Croat, and his/her mother tongue Croatian" (Durić 92). The government apparatus of the country of residence therefore is a transformative agent, allowing or requiring a person to claim a specific linguistic or ethnic/national association. As such, "the technical requirements of the modern administrative state once again helped further the emergences of nationalism" (Hobsbawm 1992: 100, Anderson 164-170).

Family, Profession, Community, Gender, Tradition, as well as Success/
Failure, Typical/Atypical, Yugoslav/Canadian, Us/Them,
Continuity/Change.

Individuals, families, and community groups take part in negotiating these themes and decided how and in what form they will impact identities. They are “deeply perspectival constructs, inflected by the historical, linguistic, and political situatedness of different sorts of actors; nation-states, multinationals, diasporic communities, as well as subnational groupings and movements (whether religious, political, or economic) and even intimate face-to-face groups, such as villages, neighborhoods, and families” (Appadurai 33).

How a person goes about “being Croatian” depends on an individual’s particular experiences within their family, peer-group, church-group, community, city and country. Anthony Rasporich (2006) has noted the community has been prone to “political and social fragmentation,” often arising out of varied experiences and identities. For some, “being Croatian” includes acknowledging Croatian heritage on a census form or maintaining sentimental ties to family or history. For others, being a “good Croatian” (a term commonly brought up in conversation) is tied to community activity.

Anyone can say they are Croatian, but when you actually participate in something that is a Croatian tradition, it makes you truly Croatian.

(Interview with participant, March 2004 taken from Wiens 5)

Forms of community involvement can include attending Croatian Catholic church, marrying another Croatian, speaking and teaching your children to speak Croatian, eating Croatian food, spending time with family, or being a part of a Croatian community soccer team, sporting club, or folklore group. Assuming an

inherent connection between community participation (being a “good Croatian”) and identifying as Croatian becomes complicated and contentious when exactly how Croatians behave is understood in different ways:

“I took my father to see *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*. The whole time he was pointing out “That could be Croatian, that could be Croatian.”

“Us Croats, you know we’re nothing like the Greeks.”

“We are more Balkan here.”

“We are not Balkan.”

A Diaspora Community

Historically, Croats came to Canada for economic and political reasons, the majority being economic migrants (Bellamy 94). The earliest Croats (during and after the time of Columbus) came as shipworkers, followed by fishermen in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The first major wave of migrants in the early 20th century was comprised of men working in the construction, mining, logging, and agricultural sectors. Their goal was to work and send money back to their families in Croatia. Historian Anthony Rasporich tells us that due to demanding work schedules and little disposable income, these early immigrants were “immune to institutional life” (1994: 24) and there were few attempts to establish formal cultural or community groups.

While many from the post-WWII migration who went to South American destinations went for political reasons, the Canadian arrivals left Croatia for a combination of political and economic reasons, and included a few who “supported the losing side” (the Ustaša nazi-puppet regime) during the Second World War (Rasporich 2006). Immigrants from 1945 on were “generally better educated and more urbanized

professionals” aiming to “foster ethnic self-consciousness” (Rasporich 1999: 384) among descendants of Croats.

Members of the next and largest wave to Canada (during the 1960s and 70s) left for economic and political reasons. As their dreams of economic security became realized in Canada, increased amounts of disposable income led to the establishment of “literary and cultural societies, language schools, musical ensembles, sporting clubs, and political organizations” (Rasporich 1999: 384). The 1960s/70s migrant group sponsored the establishment of Croatian Catholic churches, totaling over 20 across Canada by the 1980s (Rasporich 1994: 25). Church buildings continue to host community weddings, folklore ensemble rehearsals, and events for various Croatian community organizations. It was this 1960s/70s group who established a network of Croatian folklore ensembles and festivals designed to “promote and preserve” Croatian folklore (Ganza 125).¹⁴ Prodded by concerns that homelanders did not enjoy full freedom of religious and cultural expression, Croatian-Canadians “welcomed a chance to create a Croatian identity in Canada” (Rasporich 1994: 25). From the writings of Rasporich, we can further clarify that immigrants actively and purposefully created a sense of Croatian identity. Today, musical activity, as an essential component of events aiming to foster identity formation, includes strong traditions of folklore performance, tambura players at weddings and community celebrations, church choirs, household playing of Yugoslav-era and contemporary Croatian pop recordings, and music-making among friends and families.

¹⁴ The Croatian Folklore Federation of Canada in 1973 and the Canadian-Croatian Heritage Folklore Festival in 1974 (Ganza 124).

Now in the early 21st century, Canadians of Croatian heritage take part in a wide range of employment and economic activities: as primary producers and agricultural workers, steel and mine workers, business owners, professionals, artists, politicians, etc. At present, the ways in which Croatian identity is taken on and played out in the day-to-day lives of community members reveals the fluid and complex nature of identity formation, where “forms of identity, be they regional, linguistic, gender, or other, affect the way that the nation is internalized by individual subjects and the meanings given to national identity in everyday practices” (Bellamy 29).¹⁵

The Croatian community in Canada is a part of the global Croatian diaspora. They are (the offspring of) people who have migrated from a focal geographic location outwards towards other countries, and who now have established lives and families in their new locations. Social, religious, and cultural (including musical) activities within the Canadian diaspora display both a sense of displacement from and a strong continued association with a distant homeland (for example, when the word “exile” is invoked). A “sense of identity communicated in relationship to collective histories of displacement” (Clifford 286) draws inspiration from imaginings of and the “symbol of home” (Turino 5):

The homeland dimension is more than just the object of diaspora imaginings and longing but a crucial site of diaspora identity politics...They have always looked to the homeland for images and meanings that resonate with their ideas of what being a Croatian is or should be. The Croatian homeland has provided a sense of security for those living abroad, thus Croatia has always been central to their self-definitions.

(Winland 2002: 708, 701-702)

¹⁵ “Nation” in the sense of people of Croatian heritage who for some reason or another have come to identify as a group in communion with one another, the “Croatian people.”

This community, in which individuals strive to understand their own experiences and those of others who fall under the same designated symbols (the Croatian flag, anthem, historic figures) as inherently connected if not similar, shares aspects of Benedict Anderson's understanding of "community" whereby "members...will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion." (Anderson 6). The Canadian diaspora is made up of people who have purposefully set out to create a sense of communion *as Croats* in family, church- or city-wide, nation-wide (Canada) and transnational collective efforts (the community is transnational in that individuals are not bound by one geographic location but are situated within multi-locale movements and bonds between people and ideas). By functioning transnationally, it has become a "mobilized national ethnicit[y], operat[ing] beyond the confines of a single nation-state" (Appadurai 147), where identity is formed within and between multiple settings (locations that Appadurai (147) calls "diasporic public spheres") including homes, towns, cities, the country of residence, the homeland (symbolic or actual), the imagined, and the virtual. People, ideas, and cultures flow between these settings, ideas and cultures become malleable and "understood by subjects depend on other identities, interests and loyalties that they hold" (Bellamy 29). Thus, ideas of "Croatianess" are under constant negotiation and reinvention. Within existing formed allegiances, imagination has become a "form of negotiation between sites of agency (individuals) and globally defined fields of possibility" (Appadurai 31).

From my observations and experiences, I have noted that themes around which “Croatianess” is individually or collectively imagined are similar to William Safran’s proposed description of diaspora groups (though not every member takes on each aspect):

- 1) They, or their ancestors, have been dispersed from a specific original “centre” to two or more “peripheral”, or foreign regions;
- 2) They retain a collective memory, vision, or myth about their original homeland- its physical location, history, and achievements;
- 3) They believe that they are not- and perhaps cannot be- fully accepted by their host society and therefore feel partly alienated and insulated from it;
- 4) They regard their ancestral homeland as their true, ideal home and as the place to which they or their descendants would (or should) eventually return- when the conditions are appropriate;
- 5) They believe that they should, collectively, be committed to the maintenance or restoration of their original homeland and to its safety and prosperity; and
- 6) They continue to relate, personally or vicariously, to the homeland in one way or another, and their ethnocommunal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by the existence of such a relationship.

(Safran 83-84)

Nationalism

Recent scholarship describes transnational groups as “*the most important* social sites in which the *crises of patriotism* are played out” (Appadurai 176, emphasis mine) and exile as “*the nursery of nationalism*” (Smith 2003: 19, emphasis mine). This study will show that while such assertions hold merit, reasons for and ways in which nationalisms are constructed and “played out” are complex, even within a small community in a localized setting. These nationalisms are worthy of investigation in that they reveal fears and challenges of identities under threat and issues that reach deeper than (often) over-simplified and rhetorical nation-speak of right-wing nationalists represents.

Nationalist movements (activities aiming to foster a sense of importance of “the nation” among a perceived membership defined according to linguistic, ethnic, cultural, or other notions of belonging) have arisen for varied reasons and circumstances, and each bears unique characteristics. Such movements involve complex processes, sentiments, and ideologies, and look to attain and maintain (on behalf of its members) “self-actualization” (see Smith 1983: 167-174). Actualization may take political forms (self-governance, independence from a larger political body), or as in our case (a “post-independence” transnationalism, Smith 1983: 224), interests may be oriented towards issues of group-maintenance and self-definition. Viewing nationalism as a subjective and “multifaceted phenomenon worthy of study - no longer as something merely negative by definition” (Pettan 6), this study asks questions of nationalism as proposed by Katherine Verdery (39): “What is the context in which one or another definition or symbolization of nation operates? What is it accomplishing? Is it doing work for arguments aimed elsewhere rather than at national questions per se?” Problematizing or critiquing current theories and scholarship on nations and nationalism (terms that have proven to be nebulous and “notoriously difficult to define, let alone analyze,” Anderson 3) is beyond the scope of this project. I present simplified understandings of the terms invoked throughout the discussion, specifically “nationalism” and “right-wing nationalism,” and intend to focus on presenting *what* they look like and proposing as to *why* they appear.

The population discussed is a group of people who understand themselves (to varying extents) as “Croats.” It is less important to pinpoint whether community members understands “Croat” as implying an ethnic group, cultural group, or a “nation,” and more important to emphasize that there exists a wide-held understanding that they are a people connected by ancestry, culture, history, and common imagined activity (Anderson 26). Nationalism in the diaspora, viewed in this thesis as “political utilization of the symbol nation through discourse and political activity, as well as the sentiment that draws people into responding to the symbol’s use” (Verdery 38) has historically involved “organized political movements, designed to further the alleged aim and interests” (Verdery 3) of the homeland. Now in the early 21st century, cultural attributes bearing nationalist implications, while still appearing to be concerned with “doctrines about the character, interests, right and duties of nations,” (Verdery 3) function more as a “means of communication and association” rather than to its purported ends (Smith 1986: 25).

In “The Ethnic Origins of Nations” (1986), Anthony D. Smith (3) proposes that while “objective factors” (such as population size, economic resources) play a role in “creating the environment of nations,” they “tell us little about the distinctive qualities and character of the national community that emerges.” To understand what makes one nationalism different from another, Smith (1986: 3) proposes turning to more “subjective” factors, “not the more ephemeral dimensions of collective will, attitude, even sentiment, which make up the day-to-day fabric of ethnic consciousness, but the more permanent cultural attributes of memory, value, myth and symbolism.” Smith (3-4) argues that the durability of memory, value, myth and symbol complexes, “often

recorded and immortalized in the arts, languages, sciences and laws of the community...leave their imprint on the perceptions of the subsequent generations and shape the structures and atmosphere of the community through the distinctive tradition that they deposit.” Aspects of the memory, value, myth and symbol quartet, as “raw materials” of culture, are often combined and incorporated in narratives, gestures, and sounds during activities aimed at fostering notions of and members of “the nation.” In chapters one and two, I describe several instances where one or more of the quartet are present in Croatian cultural activity, for example, the blending of religious, historic, and folkloric gestures and symbols in community education and activity.

I have interpreted narratives, gestures and sounds as of a nationalist nature in that they are purposefully presented as a part of individual and community identity formation, specifically geared towards a Croatian identity. “Right-wing nationalist” value, myth, history, and symbol complexes discussed in this paper differ in that they ascribe to different means to achieve similar goals. Chapters three and four examine cultural attributes interpreted by me as “right-wing,” specifically those which promote cultural opposition to “the other,” cultural purity (cleansed of any trace of “the other”), or a sense of an “enemy” in this same “other.” Nationalism informs a sense of “nation” and membership, whereas right-wing nationalism attempts to build identity in terms of opposition to another, often with xenophobic or racist connotations. Both styles of nationalism presented here ascribe to the model of “ethno-nationalism” put forward power-holders in the Croatian government and interested parties during the 1990s, primarily:

1. National identity is held to be the product of common origins, and as such constitute a kind of kinship writ large.
 2. Regardless of evidence to the contrary, there is belief that the ethnic group shares a single common culture, and these traditions ultimately define the nation's boundaries.
 3. Co-nationals are united not only by shared traditions but also by what are regarded by many as "natural," or quasi-mystical bonds.
 4. It thus follows that every nation has a "God-given" or "natural" right to its own territory and sovereignty.
- (Simić 111)

1.6 Nationalist Ideologies and the Bearers of Their Legitimacy

Nationalist ideologies may in part radiate outwards from one central point and also arise dialogically between several parties. Primary sources in the diaspora from which highly "politicized" (Petrović 19-20) interpretations of "Croatianess" are promoted include Croatian Catholic Churches and private homes. These are settings in which "bearers of legitimacy" (people in positions of influence such as priests and parents) have naturalized "nation talk." These discursive formations involve politicized language which, from its routine use, comes to imply "our" shared history, language, culture, religion, and destiny, as inherent and natural if not almost divinely ordained aspects of who Croats are. Such "'nationalization" of public and private life...of narrative and interpretive frames, of perception and evaluation, of thinking and feeling" (Brubaker 20) by some priests and parents has been identified by many people as the source of remnant right-wing ideologies within the community.

The Church

The relationship between religious organizations and homeland politics in this community is significant and there has been a strong tradition of employing a "specifically religious concept of "communion"" (Smith 2003, 23).

Borrowing from Smith's (2003) proposed "three levels of analysis," I will briefly explore sacred foundations of national identity in the diaspora. Smith (2003, 28) describes the first level as

concerned with elite-sponsored designations both of the national and nationalism, and of religion. This is the 'national identity' of the public domain...It is the taught belief and the required sentiment, what Homi Bhabha calls the 'pedagogic' narrative of the people, proclaiming the traditionally accepted status and destiny of the nation.

Several informants have pointed out that Croatian Catholic Churches in Canada, while providing spaces for community social and religious activity, also function as settings in which "the production of memory and history occurs," as "sites of remembrance and social architecture," where church figures help shape "accounts of displacement, loss, and nostalgia" (Ballinger 15), often based on "absolutist notions of Croatian origin, territoriality, and true belonging" (Winland 2002: 698). A commonly described instance, for example, is that of priests hesitating or in some cases refusing to perform mass or weddings in English (in a few cases they do not speak English at all); thus language and culture become tightly connected with religious worship and community belonging.

Priests and nuns, often brought to Canada from Croatia or Hercegovina, take part in cultural education, and as type of community "elite" their personal takes on history and culture may enter freely into educational activities.

Is anyone else familiar with the term "*Vlach*" being used for a Serb?
...I was taught that many who identify as Serbs today were originally *Vlasi* and that the worst kind of Serbs have Vlach origins....Our former pastor (a Croatian Franciscan) always said that the *Vlasi* were the worst thing to happen to the region, they spread

Serbianization/Orthodoxy and had the worst traits (cunning, liars, double-crossers) of any people...worse then *Cigani* ['Gypsies'] ...which they passed on to the Serbs, which many of them became...

(Danko 1)

During the war of the 1990s, diaspora churches saw themselves as the "custodians" of "Croatianess," "set out to preserve a distinct Croatian ethnic identity, language and tradition" (Durić 93) functioning as "[i]deologues [who] appear to have a free hand in deciding what criteria are in play in the definition" (Stokes 14) of "Croatianess" in Canada.

It was a shock for me when I came down here to Southern Ontario and I went to the Croatian church and I heard all of this political stuff about Yugoslavia. We never used that word [growing up], it was always "Croatian," I was never taught to hate anyone. Because we didn't have a Croatian church, I was used to going to mass and hearing the gospel every week and not politics.

("John")

For children of 1960s and 70s immigrants, the primary setting for cultural education (outside of the home) was the church, specifically *Subotnja škola* or "Saturday school," which remains an important non-domestic setting for parents who wish to share Croatian culture and religious practices with their children. The programs provide lessons in Croatian language and history, catechism, and simple music and folkdance lessons. One dancer, now in her late 20s, shared that "growing up in Hamilton, most of us had a schedule. Most Croatian kids went to Saturday school on Friday nights or Saturday mornings..." ("Dana," Interview). Though several people tell me that attendance has declined in recent years, my 2006 survey of the Hrvatsko Selo ensemble showed that 14 out of 15 parental couples sent or still send one or more of their children to Saturday school. Saturday school education, though multifaceted in subject matter, was identified

by several people from their early and late 20s as one setting in which they were exposed to nationalist ideologies:

I remember learning those same maps at church, it was just presented as the way Croatia was naturally supposed to be. There was Serbia, there was Slovenia, and there was Croatia, including all of Bosnia.
(“Julia”)

Yes unfortunately the indoctrination I was referring to was the Ustaštvo that I put on like an old hand me down coat that I had outgrown years ago and was a relic unworthy of preservation. It came from peers in Subotnja škola [Saturday school] and later in high school with the strong Croatian community in my high school.
(“Tom”)

A brief perusal of Saturday school workbooks produced by children at the Holy Cross parish indicated a continued intertwining of the sacral and the national in church-based education. Drawings and coloring pages created by children showed divine narratives and the nation-state closely intertwined as images of holy figures (such as Mary) and sacred symbols (the cross) appeared alongside or meshed with symbols such as the Croatian flag or *grb*¹⁶ designs.

A second level of analysis proposed by Smith involves “sacred foundations,” “the heritage of memories, myths, symbols, values and traditions of the community which are regarded as sacred” (Smith 2003, 31). By isolating and examining symbols, I have observed that they are frequently invoked as a means of connecting “Croatianess” with the sacral.

Symbols associated with the Croatian nation-state are the first and most striking feature of Croatian catholic churches in Canada. In the case of the Holy Cross Parish in

¹⁶ The *grb* is the red- and white-checkered crest found on the Croatian flag, and by itself still stands as a symbol of the nation.

Hamilton (the church that hosts the Hrvatsko Selo group), church building design and décor displays a sense of connection between the sacred and the nation-state: a cairn with the name and image of Croatia's first president, Franjo Tudjman, greets drivers entering the church parking lot; a Croatian flag greets visitors on an exterior wall, and windows and interior décor feature red-and-white checkered motifs. Interior decor includes pictures of Croatian landmarks, and a statue of the highly politicized historical figure Cardinal Alojzije Stepinac stands outside.

Smith's third level of analysis looks at how and for what political purposes the sacred and secular mix, and the religious and the "folk" mingle (Smith 2003, 31). A typical instance of this is the performance of folklore groups at important Holy day Mass and church picnics. A more sophisticated example from across Canada is Cardinal Alojzije Stepinac and the use of his figure as a symbol bridging the sacral and "the folk." Stepinac is best known for his position as Archbishop of Zagreb during the time of the NDH, followed by his arrest and show-trial by Tito's Communist government. The persecution of this beloved person raised him to iconic status as a bastion against Yugoslav secularism. He is arguably the most important figure in contemporary Croatian Catholic life.

Stepinac is very much a part of diaspora musical life as well. Several folklore ensembles across North America are named after him and his Name Day is marked by folklore performances.



Figure 1.1 Cardinal Stepinac Poster

Invoking the iconic figure of Stepinac gives the community a reason to “proudly unite.” Naming ensembles and dancing in honor of Stepinac implies a connection between Croatian cultural expression and religious identity. The mixing of folklore, the sacral, and political figures, aligns with the nationalist ideology that “co-nationals are united not only by shared traditions but also by what are regarded by many as “natural” or quasi-mystical bonds” (Simić 111). In chapter two, I will give specific examples from the 2006 Festival and homeland tour which illustrate this point further.

Private Homes

Sociologist Zlatko Skrbiš found that within the Croatian community in Australia, nationalism is “to a great extent hidden from the inquisitive public eye” (2001). In

Skrbiš's examination of political ideologies in domestic settings, he found that themes and narratives that were reinforced in home environments strongly impacted how younger generations responded and related to mainstream society and to members of the Serbian community in Australia. In conversation, members of the Croatian-Canadian community have pointed out that children first encounter nationalist ideas such as xenophobia or anti-Serbian sentiments in their home environment.

Why might this be? Many immigrants from the 1960s/70s wave (now parents and grandparents) came from economically deprived regions or situations. They maintain(ed) a knowledge of their homeland based on their personal experiences that were often limited to a finite region and education. They possessed deep knowledge of their immediate village or region, but less about the cultural history of Croats from other regions or traditions. Coming from post-WWII Yugoslavia, their own understandings of Croatian nationhood and identity had been developed in very politicized terms, especially if they themselves or their parents had lived through the period of the Second World War.

They don't know much about their cultural history, but they sure know about their political history. There's a whole "level of the cake" so to speak that is missing.¹⁷ They become so politically involved, get Croats together and that's it: you'll hear all about the First World War, the Second World War, and, you know Tito's been dead for 30 years, but they keep resurrecting him! The thing is, that's all they really have to talk about, because they weren't forced to learn about the great Croatian artists or poets.

("John")

¹⁷ By "level of the cake" the speaker is referring to broad and in-depth knowledge of cultures and practices of various Croatian groups throughout history.

Because many migrants left the homeland with heavily politicized understandings of the country from which they came, these became the understandings passed on to their children (now young adults and parents).

Within both church and home settings, expressions of right-wing nationalist ideologies (usually anti-Serbian) seek to nullify “complex identities by the terrible categorical simplicity of ascribed nationality” (Brubaker 20) with intent to exclude (Smith 1986, 167) and to demonize the national “other” (Brubaker 21).

Chapter 2: Festival and Tour Activities

This chapter presents descriptions of two events, a folklore festival and a folklore performance tour. Both are typical events (the festival is annual, performance tours tend to only happen sporadically) and both include several activities and aims. I will describe some general characteristics of folklore ensembles in Ontario, followed by details about the festival and tour events. In doing so, I hope to show that the situations discussed in Chapters Three and Four are only partial components of diverse activities, and secondly that the politics pointed to are not focal motivations for cultural activity, but are some among several themes that emerge as tools in processes of identity formation.

2.1 Hrvatsko Selo and other Folklore Ensembles in Ontario

The folklore ensemble “Hrvatsko Selo” exhibits several characteristics of a typical Croatian-Canadian folklore group. It was founded in the 1970s, around the same time as most other Ontario groups. Like many other Ontario ensembles, it is affiliated with a Croatian parish (“Holy Cross”) and rehearses in parish-owned facilities. Holy Cross is located in Hamilton, Ontario, a central site for the majority of Ontario folklore groups who make their homes in surrounding cities such as Mississauga, Brampton, Hamilton, Oakville, and Toronto. In terms of participation, their makeup is similar to other groups: most participants are descendants of the large 1960s/70s emigration wave that was responsible for the establishment of most churches, community groups, and folklore ensembles across Canada. In general, locations of family origin were rural, including southern-central and Dinaric regions (Draganić, Karlovac, Lika, Šibenik

region), northern (Slavonia) and Hercegovina.¹⁸ Within the group there are a few children from 'mixed' marriages.¹⁹ Most of the children participate in both Croatian and non-Croatian activities outside of school time. Some children attend private Catholic schools, others attend public schools. They perform at the same types of events as other groups: festivals, community gatherings, and important Catholic calendar days. And, like other folklore ensembles across Canada, the group has seen a massive decline in participants over the last 10 years. The bulk of 'original' participants (children of 1960s and 70s migrants) have grown up and gone to university or entered the work force, married and started families. In the meantime, many have stopped participating in folklore activities, with the exception of a handful who continue as teachers, committee members, and performers in the adult *tamburaši*. The remaining participants are under the age of 20 and some are children of the 'original generation' of dancers (those who began when the group was founded).

Repertoire

Folklore performance includes the following aspects: singing, tambura ensembles, dancing (discussed in Chapter One) and the occasional re-creation of folk rituals.²⁰ As a result of poor communication and travel infrastructures up until the last century, regions and villages inhabited by Croats each possess their own highly developed folk customs,

¹⁸ A small cross-section of regions and villages of origin claimed by family members (obtained via survey) included (number of families claiming ascendance from the region in brackets): Bosnia and Hercegovina, Draganić (1), Hercegovina (3), Jatrebasko, Karlovac (4), Krašić, Lika (2), Osilje, Požega, Slavonia (1), Zadar.

¹⁹ Croat and non-Croat (Canadian), not Croat/Serb or Croat/Bosniac as would be typical when speaking of 'mixed marriages' among groups from the former Yugoslavia.

²⁰ For example: in the 2006 Brampton festival the ensemble Kardinal Stepinac from Montreal incorporated a St. John's day ritual of jumping over bonfires into their performance of Podravina songs and dances, and the Kraljica Jelena ensemble from Kitchener re-enacted a wedding scene from the region of Turopolje.

songs and dances, often differing even from close neighboring villages. And, because the costumes were often handmade by women over a period of one or more years, they can be extremely elaborate and expensive to recreate. To perform repertoire from a region or village requires different sets of costumes, and costs can grow very large when multiplying one costume from one specific region or village by the number of dancers in a group. Each ensemble has its own collection of costumes, and is therefore limited to repertoire from the regions that can be represented. If a group wishes to obtain new costumes in order to widen their repertoire, fundraising and careful money management are a necessity. In the case of Selo, their 2006 festival and tour performance included Medimurje dances, and they used costumes existing in their collection, having been sewn by a previous group of parents. New articles (aprons, hairpieces) or pieces of textiles could be added or altered if costumes had been outgrown. The large flowered shawls needed for the female dancers had in fact been purchased by the first generation of users from a Russian store in Ontario. If exact items are difficult to come by, most groups figure out innovative ways of solving the issues. And, while some people and groups are proud of their creativity and ability to recreate costumes using Canadian made materials, others lament the lack of authenticity.

Folklore repertoire and choreographies performed at festivals are obtained from several sources:

- 1) Publications by ethnochoreologists such as Ivan Ivančan (author of several well-known and highly respected ethnochoreology collections) and Vinko Žganec (Croatian ethnomusicologist and folklorist).

- 2) Videos and CDs from homeland ensembles, such as Lado (Croatia's national folklore ensemble).
- 3) Teachers and choreographers who have studied with Lado (such as Željko Jergan and Edward Mavrinac), or teachers invited from the homeland to give workshops to Ontario groups and teachers (such as Ivo Ivančan)
- 4) Folklore participants who attend *Matica Hrvatska Iseljenika's*²¹ summer or winter folklore programs in Croatia, where expert teachers instruct diaspora and homeland dancers and musicians in subjects of style, choreography, costumes and instruments.
- 5) Second or third generation Canadian dancers who move from being senior dancers in their group to assistant or head teachers.

Leadership

In Canada, there are typically one or two 'head' leaders/instructors per ensemble, along with an instructor for the tamburaši. A leader teaches steps, notes, or songs, and may also dance or play tambura in performance along with the ensemble. If an ensemble is divided into several age groups, these will each have their own instructors. The head instructor can be a paid position, in which case the money is obtained by charging membership fees to group members. Since many dances include singing components, teachers instruct vocal parts. There may be several teacher assistants who help with instruction and organization. Often the responsibility of these assistants is to instruct younger dancers with their singing parts or dance steps.

²¹ The Croatian government organization dealing with culture and the diaspora.

In the Selo ensemble, the teachers are all former dancers from the group. There is one head instructor along with two assistant teachers, and one tambura leader. The Selo ensemble includes several dance groups (divided by age group) who perform separately or together. Ensembles may be divided between the younger children, middle/late elementary school aged children, teenagers, and an adult group. Exactly what ages each grouping includes varies from situation to situation. In larger groups, there may be several age-group categories, but in ensembles where numbers have declined they often combine several age groups in performance to maintain the visual effects of a full and color-filled stage. In Hrvatsko Selo, the performers are divided into three groups according to age (a young children's group, a middle group for late elementary-school ages, and a senior group for high-schoolers). While several of the dancers may also double as tambura players, there is a separate adult tamburaši whose job is to accompany dancers, but who also rehearse and perform their own repertoire. Ensembles, Selo included, usually practice once a week, but may meet two or three times a week as performances approach.

Beyond performance, ensembles rely on several committees to help with various aspects of ensemble business. In the case of Hrvatsko Selo these include: fundraising organizers, parents in charge of costume making and maintenance, book-keeping and financial matters, and an executive committee which oversees the overall decision making and functioning of the ensemble. Board members are former or current senior dancers, parents or grandparents of dancers (some of whom were also dancers themselves).

History of the Selo ensemble

Hrvatsko Selo was founded in 1976. The priest of Hamilton's Holy Cross Parish (father Stjepan Šprajc) felt that a folklore ensemble would help broaden the knowledge of Croatian culture among younger people in the community, and that folklore would "enable the youth to grow in a Canadian cultural community in which language, song and dance could be preserved with guidance and practices of the Catholic church" (Saić 7). The first instructor was "John", a 3rd generation Canadian from Schumacher, Ontario. "John" was somewhat of a "culture-phile" who had spent extensive time among Croats in Yugoslavia, seeking out people with knowledge of local traditions: singing, dancing, customs, and costume making. His time in Croatia also included an apprenticeship with Lado, and his knowledge and experience led him to become the founder, teacher, and guest director of several ensembles throughout Ontario. The first performance of Hrvatsko Selo was in 1977, and on this occasion the ensemble performed in their first set of costumes (Posavina costumes, handmade in Croatia). In 1979 a highly regarded and award-winning tambura player from the United States joined the group as tambura leader.

By 1991, the dance ensemble numbered 155 members. At this time the dance instructor was Željko Jergan, a former member of Lado who has now risen to prominence among Canadian and American ensembles as a choreographer. Current Selo choreographies draw on videos of past performances by the group, invitations to guest choreographers such as Željko Jergan, and on the memory of current teachers who were once dancers in the group. The current ensemble retains a close connection with the Holy

Cross church, to the point that even one of the current priests, Father Mladen Vuk, participated as a singer on the 2006 folklore performance tour.

Purpose of the ensemble

The following section describes several desired social functions of folklore ensembles. While not wishing to unjustly generalize the hopes and desires of the entire community by using the viewpoints of a small group of people in one situation, I feel that it is not unfair to say that the hopes and aspirations described by Selo parents and dancers are shared by participants and community members across Ontario, and are primary motivators for many parents and participants.

Parental motivations

1) Fostering an appreciation and love of heritage.

Interviews with parents of Selo performers revealed that their main motivations for sending their children to folklore group was not related to the knowledge of specific steps or songs. One desire was that folklore would help foster an *appreciation or sense of importance* of their cultural heritage in their children. Parents viewed folklore as one important aspect in a wide array of activities which will pass on their own understandings of being Croatian (or in the words of one parent, “who we are”) to their children; other such activities included joining the Croatian soccer team, church attendance (including ‘Saturday School’, first communion, and altar service), close involvement with extended families, eating Croatian food and learning to speak Croatian. Parents felt that folklore helped add to this, providing one more thread tying them to their heritage. As one mother

stated, “a person who has a culture is a rich person,” and parents want their children to feel this richness, and are more concerned that it *is* felt rather than *how* it is felt.

2) Encouraging friendships

By the 1980s and early 90s, folklore groups in Ontario had expanded to their largest participant levels. Many people who are now parents of folklore dancers were themselves dancers during these decades, and they experienced a sense of kinship and bonding with other young performers. The bonds formed during folklore rehearsals, performances and festivals developed into life-long friendships. Those who had positive experiences from these friendships desired that their children also build close friendships. I found that parents often enroll children in folklore groups at the same time as their own close friends (relationships dating back to their own folklore days) enroll their children. Growing up together created close ties, and when two friends are of a similar age, they may experience life events such as marriage and child rearing at similar times. Parents who are now close friends with people with whom they danced in their youth may choose to register their children in the same group because they also want their children to be friends. Of the parents interviewed from the Hrvatsko Selo group, most felt that in addition to sending their children to ‘mainstream’ activities such as piano, sports, or ballet lessons, the addition of an ethnic-group activity may maintain opportunities to make both Croatian and non-Croatian friends.

Involvement in an ensemble inevitably means involvement in social activities including trips, festivals, and planned or spontaneous activities shared between small groups or by the whole ensemble. Activities such as tours and festivals are essential to

socializing; young people's time together is increased not only during weekly preparation and rehearsal for the festival, but also during festival *zabava* parties, travel time, meals shared on the road, or acts as simple as grabbing something to eat from a local fast-food restaurant after practice. Thus, folklore participation reinforces what parents see as 'traditional' notions of friendship (close bonds and dedication to one another), particularly when socialization moves from song and dance settings to related social activity.

3) *Maintaining Church ties*

Two organizational structures exist in Canadian ensembles: groups which are associated with a church, and those who are associated with a non-church community group.²² In cases where a group is associated with a church, rehearsals are often held in church facilities, costumes are stored in church spaces, and performers often sing, dance, or play tambura at holy days such as *Velika Gospa* (the Assumption of Mary), or at fundraisers. Several parents from the Selo group said that the connection between the ensemble and parish was important as an additional opportunity to pass on Catholic values on to their children. Sending their children to a church-associated group becomes one additional way of keeping ties with church activity, through ensemble participation and performance at church activities.

For groups such as Selo who are affiliated with a church, this also affects the group's administration. At times such ensembles are obligated to perform at church

²² For example: the Hrvatsko Selo group is associated with the Holy Heart Parish in Hamilton, whereas the *Hrvatski Narodni Dom* (Croatian National Home) ensemble is affiliated with a community cultural centre. The nature of such affiliations is at times contentious – involving differences between groups (dancers vs. church) about concerns and priorities and issues of who controls financial activities and to what ends – and a topic that falls beyond the scope of this paper.

calendar events in exchange for rehearsal and costume storage space. If the ties are also financial, the church books and ensemble books may be connected at varying levels. The church may be a co-sponsor of the group, or they may be full sponsors. Depending on the situation and level of financial investment, church representatives may be active on folklore committees and influential in final decision making.

Young people's motivations

1) Social benefits

Over the course of the last 5 years, I have had the opportunity to interact with and interview young people from the Croatian community from various locations including Kitchener, Hamilton, Mississauga, Toronto, Montreal, and Winnipeg. I have found that young people (in their teens and early 20s) have often consciously evaluated their own situation within their community and their motivations for continuing folklore participation. Many young people participate because of parental influence or pressure, and these young people feel more invested and concerned with other activities. For teenagers and young adults who feel personally motivated to participate, social aspects of ensemble activity are the primary reasons for participating.

Social benefits include opportunities to meet and foster friendships with other young Croatian-Canadians, the chance to travel to different cities, and the chance to attend festival events along with the associated zabava and hotel parties. Several young people have shared that not only friendships but also dating and marriage relationships fostered by these events are important in that they allow the community to remain connected. Indeed, several married couples I have met within the community got to know

their partners through folklore activities. A few shared with me fears of assimilation in terms of a battle, fight or struggle. While all young people participate in mainstream activities and cultural behaviors, some approach assimilation as a negative inevitability, equating it to a death of their values system. In a community where the “privileged” (Skrbiš 2001) dating/marriage market is defined by ethnicity (Croatian), activities which widen the market by increasing the amount of interaction with acceptable potential marriage partners,²³ and folklore activities are helpful to young people. Though priorities, motivations, and mentalities may differ between generations, folklore activities are enjoyed by all, and at the same time satisfy desires and goals that differ according to generation.

2.2 Brampton Festival, 2006

Annually on the May holiday long-weekend, two Croatian national folklore festivals take place in Canada, one in a Western Canadian province and one in an Eastern province (usually Ontario). Because of the significant land mass of Western Ontario which divides western and eastern communities, folklore ensembles are divided into two federations: the Croatian Folklore Federation of Canada, and the Canadian Croatian Folklore Federation West.

²³ This has not yet been investigated by researchers in Canada; however Skrbiš's findings (see “Long Distance Nationalism”) seem to be similar to what young Croatian-Canadians have shared with me, that is, a sort of ‘hierarchy’ of acceptable and desirable marriage matches, based on ethnicity, religion, and skin-color. While older generations still fixate on the idea of a ‘Good Croatian,’ (a person who marries into the most desired market), this is contested by young people in the community and there are increasing numbers of inter-marriages. That being said, many young people have expressed openness to marriage outside of the community but find that their dating habits naturally migrate towards Croatian-Canadians partners because of mutual understandings based on shared experiences and upbringings.

The Croatian Folklore Federation of Canada was founded in 1973 and is made up of ensembles from across Eastern Canada. The first Eastern Canadian-Croatian folklore festival took place in 1974. The federation was established to “organize festivals and workshops for teachers of Croatian music and dances, and to publish books and manuals for students and teachers of Croatian folklore” (Ganza 124). Made up of a committee of people from various Ontario cities, the federation organizes teachers’ workshops and the annual festival. Each year representatives from the hosting groups work together with the Federation to plan the event. The festival aims to “preserve, promote and expand...and pass on” Croatian culture to younger generations (Festival Program 16), and it serves as a sort of goal-post for many groups: by this date they must have their dances perfected, their costumes prepared, etc. I would even argue that without the national festival which provides motivation for learning and perfecting songs and dances, and which occasions one of the year’s biggest social events, it is likely that folklore participation numbers would be much lower than they are today. The festival is one if not the major social event of the year, and learning and performing is somewhat of a means to an end.

Location of the festival changes annually. One ensemble takes responsibility for hosting the event, and their many tasks include booking the venues, arranging the banquets, making arrangements with local hotels, producing and publishing the festival program, and hiring a film crew to document the event for distribution.²⁴ The host of the

²⁴ The festival program included information in both English and Croatian (either one or the other, not the same information translated). Seven of the ten congratulatory letters which open the booklet are in Croatian, the remaining three are in English and are from Canadian levels of government: municipal, provincial, and federal. Also, it contained photos and information about each participating group, histories of Croatian peoples, Croatian folklore in Canada, and Croats in Canada, and photographs and information

2006 festival was Brampton's "*Marjan*" folklore ensemble, and the festival ran from 19 to 21 May.

Learning, practicing and perfecting repertoire is important and becomes a focus of group energies, providing purpose for additional rehearsal time and therefore increased interaction between young people. Social interactions may be as simple as a group of young people piling into a vehicle and heading for a quick post-rehearsal bite to eat, or one or two members taking a break during practice in order to leave and bring back drinks to replenish tired dancers during rehearsal breaks.

The festival event provides a focal point of anticipation and discussion between young people. Pre-festival discussions on the Croworld.ca website include excited debates and declarations about which hotels will host the best post-zabava parties and discuss the zabava bands which will be playing. In 2003, girls in the Kardinal Stepinac group I was dancing in debated and discussed their individual choices of attire for the Saturday night zabava long before the event took place. Pre-festival discussions of attire, parties, and travel help build excitement, and the buildup of anticipation and excitement becomes another shared experience for ensemble members. Added travel time and shared hotel spaces increases opportunity for shared experience, and provides further opportunity for the fostering of friendships. At the 2006 festival, the Hrvatsko Selo ensemble from Hamilton did not have a journey long enough to warrant group bus travel or hotel booking, but there was still a marked effort by parents to congregate after the concluding Sunday performance and to arrange having supper together at a local

about the hosting group. The booklet concluded with advertisements from sponsoring companies, mostly Croatian-owned businesses.

restaurant. At this time, the youngest children sat at their own table, teenagers and young adults sat together, and the parents sat with each other. Lively conversation among the youth included discussions of various other folklore ensembles' performances or showed interest in young attendees from other groups at the festival (usually members of the opposite sex): who girls got to talk to, who they saw again since the last festival, who they danced with at the zabava, etc.

Over 800 dancers and musicians participated in the 2006 weekend, with groups coming from:

- Brampton, Ontario
- Chicago, Illinois, USA
- Hamilton, Ontario (four groups)
- Kitchener, Ontario
- London, Ontario (two groups)
- Mississauga, Ontario (three groups)
- Montreal, Quebec
- Norval, Ontario
- Oakville, Ontario (two groups)
- Oshawa, Ontario
- Ottawa, Ontario
- Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA
- Stupnik, Croatia
- Sudbury, Ontario
- Toronto, Ontario (two groups)
- Windsor, Ontario

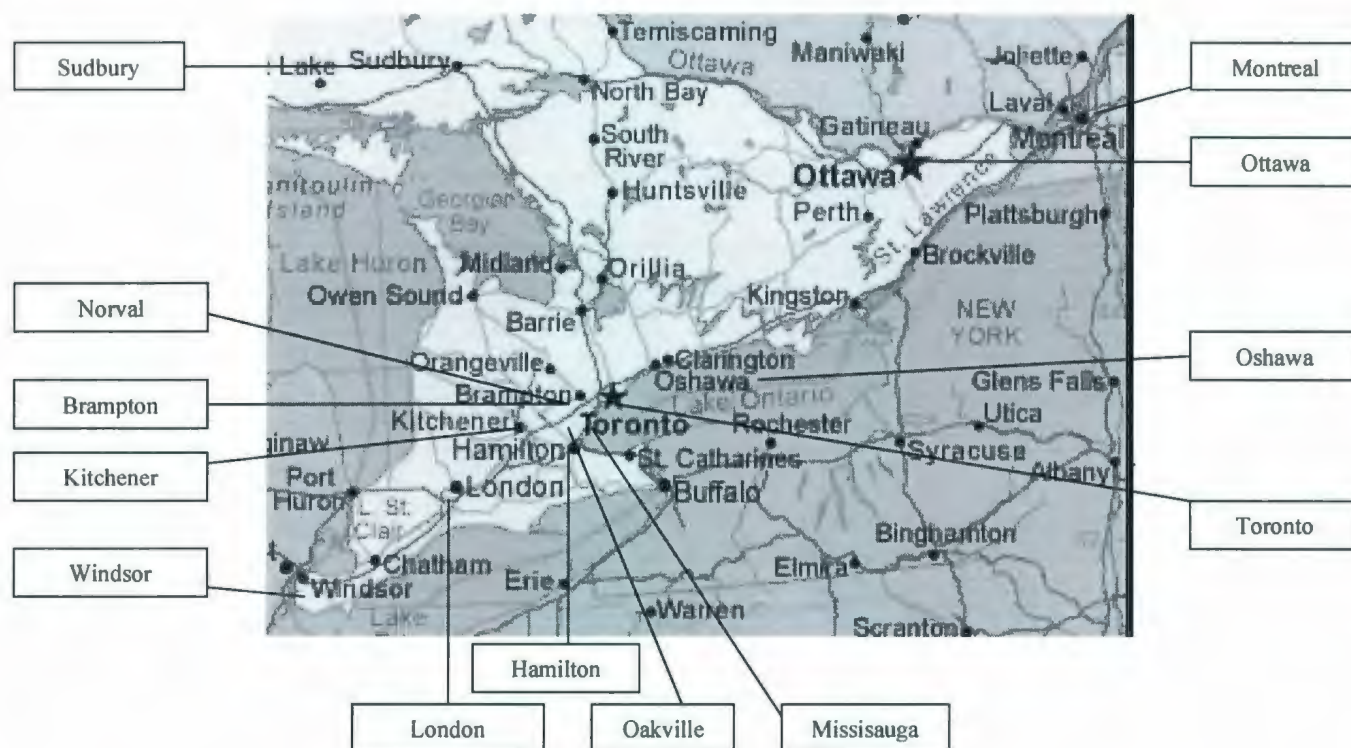


Figure 2.1 Southern Ontario

Three types of staged performance occurred over the course of the festival.

- 1) Two afternoons of folklore performances (Saturday, May 20th and Sunday, May 21st)
- 2) Three zabava nights (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday)
- 3) Holy Mass (Sunday morning)

1) Folklore Performances

The two afternoons of folklore performance took place at the Brampton Powerade centre (a hockey arena). The hallway/thoroughfare spaces were set up for vendors, and items available for purchase included several sizes of tambura, *opanci* (traditional footwear), and Croatian-language videos, DVDs, and music CDs.

The concerts ran from approximately 12:30 to 17:00 on both the Saturday and Sunday. A stage was set up in the centre of the hockey arena with one half of the arena concealed behind a curtain for the use of pre-concert group rehearsals. The stage was

decorated with the Canadian flag, the Republic of Croatia flag, and on Sunday the Independent State of Croatia flag. The folklore performances were MC-ed by two young people dressed in traditional costume; the female announced each ensemble and their repertoire in Croatian, the young man made the same introductions in English.

At the opening of the event, both the Canadian and Croatian national anthems were sung a capella: the Canadian by a solo male singer and the Croatian by a female quartet. Several speeches were made including by the Mayor of Brampton and by guests of honor such the Croatian ambassador to Canada and the visiting director of *Matica Hrvatska Iseljenika*.

The term 'folklore' is broadly applied in this context. Music included arranged tamburaši tunes and medleys, some instrumental and some accompanying singing. For example, the group *Zvuci Hrvatkse* (Croatian bells) from Oakville performed what was announced as "a lively medley of Croatian songs." The performers were dressed in Vrlika costumes,²⁵ though everyone in the ensemble was playing tambura (an instrument not traditional to Vrlika). Though unspecified in the program, the group's repertoire included a medley of both newly composed music and arranged traditional songs from several regions, such as "*Ljepo pjeva za lugom djevojka*" arranged by composer Emil Cosetto, "*Grad se beli preko balatina*" (a song from the Međimurje region²⁶), "*Ivanjski ples*" (the fourth movement from the "*Ladarke*" suite composed by Emil Cosetto), and a Slavonian "*Poskočica*."²⁷ No songs, regions or arrangers/composers were listed in the festival

²⁵ Vrlika is a village in the southern dinaric region of the country, famous for its distinct dress and traditional dance, a 'mute kolo' accompanied by the sounds of the dancers' feet, singing, and jingling costume adornments. See map 1.2.

²⁶ Međimurje is the northern most regions of the country, with folklore similar to surrounding central European countries (Slovenia and Hungary) See map 1.2.

²⁷ Slavonia: the northern agricultural region of Croatia. See map 1.2.

program or announced by the MCs before this group's medley performance. If groups performed composed or arranged pieces (one group performed a march from Gotovac's opera *Ero the Joker*), neither the names of the composer or arranger were credited in the program or in the spoken introductions.

However, when groups presented a medley of songs or dances from one specific region, this would be specified: "Songs and dances from Međimurje", "*Podravski čardaš*", etc. These appellations still were applied broadly: one group from Windsor, Ontario performed movements from Emil Cosetto's "Ladarke" suite (completely newly composed and choreographed), billed as "Ladarke from Pokuplja"²⁸ (not specifying that the work was newly composed).

Dance performance at the 2006 festival followed a suite format, popular among homeland and diaspora folklore groups. A well-executed suite moves smoothly from one song or dance to another without pause, and includes several songs or dances per suite. In general, they begin with *a capella* or slow song or dance, and with each following song the speed and difficulty increases. The momentum may be interrupted by a slow or solo song, but will then be re-established by another lively song. Some groups chose to begin their set with one or two songs played and sung by only the tamburaši, who then move towards the side or back of the stage to accompany the dancers. Each group's performance lasted ten to fifteen minutes, though groups are given instructions to keep within a 12-minute time limit with a 30-second allowance for each entry and exit.

Hrvatsko Selo performed a suite of songs and choreographed dances from the Međimurje region. As the group was preparing for their upcoming performance tour to

²⁸ On *Ivandan* (St. John's Day), Ladarice were girls who would sing from house to house. The Pokuplja region is in central Croatia. See map 1.2.

Croatia, the festival performance also functioned as a practice performance for the tour: a chance to make sure that the costumes, steps, and choreographies worked well and looked good on stage. The group used choreography by their former leader Željko Jergan, and the music sheets and lyrics used as sources were compiled and distributed by Jergan.

Hrvatsko Selo began with a tambura song performed by the dancers (who doubled on tambura) standing in two lines at the front of the stage. When the song finished they set aside their instruments while the adult tamburaši took the stage to accompany the dancers. Members of the adult tamburaši were dressed in a variety of costumes from several regions of Croatia. The dance group was made up of two of the three dance groups, the middle and older youth.

Hrvatsko Selo's Međimurje suite:

- 1) "*Klinček stoji pod oblokom*"
- 2) "*Nega sonca nit meseca*" (solo female singer)
- 3) "*Dok Kirija voska steza širok pot*"
- 4) "*Nabrala je jagode petrovke*"
- 5) "*Kad snešice v krčmu zajdu*"
- 6) "*Zginula je pikuša*"
- 7) Dance number (no singing):
 - a) Men's group dance. Male dancers only, a chance for the male dancers to show of their athleticism with quick and high-lifting leg work and doing 'tricks' with their hats while dancing.
 - b) Female group dance. Females only, a chance to show off their skill and style with turns and footwork.
 - c) Both male and female groups together for the final portion of the song.

While a wide range of Croatian regions were represented in the performance, the selected repertoire leaned towards Northern and Central regions with less representation

of Southern/Mountainous, Coastal, or Istrian regions (see Figure 3). Regions and the number of groups (in brackets) which performed selections of music or dance from regions or Croats outside of Croatia (Bunjevci or Šokci) were:

- Baranje (2)
- Zagorje (1)
- Posavina (2)
- Draganić (1)
- Međimurje (3)
- Podravina (4)
- Slavonia (5)
- Bačka (1)
- Lika (2)
- Turopolje (1)
- Pokuplje (1)
- Šokci (1)
- Moslavina (1)
- Korčula (1)
- Bilogore (1)
- Županje (1)
- Bunjevci (1)



Figure 2.2 Croatian folklore regions

Used with permission of creator <<http://www.tamburaland.com/bands/zjergan/>>

2) Festival Weekend: Zabava events

The word *zabava* can be translated in English to mean “party” or a “fun time.” In the context of a folklore festival, the word refers to Friday, Saturday or Sunday night parties. These are much-anticipated events and are the subject of a good deal of discussion among young people. There is much planning and talk about what apparel will be worn, who else will be there that they know, what the food will be, what they will drink, what bands will be playing, and most importantly, what ensembles and hotels will host the best post-zabava parties. Folklore performance afternoons are often rushed and stressful as groups arrive from

their city of origin, congregate, dress in their multi-layered costumes, apply makeup and have final run-throughs of their performances. Therefore, the folklore performances themselves afford very little opportunity for meeting new people or for lengthy social interaction between individuals. Social interaction is the main goal of zabava events. On the 2006 weekend there were three scheduled zabavas, and I attended two: the Friday and Saturday nights.

The Friday event took place at the Hansa Haus German Canadian Club in the neighboring city of Mississauga. Admission cost \$15. The Saturday night zabava took place at St. John's Hall in Mississauga, with admission costing between \$20 and 30 dollars. At the Friday night zabava, the majority of the attendees were under the age of 30 and were primarily folklore participants, while the Saturday night zabava was attended by people in a wider age range, including special guests and dignitaries, and family and friends of folklore participants. In both cases, the venue was a large open area with a raised performance stage where the bands, "Druga Noć" from Hamilton on the Friday and both "Druga Noć" and "Plavi Dim" (also based in Ontario) on Saturday. There was bar service on both nights, and a served banquet on Saturday night, followed by music and dance. Apparel is an important aspect of zabava nights, and while the Friday night event attendees dressed in what could be classified as 'clubbing' apparel, the Saturday night event was a formal occasion: female attire displayed a marked effort towards femininity and formality (dresses or skirts, makeup, styled hair and jewelry) while males dressed in collared shirts (suits for the older men) with styled hair.

At zabava nights, music and dance served as an incentive for attendance. People attended with expectations to hear their favorite songs and for the opportunity to dance.

Dance styles varied according to the music being performed or played over the sound system: couple dances, slower weaving kolo lines, fast kolo circles to appropriately fast songs, or contemporary dance styles when rap or R&B music was played. Dance-floor behavior is not restricted to dancing: groups of young men congregated towards the front of the dance-floor (close to the stage), when certain songs were played (such as "*Geni kameni*" by homeland rocker Marko Perković Thompson or anthems from Croatian soccer teams).²⁹ Their reactions included jumping up and down, yelling along with the words and waving their arms in the air.

Besides staged performance and sound-system music, smaller more spontaneous performances took place. At the Saturday night zabava, a small group of young men with tamburas gathered near the entrance of the facility and played for attendees as they entered. Later in the evening while attendees were seated in groups at round or long rectangular dinner tables, small groups of people would break out into song together.

Festival zabava music catered towards the tastes of younger audience members. Croatian zabava bands such as those performing at the Friday and Saturday nights were made up of young men from the community who performed cover versions of folkloric and popular Croatian and Bosnian songs. 2006 zabava repertoire represented a typical choice and range of repertoire, including:

- Bosnian folkloric songs (such as "*Bosno Moja*") and *sevdalinkas*³⁰
- Nationalist songs (such as "*Evo zore, evo dana*")
- Dalmatian popular songs, or songs by Dalmatian artists (such as Oliver Dragojević)
- Songs by Bosnian pop singers (such as Haris Dzinović and Halid Bešlić)
- Songs celebrating Hercegovina by singers (such as Mate Bulić and Ivo Fabijan)
- Songs by Marko Perković Thompson (such as "*Geni kameni*" and "*Izet devet sela*")

²⁹ In Chapters three and four I will discuss the music of Thompson in the festival and tour.

³⁰ A genre of solo singer love-song brought to Bosnia during Ottoman rule that later developed into a popular music genre. Though typically understood as a Bosnian Muslim genre, all ethnic groups of former Yugoslavia enjoyed listening to this genre.

- Croatian rock songs (by bands such as Prljavo Kažalište)

On both nights dancing began as soon as the music started. The first music was from the band on stage, and dancing was either in couples, linear or circular kolos. Though most of the songs are danced by male/female couples, it was not uncommon for close girlfriends to dance with each other as well, especially since women outnumbered men. The order of music performance was in sets. Bands performed a number of tunes per set, and several sets were played throughout each night. Between sets, recorded music would be played during which people would continue to dance.

3) *Holy Mass*

In Chapter One (pp 35-39) I discussed the strong link between religious and cultural life in the community. Croats in Canada who practice religious worship are predominantly Roman Catholic. The intertwining of culture (folklore activity) and sacred life is apparent in festival activity, mainly through the inclusion of Holy Mass as a part of the weekend events and the incorporation of religious symbols and language within the event. Using several photos and a printed history, the hosting ensemble “Marjan” articulated the group’s association with the Roman Catholic Church of the Croatian Martyrs. The festival booklet’s opening pages featured congratulatory letters from several individuals, including the priest of the parish of the Croatian Martyrs. The brief “History of the Croatian Peoples” included in the booklet opened with photographs of a Croatian church and the statue of St. Gregorius of Nin, and claimed that

In 679, shortly after settling their new home, the Croatians entered into a pact with Pope Agathon, promising never to attack any nation. The pope in turn promised that God and St. Peter would defend the Croatians if they were attacked.

(Festival booklet 21)

At the 2006 festival, several priests from Croatian-Canadian churches (including one priest from the Holy Cross parish in Hamilton) performed the Sunday morning mass. The service took place at the festival venue (the Powerade centre in Brampton) on the folklore performance stage, which was filled with several priests and a choir. Several singers were dressed in traditional costumes from different regions of Croatia. It is a tradition that all participating festival dancers attend the mass dressed in their costumes, and the Hrvatsko Selo ensemble attended dressed in their Medimurje costumes that they would dance in later that afternoon. After a short break, the Sunday afternoon folklore performance began at 12:30.

Festival Performances: Where Parameters of "Croatianness" are Negotiated.

1. Authenticity

Performances at Croatian-Canadian festivals are stylized presentations (choreographed dances and arranged instrumental parts and songs) based on historical village and urban practices. These presentations are modeled after folklore performance practice introduced in the 1920s and 30s in Croatia, when autochthonous village-based practice transformed into staged and choreographed festival presentations.³¹ Ceribašić points out that this transformation led to the emergence of new types of autochthony or authenticity where traditions rooted in historic practice further developed into new traditions. Transformation continues to be a part of folklore performance in Canada through the introduction of costume fabrics and materials obtained from local sources, changes in the timbre of singer's voices (a result of different styles of vocal production), and alterations of choreographies and gestures as they are passed from teacher to student and from generation to generation. Thus,

³¹ "From an invented, constructed and institutionalized tradition in the 1920s and 1930s, they have become a traditional custom" (Ceribašić 1998: 32).

“autochthony is [...] reality as well, but not that of earlier times: it is the reality of the present” (Ceribašić 1998: 29).

Contrary to this idea of “new autochthony,” there remains within the community a notion that performances do or should replicate “real” village practice as closely as possible, with prevailing aims to present “authentic” folklore “like they would have done it in the village.”³² In this way, cultural performance, by utilizing selected “clusters of various sign systems (speech, movement, costume, etc.), [allows] the performers and audience to experience and revive...the good old days, [the] golden age” (Lozica 188). Ceribašić (1998: 28) describes such events as instances where an “idealized ‘once’ is hypostatized, transformed into concrete objects, and incorporated into autochthonous songs, dances, and costumes.”

In Chapter One I explained that a range of notions exist as to “what Croatians look like or sound like” (page 27). Likewise, opinions of what the “idealized once” looks like were certainly audible in hallway and audience commentary at the festival:

“That dance would never have been done with bare feet!”

“They would have done this with accordion, but they don’t wanna do it ‘cause you know they think accordion is Serbian.”

The frequency with which costumes of one’s own or another ensembles costumes are critiqued by audience members and dancers also shows idealization. There is a sort of hierarchical approach to costume acquiring and ownership, where costumes with some sort of historical or “authentic” cachet are the most desired. In the highest (most desirable)

³² “The quality that distinguishes this ensemble from most other folk ensembles is the stylistic unity of performance based on an uncompromising wish to keep its folklore pure. Everything is so spontaneous that the audience actually has the impression that it is watching true villagers...(quote from instructor Željko Jergan in Saić 22).

echelon are costumes made in the homeland, preferably handed down in a family or at least made by hand in a village setting. These receive the most praise and positive commentary. However, to order an entire set of hand-made costumes is costly, therefore most groups assemble a group of parents or grandparents with sewing and tailoring skills who, using cloth and materials purchased in Canada, construct costumes using previously acquired knowledge or photos as guides. Canadian bought materials and accessories (necklaces, bracelets, stockings) carry less cachet, but are more and more opted for because of financial constraints.

As stated previously, culture (in this case cultural performance) is malleable within transnational flows of people, ideas, and culture (see section 1.5). “Authenticity” (or the “idealized once”), though seemingly expressed as static or unchangeable, can in fact be flexible and very subjective. For example, in the above description of folklore performance repertoire, I mentioned that details of repertoire origins remain unspecified and unshared with audiences, and the music and dance still enters into the realm of “Croatianess” regardless of historical origins (or lack thereof, in the case of newly composed songs).

Likewise, a performer’s familial region of origin seems to be of minor importance. Despite the fact that large portions of the Croatian community in Ontario originate from Dinaric regions of Croatia and from Hercegovina, repertoire presented in folklore concerts is rarely representative of each or sometimes even any ensemble member’s familial region of origin.³³ The staged folklore performances draw largely on northern and central regional repertoires, and at times incorporate traditions from different regions (as the case of the ensemble wearing Vrljka attire while performing Slavonian tambura songs) or recently

³³ An exception to this is the ensemble *Draganić* from Hamilton, founded and made up of families with roots in the Draganić region and who perform songs and dances specific to that region. However, for example in the case of Hrvatsko Selo who performed Međimurje dances, I was not able to locate any parents or grandparents from the Međimurje region.

composed repertoires (for example, Cossetto and Gotovac). While a connection between current folklore performance and historic village practice appears to be desired and significant, in reality folklore performance has moved closer to Ceribašić's idea of a new autochthony.

2. Acceptable Repertoire for the Stage

During staged folklore performances, there is a tendency towards performing northern and central repertoires. These repertoires are made up of songs with even 4/4 meters, tonal (tonic-dominant) chordal movements, dances with well-organized patterns of kolo circles, couples, and lines, and an emphasis on tambura repertoire. They tend to exclude microtonal, free-rhythmed, Dinaric or southern music or dances which could be imagined as or associated with Turkish, Balkan, or Serbian sounds or gestures,³⁴ and therefore not "portray an appropriate image" (Bellamy 152) of "Croatianness." At a dance rehearsal with the Kardinal Stepinac ensemble in Montreal (we were learning a dance from the Posavina region), I was chided by the teacher for (unintentionally) lifting my hand and arm above my shoulder while being spun by my partner: "Kate, stop lifting your arm when you turn. We're not Serbian." Having taken this statement at face value, I was surprised the first few times I went to Croatian folklore performances in Croatia where dances from several regions included hands and arms lifted in the air. The teacher's statement, albeit delivered in passing, became the first of many indicating to me that several levels of mediation (self, teacher/instructors, audience, parents, even priests) and censorship take place in music performance, especially regarding acceptable ideas of "Croatianness." Regardless of the actual similarity to any homeland practices, the imagined look and sound of "us" is more important than a genuine

³⁴ Labels such as "Balkan" or "Serbian" denote cultural "backwardness," and "Turkish" is associated with a historical enemy.

likeness with practices within the homeland with which they claim affinity. In a survey of the Croatian community in Australia, Svanibor Pettan noted similar behavior:

They used culture, including traditional music, to help them unite and to present themselves as specific to other people in the context of, e.g., folklore festivals.

Fieldwork in 1995 indicated that political and cultural rhetoric from Croatia influenced the immigrants in Australia to various degrees.

A man from Croatia's Dinaric zone did not want to sing in his own regional tradition at my request, saying, "it would not sound 'Croatian' enough." He preferred songs from the Adriatic zone, from which the majority of his community in Sydney came.

(Pettan 1997)

I have noticed a few cases where tendencies towards "Western" sounds are challenged at folklore events. An example that comes to mind occurred at a folklore performance in Montreal, where I observed staged folklore exclusively consisting of 4/4 metered, tonal tambura songs and kolo dances. Later in the evening, further away from the stage (in an adjacent hallway), some men gathered in a group to sing microtonal and free-rhythmed Dinaric *ojkanje*³⁵ songs.

2.3 Hrvatsko Selo - Summer Tour, 2006

From 2 to 12 July 2006, Hrvatsko Selo embarked on a performance tour of Croatia. Though not an unusual event for diaspora groups, due to the great expense involved most groups who have toured have only made one or two trips. In recent years, the frequency with which such trips have been taken is dwindling, and several teachers and parents from Ontario have hinted that "this generation" (implying current dancers) will be the last to see such tours take place, as lives become increasingly invested in Canadian interests, as parents with young children find it difficult to afford airfare for several people at once (peak airfare prices

³⁵ "*Ojkanje* is the local term for the music type characterized by singing on the vowel *o* or the *oj* (oy), *aj* (ay), or *ej* (ey) syllables...in which there is no sign of clearly defined intervals" (Čaleta "#2:Historical Overview").

coincide with school summer holidays), and there is the added inconvenience of upsetting the busy schedules of children and parents.

For these reasons, the Hrvatsko Selo tour was important for all involved. It was open to all Hrvatsko Selo performers along with parents, grandparents, or siblings who wished to join. Fifty-eight performers and many family members (87 people total) took part in the tour, including six groups of three-generation families (grandparents, children, and grandchildren). The performers included young, middle year, and senior dancers, plus the adult tamburaši.

The tour became an opportunity for building relationships. Planning, fundraising and costume committees were made up of parents, grandparents, and ensemble participants, and most fundraising events involved the participation of the entire ensemble.³⁶ Family and friend togetherness was reinforced as people shared spaces (buses and hotel rooms) and participated in mutually beneficial economic activities (through fundraising for the trip). In addition, family ties were reinforced between Canadian-born or emigrated peoples and their relatives living in Croatia; fifteen family units that I surveyed either arrived early or stayed after the tour to visit extended family members who continue to live in Croatia. The connection with extended family was important for the parents and grandparents. "Baka," an active member of the costume committee, mother of Hrvatsko Selo's dance teacher, and grandmother of two dancers expressed her own view of the importance of family and economic involvement within the folklore ensemble:

There are no words to express it, I'm so proud and excited. When I think back, I came here when I was 12 and I never thought of any of this. I didn't have the economic and social support to make something like this happen in my own time, I didn't have the opportunities. And so my daughter being so into this, to go home now [to Croatia], to show off

³⁶ Pre-tour fundraising occurred over the course of a two-year period, and included garden plant sales, dinners and folklore performances.

something that our daughter and grandkids are doing and promoting is beyond words, it's unbelievable.

(“Baka”)

In several cases, adults with children in the ensemble had either never been to Croatia or had only been there decades before as children or teenagers. Many people met family members in Croatia for the first time. Airfare from Canada is expensive, and the impetus provided by the tour for fundraising had the added bonus of allowing family ties to be strengthened.

Parents of ensemble members expressed two main reasons for desiring their children to participate on the tour. First, they were eager for their children to develop bonds and friendships with other members of the ensemble, an outcome of time spent together in shared activity: sitting on buses, sharing hotels and meals, leisure time on the beach and during pre-performance preparations (dressing, applying makeup, etc.). The songs, dances and performances themselves were of less importance than the tour experience.

Secondly, several parents wanted their children to be able to connect their upbringing with a physical place, to see the locations referenced by activities incorporated in their upbringing, and to be able to make a connection between childhood activities and real places, objects, and people. Gestures between hosting homeland organizers and the visiting ensemble included gift giving by a Selo group representative to a representative from the hosting organizers. Gifts were a combination of items such as Canadian specialty liquors, t-shirts, or small engraved plaques acknowledging their appreciation.

Young people had similar expectations. Several were excited to meet family members, and teenagers looked forward to opportunities to party with their friends and meet

new people, to enjoy relaxed rules (less monitoring from parents), and to spend time on the beach.

Tour itinerary

The ensemble hired a Hamilton travel agent to make tour arrangements; however the desires of the group were also taken into account. When I inquired from several people about who made final decisions about tour itinerary, I was given several conflicting answers. I was told that it was the travel agent, the head teacher, a committee, parents voting, or the priest. It was unclear in the end how exactly decisions were made regarding travel destinations.

The style of the tour was that of a guided bus-tour: two hired tour-buses picked up the visitors at the Zagreb airport and continued with them until their departure. Each bus had an English-speaking Croatian guide, whose job was to make sure that everyone knew the daily itinerary, and to provide commentary for passing or visited sights. The tours and commentary were generally done in the Croatian language, with the exception of the city of Dubrovnik tour which also included some English explanations.

The first few days were spent in the cities of Zagreb and Samobor. On Day Two, there was a trip to Zagreb which included cathedral and upper-city tours, an optional visit and welcome by a City of Zagreb representative at the City Hall, and time for shopping or walking around. The third day included a stopover in the village of Krašić (home of Kardinal Alojša Stepinac), and continued through the regions of Slunj and Karlovac, stopping for a tour at Plitvice Jezera (a nature reserve of waterfalls and crystal-blue lakes).

Day Four included a bus-ride to the city of Knin, where the group was given a guided tour of the historic fortress situated there. The tour then moved on to the Holy sight of

Medugorje in Hercegovina, then back to overnight in Neum, a town on the small stretch of coast belonging to Bosnia and Hercegovina.

The following day brought the group to the city of Dubrovnik, where a local tour guide had been hired to take the group around the city. Day Six saw travel northwards, for the third concert in the town of Zaton, with two nights in the resort town of Vodice. The next day was scheduled to be a day trip to the city of Zadar; however, the group opted for a more relaxing stay in Vodice to enjoy the beach for the day. On Day Eight, several families opted to take a day trip to the island of Hvar, while others stayed behind in the town and on the beach.

Day Nine was primarily travel from the coast to the northern regions of the country with a visit to the shrine at Marija Bistrica. The day's journey ended in the town of Varaždin, characterized by baroque architecture. A delayed arrival meant that only a walk-around of the city was possible, with a short tour of one of the large churches.

Day Ten included a tour of the castle at Trakošćan, followed by a journey to Čakovec, the main city of the Medimurje region. There the group was invited on a tour of the "Museum of Medimurje" which housed archeological artifacts and historic objects from the last millennium, including a collection of folk-culture materials (costumes, masks from street celebrations, furniture, etc.). The group was then taken to its final performance at Zelengaj (a village close to the Hungarian border) and then spent the final night at the hotel in Varaždin. The next day (eleven) each family went their own way. Most were shuttled to the Zagreb airport where they either caught a plane for Canada or were met by family to spend time together. Those who did not go to Zagreb made their own way towards other destinations to continue family visits or travel.

Tour Repertoire

Tour performance repertoire included two dance suites, individual dance and singing numbers, songs sung by the whole ensemble with dancers doubling as tambura players, and songs played by the adult tamburaši. Members of the adult tambura ensemble (who accompanied the dancing) each wore a costume from a different region, including Split, Turoplje, Baranja, and Posavina.

The two dance suites were of songs and dances from the Posavina and Međimurje regions, with a short set of dances from Samobor. The choice of Posavina was significant on this anniversary year as they performed in the nošnje purchased for the ensemble's first performance in 1977. The Međimurje suite had been performed at the Brampton festival, and tied in nicely with the final concert being in Međimurje, the home region of the Hamilton Priest who was accompanying the group. Both the Posavina and Međimurje suites were interspersed with tambura group performances by the dancers, recitations of children's rhymes or poetry, songs performed by the adult tamburaši, songs or dances performed by guest or host ensembles, or numbers sung by the entire ensemble and tamburaši such as "*Gospe od Aljmaša*" ("Our Lady of Aljmaš"); the final number was "*Moja Domovina*" ("My Homeland," see section 3.3 for explanation). Repertoire for the dancers playing tamburas included popular Dalmatian songs such as "*Kad si bila mala, Mare*" ("When you were young, Mare"). The adult tamburaši repertoire included popular Dalmatian songs such as "*La Musica di Note*." The choices of suites, songs or individual dances for performance changed for each concert, depending on the venue, length of time available, and whether or not there were other ensembles performing. Every performance began with the ensemble

singing the Croatian national anthem, and ended with the "*Moja Domovina*" ("My Homeland").

Over the 10-day tour, there were five performances.

- 1) (Day 1 of the tour) The first was in village of Ruda close to the town of Samobor. It was a regional festival, and the group was incorporated as one of several from around Croatia. Other groups performed repertoire from several regions (such as Osijek, Lika, and Međimurje). The concert was outdoors, and local specialty foods and folk art were available for purchase. The Selo ensemble performed a set of popular songs (mostly Dalmatian) and instrumental pieces with their tamburas, wearing special blue t-shirts made for the tour.
- 2) (Day 2 of the tour) The second concert took place in the town of Samobor. It was an indoor concert where the ensemble performed all of its repertoire, as well as selections by the adult tambura ensemble. Hrvatsko Selo was the central performance group of the night, with a guest tambura orchestra from the town of Zaprešić (close to Zagreb). A reception and party took place after, with a small group of players from the Zaprešić orchestra playing popular and folk songs for the party guests to sing and dance along with. Samobor is a short drive from Zagreb; therefore extended family members living in Croatia who were able to make the journey were invited to attend this concert, as it was followed by an evening of socializing, food and music (opportunities for relatives to see the dancing and also to spend time together).
- 3) (Day 6 of the tour) The third concert took place in the coastal village of Zaton, close to the city of Šibenik. The concert took place outdoors in the town square. The Selo group were the main performers, with local folklore society musicians (*K.U.D. Zaton*,

“Artistic Association Zaton”) performing between Selo’s sets. The audience was primarily local, and of the concerts on the tour, this was the most warmly received and garnered the most reaction (applause) and participation (singing along) from the audience. Many of the tambura numbers were Dalmatian songs and the audience sang along. Also, during the final number “*Moja Domovina*” there were more audience members singing along than at any other concert. After the concert, a small reception was prepared where musical activity continued, entertainment by a small group of *klapa* singers from the hosting choir, and by local and Selo musicians who played together for guests to dance and sing.

- 4) (Day 7 of the tour) The fourth concert was hosted by the village of Poličnik, in the mountainous region close to Šibenik. The village had a special connection with the group, as it was the birthplace of the father of several of the group’s dancers. The concert included two guest folklore groups from the surrounding villages of Briševo and Šlivnica, and performances by one children’s and one adult folklore ensemble from Poličnik. The guest and hosting groups performed their Dinaric styles of singing and mute kolos.³⁷ The hosts arranged for short skits enacted between each group’s sets, caricaturing a young Croat coming from diaspora back to visit her old grandparents in the village. After the concert, a spread of food and drink had been prepared. Local singers spontaneously performed more *ojkanje* songs (see footnote 35), followed by a local accordion player and few people from the Selo group singing together, at which point dancing also began (joined in by both the visiting and local people).

³⁷ “Mute kolo” (*nijemo kolo*) are dances typical of Dinaric Croatia performed without instrumental accompaniment, using the sounds of feet, jingling costume ornaments, and singing as accompaniment.

5) (Day 10 of the tour) The final concert took place in the village of Zelengaj in the region of Međimurje (close to the Hungarian border). One of the priests of the Hamilton parish, Father Mladen Vuk, (who had joined the ensemble on the tour) was born and raised in the Međimurje region, and several of his friends and family were in the audience. This was also important for the group, and in a verbal address one of the parents emphasized the connection between Father Mladen and the Hamilton parish. The concert took place at a rural restaurant, surrounded by ponds, fields, and forests. Joined by one guest ensemble (*KUD Donji Kraljevec*) that performed Slavonian dances, the ensemble performed their Međimurje suite, which the audience reacted to appreciatively (singing along and clapping), interspersed with songs by the adult tamburaši. The dancing took place on a large, flat grass area. After the close of the formal performance, a special guest singer was invited to sing: an elderly woman Elizabeta Toplik (nick-named *Teta Liza*, or Aunt Elizabeth) from the village of Donja Dubrava who was well-known for her knowledge and performance of Međimurje songs. Following the concert, a buffet style meal was served. Music by both local and Selo performers accompanied couple and kolo dancing by Hamilton and local guests. This particular event caught the attention of the *Hrvatski Radiotelevizija* (Croatian Radio/Television), the national broadcaster and a regional newspaper. The following morning, a short segment about the group was broadcast on HRT's national morning program *Dobro jutro Hrvatska*. An article with pictures appeared in the 19 July 2007 issue of the regional newspaper *Međimurske Novine* featuring photos of the dancers, parents, and of Father Mladen Vuk.

The Homeland Tour: Where Parameters of "Croatianess" Are Negotiated

While the tour incorporated education about several aspects of Croatian history and culture, there was a marked emphasis on the relationship between culture and the sacral, observable in both concert performance and in tour itinerary.

1) Performances

Connections between the Catholic Church and the ensemble were presented at each folklore performance. Programs were distributed to audiences which included the names of the dancers and tamburaši, photos of the dancers, a history of the ensemble and a history of the Holy Cross parish. In the history section, the relationship between the parish and folklore activity was heavily emphasized. At the beginning of each concert, an adult performer gave a speech about the history of the ensemble, with emphasis placed on the group's connection with the parish.

Repertoire also reflected a connection with the Catholic faith. This occurred when the group performed the song "*Gospe od Aljmaša*," (Our lady of Aljmaš) a song about a sacred statue of St. Mary in Aljmaš, a village which was heavily damaged during the 1990s. As the group performed the song, the youngest children stood at the front of the stage clasping their hands in front of themselves in a position of prayer.

2) Tour itinerary

Throughout the tour, there was an emphasis on visiting sights associated with the Roman Catholic faith. It was unclear as to whether or not this emphasis was purpose-driven and planned, if it was an outcome of requests from parents, the travel agent, the priest, or if it simply occurred as a result of visiting a country where much historical activity took place in relation to church buildings and figures.

Day Two sites included:

- The Zagreb Cathedral (a guided tour including the tomb and museum of Cardinal Alojša Stepinac and the Cathedral sacristy).
- A walk through Zagreb's historic upper city with particular attention to two prominent churches.

Day Three:

- A morning-long tour of the village and church in Krašić, birthplace of Cardinal Stepinac.

Day Four:

- This day included a visit to Međugorje in Hercegovina, arguably the most significant site in Croatian Catholic life, where in 1981 six children saw a vision of the Holy Mother Mary. From that time until recently, many of the children continued to see images and receive message from the Holy Mother, making Međugorje a pilgrimage site for Roman Catholics around the world. Group members were given a choice to either hike to the site where Mary first appeared on the top of a hill, or to take a bus up to the top of a higher hill marked by a large white cross.

Day Nine:

- The main attraction on this day was the visit to the Marian shrine at Marija Bistrica. The site holds a statue of the Virgin with Child that was hidden in the early 16th century and discovered years later. It is thought to have been saved from the Turks and discovered by divine indication. In the 19th century a new church was built to house the statue, and the location has become a pilgrimage site.

Imagination and actuality: Anxieties of the homeland experience

In 2004 I came across a quote attributed to Croatian sculptor Ivan Meštrović:

No matter how far fate has blown the frail tree of my life across foreign lands, its roots have always sucked nourishment from that little barren clod of soil from which it sprung.

(Ivan Meštrović)

The idea expressed in this quote had a strong impact on me. I come from a family and community background that includes strong ties to specific religious beliefs and folkways, but with no concept of a homeland and no emotional tie to a nation far away. This statement led me to imagine that the idea of homeland was something from which many Croats in Canada drew strength to create their identity, and was a symbol which represented history, family, emotion, hope, longing, and joy. My romanticized notions were further shaped by messages around me. For example, in the Canadian-produced TV documentary “In the Heart of Gold Country,” a film about the Croatian community of Schumacher, Ontario, one scene features a man who speaks of his respect for Canada, but then is moved to tears when talking of his profound love for the country which he had to leave but which will always be “his home.”

However, on the 2006 folklore tour I learned that love of the homeland is, in part, a love of an imagined, symbolic homeland: one which is biased by information from sources which hold specific, essentialist, or idealized notions of the place. Ideas of the place can be used to help provide stability in confusing processes of identity construction for diaspora groups, but first-hand experiences can produce a range of emotional reactions.

Before the tour, *Croatia* meant freedom from parents,³⁸ parties with friends, experiences with extended family, and a look at Croatian history. However, in face-to-face experiences and having to cope with daily realities, mentalities and habits of homelanders, I observed reactions that conveyed confusion, distress and frustration. I would have loved and had planned to return to Canada having witnessed the experience of Croatia described by Meštrović, perhaps a time of nourishment and inspiration. However, in order to do so I would have had to struggle as a researcher to draw out certain moments of joy in order to represent positive feelings. It was difficult to admit to myself that what I observed was a group of people faced with a reality different from what they had imagined it “back home” to be, and the experience seemed to provoke strife more often than enjoyment. Though these moments of friction were never acknowledged directly to me, the frequency with which they occurred each day of the tour and the very open and verbal reactions which ensued were impossible for an observer to miss. By the end of the tour several parents recognized and acknowledged these moments of friction to me, but only through comments implying (never outright declaring) their existence and frequency.

Friction between the real and the imagined was compounded to by the fact that most of the participants had either never been or not been back to the homeland in several years (in some cases over a decade or even two before). Those who had returned usually took short trips (for a couple of weeks) confined to small geographical areas, either ‘the village’ or the coast. Years and lifetimes of living Canadian lives and becoming accustomed to Canadian behaviors and surroundings had caused distancing between the day-to-day lives of Croats at home and Croats abroad. The relationship between homelanders and diasporans was further

³⁸ Tours and trips with Croatian folklore ensembles tend to allow for an easing-up of restrictions imposed by parents. Many parents understand boisterous behavior and late-night social events as a part of Croatian life, and relax normal rules regarding curfews and alcohol consumption.

tainted by negative stereotypes held by both sides regarding “the other” (Winland 2002; 2006) and I witnessed these stereotypes color interactions.

Before the tour, I had asked several parents what expectations and hopes they had for the trip and for their children during and after the tour. The primary desire shared with me was for their children to formulate positive feelings and experiences associated with the country. Over the course of tour preparations and the trip itself, I became aware that each parent had very specific and personal ideas of the Croatia that they wanted their own child or children to experience. Since each parent’s idea of the nation was different, this resulted in disappointment in many cases, and these disappointments were frequently verbalized among themselves, in front of the ensemble, or between individuals.

Early in the planning stage, issues arose with assembling tour itinerary. Planning the trip was a group effort, and since each individual had different ideas of what was important to see or experience (locations or activities), finalizing the itinerary became a balancing act. The itinerary went through several stages of evaluation and revision by a parental committee and by the hired tour company. Early versions of the schedule had included a performance at the famous folklore event *Đakovački vezovi* (“Đakovo Embroidery”), a large and elaborate annual celebration of Slavonian folklore. The group’s tour itinerary did not coincide with the main Đakovo festival weekend when the majority of the folklore performances took place; however, there was a possibility for them to perform on a weekend one night on a stage with some rock/pop bands. Feeling that this was an inappropriate combination, and because of worries over being able to travel to the town of Đakovo and return in time for their existing engagements in Samobor, it was decided that it would not be possible to perform in Đakovo. Some parents (especially those who had participated in folklore since childhood and for

whom Đakovo had been an iconic event) were disappointed by the decision to withdraw, despite the inappropriateness of a folklore performance in a rock n' roll lineup, or the inconvenience and further time constraints the added travel would have caused. One parent shared with me that she thought it would be a shame to go all the way to Croatia and not be able to perform at or see the Đakovo festival. Though parents had wanted their children to participate in this grand event, perhaps it was not understood that if the group had consented to perform on the available date, the children would not have seen the famous Sunday parade or any other folklore performances. As I mentioned previously, when I inquired as to who exactly made decisions to see certain sites or participate in certain events – for example, why many church-related sites were included on the tour – the answers I received were always conflicting: “the travel agent,” “the parents,” “the priest.”

Prior to the tour, the parents spoke of desires for their children to gain an appreciation of Croatian culture and history; however in many cases this desired result was not achieved. Many young people expressed frustration at the number of churches and historic sights included on the itinerary. Many concert performances incorporated visiting or local folklore ensembles; yet, the attention of the Hamilton dancers was rarely on other groups. Rather, they were occupied with dressing, costume changes, or socializing among themselves. Throughout our bus rides that covered much of the country and parts of Hercegovina, many young people would talk among themselves, listen to music, sleep, play video games, or watch movies on personal devices. Often, parents would yell towards the children: “Open the curtains guys! Look out the window!” “Pay attention!” urging them to take note of things around them. Despite parental desires, the young people generally seemed very content to keep themselves occupied with their own activities and socializing.

Stark differences between generational desires were expressed in statements such as:

“You’re going to Hvar. That’s why we came to Croatia, not to watch the World Cup of Soccer.”

“You don’t know how good you have it. You don’t know how lucky you are [to be able to be in Croatia].”

The tour was for Croatian descendants and therefore most of the tour activities and historical commentary took place in the Croatian language. Organizers and parents failed to take into account the disparity of language skills among the children and youth, and how this also impacted their interest in certain activities. For instance, during a visit with a representative from the City of Zagreb, group members were asked by the representative: “Does everyone here speak Croatian?” Several parents loudly responded “Yes. Yes, everyone.” In the corner where I was sitting I heard a father next to me say under his breath, “No, not everyone.” While a child’s ability to speak Croatian is a point of pride for parents and grandparents, at this point language skills among younger generations are waning, and this was not acknowledged or dealt with during the tour.

Included in the idea of being a “Good Croatian” in Canada is the ability to speak the Croatian language, and many parents and grandparents adamantly declare that “our children speak Croatian!” The tour itself showed otherwise. Young people who straggled behind the main group during tours of historic sights had little idea of what was being discussed or presented; therefore, their attention waned. While the tour guide would be talking into the microphone on the bus, describing pieces of history relevant to passing sights, I often heard young people from the back of the bus muttering that they did not understand what she was saying; or else they just continued their own private conversations. Responses from one

group interview indicated a combination of disinterest and only moderate comprehension of the tours:

“We understand at least 40% [of what’s being said by the tour guides], but we’re not interested. We’re not interested in history on the microphone, we’re interested in getting there [to the destination].”

“It doesn’t make a difference if it’s in English or Croatian because it’s boring and useless.”

“It’s like school all over again, but we’re on summer vacation.”

For young people interested in socializing, relaxing and beach going, such sights were of little interest, and indeed many adults also chose to stand aside or find a café to relax in rather than participate fully in every guided tour.

Aspects of daily life encountered in Croatia also caused discontent, including differences of mentality among locals. Croats, especially those native to Adriatic coastal regions, often ascribe to a sort of *mañana* attitude and approach to daily life. This impacts the speed and style of services available in hotels and restaurants and other travel-related activity. The North American inhabitants had grown accustomed to North American services: easily accessible and speedy services where the “customer knows best.” In Croatia, there was less concern for the desires of patrons (in my experience this is often caused by workers’ low wages). Obvious disparities between post-socialist hotel facilities and North American hotels caused tension and at times anger among adult and young tour members, expressed through vocal comments and criticism.

“We are going to be late again.”

“Why is the food taking so long?”

“Oh my god, is THIS the hotel we are staying at?”

“We are being treated like third rate citizens.”

Though there had been an expectation that Croatia would be folklore, beaches, and parties, the day-to-day aspects of dealing with different mentalities and the realities of a still developing post-socialist and post-war economy caused tension and dissatisfaction within the group.

Folklore performances led to tense situations as well. At the first concert, a female dancer approached me and shared with me her concern over performing in costumes made in Canada (the Posavina headpieces and the Međimurje costumes were made in Canada). She was worried that homeland audiences would know right away that the costumes were not authentic: "The thing here is about the *nošnje*. I KNOW that they know about the *nošnje*." For the speaker, a notion of authenticity was important, and to have to perform for homelander while wearing Canadian-made "imitations" was a bit embarrassing.

Another instance of tension involved the festival night at Poličnik, an event that incorporated the Selo performers, local performers, groups from surrounding villages, and theatrical skits with costumes and a backdrop set, followed by a banquet of roasted pork and beverages after the concert. One plotline of the skits involved a girl who comes back from diaspora to visit her grandma in an imaginary village, and during the skit the young girl's highly anglicized (or "bad") Croatian was the butt of several jokes, referencing the style of spoken Croatian common among diasporans (those in Ontario included). Some older tour members reacted indignantly to these parts of the prepared skits, one person loudly and publicly remarked that "they worked hard to teach their children Croatian and they did not come here to be made fun of."³⁹

³⁹ Incidentally, I knew that the grandchildren of this speaker understood only a few basic words of Croatian.

For their final performance (in Međimurje) the venue required that the group perform on a large, flat, grassy area. Several young people expressed despair or confusion when told that this would be their performance space. They had been accustomed to performing folklore on stages, and had to be reminded by Father Vuk (from Međimurje) that originally Međimurje folk dances would have been performed on natural surfaces in village settings, not on man-made hard floors in auditoriums. This case of confusion was interesting considering that I had been informed of past Selo activities that included parades and performances at picnics, all of which are outdoor activities.

Tour events are stressful times for all involved. Pressure on parents and organizers was palpable, and often we would arrive in a city or town only to rush the performers into their costumes and drive to a performance. With 87 people constantly on the move and with schedules to adhere to and children to look after, patience often wore thin. As it can sometime happen when many people are in close contact, an unpleasant illness spread through several children and adults. Aside from friction and tension that I have mentioned, there were many happy moments shared.

2.4 Conclusion

I have described an annual festival event and a rare summer tour event. The Festival and tour show that participation in musical activity, whether as a teacher, musician, dancer, priest, parent, or audience member, “is crucial to the processes of social reproduction and renegotiation...[it] allows individuals to convey a range of messages that they might wish to make about themselves as social beings. Each rendition of each song thus serves as an embodied performance of multiple aspects of that performer’s sense of self and of

community” (Sugarman 3). One can also observe that musical performance is not “unidirectional” and does not merely reflect or express “the social system or the cultural configuration...it is reciprocal and reflexive...an evaluation of the way society handles history” (Turner 22).

Motivations for, as well as expectations and interpretations of both occasions are as varied as there are individuals taking part. Both show how musical performance “establish[es] and re-establish[es] important relationships between groups and among individuals” (Seeger 78). Festival events in particular provide settings in which parameters of “Croatianess” (what “being Croatian” means, looks like, how Croats behave) are negotiated. Imagining a symbolic “village far away” of a “day gone by” is a significant factor shaping folklore performance in which

Organizers create a cultural display and decide what forms of entertainment they will use to represent their group. This decision obviously forces members to clarify for themselves the ways they want to understand (or to “story”) themselves and be understood by outsiders... In short, spectacles may facilitate the presentation of dramatic performances of identity directed not only by, but also at themselves in order to tell a certain kind of story about what it might mean for individuals and groups to combine within themselves various identities.

(Bramadat 7)

Folklore performances such as the Festival are directed at community members and reinforce an Andersonian notion of imagined communion between a people and their history. These notions are complicated by real experiences within the normally “imagined” homeland, as I witnessed on the 2006 tour. Friction or tension may arise when pre-conceived ideas of how “things should be” turn out to be different than expected or imagined, and despite folklore activity functioning as a “symbolic framework” (Yazedjian 47) of “Croatianess,” it can also be an activity leading to moments of tense negotiation. In the

following chapters I will describe situations in which Smith's "memory, value, myth and symbol" complexes are presented as components of these two events. I will focus on right-wing nationalist themes, and where and why they are embedded within musical activities as a part of expressing and forming Croatian identity.

Chapter 3: Remembering the Homeland War

By the 1990s several groups in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia had grown tired of marginalized economic status and lack of political influence within the Federation. Frustrations arose in response to government attempts to monitor and control cultural expressions, seen by ruling powers as supposedly emphasizing difference or promoting one ethnic group above others. In the case of Croats the foremost issue involved lack of freedom to openly practice Roman Catholicism. After the death of Tito in 1980 and the ensuing power struggles, the Croatian cause for independence gained momentum. The leading figure became Franjo Tudjman and his HDZ party (*Hrvatski Demokratska Zajednica*, Croatian Democratic Union). On 15 January 1992, Croatia became internationally recognized as an independent state, with Franjo Tudjman as its president. By June 1991 the Yugoslav National Army had already begun offensive attacks on Eastern regions of Slavonia, trying desperately to retain control of Croatian territories. Croatia was brought into full-scale conflict, and from the defensive beginnings in 1991-92 to the final military operations in 1995, there were many civilian and military deaths on all sides.

3.1 Right-wing Nationalist Ideologies: Tudjman and the Ethnic State⁴⁰

To better understand expressions of right-wing nationalism that appeared in post-war diaspora activity, it is important to reflect on the political situation of the homeland during the 1990s.

⁴⁰ The following is a brief and cursory account of the period of the break-up of the former Yugoslavia. It should be noted that for the sake of brevity, this summary includes only the barest description of this complicated and tragic period. Fuller interpretation and insights may be found elsewhere (Bellamy 2003; Benson 2001; Glenny 1992; Goldstein 2000; Hayden 1992, 1996; Hislope 1997; Holbrooke 1999; Tanner 1997).

President Franjo Tudjman, playing on his merits as a historian (he was the author of several historical books), promulgated messages of Croatian cultural history based on primordial understandings that suited his political aspirations (Goldstein 2000: 205). Primordialist political and cultural histories inundated the public sphere: the media, linguistic scholarship, music, the arts, even sports and football were immune to being manipulated for right-wing agendas (several examples are discussed in Alex J. Bellamy's "*The Formation of Croatian Nation*"). In political, cultural and social arenas, steps were taken to utilize carefully selected symbols, rhetoric, and gestures (including cultural performance and music) in order to shape a suitable notion of Croatian nationhood, promoted by the Tudjman-controlled media as unquestionable phenomena. "Croatianess" was re-interpreted to "establish and impose new symbols and elevate the national myth to a lofty pedestal" (Rihtmann Auguštin 71).

Historical narratives and myths served an important role in these processes, and included Croatia as the "bulwark of Christendom" placing Croats as protectors of Christian Europe against their barbaric Orthodox neighbors to the East (Žanić 2005), the Drina boundary myth used to promote territorial ambitions on Hercegovina (Goldstein 2005),⁴¹ renewed debates over the Bleiberg events of the Second World War,⁴² and the figure of Cardinal Alojzije Stepinac (Perica 2005).

As the leader of Croatia during the armed conflict, Franjo Tudjman introduced constitutional ethnonationalism: an idealized political state wherein ethnicity was more important than place of birth or residence (Hayden 1992: 655). Over the course of several centuries, ethnic Croat populations had developed highly regionalized cultural practices that

⁴¹ The Drina boundary myth refers to the belief that Croatian national territory spans (or should span) the territories of modern day Bosnia and Hercegovina.

⁴² Referring to the May 1944 slaughter of thousands of people fleeing the defeated NDH.

were neither homogenous nor exclusive according to ethnic boundaries. The culture of the ethnic group needed to be reworked to appear homogenous and add legitimacy to the ethnonationalist idea of a common people with a common destiny (the “centuries old dream” of independence that Tudjman and his supporters flaunted relentlessly; see Bellamy 32).

Ethnonationalism also required that populations within the boundaries of the political state consist exclusively of people from the acceptable ethnic group. Ethnocentric *domovnica* policies⁴³ lead to the purging of Serbian civilians from employment or dwellings, and provoked skepticism and fear among the Serbian populations within Croatia, fears then played on by the Serbian media. Meanwhile people with Croatian “blood,” even those born in diaspora,⁴⁴ had comparatively little problem obtaining the same certificate of residence (Hayden 1992: 666). Maverick author Dubravka Ugrešić (88) described the 1990s as a time of the “Holy Blood Group” nation, controlled by “Great Manipulators and their well-equipped teams (writers, journalists, sociologists, psychiatrists...)” (Ugrešić 39). From her perspective, Ugrešić saw the state of minorities within the country reduced to the level of pollutants or vermin, thereby needing to be “cleansed...where the pest controllers were given awards for patriotism and heroism” (Ugrešić 64). The ethnonationalist agenda “exclud[ed] [ethnicity’s] dynamics and mandatorily include[d] in equal measure both ethnic and national exclusivity and territory” (RA 74), reasoning characteristic of nationalist movements aimed at the creation of “political legitimacy” requiring “that ethnic boundaries should not cut across political ones” (Gellner 1).

⁴³ Domovnica: a certificate of residence necessary to obtain passports and identity cards.

⁴⁴ As long as they “considered himself or herself a Croatian citizen” (Winland, “Ten Years” 299).

Folklore and Popular Music

Folk and popular music became a part of reworking culture in the 1990s.

Manipulations and new interpretations shaped ideas of "acceptable" music for public consumption, for example staged performance and radio-play.

There is no need to make particular mention of political folklorism and current use of those selected signs of folk culture in the political presentation of the Croats and of Croatia. This is imposed and accepted as something, which is self-explanatory...In addition, terms such as "folk culture, folk art, and even folk customs" were not precisely defined, because traditional Croatian ethnology did not deal with theoretical definitions of its subject. Just what Korff warned could happen did happen: these terms remained open to and very appropriate for diverse, and even arbitrary interpretations and political manipulations. Be that as it may, 'folk culture' and 'folk art' were presented as being authentic, and thus pre-political or non-political categories (see Korff, 1996). As such, their shelf-life has no limits in political rhetoric.

(Rihtmann-Auguštin 73)

Influenced by experiences of hurt and loss, popular and folkloric music-makers expressed a range of reactions to the war: fear, trauma, defiance, patriotism, unity, despair and anger. Svanibor Pettan (1998: 13) lists three roles of music during the 1990s:

- 1) Encouragement for those fighting on the front lines and those hiding in shelters alike
- 2) Provocation and sometimes humiliation directed at those seen as enemies
- 3) A call for involvement to those not directly endangered- including fellow citizens, the Diaspora and the political and military decision-makers abroad.

Popular and folkloric music became a powerful tool of right-wing ideologues interested in creating Franjo Tudjman's ethnically and culturally homogenous citizenry.⁴⁵

Popular music perceived as "Balkan-sounding" was banned from radio broadcast (music with

⁴⁵ Mirjana Laušević (293) describes the trend towards polarization and self-definition in several Yugoslav states: "Sevdalinkas, preferably accompanied by saz, for Muslims, epic songs accompanied by gusle, for Serbs, or cheerful poskočicas, preferably accompanied by tamburica orchestras, for Croats, are used as symbols of ethnic identity as well as means toward redefining history by bringing ethnic difference into the foreground."

fast-paced “oriental” sounding melodies, chromaticism, heavy accordion use, and odd-numbered 5 or 7 metered rhythms such as Newly Composed Folk Music⁴⁶ and Turbofolk). Instead, the trend moved towards “polished adaptations of traditional music presented by tambura and choral groups, Croatian popular music standards, arias from Croatian operas (Nikola Šubić Zrinski) and new productions of various genres connected with the war” (Ceribašić 2000: 226). Discourses in folklore circles included shifting ideas of acceptable or unacceptable choices for stage performance (see Ceribašić 1998) and the designation and presentation of the tambura as the national instrument (Bonifašić 131-134). Folkloric music presented “us” in opposition to “them,” for example “the *gusle* bowed lute and *harmonika* accordion were increasingly being experienced as “Serbian” counterparts to the Croatian tamburica” (Pettan 1998:16), implying a “balkan or uncivilized” Serbia (Bellamy 69) in contrast to the Croatian tamburica that invoked the peaceful labourer, “the good, the honest” Croat (Ceribašić 2000: 226). Thus, music echoed President Tudjman’s attempt to “unify the Croatian people by situating them alongside the ‘other’, the Serbs” (Bellamy 68).

3.2 Diasporic Transnationalism

In the above discussion, I have pointed out right-wing activities with little discussion of left-wing or moderate activities in the homeland. This was for the sake of brevity and because it was not the left or moderate ideologies/ideologues that dominated diaspora public discourse or gained the lion’s share of financial support from the diaspora. In general, homelanders continue to perceive diasporans as more conservative or right-wing in their

⁴⁶ See Vidić-Rasmussen 1996.

political leanings than themselves,⁴⁷ and diasporans I have encountered even describe themselves as “more Croatian than people in Croatia,” implying allegiance to specific notions of “true Croats.”

In Canada during the 1990s, right-wing nationalist ideologies were not necessarily *predominant* (the most commonly held), yet became *dominant* (overriding and loudest). In other words, they were not held by every community member but became common in public discourse, particularly in community media, churches,⁴⁸ and public events. Importantly, this was not a case of “one-way” homeland ideologies aimed at the diaspora, it became a mutually beneficial “back-and-forth” of ideological messages eventually taking the form of financial backing: the diaspora could vicariously live their dreams of an independent homeland by financially supporting Franjo Tudjman and the HDZ, and Tudjman could keep the diaspora dollars rolling in by building the kind of homeland that the diaspora imagined and desired. “Culture, history, myths, language and religion were instrumentalised...and served as the first stage of diasporic political mobilization” (Durić 91), and diaspora media outlets⁴⁹ including the Internet (Winland 2002: 699) and community print media (see Durić) spread “the idea of Croatia as a modern ‘Western’ democratic state...within an intellectual context where the central tenets of Franjoism were accepted and re-articulated” (Bellamy 95).

It remains contested whether the aim of Tudjman’s campaign in the diaspora was to gain support for a worthy cause or an easy cash-grab by pulling heart-strings of nostalgia and

⁴⁷ Such sentiments are described and discussed by Daphne Winland (2002).

⁴⁸ Croatian churches were “involved politically during the wars mainly by supporting nationalist political parties...” (Petrovic 14).

⁴⁹ “The Croatian government recognized the importance of developing modern communication means for disseminating information and interacting with diasporic communities early on. It counted on the political support of the diaspora as well as recognizing that the diaspora were significant financial contributions to the new Croatian state” (Durić 100).

romanticism.⁵⁰ Enormous funds were raised by diaspora communities world-wide for the HDZ's campaigns, and Tudjman even dubbed the diaspora "the third pillar of the Croatian budget" (Winland 2006: 299).

The crafting of the new state has not only involved Croatians within Croatia; it has included political and economic transnational involvement as well. Diaspora Croats were implicated in the Croatian nation-building project largely thanks to the efforts of Tudjman and his Croatian Democratic Community (HDZ) party to solicit the support of the diaspora in the election campaign. During the first decade of Croatian independence, diaspora Croats wielded considerable political and economic influence in Croatia, earning them a reputation for hard-line nationalist policies and corruption...

(Winland 2006: 295)

Tudjman knew where his financial support base lay, and went to great lengths to make sure the diaspora felt like they had a part in the establishment of *their* homeland. The "Ministry of Return and Immigration" was set up and special diaspora voting privileges were given in Croatian national elections, in the form of six seats in the Sabor, all of which were incidentally filled by HDZ members. An ultra-right-winger from Ottawa (Croatian-born Gojko Šušak) was given the position of Defense Minister (1991-1998) in Tudjman's party, and persons such as Šušak and Ante Beljo (from Sudbury) relocated to the homeland to become active advocates for Tudjman's right-wing causes.⁵¹ Social pressure increased within the diaspora to conform to the new and somewhat narrow right-wing idea of Croatian nationhood. Small diaspora groups of extreme nationalists grew into "self-described intelligentsia" who "endeavored to exert control over Croatian identity narratives through

⁵⁰ Winland (2002: 698) says that by 1992, Canadian diasporans alone had contributed over one million dollars towards Tudjman's campaign and Bellamy states: "Some observers suggest that attempts to rehabilitate the émigrés owed more to the desire to secure important funding from North America...According to Mark Thompson, these groups contributed \$8.2 million to the cause, giving the HDZ a substantial edge in funding over the other parties" (Bellamy 69, quoting M. Thompson).

⁵¹ Beljo "was one of the original core groups to promote Tudjman in Canada and would become a key player later in the HDZ in Croatia and Bosnia" (Hockenos 27-28). His efforts were later rewarded by a Ministerial position in Tudjman's government.

nationalist rhetoric..." (Winland 704), on a mission to provide "the context for absorbing and "re-educating" economic migrants... [they] nurtured ideologies and a worldview centered on the re- establishment of an independent Croatian state and the question of Croatian ethno-national survival amid the perceived threat from Serbia in the 1990s" (G. Brown 71). One successful outcome of this was a general shift in self-identification among the largely economic migrant group of the 60s/70s to identify as 'political' rather than economic migrants (Winland 2002: 700).

New allegiances, identity formations, and social pressures, had marginalizing effects on people who did not align to right-wing ideologies and thus no longer felt welcome at community clubs⁵² or churches.⁵³ This was often true of people who still chose to identify as Yugoslav, or who were descendants of mixed Serbian and Croatian parentage.

Music during the War

Alarmed by military attacks on Slavonia in 1991, the diaspora began fundraising for Croatian defense and aid, and music and folklore events played a significant part in these efforts. Zabavas, folklore concerts and other community events (banquets, bachelor parties) were organized across Canada.⁵⁴ "The cause" (independence) became the focal point of community activity and identity:

⁵² Blaskovich (66) described his experience of the situation in one urban setting (San Pedro) in California: "During Croatia's self-determination effort there was a proliferation of new political parties. Astutely, the only Croatian political party which actively courted émigrés worldwide was the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ). Consequently, most of the émigrés, committed themselves to the HDZ party. In attempting to consolidate the party's position, the leaders made certain that any émigré who was not for the HDZ felt uncomfortable in the Croatian Club."

⁵³ "For example, a politicized church is an "ethnic church" in the diaspora and not a mainstream Canadian church; all three major churches from the former Yugoslavia – Islamic, Orthodox Christian and Catholic – were involved politically during the wars mainly by supporting nationalist political parties and justifying the war; if one sees churches as politicized and therefore does not want to attend service, the implication is that the person does not share the political views associated with the church" (Petrović 20).

⁵⁴ In some cases the war even altered the face of folklore performance, for example in the case of an Australian ensemble: "When the barbaric aggression began in Croatia in 1991, members of the ensemble decided to help

A tremendous change happened during the war; during the war people were truly focused on what was happening. They were perturbed by what was happening, they were threatened and felt that the country could disappear... it was very close to it.

(“John”)

War repertoire emerged from the diaspora, a poignant example being “*Ne dirajte mi ravnicu*” (“Don’t Touch My Plains,” 1992) written by émigré Miroslav Škoro and reinterpreted by the popular homeland tambura pop group *Zlatni Dukati*.⁵⁵

their homeland. All their work was directed towards collecting financial assistance. Apart from various other contributions the ensemble decided to directly aid several Vukovar families who were left without their breadwinner in the family. It is then that the ensemble decided to change its name to “Vukovar.” This was their way of specially honoring that Heroic Town and its defenders. It is a great honor whenever the ensemble is announced and the public brings to mind the horror of 1991 and the role that heroic town played in the war.” (announcement on the Matica Hrvatska website “The Vukovar Croatian folklore ensemble”

<http://www.matis.hr/eng/mt_sydney.php>)

⁵⁵ Ruža Bonifačić (140) notes that the song “grew into a symbol of protest and resistance among Croats who had emigrated.”

Ne dirajte mi ravnicu

*Večeras me dobri ljudi
namojte ništa pitati
neka suze tiho teku
pa će manje boljeti.*

*Ne dirajte mi večeras
uspomenu u meni
ne dirajte mi ravnicu
jer ja ću se vratiti.*

*Još u sebi čujem majku
kako tiho govori:
Kad se jednom vratiš sine,
ja ću te čekati.*

*Mene zovu moja polja
mene zovu tambure
prije nego sklopim oči
da još jednom vidim sve.*

Tonight, my good people,
Do not ask me anything
Let the tears fall softly,
Maybe it will hurt less.

Do not touch my evenings,
My memories,
Do not touch my plains,
Because I will return.

I can still hear my mother
Ever so softly telling me:
When you come back my son,
I will wait for you.

My fields are calling me,
Tamburas are calling me
Before I close my eyes forever,
I must see them once again.

(Transcription and translation of lyrics by K. Wiens.)

Media reports of atrocities helped bring the Canadian diaspora community together for the homeland cause.⁵⁶ Music became part of community identity formation in the face of crisis by creating a sense of unity and purpose within local, North American, and worldwide Croats, and by creating a sense of solidarity with the homeland.⁵⁷

With the exception of a few songs that emerged from diaspora, musical activity drew from repertoire emerging from the homeland (bands such as Zlatni Dukati, Prljavo Kažaliste, and Thompson). The purpose of these songs became unique in their distant setting and

⁵⁶ "With... communities and towns that were under attack, the community appeared more strongly than ever" (Durić 98). For discussions of how media sources influenced ways the diaspora received, understood, and reacted to the conflict, see Durić 2001; Hockenos 2003; Kolar Panov 1996; Skrbušić 1998; and Stubbs 1998.

⁵⁷ Pettan (1998: 14) points out a connection between the output of patriotic songs and "considerable donations" given by the diaspora.

context. In the homeland, for example, the song which shot the singer Marko Perković Thompson to fame was “*Bojna Čavoglave*” (Čavoglave Battalion).

Bojna Čavoglave:

*Za Dom - spremni!
U Zagori na izvoru rijeke Čikole,
Stala braća da obrane naše domove.
Stoji Hrvat do Hrvata, mi smo braća svi,
Nešete u Čavoglave dok smo živi mi!
Puče tomson, kalašnjikov a i zbrojevko,
Baci bombu, goni bandu preko izvora!
Korak naprijed, puška gotov s', siju pjesmu svi,
Za dom braćo, za slobodu, borimo se mi.
Čujte srpski dobrovoljci bandu četnici
Stići će vas naša ruka i u Srbiji!
Stići će vas Božja pravda to već svatko zna
Sudit će vam bojovnici iz Čavoglava!
Slušajte sad poruku od Svetog Ilije:
Nećete u Čavoglave, niste ni prije!
Oj Hrvati, braćo mila iz Čavoglava,
Hrvatska vam zaboravit neće nikada!*

For Homeland- Prepared!
In Zagora, at the source of the river Čikola
Brothers stood in defense of our homes.
A Croat stands by a Croat, we are all brothers,
You will not conquer Čavoglave as long as we live!
Thompson, kalashnikov shooting, also zbrojevka
Throw a bomb, drive the gang beyond the (river) source
One step forward, our guns are ready,
Everybody's singing our song
For our homeland, for our freedom, we are fighting
Hear us, Serb volunteers, Chetniks...
Our hand will reach you, even in Serbia
God's justice will reach you, everyone knows
You'll be judged by the warriors from Čavoglave
Listen now to a reading from Saint Ilija
You will never get into Čavoglave, you never did before
Hey Croatians! Our brothers from Čavoglave
Croatia will never forget you!!

(Source: liner notes of the album “*Thomson: Sve Najbolje.*”)

The video for “*Bojna Čavoglave*” features a group of soldiers marching, posing, and singing alongside Perković, dressed in army fatigues and ready for battle. The giant crucifix around Perković’s neck is outsized only by the semi-automatic weapon slung over his shoulder. He sings of God on the side of the victims and defenders: our Saint Ilija adds divine power to the fighter. As disturbing as these images seem years after the war, the song rose out of Perković’s experience as a soldier during the complicated and alarming time when his country and his home town were being invaded. After its release, the song was appropriated for nationalist purposes, in some cases played ad nauseam by media outlets to keep up morale during the war (Kolar Panov 1994: footnote 9), or in some cases for more frightening purposes, described in this portion of transcript of the International Court Tribunal of Yugoslavia (ICTY) trial of General Tihomir Blaškić:

All roads to the town of Novi Travnik have been blocked and no access will be granted to the town without our permission for the time being, after 1945 hours. In other words, the town is under a complete blockade. 2. The blockade of all roads was lifted along with singing of the songs *Čavoglava* ... and *Evo zore, evo dana*.⁵⁸ The amplified singing shook the town. Muslim forces were pushed back towards the villages with a majority of Muslim inhabitants. The villages of Kasapovici, Isakovici, and Lasine were completely blocked and exposed to intense firing from our forces.

(ICTY trial transcripts, case number IT-95-14 “Lašva Valley” 1999)

“*Bojna Čavoglave*” was distributed (through shared cassettes) among the diaspora, becoming part of community events and resonating with the feelings of the time. With the exception of war refugees (who make up only a small fraction of the Canadian population), the diaspora experienced the “tremendously distressing life event...vicariously” (G. Brown 1) through international media, homeland government

⁵⁸ The song “*Evo zore, evo dana*” is discussed in chapter 4.

and family reports. Cases where popular songs played at community events included aggressive sounds and styles (such as “*Bojna*”), reflected the sense of alarm, but also played a role in strengthening feelings of resistance against the perceived enemy:

A couple of pivotal war time, “nationalist-sentiment-inspiring” songs during the war (e.g., *Čavoglave*) helped people feel like they could prevail over the aggressors, maintain strength and stamina for defense during the onslaught, and in some way helped people feel like they were fighting the same battle collectively.

(“Jennifer”)

Feelings in the diaspora included sadness, hope, fear, anger and confusion, and homeland repertoire of the time touched on these emotions. They were further shaped by the fact that many Croats living in Canada had close friendship or familial ties to homelands experiencing fear, loss, or tragedy. Diaspora audience’s responses to war repertoire were as varied as those who produced the repertoire, and “the songs serve[d] different, but almost equally as important roles within the context of Croatia’s defense” (Pettan 1998: 24).

Homeland Politics and Contemporary Music Performance

Over a decade has passed since both independence and the end of the armed conflict. Even so, the war still figures strongly into constructions of individual and community understandings of “self.” Continued maintenance of memory and value complexes based on the war often appears in musical activity, in examples such as the nostalgic “*Ne dirajte mi ravnicu*” or the more aggressive “*Bojna Čavoglave*.” In Chapter two, I described situations in which religious, historical, and political ideologies and symbols have become interwoven with music performance, folklore in particular. The following section outlines specific situations in which I encountered “memory, value, myth, and symbol” complexes aligned with what I understand as “right-wing”

expressions of nationalism, geared towards exclusionist and xenophobic ideas of “our” culture portrayed in opposition to “their” culture (the culture of the undesirable group, in this case, Serbs).

3.3 The Homeland Tour

In 2004 I encountered a Croatian-Australian folklore ensemble from Melbourne participating in a folklore performance tour of Croatia. The performance that I observed took place in the mountain village of Polača that had been decimated during the war, but was rebuilt by the residents. As the final song of their performance the Australian group performed “*Ne dirajte mi ravnicu.*” The scene was emotionally charged, as the audience of mostly local and regional inhabitants (who had known and survived the atrocities of the 1990s) began to sing along. Later, I was informed that the group’s itinerary had also included a tour of the demolished Slavonian city of Vukovar. Beyond this case and the Hrvatsko Selo tour, I am unaware of how many ensembles include wartime repertoire or war-ravaged locations as a part of their tour activity. The most that I can say is that it exists in some cases, in pre-planned (itinerary) and rehearsed (music performance) forms.

Tour repertoire of the Hrvatsko Selo group also included war-time songs, specifically “*Moja Domovina*”⁵⁹ and “*Gospa od Aljmaša.*”⁶⁰ “*Moja Domovina*” was the closing number of each concert when all of the performers would line up in several rows facing the audience with the adult tamburaši accompanying from the side. At each

⁵⁹ “My Homeland” (1991), by the group Hrvatski Band Aid. During the war, the song “*Moja Domovina*” became a sort of unofficial Croatian anthem, played in conjunction with daily news broadcasts.

⁶⁰ I unfortunately could find little information about this song, and the source was not shared with me by Selo leaders.

performance the audience sang along, and the song seemed to become a gesture of solidarity between the homeland audiences and diaspora performers.

Moja Domovina

*Svakog dana mislim na tebe
Slušam vijesti, brojim korake
Nemir je u srcima, a ljubav u nama
Ima samo jedna istina
Svaka zvijezda sija za tebe
Kamen puca pjesma putuje
Tisuću generacija noćas ne spava
Cijeli svijet je sada sa nama.*

Every day I think of you
Listening to the news, counting steps
Restlessness in hearts but love in us
There is only one truth
Every star shines for you
Stone is breaking, song traveling
A thousand generations are not sleeping tonight
The whole world is with us.

*Moja domovina, moja domovina,
Ima snagu zlatnog žita,
Ima oči boje mora,
Moja zemlja Hrvatska.*

My homeland, my homeland
Has the power of golden grain,
Has sea colored eyes,
My country Croatia.

*Vratit ću se moram doći, tu je moj dom,
Moje sunce, moje nebo.
Novi dan se budi kao sreća osvaja
Ti si tu sa nama.*

I will be back, I have come, my home is here,
My sun, my sky.
New day is waking, like luck overtakes
You are there with us.

(Source: Hrvatsko Selo. Translation: Ana Stepanek.)

At several points during the tour, images of the war moved from media and community-mediated imagery face-to-face observation.⁶¹ The foremost example of such exposure was a daylong drive from Samobor southward toward the Lika region, passing through the city of Karlovac. Just as wartime understandings of the conflict were mediated (Skrbiš 267), the face-to-face experience (or “war tourism” as I call it) was also filtered, viewed from the luxury of an air-conditioned tour-bus, and guided by the commentary and histories from our tour guide. The journey took us through the heart of the Krajina region, an area that had been brutally hit by Serbian-backed forces during the war, then recaptured by Croatian forces during Operation *Oluje* (“Storm,” 1995).

⁶¹ Of the child and adult participants I surveyed, none had arrived in Canada during the war as refugees.

Although the government has put effort into reviving the region, signs of destruction remained noticeable. The landscape was littered with remains of leveled dwellings and villages, shelled buildings, and remnant minefields. As the drive through the Krajina progressed, parents emphatically expressed how they wished for their children to understand their surroundings.

“Look at the green building, look at all the marks on it.”

“Hey guys, look at the mark on the wall, it’s where they threw a grenade during the war.”

At one point a mother came to the back of the bus and pulled the window curtains open exclaiming:

“Open the curtain so you can see all the houses that have been bombed, so you can understand what it’s all about.”

The atmosphere created by passing images and incorporated commentary was further charged by a “soundtrack” blaring from the bus sound system, comprised almost exclusively of music by Marko Perković and his band “Thompson.” Thompson is a familiar band in the diaspora and one of the only homeland bands to tour diaspora cities usually every few years, and his music is a staple of zabava events across North America (see chapter two description of the Festival zabava). I was intrigued that the macho voice of lead singer Perković, along with Thompson’s driving rhythms and powerful electric guitar sounds were chosen as a part of the Krajina drive.

Perković, seen by some as a politically-charged and right-leaning nationalist figure (writer of “*Bojna Čavoglave*” discussed earlier) is infamous for songs that share an “understanding of ‘Croatian values’ with the formulators of the 1990s nationalist

narrative” (Baker 2006).⁶² Senjković and Dukić (52) describe Thompson’s “thematic complexes” as “male hedonism, the battle against the enemy in the last war, [and] the historical stereotype of Croatian nationalism...” Songs played repeatedly on the Krajina drive included these themes, along with references to genocide against Serbs (“*Bojna Čavoglave*” and “*Anica Kninska Kraljica*,” “Anica Queen of Knin”). Natural vistas and barren or destroyed buildings we observed through the windows of the bus were eerily similar to Thompson’s music videos and shared striking similarities with motifs seen on state television during the war of 1991-95 where “series of pictures of the country’s natural beauties and Croatian cultural monuments reminded viewers of the values that had to be defended” (Senjković and Dukić 56).

Were the music and the scenery paired coincidentally? Or, was it by chance that Thompson was put into the CD drive that day? I hesitate to answer definitively, yet I was not alone in pondering the connection. One young woman seated across the aisle from me muttered under her breath, “Is it any coincidence that we are listening to Thompson while driving through this area?” At moments it almost seemed to reinforce the sentiments that parents desired their children to share, for example at one point a parent pointed at the stereo speakers and asked: “There, do you understand what he’s talking about? Now do you understand Knin?” The following is an excerpt from “*Anica kninska kraljica*,” the song she was referring to.⁶³

⁶² Baker continues: Thompson “shares his understanding of ‘Croatian values’ with the formulators of the 1990s nationalist narrative, which offered uncritical praise to any group or individual who had defended the independence of Croatia, including the 1940s state of Ante Pavelić. As Thompson’s popularity increased, this implicit and explicit attitude in his repertoire proved more and more troubling to Croats who rejected the Tudjmanist narrative...” (Baker 2006).

⁶³ “One of [Perković’s] wartime (1993) songs, “*Anica, Kninska kraljica*”, sets a description of a Croatian assault on a Serbian base in Krajina alongside a call for Croats to remember that Knin, the Krajina capital,

*Zbog Anice i bokala vina,
zapalit ću Krajinu do Knina
Zapalit ću dva, tri srpska štaba,
da ja nisam dolazio džaba,*

"Because of Anica and a jug of wine,
I'll set fire to Krajina all the way up to Knin
I'll set fire to two, three Serb headquarters,
For my trip not to be in vain

(Source: Liner notes from "*Thompson: Sve Najbolje*." Translation: K. Wiens)

Incidentally, the following day the group visited the above mentioned bastion of war-time cities, Knin, and had a guided walking tour of the ancient hill-top castle where Tudjman raised the Croatian flag after the success of Operation Storm and the re-capture of the Krajina.⁶⁴

Another interesting situation took place some days later. As we drove along the coast, our tour guide told a story over the bus loudspeaker about an offer made to the Dalmatian pop-star Severina to perform at a concert in Belgrade. When the tour guide stated that Severina "told 'them' that they couldn't pay her enough to play in that city" (paraphrase), the parents at the front of the tour bus cheered loudly, a show of support or happiness for a musician's refusal to connect with the enemy.

The tour guide did not elaborate further or share that in that same year (2006), Severina had gone to Belgrade to collaborate with the famous Serbian musician Goran

belonged to the legendary King Zvonimir...[a] symbolic legitimization of the Croatian war effort against Serbs in Krajina by referring to Zvonimir's association with Knin." (Baker 2004).

⁶⁴ The tour at Knin centred around the medieval kingdom and its significance in Operation Storm. Statements from a post-"Storm" speech by Tudjman resonated with the nature and understandings shared on the tour given that day at Knin: "Knin was not just the capital of Croatian King Zvonimir, Knin was the capital of the kingdom of Croatia at the time when we did not have our own rulers from our own blood until 1522, when it was captured by the Turks and when those who were in our Croatian Knin until yesterday came together with them. And from today, this is Croatian Knin...And [applause] there can be no return to the past, to the times when they the Serbs were spreading cancer in the heart of Croatia, cancer which was destroying the Croatian national being...and then, owing to the strength of the Croatian Army, the wisdom of our decisions and our leadership, they disappeared in two to three days [applause for 12 seconds]. They didn't even have the time to take with them their filthy foreign currency or their knickers."(<http://emperors-clothes.com/docs/tudj.htm>)

Bregović for her Eurovision song *Štikla* (“High heels”), nor that she had performed her first post-war concert in Belgrade in 2002, four years earlier. With only part of the story, the parents could celebrate ideas that they saw as worthy, that “the Other can not or should not own or occupy the self that music purports to own” (Radano and Bohlman 6), a continued separation and opposition between “our” and “their” cultures and by implication between our and their people.

The combination of images and experiences (Knin, Thompson, destroyed landscapes, mothers pointing out the windows, narratives shared by the tour guide) created a strong sense of the kind of Croatia that diasporan parents desired to see and have their children understand. Complexities of the war, the actions of Croatian forces in the region during Operation Storm, or the delicate nature of the situation or a desire for balanced discussion of the events were not a part of the messages portrayed.

I have discussed how tour repertoire, itinerary and activities were influenced by the notions and ideals of Croatia and “Croatianness” that the visitors wanted or expected to experience. Interaction with homeland Croats over the course of the tour was limited to post-concert parties or casual conversations in the course of tour events as bus travel, guided tours, and hotel arrangements kept the group by-and-large isolated from interaction with the daily lives of Croats. This relative isolation allowed room for constructing and creating a tour and a homeland that they wished to see. Within their construction, songs, events and discourses revealed a group seeking to emphasize solidarity with homelanders and understandings of Croats in continued opposition to Serbs.

3.4 2006 Brampton Festival

Musical Styles that Challenge "Croatianess"

Exclusivist agendas of right-wing nationalisms often aim to purge culture of what is perceived as foreign or belonging to "the other." Staged folklore performance can help shape notions of what "Croatianess" looks and sounds like by expelling "all foreign influences, which sought to oppress the Croatian identity and culture" (Festival Booklet 26). Actions or sounds that may be perceived as "Serbian" or "Balkan" are avoided in folklore performance, emphasizing cultural heritage "that would include the best of classical and modern European culture" unlike the "Balkan tribes to the east [who] pursued primitive existence" (Festival Booklet 21).

Zabava repertoire, however, presents an interesting situation for wider discussion about "our" music and "their" music. While folklore repertoire presents clearly "Western" music (tambura ensembles, even duple or triple time signatures, tonal harmonies), sounds often associated with "Balkan" or "Serbian" music (additive metered time signatures, frenetic melodic lines on the accordion) are also a part of zabava music, either in choices of Serbian and Bosnian repertoire, or in more subtle manifestations such as in the driving 7/8 "Balkan warrior" beat (Pettan 1998: 25) of Thompson's *"Bojna Čavoglave."* Other performances which would be understood as "Balkan" include kolo dances in linear snake-like figures with dancers holding hands and dancing to even (4/4) or uneven (5/8 or 7/8) rhythms, the performance of Bosnian and Serbian influenced accordion melodies and popular songs, and Serbian pop songs and Bosnian *sevdalinkas*.

Questions about how "Croatianess" sounds have been raised on the Croworld.ca website, for example: What is acceptable or unacceptable dance music at community

events? Should only Croatian music be played at Croatian events? What about Serbian pop music? What exactly *is* Croatian or Serbian music, how does it sound, and how can you tell the difference? Does it make you a bad Croat or less Croatian to listen to Serbian music?

In the homeland during the war, Serbian music was banned from public airwaves “not only because of its supposed ‘low cultural quality’ but also because of the belief that such songs ‘belong exclusively to the Serbian (un)cultural identity’” (Bellamy 68), and these ideologies became a part of diaspora discourse as well. To some people, Serbian music is as much of an enemy as Serbs themselves, and in such cases the “racialization of music’s metaphysics functions also to limit choices and options” (Radano and Bohlman 8):

If you listen to Serbian music, then you are a scum *izdajnik* [traitor] just like Mesić....If you listen to Serb music or hang out with any Serbs for that matter, you are my enemy just as much as they are.
(BracoNDH)

Others equate Serbian music not only as a threat to Croatian culture, but question the listener’s true Croatianness:

It’s the worst music I’ve ever heard, doesn’t sound good, lyrics are very poor and I cant help but think of *Cigani* [‘gypsies’] when I hear it...But listening to Serbs and Muslims...sickening, however nothing I can do about it, but don’t go preaching how you are all big Hrvati [Croats]...And don’t tell me how music is just music, and its got nothing to do with anything...music is culture. And culture makes a *narod* [nationhood]...I prefer to stick to my own culture, and not someone else’s culture, let alone a culture of people who killed our narod.
(marin marin)

There are people who question such clear-cut terms, especially when personal taste enters the discussion. What if people like the songs? What is the point of party

music, and what kind of music can best promote a party atmosphere? Should trying not to 'sound Serbian' (or 'Balkan') be more important than playing a song which gets people in a party mood?

It's a personal choice of preference and got nothing to do with 'Serb loving'...It's funny because it's all too often the case that people love a song then they find out the original artist is Serb or Muslim or whatever then all of a sudden they reject the song...

(lida)

When I listen to Serbian Narodno⁶⁵, I don't think about Blieburg, Vukovar and so on, I just enjoy the music. It is just folk music about love, friendship, drinking. Why should we not listen to it if it is good music?

(Bad_blue_boy)

Everyone's an expert when it comes to these tunes and everyone knows if they are Serb tunes or not, yet you see everyone flock to the stage when a band starts playing them. So who is wrong? The band for playing them, or everyone for singing along?

(LoPoVe)

My favourite argument is "well the version I have is by Miljac i slatki dodir so it must be Croatian."

(est)

Oliver and all that ain't gonna make your heart race but most *nardone* from Bosna (Muslim singers mostly)⁶⁶ have the songs such as *I tebe sam sit kafano*, *Žena prijatelja mog*, *O majko majko*, BUT you get the d***head who says too much Muslim crap and the accordion (wait for it is a Serb instrument) and Cros should not be playing it!

(Squeeze)

See, that's the problem. People don't know that there's more to Croatian music than Oliver or Gibonni and therefore they think that artists who don't play that type of music sound "Serbian". Because hey, it has a melody, it must be Serbian, because real Croatian music is

⁶⁵ Narodno style music is typically associated with Serbia, and features fast paced beats and ornate melodies on accordion or synthesizer.

⁶⁶ The writer brings up a topic worthy of further investigation. While this paper focuses exclusively on Croatian and Serbian culture, zabava music includes Bosnian Muslim (Bosniac) repertoire, though Bosniacs themselves are often looked down on and prejudiced by the community. I have found that often young people do not realize that some of the songs are of Bosnian origin, and, while holding prejudice towards Bosniacs, they see the music as acceptable because their parents listened to it.

always lame, in major key and has to be played on a 30-year-old keyboard, right?

(psy4)

Anything that is remotely *veselo* [cheerful] is branded Serbian.... Without accordion there is nothing... The people who can enjoy REAL good music usually listen to Cromusic all the time, not like these *cigani* who know a couple Thompson and Bulic tunes...(basically listen to real simple Croatian tunes for their real simple Croatian vocabularies) in order to feel Croatian. And that's the problem here in Canada, and it is a contributing factor to why functions suck. Same tunes all the time. Find me a zabava where I won't here "*Gori borovina*" (I swear if I hear it one more time I'll freak) or "*Ruza hrvatska*"...At boxing day dance at monaghans the place ERUPTED when NR busted out some real good Meho [Puzić] tunes like "*Odavno se ti javila nisi*" ... Meanwhile more than 3/4ths of the very same crowd would tell you that they "hate" Muslim music ...

(Brankec)

Let's not be imitators [of Western pop] for the sake of not being "Balkan."

(herceg_jadran)

Discussions of what Serbian music is like and what its role in the community is are interesting not only for their content, but also because they illustrate that ideas of constructing the self still depend on "the other," as a symbolic enemy or as an imagined continued threat to one's own culture. Despite attempts to position "us" in contrast to "them," where exactly the line lies dividing the two supposed dichotomies and the function of such a division is not clearly or easily defined. Trends that I have presented (very "Western" staged folklore versus more "flexible" definitions of "Croatianness" at zabava events) were noted within the Australian community by Svanibor Pettan, where folklore performance presented "Western European" looking and sounding repertoires but social dances embraced what "official media in Croatia would avoid as a notorious example of "Balkan" music, in this context synonymous with "Serbian," for its mixture of

musical contents, instrumentation and style” (Pettan 2006).

Song Lyrics: Reinforcing “Croatianess”

Zabava music serves as a forum for the maintenance of war-related memory by including politically charged lyrics. At the Saturday night zabava of the 2006 festival, I noted that one song in particular evoked an energetic reaction from attendees. While the upbeat polka-style song was performed by the band on stage, I became fixated on a mother dancing with her young daughter close to the front of the stage, jumping and singing to the music. As I watched the mother coax her child to dance, smiling at her and singing along, my observations were interrupted by a woman who told me that the song being performed unabashedly glorifies Ante Gotovina, a General awaiting trial by the ICTY court charged with crimes against humanity.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Including: persecutions, murder, plunder of property, wanton destruction of cities, towns or villages, deportation and forced displacement, and other inhumane acts.
(<http://www.un.org/icty/indictment/english/got-ai040224e.htm>)

Ante, Ante

*Ima jedan čovik
Tvrđi nego stina
Ime mu je Ante Gotovina
cili svoj život
Hrvatsko je dao
i nikada nije
na koljena pao
Učija si škole
po stranome svitu
kako postat čovik
kako dobit bitku
Sta si uz ramen
svakoga vojnika
za domovinu ti si
ponos i dika*

*Ante Ante , svi smo za te
svi smo za te i uvijek ćemo biti
Ante Ante život za te
život za te jesi heroj rata
ti si Ante, legenda Hrvata*

*Vodija si sve
Blijeske i Oluje
protjerao četnike
neka svatko čuje
žalija nisi ni truda ni znoja
zato ti je zahvalna
domovina tvoja.⁶⁸*

(Lyrics <croradio.net>
Translation: Ana Stepenak)

There is one man
Stronger than a rock
His name is Ante Gotovina
His whole life
He gave for Croatia
And never
Fell to his knees
Studied at school
In a foreign world,
How to become a man
How to win a battle
Stood by
Every soldier's shoulder
For homeland you are
Pride and joy

Ante, Ante, we are all for you,
All for you and always will be
Ante, Ante, life for you
Life for you because you are a war hero
Ante, you are a Croat legend

You saw all,
Thunders and Storms⁶⁹
Banished Chetniks
Let everybody hear
Did not regret nor sweat
That is why your
Homeland is thankful

⁶⁸ original version by Niko Bete

⁶⁹ Names of official military operations

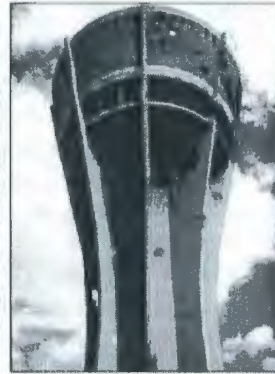
Print Material

Every year, the local Festival committee produces a Festival booklet for purchase by dancers, their families, and audience members. It includes lists of performers' names, photos of ensembles, advertisements by sponsors, the program for folklore and social events, and short histories of the hosting ensemble and of Croatia. Though this thesis focuses on activity involving music making, the annual booklet is an interesting and fitting example of a text-based presentation of "memory, value, myth, and symbol" aligning with right-wing ideologies.

The 2006 booklet cites a 1991 cookbook as its main source for the brief section on Croatian history. According to the text, the history of the Croatian nation started with the arrival of Croatian tribes on the shores of the Adriatic, who became, from then on, (and without exception) a nationally-minded citizenry, and remained so until the 19th century figure nationalist ideologue Ante Starčević. Jumping from Starčević to the late 20th century (completely avoiding information on the most tumultuous and defining century in the modern Republic's history), the reader is presented with only a short paragraph and unidentified photograph (the shelled Vukovar water tower, a symbol of Croat victimhood at the hands of Serbian invaders) to explain the last century of Croatian history.

Freedom at Last •

After centuries of conflict and oppression, the Croatian people declared their Independence from Yugoslavia on June 26, 1991. At last the Croatian people were on the road to enjoying their national and cultural rights as Croats. Although their independence came out of years of bloodshed, turmoil, and ethnic cleansing, Croats have nothing but pride in their homeland and in those who were lost in order to preserve the rights, history, and culture of their dear and treasured country.



These sorts of patchwork histories, devoid of details (which risk running contrary to the desired interpretations), appear in other materials supported and produced by the diaspora's "self-elected intelligentsia" in the 1990s (Winland 698).⁷⁰ A history excluding a period open to many interpretations must be presented as "sufficiently constant...legible and acceptable to the majority..." (Senjković). Since I am unable to obtain figures as to how many attendees purchase and read the 2006 booklet, I have added this example as an interesting illustration of how self-elected community event organizers can mediate the "public face" of "Croatianness" and its content.

Further Investigation

One area for further investigation is the role of the commercial music industry during the 1990s and after. The music of Marko Perković Thompson is an example illustrating the relevance of this issue, especially within processes through which acceptable histories and notions of "Croatianness" are shaped. Crowworld.ca users seem to

⁷⁰ Print materials produced by the community expose primordial and nationalist understandings in books such as "Croatia and the Croats" (Čuvalo et al. 1991) which blatantly proclaim Bosnians as ethnic Croats, Bosnia as a part of Croatia, and other nationalist themes. Selective and one-sided accounts rose to the forefront of community media and public discourse and were even portrayed to the Canadian public. For example, the "John Zdunić Foundation" funded the distribution of nationalist printed materials into libraries across Canada (John Zdunić himself proclaimed that "There was no Bosnia issue, only the Croatia issue" (Hockenos 45).

disagree as to whether Perković produces nationalist music out of sincere self-expression or rather because of the chance to market towards a lucrative niche by catering to diaspora nostalgia:⁷¹

If you remember that first album of his, *Moli Mala*, there were only a couple of nationalist songs on it. He completely disappeared after that until *Anica kninska kraljica*. I assume that he saw which side his bread is buttered on and what people wanted to hear from him...As far as focusing on the diaspora...it's a good strategy.

(SuzaGuza)

... Then with the release of his new song, everyone began saying how they were sick of all his *domoljubne pjesme* [nationalist songs] and that all he's doing is trying to get rich off of the diaspora. I... disagree with the criticisms...Unlike most artists which abandoned this genre of music post 1995, Thompson continued to produce some of the most memorable Croatian songs of our time (*Geni Geni Kameni*, *Lijepa li si*, etc.). Sure the diaspora craves these songs for the most part, but I highly doubt Thompson's music is fuelled by this fact.

(test)

Such songs are played or celebrated in diaspora in part because they share acceptable and community-supported understandings of Croatia and “Croatianess,” and the music of Thompson articulates and reinforces right-wing notions of the homeland. The extent to which Thompson’s music continues to be themed towards these notions could add an interesting dimension to this project.

3.5 Conclusion

I have pointed out cases illustrating how music is used to express right-wing nationalist notions of “Croatianess.” The expressions discussed indicated the presence of homeland war themes as part of in tour repertoire and activity, serving as a means to

⁷¹ Pettan (1998: 15) points out that there had been skepticism in the homeland about music which promoted patriotic feelings during the war, particularly as to whether the music arose from personal feeling or for the purpose of commercial gain.

portray a continued emotional attachment and solidarity with the homeland, and to reinforce the notions of polarization between “us” and “them,” Croats and Serbs. I have also given examples of how music preference can challenge “Serbian-free” interpretations of Croatian culture.

Continued use of repertoires and references to the homeland war help perpetuate ideas of “Croatianess” fixated on the politics of the 1990s.

God speaks every language, even Serbian. But we’re not supposed to talk about that because Croatia had a war with Serbia and Croatia won.
 (“Amy”)

We need another war to get [people] to remember they are Croats.
 (Salama)

The first statement (above) was shared with me by a 9-year-old girl in the Hrvatsko Selo group, the second is from a Crowworld.ca posting. I have called this fixation on the 1990s a “perpetual state of 1991.” Rihtman-Augustin (70) uses the term “ongoing trance,” and Gregory S. Brown (26) a “homeland hangover,” part of identity negotiations requiring that “migrants carry their cultural baggage with them and, based on the situation in the local context, decide what to preserve and what to dismiss” (Petrović 19).

My project illustrates a divergence between homeland and diaspora communities. This is not to say that nationalist groups do not continue to exist in the homeland, nor that left-wing or pluralistic definitions of “Croatian” do not also exist in diaspora; however, it is clear that the 1990s shaped the consciousness of both the homeland and diaspora communities in a significant manner. Music associated with the war has enjoyed a very different and perhaps longer life span in Canada than in the homeland.

A brief look into the destinies of the songs that contributed to this achievement [independence] suggests that most of them now, with the conflict being over, do not live any more. A few of the songs got new

roles which prolonged their existence...The others, which meant so much only a few years ago, became obsolete or "buried"...many people who associated these songs with the war and its deadly consequences would prefer them to stay where they are.

(Pettan 1998: 26)

The nation has been declared, the enemies have been defeated, and the homeland has entered a new era. European Union membership looks hopeful, and economic growth is on the horizon. Steps have been taken led by government, church, and cultural groups⁷² in the difficult processes of reconciliation with history, with neighbors, and with national minorities. Today, quotidian realities faced by homelander and by diasporic groups are considerably different. Has a "new role" (see Pettan above) resulted in the prolonged appearance of war-time themes in diaspora musical activity?

There is evidence that diasporans have been "free to nurture their prejudices outside their home country" (G. Brown 2), aided by maintenance of and reliance on 1990s wartime themes that could be interpreted as "vulgarized ethnic culture and obsolete political ideals" (Winland 700), "petrified...in Romanticism... anchored in a particular interpretation of national folklore and a proscribed political idea" (Senjković and Dukić 57-58). Folklore, as a tool in the retention of nationalist complexes, has become a practice "normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek[s] to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past... a suitable historic past" (Hobsbawm 1).

⁷² Activities in recent years have included Government initiated steps towards reconciliation with the newly independent (2006) nation of Montenegro; messages during Pope John Paul II's visit to Osijek included encouragement towards forgiveness and reconciliation with neighbors ("Croatian World Conference" website); and the 2003 International Folklore Festival in Zagreb which featured the theme of minority communities in Croatia, including "Albanians, Austrians, Bosniacs, Czechs, Germans, Hungarians, Italians, Jews, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Roma, Rusyns, Serbs, Slovaks, Slovenes and Ukrainians" ("Smotra" website, Archives, 2003).

Chapter 4: The NDH

The period of the Second World War is a contentious era of modern Croatian history. The period from 1941-1945 saw the installation of the NDH, the *Nezavisna Država Hrvatska* ("Independent State of Croatia"), an Axis puppet regime which, while allowing Croatia independence from the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, saw rigorous campaigns of genocide against Serbian, Roma, Jewish and leftist Croatian people.

Right-wing nationalists tend to interpret the NDH period as one in which atrocities performed were justified for the sake of the independence of the nation. Non-Croatian (Serbian, Jewish, Roma) victim counts are marginalized by the nationalist agenda that resorts to comparisons with the number of Croatian victims during the period (especially during the Bleiberg massacres).⁷³ The NDH era served the nationalist cause of the 1990s, when Ustaša-led genocide was relativized by president Franjo Tuđman "as part of a normal progress of war," implying justification for "the post-1990 process of ethnonational homogenization" (Winland 2002: 703). Tuđmanist histories "presented the HDZ as a synthesis and reconciliation of all trends in the 'vertical line' of Croatian history- from Starčević to Radić - from Ustaša to Partisans, and from the World War II fascist 'Independent State of Croatia' [NDH] to the ZAVNOH (Regional Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Croatia)" (Hislope 475). Parties seeming to be philosophically opposed were portrayed as having the same goal, the "thousand year old dream" of Croatian independence. As an era in recent history that could be portrayed as a period of Croatian freedom,⁷⁴ symbols (such as the NDH-era flag) "regardless of their

⁷³ The Bleiberg massacres took place close to the Austrian/Slovenian border in May of 1945, and saw the systematic slaughter of tens of thousands of Croats fleeing the defeated NDH.

⁷⁴ This was an important aspect of the interpretation portrayed in activities discussed in this chapter. While a nationalist viewpoint sees the NDH as a time of freedom from the yoke of Yugoslavia, others

tarnish by the WWII fascist regime" (Hislope 476), were invoked by nationalist movements to remind the population of their victimhood, and that freedom and independence had been and was again achievable.

The actions of the ruling *Ustaša* party and its leader *Poglavnik* ("Chief") Ante Pavelić provoke a wide range of reactions, from fervent support and glorification to regret and desire for reconciliation. Despite the passing of over a half-century, the period of the NDH continues to serve as a focal point of identity negotiation in Canada, Australia and the United States. Into the 1990s, April 10th (the date of the declaration of the Independent State in 1941) was celebrated throughout Canada with banquets, picnics, and concerts. Such events are decreasing in frequency or have been slowly re-cast as celebrations of Croatian independence to try to shed the association with the NDH; however, within certain communities or church congregations the association remains important and desired.

In London [Ontario] on March 7th it was announced that today, April 15th, would be *proslava* [celebration] for *deseti travanj* [April 10th] within our *župa* [parish]. By March 8th, the priest had received a letter from the *biskupija* [diocese] here in London claiming that "*Hrvati*" ["Croats"] have been mailing and calling because they have a problem with this, and the pictures of both *Poglavnik* Dr. Ante Pavelić and *Doglavnik* Džaferbeg Kulenović in our hall. The hall went silent. *Deseti travanj* was always big here...but I was totally grossed out that our own *župljani* "*hrvati*" ["Croatian" parishioners] would go so far as to get the *biskupija* involved. These are the people who cannot stand *hrvatstvo* [Croathood].

(dalmatinac69)

We had the same thing happen here a while ago. People were saying this and that. All of a sudden everything was taboo, everybody had to politically correct. [We] even had people saying that we should go out of our way to make *Srbi* [Serbs] feel welcome in our hall...

interpretations point out that the NDH was ruled by Italian and German interests, and that it left many Croatian needs and people unsatisfied.

Anyways d69, we solved it by setting a date a few months in advance where there would be a discussion about the photos and the old flag. When the date came, no one from the other side even showed, they had the chance. Everyone just socialized and ate, the same way it has been for the last 50 years here.

(pavelic)

Right-wing narratives that seek to justify or glorify the NDH era and the actions of the Ustaša party use sanitized and selective histories as their basis. These narratives portray if not glorify figures of that era as noble men who fought and died for the ultimate goal: Croatian freedom from oppression and the worthy cause of independence.⁷⁵ The following announcement that greeted Crowworld visitors around the time of 10 April 2006 is an example of such narratives:

We wish a happy April 10 to all Croats throughout the world.
God and Croats!

We celebrate April 10, because we do not renounce the Republic of Croatia's warriors, Independent Republic of Croatia's [NDH] warriors. They and their Chief did not fight for fascism, communism, racism, it was unknown to them, they died only and solely for the Croatian Republic. Because of that exactly, we do not renounce and do not remonstrate from the Independent Republic of Croatia [NDH], it's brave defenders and it's chief Dr. Ante Pavelić, because love for homeland and their people led them.

(Crowworld.ca)

Glorification transfers into music performance, reflected by, for example, continued support among a small number of young people in the homeland and diaspora for a song dating back to the Pavelić regime, recently revived in a performance by the rocker Marko Perković Thompson. Themes found in the song "*Jasenovac i Gradiška stara*" include the Jasenovac death camp and fascist Ustaša regime leaders.

⁷⁵ For example, portraying an NDH state created by opportunists, one which saw the deaths of thousands of Croatian civilians at the hands of the ruling party, or that "no matter how hard the Ustaša worked at stroking the Croat national pride... the policies of the NDH quickly disappointed all Croat expectations" (Banac 25) run contrary to the desired themes.

Jasenovac i Gradiška Stara

*Jasenovac i Gradiška Stara,
To je kuća Maksovih mesara.
U Čapljini klaonica bila,
Mnogo Srba Neretva nosila.
Oj Neretvo teci mi na stranu,
Nosi Srbe plavome Jadranu.
Kroz Imotski kamioni žure,
Voze crnce Francetića Jure.
Ja Ustaša i ćaća mi bio,
Otac sinu zanat ostavio.
Ko je moga zamisliti lani,
Da će Božić slaviti partizani.
Ko je reka jeba li ga ćaća,
Da se Crna Legija ne vraća.
Jasenovac i Gradiška Stara,
To je kuća Maksovih mesara.
Sjajna zvijezdo iznad Metkovića,
Pozradi nam Ante Paveliću.*

Jasenovac and Stara Gradiška
That's the house of Maks' butchers.
There was a slaughterhouse in Čapljina
Neretva carried away many Serbs.
Hey, Neretva, flow downhill,
Carry Serbs into the blue Adriatic.
Through Imotski trucks rush
Driving black uniforms of Jure Francetić.
I am Ustasha and so was my father,
Father left craft to his son.
Who could imagine last year
That Partisans would celebrate Christmas.
Who said, his father fuck him
That Black Legion is not coming back.
Jasenovac and Stara Gradiška
That's the house of Maks' butchers.
Shining star above Metković
Send our greetings to Ante Pavelić

Many young people I have spoken with in Canada are not aware of this song and thus do not see it as important in personal or community musical activity. Having said that, an early 2006 front-page announcement on Crowworld.ca declared support for the

song, thus indicating that there are young people in Canada who know of the song and who see it as an important expression of “Croatianess.”

“THOMPSON - JASENOVAC I GRADISKA STARA”

As you have undoubtedly heard from this website or others, Thompson has recently been under heavy scrutiny for his nationalism and so-called 'fascism'. The media is portraying him as an extremist, a fascist and an Ustaša sympathizer. They have stirred all this controversy simply because of a song that all Croats know; a song that has been sung by our parents, their parents and their parents. A number of sites have arisen supporting Thompson and his pursuit of nationalism. One such site is www.don't-stop-thompson.cjb.net. Although visiting this site and signing the petition won't do anything per se, everyone should sign it based on principle. We cannot show the 'anti-Croatian' people that our nationalism is dwindling. Crowworld.ca supports Thompson and his endeavor. We will continue to sing songs like Jasenovac to ensure that everyone knows just how proud a people we can be.

If you have not heard the song Thompson is being criticized for, Click Here to download Thompson- Jasenovac i Gradiška Stara (<http://Croworld.ca/comment.php?comment.news.63>)

The NDH in diaspora

Prompted by signals received from the homeland during the 1990s (Tudjman's revisionist agenda) right-wing ideologies rose to the forefront of Croatian-Canadian community media and discourse (Winland 2002: 698), including renewed interest in NDH era events (Durić 91, 94-95). These ideologies were brought from Croatia by individuals from the post-1945 and 1960s/70s wave, whose “passions and historical time were frozen” in eras gone by (Hockenos 56). Because the ideologies of a number of individuals⁷⁶ in Canada shared similarities with nationalist rhetoric proliferated by the Tudjman government, these right-wing ideologies (including revisionist understandings of history, culture, and ethnicity) became portrayed in community media and events as acceptable and correct interpretations of Croatian nationhood. Rehashed historical events

⁷⁶ Individuals such as Gojko Šušak and Ante Beljo discussed in Chapter 3

including the “reinterpretation of national history, particularly of the Bleiberg victims, of demographic losses during World War II...served as powerful motivating symbols that set in motion the process of ethnic homogenization and mobilization” (Durić 91).

Glorification of the NDH era helped raise the nationalist cause to almost mythical heights. The date of the declaration of the NDH (10 April) was celebrated across the Canada with banquets, parties, music and folklore performances. At that time, and still in a very few cases, photos of Ante Pavelić were displayed in church buildings and halls. Hockenos describes the public proliferators of right-wing political ideologies in Canada as men who “never established roots in Canada’s multi-ethnic society but dwelled in the subcultural enclaves they had carved out for themselves...The Croatia they mapped out in their publications covered the Croatian republic and half of Bosnia and Hercegovina, stretching all the way to the River Drina, just as it had in the 1940s” (Hockenos 56).⁷⁷

4.1 The NDH in Festival Events

Themes related to the NDH presented me with a challenge, as the glorification of the NDH that I witnessed was confusing to deal with. I soon realized, however, that frightening or negative aspects of the era were not always the first brought to the minds of community members.

Symbols

“Mythic structures require the incorporation of symbols” (Smith 183) to provide visual reminders of past events and possibilities to strive for. In Canada, two symbols

⁷⁷ “Members of the second ‘ustaša emigration’ created the myth of the Drina after the Second World War, after the fall of the NDH. Instead of looking on the river as an actual border that had once been won, which should have been defended, and which was lost in such a catastrophic way, the myth about the border on the Drina now became a way to encourage nostalgia, resistance and finally a desire for revenge” (Goldstein 91).

have been pointed out to me as being of more particular importance than most: the NDH-era flag and associated *grb* (crest) symbols. A significant difference between the NDH era and the contemporary Republic flag is the pattern of white and red checkers: the crest with a white square in the top left corner indicates the NDH-era flag, while the modern Republic of Croatia crest begins with a red square in the top left corner (the modern flag features a smaller crown of crests above the red and white *grb*). It is important to note that while both forms of the crest (white and red-squared) are found in archeological artifacts and historical documents, and have been used by various political movements throughout history, in the diaspora the white-square *grb* and flag are often associated with and referred to as the NDH or “old” flag (see figure 4), while the red-square and crowned *grb* or flag is the “new” (Republic of Croatia) flag (see figure 5). In addition, there are issues of esthetics that can influence the choice of crest in publications or decoration: on some backgrounds, white corners look more pleasing than red corners, or vice versa.

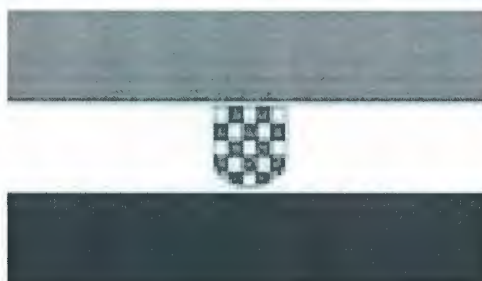


Figure 4.1 The “Old” Flag (Google images)



Figure 4.2 The “New” Flag (Google images)



Figure 4.3 Logo of the Croatian Folklore Federation of Canada (Festival Booklet Cover)

The Brampton festival booklet was available for purchase by anyone attending the festival. In the booklet there are pictures and information on the groups performing, lists of repertoire presented, short histories of Croatia and Croats in Canada, and advertisements from event sponsors. Photos of all participating ensembles are included, and many groups incorporate flags into their photos. Some groups include the Canadian and new Croatian flag, others the Canadian and old Croatian flag, and some use all three. Throughout the booklet, white-squared flags or crests appear over 50 times as page décor or in crests of various organizations (see figure 6), the official Republic flag appears only twice within the program, both times on letterhead of documents from homeland based organizations (a letter from President Mesić and one from the Consulate in Mississauga).

Typically during folklore festivals and folklore performances, both an “old” and a “new” flag (alongside the Canadian flag) are displayed on or in close proximity to the performance area. This was also the case at the 2006 Brampton festival: three flags were draped at the front of the stage, the Canadian flag, the “new” Croatian flag, and the “old”

Croatian flag. I noted that the “old” flag was not displayed on Saturday, only for the Sunday event. I offer three possible explanations for this: first, it may have been an oversight on Saturday which was then corrected on Sunday; secondly that a complaint may have been made when the “old” flag was not presented on the first day; or thirdly the absence of the “old” flag on Saturday was connected with the presence of important guests of honor (including the Croatian ambassador and the president of *Matica Hrvatska*) who were seated in the front row at the Saturday performance.

It would be problematic on my part to assume that the NDH era is associated with every appearance of the “old” flag or crest, especially considering that community members have implied or shared differing opinions on the matter. Some say the choice is a purposeful association with the NDH; others assert that it is a matter of esthetics, and yet others maintain that it is a reference confined to Hercegovnian belonging. I would suggest however that the predominance of the flag and *grb* in festival material shows one or combinations of all three possibilities.

Music: Folklore Performance

The Republic of Croatia is crescent shaped. During the Kingdom of Croatia (c.925-1102) and the NDH (1941-1945), Croatian-ruled territories included much of what is today Bosnia and Hercegovina. Modern-day debates over ownership of Bosnian and Hercegovnian territories stem from ideologues of the 19th and 20th century (figures such as Ante Starčević and his followers, later triumphed by Ante Pavelić. See Goldstein 2005). They involve complex issues and opinions of group migration, history, religious conversion and ethnicity. These issues are too lengthy to discuss in this study,⁷⁸ but it is

⁷⁸ Both Goldstein (“The Boundary on the Drina”) and Žanić discuss the roots of contemporary fascinations with Bosnian territorial ownership.

noteworthy that they are based on vague and revisionist histories, hearkening back to medieval kingdoms and to notions of Bosnians being ethnic Croats who were converted to Islam, thus suggesting that Bosnia and Hercegovina actually belongs to ethnic Croats.

One version of the Croatian national anthem reflects this notion:

Official Republic anthem, verse two:

*"Teci, Savo, Dravo teci,
nit' ti Dunav, silu gubi"*

"Flow on Sava, Drava flow on,
nor you Danube, lose vigour"

Alternative version, verse two:

*"Savo, Dravo, Drina teci,
nit' ti Dunav, silu gubi"*

"Flow on Sava, Drava, Drina,
nor you, Danube, lose vigour"

The first version calls on the Sava, Drava, and Danube rivers, while the second calls on the Sava, Drava, Drina, and Danube. Each version indicates an understanding of Croatia's natural/geopolitical borders: one includes the river boundaries of the modern Republic, the other stretches the nation towards the Drina river in the south.

Historian Ivo Goldstein (2005: 105) tells us that "[s]ince the elections of 3 January 2000 in Croatia and the passage of the post-war years, the theme of boundary on the Drina is no longer part of public discourse," and that "the anthem was taken over by émigré circles in this form, and that is how they sang it even into the 1960s" (ibid. 89). While it may be that in the homeland these debates have died down, symbolic territorialism lives on in diaspora performances of the national anthem inclusive of the Drina boundary reference, such as that performed at the 2006 Brampton festival, where the anthem was presented in both performance (sung by a female quartet on the

performance stage during the opening of the festival) and in print (in the folklore festival booklet).

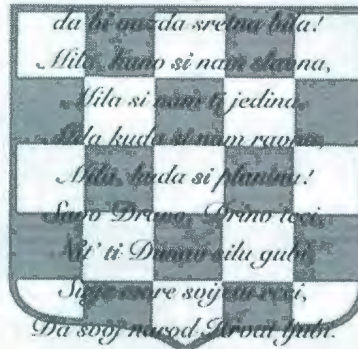


XXXII canadian croatian folklore festival



Lijepa Nasa Domovino

*Lijepa nasa domovino
Oj junacka zemljo mila,
Stare slave ljedovino,*



*da bi ovuda sretno bila!
Mila, kamo si nam stara,
Mila si nam ti jedina,
Mila kuda si nam ravna,
Mila, kada si planina!
Savo Drago, Drago teci,
Mi' ti Drago silu gubi,
Sve svoje svijetu reci,
Da svoj narod Trovat gubi.
Dok mu pije sunce grije,
Dok mu hrasci bura vije,
Dok mu mrtve grob sakrije,
Dok mu živo srce bije*

O Canada

*O Canada! Our home and native land!
True patriot love in all thy song command.*

*With glowing hearts we see thee rise,
The True North strong and free!*

From far and wide, O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.

*God keep our land glorious and free!
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.*

Figure 4.4 Festival booklet presentation of the Croatian National Anthem

Music: Zabava repertoire

Among the various Croatian and North American songs played on recordings or by live bands at zabavas, there is usually at least one nationalist song, often the well-known tune *Evo zore, evo dana*, “Here is dawn, here is day.” This song is associated with the period of the Second World War⁷⁹ and references important figures in the Ustaša regime, Jure Francetić and Rafael Boban.⁸⁰

The song was performed on both the Friday and Saturday night zabavas of the festival. There are several variations of the song, and lyrics of the version performed at the 2006 festival read as follows:

⁷⁹ In Pettan’s “Music, Politics, and War”, Naila Ceribašić describes how this song was used by both the Ustaša and Partisan movements (see Ceribašić 1998).

⁸⁰ Jure Francetić was Commander and Rafael Ranko Boban was Major of the battalions known as “Black Legion,” a sort of “special forces” during the war.

Evo zore, evo dana

*Evo zore, evo dana,
Evo jure I Bobana.
Jure zove, Boban viče,
Evo mene poglavniče!
Na vrh gore Treberića,
U logoru Francetića.
U logoru Jure sjedi,
Svojoj vojci on besjedi.
Jure zove, Boban viče,
Hej viteže Francetiću.
Tvoja bojna čuva Liku,
Biser zemlje, našu diku.
Evo zore, evo dana,
Evo bojne Imočana.
Oj ustaše braćo mila,
Duboka je voda Drina
Drinu treba pregaziti,
I Srbiju zapaliti.*

Here is dawn, here is day,
Here is Jure and Boban,
Jure is calling, Boban is yelling,
Here I am chief!
At the mountain peak Trebević,
In the camp Francetić.
In the camp, Jure is sitting and
Lecturing his army
Jure is calling, Boban is yelling,
Hello knight Francetić.
Your battalion is looking over Lika,
Earth's pearl, our pride.
Here is dawn, here is day,
Here is a battalion from Imočan.
Hey, Ustaše my dear brothers,
The Drina water is deep.
Walk over the Drina
And burn Serbia.

(Source: 2006 Festival Zabava performance.
Translation: Ana Stepanek.)

At both zabava nights, the popularity of this song was apparent from its start: most youth got on their feet to dance, and many sang along. The dance involved linking arms with hands held, and weaving in a kolo-style line around the dance floor (see Example 1 “Video clip, Evo zore, evo dana”). In cases which I have not witnessed but have been made aware of through webforums (such as Croworld.ca)⁸¹, blog postings (such as balkannet.org), or media sharing sites (YouTube)⁸², reactions to this song may also include audience members jumping up and down, yelling along with the words, and giving stiff-armed Ustaša salutes in the direction of the band on stage.

Further Investigation

Journalist Paul Hockenos (38) proposes that “[f]or most second- and third-generation diaspora Croats, the Ustaša symbolism is probably void of any meaning or experience,” and situations I have observed point to this as a possibility. Symbols and references may appear, but their significance is for the majority of young viewers, listeners, party-goers and audience members is a matter that deserves further investigation. I would say that for many young Croatian-Canadians, these themes and narratives hold little relevance to their daily lives, or at least far less than they did for members of their parents’ generations.

On the final evening of the Hrvatsko Selo tour, the bus-ride to the hotel after the last performance was a boisterous affair, with music blaring and kids shouting along with Croatian pop tunes. Part way through the ride, a grandfather sitting near the front called

⁸¹ Described by one young woman as “making some Hitler movements and screaming Ustaša” (“plesica”).

⁸² See Example 2 “YouTube Video: Hrvati Kanade- Evo zore,” accessible at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rLsmR5NtBiU>

his grandchildren forward to sing a song with him. The song was Ustaša-themed, and from the singing I could hear from my position at the back of the bus, I noticed that the young people's singing was far less enthusiastic than that of their grandfather (the young people were approximately ages 19 and 13). As the children returned to their seats, I asked one of them what song they had been singing, and he replied "it's a song from World War II," not explaining any connection with the Ustaša nor elaborating any further detail. From their less than enthusiastic performance, I wondered how often the historical implications behind certain actions are lost or insignificant to younger generations, whose language skills are waning and whose daily concerns have moved beyond themes of Yugoslavia, Croatian independence, and outdated ideologies from the NDH period. Certainly there are generational aspects that are at play in these processes, specifically regarding political consciousness and the role of traumatic experience, such as those discussed in "Generational Consciousness, Narrative, and Politics" (Edmunds and Turner). Further discussion using generation as an analytical tool would be relevant and important.

4.2 Conclusion

Symbols, songs, gestures, and narratives referencing the period of the Second World War and in particular the period of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) are a part of Croatian activities in diaspora. During the time period surrounding 1991 and the fight for Croatian independence, such themes were desirable and celebrated, but now they are quickly losing significance within the community in general. Among tenacious believers, the era was one of glory and freedom that should be remembered and

celebrated. While these discourses provide added strength to victimhood, enemy and oppression themes (and thus can be seen as providing incentive to unite and be active within the community), they no longer carry the urgency or passion of the last generation. The remaining cases illustrate that “the musical event, from collective dances to the act of putting a cassette or CD into a machine, evokes and organizes collective memories and present experiences of place with an intensity, power and simplicity” (Stokes 3) that is still sought after by a small number of people.

For young people who do not align with the ideologies represented by NDH-era references, who perhaps have explored beyond understandings passed to them in their childhood and youth, or for whom NDH-era ideologies or vocabularies were not a part of their upbringing, the presence of NDH-era references or symbols during music events has little effect on their sense of self or idea of Croatian identity, and often seem to be occasions for eye-rolling and sighs of resignation. With this in mind, NDH references are perhaps best seen as performances where “together the participants contribute to one single over-all definition of the situation which involves not so much a real agreement as to what exists but rather a real agreement as to whose claims concerning what issues will be temporarily honored” (Goffman 10).

Chapter 5: Why Nationalism?

Our understanding of local context expands to encompass the historical, dynamic, often traumatic, movements of people, ideas, images, commodities, and capital. It is not easy to sort out the local from the global: transnational circulations of images get reworked on the ground and redeployed for local tactical struggles.

(Conquergood 145)

During the war of the 1990s, “generational differences, regions of origin, circumstances of migration and settlement, class and political identifications” (Winland 2002: 702) could be put aside for the sake of a unified effort against the enemy and for Croatian independence. Victimhood, whether real, perceived, or vicarious, became “an example of strategic essentialism in which internally heterogeneous groups present[ed] themselves as homogenous” (Bramadat 6). As time passes and enemy narratives lose their relevance to assimilated young people, narratives from the 1990s or the Second World War help provide an additional sort of “proof” of oppression by an enemy, reinforcing the “victim syndrome” (G. Brown 80). Notions of Croatianness were diverse when the first migrants left their homeland and arrived in Canada - now that the third and soon fourth generations are coming of age, perspectives of Croatianness continue to diverge as life interests and influences pull each individual towards different goals. Inclusion of songs and symbols invoking the 1990s or the NDH seems to further contribute to the hope that declarations of freedom from oppression will provide powerful incentives for people to identify and continue in community activity.

As long as a primordial understanding is portrayed, as long as ‘outside threats’ are seen and articulated as such, this increases the safer understandings, and requires less evaluation of us. However, It is precisely this vagueness that draws attention to the underlying issues that are at stake here: invented traditions that form the basis for establishing not only cultural boundaries, but also for mechanisms of

dominance and resistance, inclusion and exclusion. Identity as a representation is marked out by difference; the key questions have become those of power, boundary-marking and exclusion processes. If identity is crucially about difference, the politics of identity necessarily raises questions of authenticity, of roots, tradition and heritage.

(Reisenleitner 8)

Nationalism in the Croatian diaspora is not “a simple reconnection of primitive, frozen nationalism in a new national movement” (Stubbs 5.2) nor are its roots solely traceable to “individuals, who draw their nationalist inspiration and political ambition from the comfortable distance of diaspora” (Skrbiš 2001). I have shown that it is a “group/community-based phenomenon” (Skrbiš 2001), arising dialogically between musicians, audiences, parents, church figures, and peer groups. Themes concerning the 1990s and the NDH era have been chosen and adapted not only because people in positions of influence decided that such themes were desirable, but also because the wider community and small groups within it (family/parental) continue to see value and purpose in these themes.

Homeland independence and the preservation of Croatian identity, goals of previous diaspora nationalisms, were achieved over a decade ago. Why do right-wing nationalist references continue to appear in musical activity? I argue that contemporary invocations of 1990s wartime and Second World War references have little to do with the actual war events when referenced among or by young people (who often have rudimentary comprehension of invoked histories and symbols). Rather, they provide useful language and sentiments with which to try to make sense of current challenges faced by their community situated within a multicultural Canadian setting. Today, true threats to community identity include internal divisiveness caused by diverse identities,

and assimilation. This argument aligns with the findings of Daphne Winland's work within the same community:

Many romanticized images projected by diasporan Croatians onto the homeland convey the desire for a familiarized territory infused with symbolic sentiments and collective memories, powerful enough to generate a sense of community and loyalty. These images are easily accessible and desirable to diasporan Croats regardless of their ties to the homeland. Furthermore, these efforts to generate a sense of homeland through a connection with geography and an idealized cultural past present fewer obstacles to conjuring up positive and uncontested images...

(Winland 2002: 707)

In recent years, the number of participants in folklore ensembles has been steadily declining, and two main causes contribute to this. First, the Croatian community struggles with issues of internal divisiveness (Winland 2002: 705). As discussed in chapter one, varied experiences and interpretations of Croatian nationhood, culture, history, and identity compounded by diverging personal hopes and goals have created tension within organizations, and folklore ensembles are no exception. In cases where internal discord in performance ensembles has occurred, split-off ensembles may result, or loss of participation by some members (Wiens 7).

Secondly, assimilation and integration into mainstream Canadian social networks have resulted in competing allegiances followed by falling numbers of participants in folklore, church and other Croatian community activities. Age-related changes in interests, lack of time, or career-oriented activities play roles as competing activities as well. Several parents and older dancers have shared with me fears of an almost non-existent folklore scene in as little time as 10 to 15 years. Declining membership is a trend seen across Ontario; using Hrvatsko Selo as an isolated example we can see that group

membership has fallen from 155 persons in 1991 to approximately 60 in 2006, a reduction of approximately 60% in 15 years.

Music, and political themes incorporated within, plays a role in processes affecting continuity:

A group's chances of survival depend on both the internal integrity of the group (within-group processes) and on the ability of that group to function in relation to competing groups in a meta-population (between-group processes). The most important concept to be highlighted here is that internal cooperation is a necessity for groups to flourish at both levels...Music serves principally as a cooperative device within social groups to foster both internal harmony for its own sake and group solidarity in the face of intergroup conflict.

(S. Brown 3)

By including a range of regional Croatian music and dance repertoires in performance by groups comprised of dancers with varied familial regions of origin, regionalisms may be assuaged and "Croatianess" presented as "a single culture, a single heritage, a single interest" (Hayden 664), this aligning with nationalist ideologies. Music, as a "cooperative device" (S. Brown 3), becomes "a tool of resistance, a set of actions that one protects against those who don't possess the same music" (Bohlman 1999: 20). If a "main task of the nationalist is to discover and discern that which is truly "oneself" and to purge the collective self of any trace of "the other"" (Smith 44), then (ideally) in-group activity should be cleansed of symbols indicating foreign or influence from "the other." Maintaining a sense of cultural opposition to an enemy shares characteristics with nationalist narratives of the 1990s which insisted that "a people are not only imbued with a sense of their own innate uniqueness, but also regard themselves consequently in a state of potential opposition, competition, and/or conflict with other nations" (Simić 111). Perpetual opposition to "the other" (even if "the other" is a fictitious Serbian enemy) is

seen as valuable reinforcement of community identity and an incentive for continued involvement in community activities, promoting the “individuals’ solidarity against an alien force [and] enhance the salience of boundary perception” (Armstrong 9). Similar ideologies were noticed among Australian Croats, as Svanibor Pettan notes:

The real power that plays with the East-West distinction is of political nature. In most parts of the world, ethnic/national identity seldom matches cultural/musical identity. Several ethnic groups may to some extent share cultural identity, e.g., *ala turka*, and members of a single ethnic group can through a longer period of time develop different cultural identities, e.g., within Croatia. It is the holders of political power who - in particular when confronted with a serious threat from outside - tend to minimize regional cultural differences and present cultural and political identity matching one another, or even superimpose political identity over cultural specifics. This was particularly evident in the context of the war in Croatia in the 1990s. Political power holders favored musicians who used Western sound and in lyrics portrayed Croatia as a Western country under attack from the East. They tried to keep from the public eye Eastern (Dinaric, Balkan) music, and lyrics calling for radical military solution of the war.

(Pettan 1997)

As I illustrated by the wide range of opinions discussed earlier on “Serbian” sounds and repertoire in *zabava* music, despite xenophobic nationalist understandings of culture, it is “virtually impossible to define what “our music” is - that is, what repertoires or even pieces it embraces” (Bohlman 1999: 21).

Contrary to cases discussed earlier that indicate an adherence to exclusivist notions of cultural expression, such notions are not valued by all members of the community. In an interview, the founding teacher of the *Hrvatsko Selo* ensemble articulated the idea that contemporary diaspora musical activities remain rooted in mentalities fostered during the 1990s conflict.

There are some regions...where the music has a Serbian flavour to it. But you can't avoid that! Serbian people have been in some regions for over 700 years! They've infiltrated one into the other, a tapestry.

This is something that's been passed on. When the war broke out and with all these fundraisers, there was this anxiety and true hate for them, it is [that] specific, situational cultural group that is hated. There are all these shifts that have happened [back home] and I think that here, people find those shifts very difficult. I think it's the same mentality: "We've gotta sing this song because we can't let people forget what they did to us."

The minute you have an enemy, there is a reason to survive, to fight for your rights, for what is yours, and the minute there's not, there's a void, and you have to figure out what you're going to fill that void with. Are you going to fill it with intelligent planning, or with anxiety, or with nostalgia? ... Again here we come to that whole philosophical perspective, that all of a sudden there's no enemy, and many of the people here still don't get that.

("John")

Exclusivist notions of cultural expression are also criticized by Internet forum

users:

I agree that for us to survive we have to evolve. I sometimes think we're still in a mindset that Juga is still out there when it has been dead and buried for 15 1/2 years. ... Our communities seem stuck for lack of a better word. Seems like post 1995 we haven't figured out where to proceed. Talk about working with organizations like the CFU and you get jumped on by 18 year olds who think Juga is still out to get us.

(Sino69)

Maybe you should stop drinking wine, practicing Roman Catholicism or eating čevape or hearing tambure or harmonike as ALL of this is imported into our culture.....no more cabbage rolls, schnitzel, etc.....I was talking about closing one off in fear - that's what some want to do....a truly confident person takes on the world, not hide behind a wall!

(Pelle75)

One result of xenophobic attitudes is that Croatian folklore performance remains a largely inward-aiming activity (with some exceptions ⁸³) primarily targeted at and attended by Croatian community members. The situation has become what is seen by

⁸³ Several groups across Canada participate in urban-based multicultural festivals.

some people as a detrimental over-emphasis on “the in-group” that has led to a state of ghettoization, a state which now lacks relevance in the daily lives and concerns of increasingly assimilated young people.

Though it is unclear to what extent right-wing sentiments are internalized, some young people do carry NDH terminology into different settings.

The fight went on and off for about twenty minutes... I went around to talk to kids who seemed to be the target of the original attack. The oldest was born in 1973. The one who got kicked first, Vanja, is a tall, lanky, kind of guy you'd not be afraid to hit. He thought I was on their side. Good for me. It seems that other side thought the same. So, I asked him what precisely was “his side”...He was the “ustasha” side, he said. Fantastic: here I have a regular American high school kid with his baseball cap turned backwards, baggy pants, zits, and all, slurring through consonant-intensive Croatian language, still hyped-up that he was the first guy to get hit, and he is an “ustasha.” So, what were the other guys? “Chetnicks,” he said. But they weren't. They were Croats, too...

(The Balkan pages: Ivo's war journal.)

Though certainly cases exist of young people carrying over right-wing terminology into different settings, opinions from several interviews show that these expressions may contribute very little towards understandings of politics or history among most folklore participants, but rather that they reinforce ideologies among those who already encounter these ideologies in the church or at home.

Do you know why they play this song [*evo zore*]? They play it because Croats are racist. It's very nationalistic... It's a song about Croatian nationalism. It talks about Croatian heroes, it talks about burning Serbia...basically you want to burn Serbia... Because [of] their parents...[they] were brought up very racist... we weren't alive then, so its not as if we really know Serbia...

(“Mary”)

Certainly, desires to fit in and peer-group pressure play into the continued use NDH-era songs. As to songs like “*Evo zore*,” they provide a reason to get “all riled up”

("Mary"), and may be explained as "just mass hysteria" ("John") and a chance to act together with salutes, yelling and flag waving, in a process similar to that described by Steve Feld as a "transformation from an audience member into a historically situated being..." (Feld 84). One online blogger responded to a situation he witnessed in New York City in 1995:

[The] D.J. and the local wedding band kept music upbeat and contemporary until around midnight. Then they played some songs of Croatian rock bands, and then, unavoidably, they played some Croatian nationalist folk songs (like "*Evo zore, evo dana, evo Jure i Bobana*"), knowledge of which is a kind of rite of passage to any Croatian teenager in the U.S. Those with more "guts" would climb the stage and grab Croatian flag (which of course is at hand in a Croatian Center), or if they want to show how high their testosterone levels really are they'll give a stiff-armed salute. This is bound to piss-off their elders, who try hard to rid Croatia of its Nazi-past image. But also this makes their elders proud, because it confirms that kids are defiant, ready to do anything for "the cause," that they belong to "the cause." And kids sense that ambivalence...

Controversial songs and gestures however always produce upsetting situations. And now with Croatia winning the war "over there," a lot of people here started to believe that rite of passage is stupid, needless, useless, and ultimately harmful for "the cause." This antagonism nevertheless just fuels the kids rebellion - because after all for a teenager this is a kind of rebellion against "the system" without an ulterior motive. This creates an absurd situation in which cool kids will fight to protect what they believe is their right to perform basically a disgusting ritual...

("The Balkan pages: Ivo's war journal.")

These activities can occur precisely because they are based on the partial and revisionist histories that have been passed on to them. Joining hands and dancing in a circle while singing about "burning Serbs" can be made to feel a normal and acceptable activity when the subtleties, details, and opposing viewpoints of that era have not entered or been allowed legitimacy in public (community, church) discourses.

Negotiating diversity in light of changes in the Homeland

Between Hercegovnian Croats and Croats in Canada, there are both feelings of belonging and of separation. Younger generations of Croatian-Canadians of Hercegovnian heritage are taught that they are ethnic Croats, and many whom I have spoken with still carry understandings of territorial belonging to the homeland.⁸⁴ At the same time, these same young people are aware that in the international community, according to contemporary geo-political maps, and to some extent within the Croatian-Canadian community, Bosnia and Hercegovina is treated as a separate entity from Croatia. Where is their homeland, their *domovina*?

“I know I’m Croatian, but now that Bosnia and Hercegovina are a country, I don’t know what to say. Am I Croatian, or Bosnian, or what?”

(“Mark”)

Martin Stokes tells us that “Music is socially meaningful not entirely but largely because it provides means by which people recognize identities and places, and the boundaries which separate them” (5). Recognizing “place” for young Hercegovnian Croatian-Canadians includes three different and related locations: the geographic (Hercegovina), the symbolic (the homeland), and the everyday present (Canada), and music is used in trying to make sense of how each of these is brought into the sense of belonging to the community. While folklore presentations rarely draw from Hercegovnian regions and practices, Hercegovnian children participate in Croatian folklore as a part of the expression of group and individual identity. Zabava repertoire includes many songs by Hercegovnian singers or featuring references to Hercegovina.

⁸⁴ When I have questioned geographical understandings of the homeland, a typical response has been “if you look at some maps, Bosnia belongs to us.” (paraphrase).

The zabava song "*Ante, Ante*" in praise of General Ante Gotovina is an interesting case. A controversial character in post-war Croatia, Gotovina has been awaiting trial at the International Court Tribunal of Yugoslavia in The Hague since he was captured in 2004. In territories re-attached to Croatia through Gotovina's Operation Storm campaign, he is supported and upheld as a hero: one cannot be a criminal when defending their own land or family.⁸⁵ To left-wingers or moderates, he is a war criminal whose actions should at the very least be examined so that the nation may reconcile with its past.

In the diaspora, there is massive support for Gotovina. Websites, protests, and a global diaspora-based petition at Gotovina.com applaud the General for his actions, dismiss the ICTY as illegitimate, and even label the Mesić government as traitors (see Winland 2006: 301). On the surface, the described song (an unabashed glorification of a war criminal) may appear as an expression in support of Gotovina's innocence, an invocation of the nationalist theme of "heroism." However, there exist underlying fears driving such expressions. In order to be considered for European Union membership, Croatia was required to comply with ICTY demands to turn in outstanding war criminals. Due to Croatia's compliance in finding and extraditing Gotovina to The Hague, their bid for EU membership moved forward and is now being seriously negotiated.

For several reasons, including a struggling post-war economy, the country of Bosnia and Hercegovina is years if not decades away from EU eligibility. A large portion of Croatian-Canadians have Hercegovnian roots, and as discussed earlier, identities

⁸⁵ "Right up to the present day, naturally enough, domestic nationalistic politics has continued to challenge the right of the International Tribunal to try 'our boys'. Public opinion regards individual defendants at the court in the Hague not only as being innocent but also as 'our heroes' who made possible the implementation of the Croatian dream, that is, the myth of the independent State" (Rihtman-Augustin 107).

between Croatian and Hercegovnian Croats in diaspora can be confusing since they involve layered and at times contradictory notions of ethnicity, territory, national and cultural origins. Support for Gotovina, whose extradition was closely tied to Croatia's bid for EU status, may in fact indicate a fear of further divisions between the two groups (Croats and Hercegovnian Croats in Canada). Symbols such as the NDH flag and the Drina river boundary attempt to assuage differences and show a symbolic union between people from territories now divided by an internationally recognized political boundary. Efforts to maintain a sense of belonging within the community will be further confused by Croatia's EU membership: economic and cultural differences between the (now) "two homelands" will increase, and the effects of this on diaspora identity are unpredictable. Where will Hercegovnians fit between Hercegovina, the homeland, and Croatian-Canadian society?

Additionally, scorn for EU membership directly involves the relationship between homeland and diaspora. One grandfather on the Hrvatsko Selo tour shared with me that it had been decades since his last trip to Croatia, and that he did not recognize many things because the country had advanced economically and looked more 'European' than ever. New autobahns, new cars, changing governments, and the boom in tourism and tourist infrastructures in Dalmatia are making the country ever more unrecognizable to people who may visit only a few times in their life, but who still depend on notions of the place for their own identity. With EU status, Croatia will grow and advance in unpredictable ways that will push it further away from the imaginings and ideas of 'homeland' the diaspora believes in and depends on, possibly pushing it into a state of complete cultural unfamiliarity.

This will be the last generation to do these dancing trips, especially if Croatia becomes a part of the EU. I think that's why many parish priests are preaching against going into the EU, but you know, you can't stop progress. If it joins the EU a certain aspect of the whole tradition will be lost, they'll [Croatia] be a part of something that is much bigger, they're not just going to be a part of themselves...

("John")

EU membership will force a painful, perhaps unwanted, and even frightening re-evaluation upon the diaspora community. Support for Gotovina's innocence means support for Croatia and Hercegovina as they are imagined. Support for the ICTY judicial process means unpredictability, and the possibility of further disassociation between two communities within Canada and between the diaspora and the homeland.

It has been brought to my attention by community members that the continued use of NDH era symbols, maps, anthems, and songs may be gestures to try to maintain a sense of belonging among Hercegovnian Croats. Regardless of whether or not these references draw from a short time-period in Croatian history or from "a myth-symbol complex, which the authorities call upon when they want to expand the state-forming nation even across the state's borders..." (Rihtman-Augustin 70), as long as the geographical sense of belonging is presented as natural, these are tools in processes that members see as important. As a part of identity formation, symbolic territories called to mind by NDH-era symbols move beyond issues of homeland territorial belonging to issues much more pertinent to the diaspora.

Thesis Conclusion

Music in the Croatian-Canadian community performs numerous roles. Though inspired by and based on historic homeland folklore or popular performance, it has emerged as its own unique practice, functioning to fulfill desires and form identities of community members. Within these activities, music serves to both express and negotiate a sense of individual and community political identity. Though the manner in which political expressions are performed and perceived vary from individual to individual or group to group, the presentation of political aspects of "Croatianess" include themes that can be categorized as nationalist and right-wing nationalist.

Daphne Winland proposes that "[m]any second-and third-generation diaspora Croatians are often ambivalent and conflicted over the issues of identities and allegiances" (2002: 705). My research supports this statement, and I have found that as time passes and young people become increasingly involved and concerned with mainstream interests and goals, Croatian political concerns hold less and less relevance to their lives.

For church leaders, parents, dance teachers, musicians, dancers, and audiences, themes associated with homeland patriotism and nationalism seem to be invoked as a way of promoting continued concern and devotion to "Croatianess," and thus promote continued involvement in Canadian-based community activities. Though of lessening importance, nationalism's continued appearance indicates that it is "an important and existing reality" within Croatian diaspora groups (Skrbiš 2001). I have shared several examples of what the face of Croatian nationalism in Canada looks like in music performance, from gestures of remembrance to glorification of violent acts. Each case

appears to express viewpoints, but more importantly performs functions that are understood as significant by both performers and viewers.

During the 1990s, the homeland conflict and the independence movement were the focus of diaspora community efforts and identity formation. Themes that became important were of enemy threat, cultural opposition to “the other,” and a rehashing of histories related to the WWII-era Independent State of Croatia (the NDH). Over a decade later, messages in community musical activity continue to promote these as acceptable themes.

Focusing on expressions which align with right-wing nationalist themes, I have put forward ideas suggesting why nationalist expressions continue in the diaspora setting, despite the fact that the agendas of nationalism (nationhood and the defeat of the enemy) have been achieved. The arguments relate less to complete understanding and adherence to the values or ideas expressed, and more to processes where these expressions become tools in the every-day battles of internal divisiveness and assimilation faced by the community. Looking at areas where identity formation is often confused and confounded, I found that music and dance as tools of nationalism played an important role in the negotiation of “us” versus “them,” and of belonging.

Further Investigation

Many questions arise out of this study, and there is room to look further. I have already pointed out the possible role of commercial interests in nationalist expressions (the commodification of nationalism), and issues of political consciousness according to generation as areas for further investigation.

It would also be interesting to look further into the efficacy of nationalism in the diaspora setting. How internalized are the sentiments I have witnessed? A tour may be organized which will take a young person from Stepinac to Knin to Medugorje, but does this guarantee interest or concern? A festival booklet may present a perfectly sanitized version of history, but how many young people will purchase and read it? A song may be sung in praise of General Gotovina or of NDH figures, but how many young people will dance and sing along, then go home and become more immersed or concerned with their latest favorite Hollywood-produced television series? Will the parental desires for young people “to understand where they come from,” “to connect a physical place with how they have been raised” be fulfilled? In how many cases do “acceptable histories” have relevance or effect? I have posited the likelihood of a negative response to these questions; however I expect that more rigorous interviews specifically addressing these queries would shed more light on issues of continuity in community activity.

Another important aspect that has unfortunately remained untouched is that of gender in performance. Among folklore participants in Canada, females vastly outnumber male participants. Positions as folklore ensemble teachers, on folklore ensemble committees, and even as drivers and chaperones on trips or to and from rehearsals are roles which, I have observed, are more often filled by females, usually mothers. More interesting, perhaps, are aspects of machismo and nationalism: it is rare to see girls jumping up and down and screaming to the music of Thompson while it is common for male teenagers and young men. I have often noted these same young men reacting in the same manner when soccer anthems are played at a zabava. No doubt an approach with a

more thorough examination of gender issues and gendered performances (structured or everyday) would draw out new and important findings.

Also, one group has been left out, perhaps the most interesting of all: offspring from mixed Serbian and Croatian marriages. So often the focus of descriptive and scholarly works is on the lives of one ethnically or nationally definable group in their new diaspora setting. Within the Croatian community, I have yet to hear talk of the state of persons from mixed Serbian-Croatian marriages in Canada, although in the former Yugoslavia and in Croatian regions this was a regular occurrence. What discourse occurs within the community regarding this subset? Where do mixed families position themselves? It would be interesting to look at the activities of children from such marriages. What sorts of cultural activities do they participate in? How do they identify with the various sides of their heritage?

The study provides a small addition to increasing numbers of works pointing out challenges encompassed in “fashionable terms such as ‘diversity’, ‘multiculturalism’, and ‘pluralism’ ...in Canadian society” (Li 3). It recognizes that multiculturalism in Canada has never been limited to issues between *Two Solitudes*⁸⁶ (French speakers and English speakers), which it was conceived to reconcile in the 1960s,⁸⁷ nor can “common assumptions of race and ethnicity”, along with their “contentious and antagonistic aspects” (Li 4) adequately describe the workings and challenges of multiculturalism. Notions of race and issues of racism in Canada do not pertain only to issues of skin color, as they are often misconceived (Li 4).

⁸⁶ This is a phrase often used to describe the delicate relations between English- and French-speaking Canada, also the title of the 1945 novel by Hugh MacLennan about tensions between French and English-speaking Canada.

⁸⁷ For example, the 1963 Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism.

The study illustrates issues currently theorized and explored by scholars of multiculturalism in Canada, including negotiations through the unclear, confounded and constantly reworked definitions of ethnicity, culture, and community (see Li, Kalbach & Kalbach, and Taylor). It shows challenges found at the intersections of federally constituted rights to freedom of speech, and federal laws banning hate-speech,⁸⁸ and demands evaluation of the “line” between buzzwords like “reasonable accommodation” and “tribalism.”

In the end, this study became an opportunity for myself, the researcher, to shed some of my own misconceptions about the multicultural society I was brought up in, and to discover that the inner workings of communities in Canada involve cultural baggage with histories, experiences and perceptions that shape who we become and how we choose to express ourselves as individuals and groups.

⁸⁸ In “The Hateful and the Obscene” L.W. Sumner problematizes the “Balancing Act” (Chapter Three) of constitutionally protected rights to freedom of thought, belief and expression (52-53) and “hate propaganda statute in the criminal code prohibiting communication which willfully promotes hatred against an identifiable group” (53), pertaining to sections 319(2) of the Criminal Code: “Everyone who, by communicating statements, other than in private conversation, willfully promotes hatred against any identifiable group is guilty of (a) an indictable offense...”, and section 318 “dealing with the advocacy or promotion of genocide” (212, endnote 3).

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