

The Origin of Russian Primitivism? Alexander Grechaninov's Arrangements of Asian Songs

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Abstract:

*Igor Stravinsky's contribution to Primitivism in music has been widely acknowledged; however, the contributions of his Russian contemporaries to the musical representation of so-called "primitive" cultures of Russia's Asian ethnic minorities have received only scant attention in musicological circles. Several key stylistic traits of Stravinsky's *Sacre du Printemps* (simplicity of thematic material combined with discordant harmony, ostinato-driven formulas, the prominence of rhythm) are found in the compositions of another Russian composer, Alexander Grechaninov. Using musical elements associated with Russia's ancient times in his arrangement of a Teptiar folksong Grechaninov presented Russian Asian "primitive" subjects as culturally connected to Russia's past.*

*Drawing from the analysis of Grechaninov's arrangements of Asian songs, I argue that the goal behind Grechaninov's representation of Russia's Asian "primitive" subjects differed from that of representation of pagan Russia in Stravinsky's *Sacre*. My comparison of Grechaninov's arrangements of Teptiar and Tatar folksongs shows how these songs exemplified hierarchies of values established in ethnographic literature and subsequently shaped the Russians' perceptions and responses to Asian subjects who inhabited the Russian empire. With these arrangements, Grechaninov sought to present a culturally appropriated and recontextualized depiction of Russia's Asian neighbours and to promote an image of Russia as a multiethnic yet unified state.*

Introduction

In a 1930 speech addressed to American composers in New York, Nikolai Roerich, Stravinsky's *Sacre du Printemps* collaborator, noted the close connection between Stravinsky's oeuvre and Asian culture:

At the beginning of World War I, Stravinsky found himself abroad.¹ I heard that my *Spring* sketches were destroyed in his Galician estate [...] Much is left behind, but the eternal remains. During these years, we observed that, as in Asia, the eternal rhythms of the *Rite of Spring* still resounded. We heard songs resounding in the holy mountains and deserts—songs that were created not for people, but for the Great Desert itself. [...] And we recalled Stravinsky, how he embedded in the orchestral *Spring* the Mighty rhythms of human aspirations. Then in Kashmir we witnessed a magnificent Celebration of Spring with fantastic dances with torches. And again we exclaimed aloud, recalling Stravinsky with rapture. [...] We cannot view *Spring* as something Russian or Slavic. It is much more ancient, it is panhuman.²

Even though this speech was written almost two decades after the first performance of the *Sacre du Printemps*, Roerich's bold comparison of Stravinsky's work with Asian rituals and art raises a number of questions: Why did Roerich relate the rhythms of the *Sacre* with Asian ritual dances? What was Roerich's knowledge of Russian-Asian cultural connections at the time of the *Sacre's* conception? Was Stravinsky aware of Roerich's interest in Asia and could his ideas influence the young composer?

In his study of Stravinsky's *Sacre du Printemps*, Richard Taruskin examines in great detail the relationship between the ballet and Russian folk traditions.³ While he does address Scythianism in relation to Roerich, he does not elaborate on another interesting (yet no less important) topic that sheds crucial light on the work's creation —Nikolai Roerich's interest in Asia and its likely influence on the realization of the *Sacre*. In this paper I argue that scholars have hitherto underestimated the potential role of contemporaneous ethnographic sources on the subject of Russia's Asian Others in the formation of the ballet. Because Roerich believed in Russia's profound cultural and historical relation with Asia, I suggest that Roerich could provide the composer with some newly transcribed music from Russia's Asian peoples and published in ethnographic sources.

During the same period, besides Stravinsky, other Russian composers also worked on the presentation of the primitivism in music. A student of Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov just few years before Stravinsky, Alexander Grechaninov arranged for piano and voice a number of Asian tunes, some of which bear striking similarity to the style Stravinsky deployed to dramatize his Russian pagan ritual. Although Grechaninov most likely lacked the ambition of the younger composer and the bulk of his oeuvre can be described as conservative, he used some modernist musical elements, such as a combination of simple thematic material with discordant harmony, in his presentation of Russia's "primitive" people —the Teptiars.⁴ To provide a counterpoint to Stravinsky's primitivism, I analyze an arrangement of a Teptiar folksong that Grechaninov penned for an ethnographic concert organized by the Music-Ethnographic Committee (ca. 1911).⁵ By using some musical elements associated with Russia's remote past, with this arrangement Grechaninov sought to connect ancient Russia with Russia's present Asian subjects promoting a popular at the time idea of Russia's historical and cultural legacy in Asia.

Roerich, Asianism, and Stravinsky

Roerich's inclination towards Asian philosophy and culture is well known in Russia.⁶ His interest in Asia was ignited when he was studying at the University in St. Petersburg a couple of decades before he began his collaboration with Stravinsky.⁷ In his *Diary*, Roerich recalled: "The University remained a useful episode [in my life]. Mendeleev, Sovetov, [and] Orientalists Golstunskii and Pozdneev visited us. The foundation of [my] interest in the Orient was laid [then]."⁸ Later, in the mid-1900s, when Roerich met Vladimir Stasov, the guru of the Russian nationalist composers known as the Mighty Handful, his interest in Asia intensified.



V. V. Stasov and N. K. Roerich in the Imperial Public Library. St. Petersburg, end of the 1890s.

Stasov was an ardent proponent of Russian-Asian cultural relations and identified the Eastern influence as one of four elements characterizing the musical style of the so-called “New Russian School.”⁹ According to some Russian biographers, Stasov stimulated Roerich’s interest in ancient Russian artifacts, chronicles, legends, and folklore.¹⁰ In his letters to Roerich, Stasov repeatedly stated that the ancient Oriental culture is “inseparable” from the ancient Russian.¹¹ Furthermore, Stasov encouraged Roerich to consult ancient Asian artifacts in order to add an “ethnographic spirit with historical character and details” to Russian ornamental patterns.¹²

Russians and Asians lived in close proximity for centuries, so, not surprisingly, Roerich, following Stasov, “discovered” Asia on his quest to learn more about Russia’s past. In particular, Scythianism appealed to Roerich in the early stages of his career.¹³ Roerich’s ideas regarding the ancient Russian connection to the Scythes (Russia’s eastern neighbours) were not new. In the mid-nineteenth century, Aleksei Khomiakov, the leader of a Slavophile movement, claimed the Russians were related to the Scythes. And through this relation, they were connected to the Aryan race. By the end of the nineteenth century, the theory of Russian-Aryan roots gained such popularity among the Russian intellectual elite that it even influenced members of the ruling family, including the Tsar himself.¹⁴

In addition to the histories of Scythianism and Aryanism, Russian readers were exposed to a large body of literature that discussed the relationship between Russia and Asia. Proponents of the idea of Russia’s Asian roots called themselves *Vostochniki*, or *Asianists*. *Asianists* believed that Russia’s future lay in the East and claimed that Russia had to expand into Asia to tighten what Prince Ukhtomsky called the “bonds between us and that which in reality was always ours.”¹⁵ Some Russian sources underlined even Russian-Asian ethnic/racial affiliation, documenting Russian families with Asian roots who entered Russian nobility and considerably influenced Russia’s social and cultural life.¹⁶ Musicians too fell under the spells of *Asianism* and *Aryanism*: a number of Russian music writers (including Petr Sokal’sky, Alexander Famintsyn, and Viacheslav Petr) believed that Asian musical elements (such as scales) constituted an essential part of Russian musical identity.¹⁷ Other writers, such as Mikhail Petukhov, Alexander Famintsyn, and Alexander Maslov, claimed that some Russian musical instruments, such

as *balalaika*, could have been borrowed from Russia's Asian neighbours.¹⁸ Such statements demonstrate an important shift in the attitude of Russian writers towards the idea of belonging to, or identifying with, Asian culture.¹⁹

It is important to note that Roerich also contributed to the choir celebrating Russian-Asian cultural connections. In his 1908 essay "Joy in Art" [Radost' iskusstvu] he claimed that the Asian influence on Russian art and way of life was profound and beneficial in many respects. According to Roerich, the Tatars, who inherited Indian, Tibetan, and Mongolian culture, "taught Russian princes persistence, endurance, and unification," and "brought riches of carpets, embroidery, and all sorts of decorations into common use."²⁰ Furthermore, in the same essay, Roerich noted a link between the Russian rituals of the past, such as the celebration of the coming spring, and the poetry welcoming spring created by the Yakuts, a Russian Asian ethnic minority living in Siberia.²¹ Roerich's interest in Yakuts is not surprising. Since Yakuts (and other peoples living in the north) were Christianized only at the end of the eighteenth century and still practiced pagan rituals at the time Roerich wrote his essay,²² Yakut culture was rife with material Roerich could appropriate in his vivid imagination of Russia's Eastern heritage.

Strikingly, some elements from the opening section of Stravinsky's *Sacre* resemble transcriptions of Yakut songs published by Music-Ethnographic Committee in 1911 in the second volume of *Trudy*.²³ Repetitions of short two-note formulas, trills, irregular rhythmic patterns characteristic for the transcriptions of four Yakut songs transcribed from phonograph by Alexander Maslov (1877-1914) are in the basis of Stravinsky's Introduction of the *Sacre*. Although the composer might not have been familiar with this source, Roerich could have seen it before he met Stravinsky in the residence of Princess Tenisheva – Talashkino — in the summer of 1911,²⁴ and shared his thoughts about it before the scenario of the *Sacre* reached its final stage and Stravinsky started sketching the score. Furthermore, since Roerich was interested in finding Russian-Asian connections, he was most-likely familiar with ethnographic sources on Russia's Asian minorities who, despite Russian domination, preserved their ancient pagan rituals. Among few sources that mention music practices by peoples living in the remote areas in the north, besides Yakuts, there were studies of Teleut, Samoyed, and Giliak peoples.²⁵ Although only a few transcriptions of melodies/songs are present in these sources, almost all of them have similar features, when presented in European notation: limited range, trills, grace notes, multiple repetition of the same phrase that consists of two-three notes.²⁶

It is difficult to assess to what extent Stravinsky shared Roerich's belief in Russia's relationship to Asia. However, it is even more difficult to imagine that Stravinsky could have completely denied popular discourses that claimed Russians and Asians had the same roots in antiquity.

Stravinsky was not the only composer preoccupied with an idea of the embodiment of primitivism in music. Alexander Grechaninov also worked on arrangements of Asian songs, some of which aimed to present Russia's "primitive" subjects. While Stravinsky's involvement in studies of Russian ethnographies on Asian groups is questionable, Grechaninov's interest and knowledge of contemporaneous ethnographic sources is indeed evident. To understand the pedigree of Grechaninov's primitivism, I will discuss a particular ethnographic source that inspired him and analyze his arrangements of Asian songs representing different ethnic groups, namely the Tatars and the Teptiars, that were

perceived as representatives of different levels of cultural development.²⁷ I argue that each arrangement evinces how these cultural hierarchies permeated even the musical fabric of the song.²⁸

Russia's Asians

In nineteenth-century Russian ethnographic literature, each Asian group living in Russia was assigned its own cultural niche. Differences in mode of life and religious practice were believed to be a cultural yardstick. Peoples with developed agrarian cultures (such as Tatars and Sarts) were considered superior to peoples who lived as nomads (e.g., Kyrgyz and Giliaks). According to ethnographers, Christians and Muslims were more advanced as they believed in one God and lived according to certain regulations outlined in the Bible or the Koran. Groups who still practiced paganism, on the other hand, were considered to be at a lower level of cultural development. Furthermore, the state persecuted Russian practitioners of paganism, as they were seen as a threat to the state's unity; they disobeyed Russia's military and religious regulations and shook the very foundation of Russian nationalism (the triumvirate of Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationality).²⁹ At the same time, the state's policy towards non-Russian ethnic groups, such as the Teptiar, who still practiced paganism, was relatively tolerant.

Grechaninov culled all of the songs he arranged from an ethnographic report authored by Sergei Rybakov (*Music and Songs of Ural Muslims with an Essay on their Way of Life* [1897]). Rybakov's research covered the songs of three Asian peoples (Tatar, Bashkir, and Teptiar), the contexts of their performance, ethnographic details on their lifestyles, and their music practices, as well as the biographies of Asian musicians. In the general descriptions of different ethnic groups, Rybakov's ethnography replicated the cultural hierarchies established in the literature of contemporary writers and thinkers.

Tatar Song

Of all the Asians, the Tatars were usually considered the most educated and culturally advanced people. Many ethnographers who lived among the Tatars stressed the cleanliness and neatness of a Tatar's house and garments.³⁰ In spite of their religiosity (most Tatars practiced Islam), the Tatars were regarded as an open-minded people who were able to survive and function properly within and outside the Russian economic system.³¹

According to Rybakov, the music of the Tatars had less interesting melodic lines than the music of other Russian Asian peoples, such as the Bashkirs. However, the Tatar melodies had an

inherent character of *ancientness*: if one analyzes their scales, one discovers ancient Greek, or so-called Church, pentatonic, or so-called "Chinese" scale [...] Tatar melodies in general do not fit into a common European harmonization.³²

Although Rybakov argued that Tatar songs did not fit European harmonizations, Grechaninov created simple harmonic realizations for his arrangements of two Tatar songs. One of the arrangements — “Su sagan”—, despite the presence of simple harmony and melody, is coloured with a chromatic accompaniment, which for a nineteenth-century European listener might have sounded rather sophisticated. Furthermore, the melodic line in the right hand is not only highly ornamented, but also forms a contrapuntal line to complement the vocal melody. What is more, this contrapuntal line eventually subdivides into two and then three lines forming a multi-layered texture near the end of the song (Ex. 1, mm. 6-7).

Ex. 1 Tatar Song “Su sagan,” arranged by A. Grechaninov

Moderato (u poco rubato)

Voice

Су са - ган ук - сак та дай

Piano

mf *espressivo*

I ii7 V7

3

су - лар кай дай Дарь - я су - нун

Pno.

I IV vii°_{4/2} V7 ii(e-minor)

5

Дарь - я су - нун ай - ес - ип - та ни фай - да

Pno.

V7 I_{6/4} IV ii I_{6/4} V7 I

With this arrangement, Grechaninov transformed a simple Tatar tune (which remained absolutely unchanged) into a sophisticated song with a contrapuntal line that conveyed a certain European refinement to say the least. It is particularly striking since no other Asian melodies arranged by Grechaninov are provided with chromatically sophisticated accompaniments.

Now let me present Grechaninov's arrangement of a Teptiar song and set it against the cultural context of the Teptiar peoples usually provided in ethnographic sources.

Teptiar song

Nineteenth-century descriptions of Teptiar people (including Rybakov's ethnography) are mostly unflattering: according to these sources, the Teptiar had no original culture and were situated at a lower economic and cultural level of development among the other Turkic peoples.³³ Their morality also came into question, since among Russians they had a reputation as horse stealers and predators living at another's expense.³⁴ A significant group of Teptiar people still practiced paganism: one major Russian ethnography called *Narody Rossii* [Peoples of Russia] published in 1880 described the Teptiar's ritual of abducting a bride as a mandatory practice for any man who wanted to get married.³⁵

As for music, Rybakov claimed in his ethnography that the Teptiar never produced their own culture or music: everything that they practiced was borrowed from either the Bashkirs or the Russians.³⁶

Grechaninov's arrangement of the Teptiar song "Iggai agai" provides a sharp contrast to the Tatar arrangement. The clumsy harmonic progression and endless repetitions could have sounded rather "primitive" to an early twentieth-century listener. The melodic line of the Teptiar song, as it appears in Rybakov's collection, has a simple and clear structure: the G-major opening is reinterpreted as the dominant to C major in measure 8, which then resolves to this tonic in the following measure with the repetition of C (Ex. 2).³⁷ Instead of using the two chords outlined in the melody for the piano accompaniment, Grechaninov continually sustains a *g-d* (*g-e*) drone. When the melody begins its resolution to C major, the same is expected in the harmony (because of the V_7 in m. 8), but the composer strikes with a chord on G (*g-d-a* played in the left hand and *c-f-c* in the right) that does not resemble any chords of "civilized" classical (or even Romantic) Western harmony.³⁸ Furthermore, despite the definitive melodic ending on C, a G-major tonic is played in the accompaniment at the very end of the first and second verses. The lack of resolution to C major (which is replaced by the unusual chord on G), the *g-d* drone, and the contradiction between the melody and harmony create the effect of an uneasy and clumsy harmonic progression that turns around G and does not "progress."

Ex. 2 Teptiar Song “Iggai aggai,” arranged by A. Grechaninov

Vivo

Voice

Иг-тай а-гай ар-ба-дында йа-тып калган бе-рип-тан. А - дун-дя
кайгыр-сын. Фа-хар-ни-са бик-куш-тан; А - дун-дя

Piano

mf

ср.с.

7

за - лю-ли, йа - тып кал-гай бе - рип-тан. *ff* *ср.с.*
за - лю-ли, Фа - хар-ни-са бик куштан.

Pno.

14

Штагына ник *sf* *mf* *sf*

The chord located in measure 10 is not unusual in Russian music: the final movement of Alexander Borodin’s Second Symphony opens with a very similar chord in B major. Rimsky-Korsakov called this chord “Borodinian epic parallel seconds” and referred to it as a characteristic element of the *Kuchka* style that distinguished Russian music from other Western European musical traditions.³⁹ It is noteworthy that César Cui mentioned this primitive sound quality in his discussion of Borodin’s symphony.⁴⁰ Although he did not talk about this chord in particular, he described the symphony as being “permeated by traits of Russian nationalism, but the nationalism of remote times; *Rus’* is perceptible in this symphony, but primitive pagan *Rus*.”⁴¹ Cui’s last observation regarding the “pagan *Rus*” is of special interest: as I mentioned previously, some popular ethnographies presented Teptiars as people who still practiced paganism.⁴² Paganism united Russians in the past and Teptiars in the present.⁴³ Thus, Grechaninov might have selected musical elements associated with Russia’s remote past in order to create a cultural connection with Russian Asian subjects. The “barbaric” chords effectively place the Teptiar people at the primitive stage of development while aligning them with the Russian past.⁴⁴ The Russian-Asian relation does not stop here: another element in this song references Russian culture. Out of the seven Teptiar songs from Rybakov’s collection, Grechaninov chose the one that was clearly influenced by Russian folksong. The text in the refrain, “A-du-dia za-liu-li,” is reminiscent of the typical Russian folksong interjections “Ai-du-du” and “Ai-liu-li.”

“Merging with a Higher Nation”

The Teptiars were not the only people presented as falling under the influence of Russian music. Grechaninov also infused his arrangements of Tatar and Bashkir songs with some elements associated with Russian music (e.g. “Glinka variations”).⁴⁵ This attitude of inflicting Russian musical vocabulary into Asian tunes is symptomatic of Grechaninov’s awareness of Russian influence on Asian culture. Again, Rybakov’s ethnography on music and the songs of Ural Muslims might have been the source of Grechaninov’s ideas. Several passages in Rybakov’s book emphasized the fact that under the influence of “approaching” Russian culture, some Tatar or Asian songs lost their original texts, and entire refrains were replaced with broken Russian.⁴⁶ This tendency of “merging with the higher nation,” according to Rybakov, was not only an “inevitable” but also a “desirable” fact, since it led to the “natural and gradual establishment of Russian culture” in the region inhabited with the empire’s Asian subjects.⁴⁷

Thus, it is evident that Grechaninov’s arrangements of Asian songs were informed by Russian ethnographies, since the composer continued perpetuating cultural stereotypes established in nineteenth-century Russian literature by assigning more sophisticated musical writing for the Tatar who were considered culturally advanced and developing “primitive” musical idiom for the Teptiar who resided on the periphery of civilization. Therefore, the goal behind Grechaninov’s representation of Russia’s Asian “primitive” subjects differed from that of the pagan Russia Stravinsky depicted in *Sacre du Printemps*. Grechaninov’s arrangements of Tatar and Teptiar songs simultaneously exoticized and domesticated the united, yet culturally distinct subjects of the Russian empire in a form that reflected the imagination of the dominant culture.

In conclusion, Russia’s ambivalent geo-political and socio-cultural position, as a self-avowed intermediary between the East and the West, generated a certain degree of mental confusion in the Russians’ vision of their own nationhood. Certainly this sense of ambivalence and dislocation played a pivotal role in the creation of Russia’s own Oriental Other or, indeed, Russia’s own past or present. The analysis of folksong collections and ethnographies on Russia’s Oriental Others might help us not only to understand the conditions under which the music was composed, but also to shed light on the very formation and construction of a specifically Russian national musical identity.

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¹ Unless otherwise indicated, translations from Russian are my own.

² Пришла война, Стравинский оказался за границей. Слышно было, что мои эскизы к "Весне" были уничтожены в его галицийском имении [...] Многие прошло, но вечное остается. В течение этих лет мы наблюдали, как в Азии еще звучат вечные ритмы "Весны Священной". Мы слышали, как в священных горах и пустынях звучали песни, сложенные не для людей, но для самой Великой Пустыни [...] И мы вспоминали Стравинского, как он влагал в симфонию "Весны" великие ритмы человеческих устремлений. Затем, в Кашмире

мы наблюдали величественный Праздник Весны с фантастическими танцами факелов. И опять мы восклицали, в восторге вспоминая Стравинского [...] Мы не можем принимать “Весну” только как русскую или как славянскую... Она гораздо более древняя, она общечеловечна.” See Nicolas Roerich, “Vesna sviashchennaia,” in *Derzhava sveta*, 161–63.

³ See Richard Taruskin, *Stravinsky and the Russian Traditions*.

⁴ On the life and works of A. T. Grechaninov, see Alexandre Gretchaninoff, *My Life*; Iu. Aleksandrov, “К 100-letiiu so dnia rozhdeniia A.T. Grechaninova,” *Sovetskaia muzyka* 10 (1964): 59–69; Iurii Paisov, *Alexander Grechaninov*.

⁵ Grechaninov probably arranged the Teptiar song before 1911, since the introductory note written by the members of the Committee indicates that most of the arrangements published in the fourth volume of *Trudy* (1913) were ready for the publication and started being engraved in 1911. See N. Ianchuk, A. Kastal’skii, D. Arakchiev, “Ot muzykal’no-etnograficheskoi komissii,” in *Trudy* 4: v.

⁶ On the life and works of Nikolai Roerich, see V. Kniazeva, *N. Rerikh*; P. Belikov and V. Kniazeva, *Rerikh*. Roerich’s name is often identified with Agni Yoga, a spiritual teaching heavily influenced by the Vedic tradition, particularly that of Raja Yoga. See N. Roerikh and H. Roerikh, *Agni Yoga*.

⁷ Later, this interest developed into an ardent passion. In 1923 Roerich embarked on an incredibly challenging journey with his family across Central Asia and Manchuria. He eventually settled in India in 1928 and lived there until his death in 1947.

⁸ “Университет остался полезным эпизодом. Дома у нас бывали Менделеев, Советов, восточники Голстунский и Позднеев. Закладывался интерес к Востоку.” See N. Roerich, *Iz literaturnogo naslediia*, 87. Konstantin Golstunskii (1831–1899) was a Russian specialist in Mongol and Kalmyk studies and the author of the first Russian-Mongol and Russian-Kalmyk dictionaries; Aleksei Pozdneev (1851–1920) was a Russian Orientalist who specialized in Mongol studies, and was one of the founders of the Institute of Oriental Studies. He also authored 122 works (including 17 monographs) on Mongol, Kalmyk people, and Buddhism in Mongolia.

⁹ See Vladimir Stasov, “Nasha muzyka za posledniia 25 let.”

¹⁰ See V. Kniazeva, *N. Rerikh*, 6; P. Belikov and V. Kniazeva, *Rerikh*, 23–25. Stasov introduced Roerich to the members of Mighty Five as well as Leo Tolstoi. In 1898, Roerich became an assistant editor of Stasov’s journal *Art and Artistic Manufacture*. *Ibid.*, 40.

¹¹ See V. A. Rosov, ed., *N.K. Rerikh, Pis’ma k V.V. Stasovu. Pis’ma V.V. Stasova k N.K. Rerikhu*, 27–28.

¹² *Ibid.*, 27.

¹³ R. Taruskin, *Stravinsky and the Russian Traditions*, 1: 888.

¹⁴ Marlene Laruelle, *Mythe aryen et rêve impérial dans la Russie du XIX^e siècle*, 78–88.

¹⁵ Kniaz Ukhtomskii, *Travels in the East*, quoted by Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, *Towards the Rising Sun*, 44.

¹⁶ See E. P. Karnovich, *Rodovye prozvaniia i tituly v Rossii*, 231–50.

¹⁷ See my article “‘Connected by the Ties of Blood’: Musical Scales in the Quest for the Russian/Asian Identity.”

¹⁸ See M. Petukhov, *Narodnye instrumenty Spb-oi konservatorii*, 7; A. Famintsyn, *Domra i skhodnye ei muzykal’nye instrumenty*, 8; A. Maslov, “Legenda o proiskhozhdenii balalaiki”: 8–9.

¹⁹ In the late nineteenth century, many Russians of different social milieus, such as Doctor Vasilii Florinskii, Prince Ukhtomskii, historian Vasilii Kliuchevskii, and writer Fedor Dostoevskii, were attracted to the idea that Russian culture had an Asian or Aryan provenance.

²⁰ See *Rerikh, Radost’ iskusstvu*.

²¹ See *Ibid.*

²² On nineteenth-century ethnography on the Yakuts, see Seroshevskii, *Yakuty*; Middendorf, *Puteshestvie na sever i vostok* 2: 758–833; Troshchanskii, *Evoliutsiia chernoii very*.

²³ See “Zaklinaniia ‘Olongo’ iakutskikh shamanov,” in *Trudy* 2: 882. Here are two out of four Yakut melodies transcribed by Maslov. See *Ibid.*

2.

4. (excerpts)

²⁴ See Taruskin, *Stravinsky and the Russian Traditions*, 1:871-880.

²⁵ See Solovtsov, *Istoricheskoe obozrenie Sibiri*, 360; Middendorf, *Puteshestvie na sever*, 673, 808; Seroshevskii, *Yakuty*, 571; Schrenck, *The Peoples of the Amur Region*, 2: 680-81.

²⁶ See, for instance, Middendorf’s transcription of a Yakut melody from his *Puteshestvie na sever*, 808:

Most probably Roerich was familiar with this source, since in his 1908 essay *Joy in Art* he cited Middendorf’s translation of a Yakut spring song in a free manner.

²⁷ These arrangements were performed in ethnographic concerts in Moscow between 1906 and 1911 and published in 1913 in a huge volume issued by the so-called Music-Ethnographic Committee, an organization that functioned under the auspices of Moscow University. Ethnographic concerts presented arrangements of folk melodies of different peoples living in Russia. In some ways, the ethnographic concerts promulgated the idea of Russia as a multiethnic empire since they included folk songs/melodies from ethnic groups living in all regions of the vast empire.

²⁸ My choice of Grechaninov is not random. As Rimsky-Korsakov disciples, Stravinsky and Grechaninov could have met at their master’s house and definitely were familiar with each other’s works. See V. Yastrebtev, *Reminiscences of Rimsky-Korsakov*, 375, 401.

²⁹ At the end of the nineteenth century, the Russian Orthodox Church was still fighting some Russian sects that practiced pagan rituals. See T. S. Rozhdestvenskii and M. I. Uspendkii, “Pesni russkikh sektantov-mistikov.”

³⁰ See Karl Fuks, *Kazanskie tatory*, 22–30; Rybakov, *Muzyka i pesni*, 8–9.

³¹ Although some ethnographies mention Tatar slyness and reluctance to work hard in the fields, the reader usually gets the impression that the Tatars were economically and culturally advanced Asians. See Fuks’ *Kazanskie tatory* and Rybakov’s *Muzyka i pesni*.

³² “Татарским мелодиям присущ характер древности: если всмотреться в состав звукорядов, то в последних можно открыть присутствие древнегреческих или так называемых церковных ладов, пятитонной, или так называемой китайской гаммы [...] Татарские мелодии вообще мало подходят под общую европейскую организацию.” See Rybakov, *Muzyka i pesni*, 67.

³³ Rybakov, *Muzyka i pesni*, 38–43; *Narody Rossii*, 2: 128–34.

³⁴ Rybakov, *Muzyka i pesni*, 42.

³⁵ See *Narody Rossii. Etnograficheskie ocherki*, 2: 133–134.

³⁶ Rybakov points out that the Teptiar people borrowed the violin, balalaika, and accordion from the Russians. See Rybakov, *Muzyka i pesni*, 198. Although Rybakov's views on the Teptiar people were later criticized on the pages of the journal *Izvestiia Kazanskogo Obshchestva Arkheologii, Istorii i Etnografii*, his views on Teptiar music were perpetuated in Grechaninov's arrangement. For the critique of Rybakov's book, see G. N. Akhmarov, "Teptiari i ikh proiskhozhdenie," 230–364; especially 341.

³⁷ The original tune in Rybakov's collection is transcribed a perfect fifth down and starts on *e* instead of *b*. See Rybakov, *Muzyka i pesni*, 207.

³⁸ This chord resembles a dominant-eleventh chord with a suspension to the third (which is not resolved) or a dominant-thirteenth chord without a third.

³⁹ See V. V. Yastrebtsev, *Reminiscences of Rimsky-Korsakov*, entry for April 21, 1894, 74.

⁴⁰ Ts. Cui, "The Popular Russian Symphonic Concert," in *Russians on Russian Music, 1830–1880*, 276–79.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 276. Throughout his essay on Borodin's symphony Cui stresses the quality of sound that Borodin creates as "unconquerable, elemental power [...] not clothed in the balanced, serene forms of western harmonization." *Ibid.*, 276–77.

⁴² See *Narody Rossii*, 2: 128–34.

⁴³ It should be noted that the words "paganism," "primitivism," or "backwardness" did not have pejorative connotations, since many Russians believed in the universal pattern of human development (from barbarian culture to civilization) and considered backwardness a temporal condition from which any people could be liberated.

⁴⁴ It could also be argued that the musical elements used by Grechaninov in the arrangement of this song—simplicity of thematic material combined with discordant harmony, repetition, and the prominence of rhythm—foreshadow elements used in the avant-garde movement. However, it would be erroneous to place Grechaninov among the avant-garde composers since he is primarily known for writing music in the best tradition of the Kuchka composers (between 1890 and 1896 he studied with Rimsky-Korsakov). Furthermore, Grechaninov expressed negativity toward modern art in his memoirs. See Iu. Aleksandrov, "K 100-letiiu so dnia rozhdeniia A.T. Grechaninova," *Sovetskaia muzyka* 10 (1964): 59–69.

⁴⁵ "Glinka variation" or a "changing-background variation" is a type of form based on the repetition of an *unchanging* melody played against varied harmonies and texture. In Russian/Soviet music this type of variation was linked to the "father" of Russian musical tradition, Mikhail Glinka, who used it in his opera *Ruslan and Liudmila* and symphonic fantasy *Kamarinskaia*. For more detailed information on the historiography of "Glinka variations," see Frolova-Walker, *Russian Music and Nationalism*, 114.

⁴⁶ Rybakov, *Muzyka i pesni*, 66 and 236. See also Rybakov's article "Russkie vliianiia," *Russian Musical Newspaper* 11 (1896): 1343–54.

⁴⁷ Rybakov, *Muzyka i pesni*, 43. Interestingly, in his description of Russian elements in Asian culture, Rybakov never used the term "Russification" [*russifikatsiia*], which would have a disciplinary connotation. I follow here the usage of the term as established by Hans Rogger (*Russia in the Age of Modernization and Revolution, 1881–1917*, 183). Instead, the milder terms "cultural rapprochement" or "merging" and "fusion" [*sliianie*] are used. He insisted on the peaceful and natural influence of the Russian "elemental power" [*stikhiia*] on Asian culture, and the importance of establishing mutual trust and a peaceful relationship between the Russians and *inorodtsy*. Rybakov, *Muzyka i pesni*, 43. Meanwhile, Rybakov suggests that Russians should not exercise a "forced influence [on *inorodtsy*] for its mercenary ends," as the "natural and gradual establishment of Russian culture" will eventually take place.

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