

COSSACKS AND WALLFLOWERS:
UKRAINIAN STAGE DANCE, IDENTITY AND POLITICS
IN SASKATCHEWAN FROM THE 1920s TO THE PRESENT

A Thesis Submitted to the
College of Graduate Studies and Research
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts
in the Department of History
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon

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ABSTRACT

Ukrainian dance is a popular means of expressing Ukrainian cultural affiliation, for the dancers as well as for the audience. It also performs a didactic function by sanctioning specific identities through the instruction and presentation of dances. This thesis examines the interaction of politics and the arts in shaping these identities in Saskatchewan.

By tracing the establishment and development of staged dance, this thesis explores the formation of the Ukrainian Canadian identity in the twentieth century. Through analysis of primary documents, archival footage, and interviews with leaders in the dance community, a record of the development of Ukrainian dance in Saskatchewan has been created. As the reasons for the dances changed over time due to internal and external pressures, so did the dances and identities that were expressed and encouraged.

This study also reveals that dance and politics are inextricably intertwined in the province. An internal nationalist / progressive political division shaped Ukrainian Canadian identity and the expression of that identity, including dance. Politics were imposed through control over the locations of dance training and performance. The legitimacy of the political divide, however, was challenged in the postwar period as artistry and aesthetics were emphasized. Political influence upon Ukrainian dance also extended beyond the Ukrainian Canadian community, and included consequences of general Canadian developments, such as the multicultural policy. By tracing the intersection between politics, identity and the arts in this ethnocultural community, how various influences shaped Ukrainian cultural identity is explored and critically examined.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study was funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (MA CGS) and the University of Saskatchewan (University Graduate Scholarship and Morton Travel Fund). This funding from the Department of History enabled me to conduct research throughout Saskatchewan and at Library and Archives Canada. I was also fortunate to receive assistance to present my research in progress at conferences.

I thank my supervisor, Dr. Valerie Korinek, for inspiring me to enter graduate studies. Her insights into popular perception of Ukrainian culture on the prairies challenged my assumptions. I also thank my committee, Dr. John McCannon and Dr. Bill Waiser, for providing feedback throughout the process. This thesis would not be possible without the L'viv Summer Semester Abroad program. I thank Dr. Natalia Shostak from St. Thomas More College for arranging the program, and *Pani* Lesia and *Pani* Olena, for their language instruction. Finally, I thank my instructors at the Humboldt School of Dance and the Saskatoon School of Dance, Jocelyn Luchak, Teri Tkachuk, and Serhij Koroliuk. While I was never very talented, they were always encouraging.

Innumerable others have assisted with this thesis. I thank the interviewees for inviting me into their homes and workplaces to share their experience with me. My gratitude goes to the staff at the archives for helping to locate sources. I also thank my past and present coworkers and my current employer, the Ukrainian Museum of Canada, for their patience with my enthusiasm and exhaustion throughout the writing process.

Finally, I thank my amazing friends and family. Their support, whether in proof-reading, teaching me the finer points of wine, or taking me to baseball games in Boston, is why this thesis is complete. My family has been very patient, especially with my absence at key social events over the years; I hope their investment pays out. And thank you Brian, for being there for me all these years.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACU	Association of Canadian Ukrainians
AUUC	Association of United Ukrainian Canadians
CFAC	Canadian Folk Arts Council
NEC	National Executive Committee
UCAM	Ukrainian Committee to Aid the Motherland
UCC	Ukrainian Canadian Committee
UCC-SPC	Ukrainian Canadian Congress—Saskatchewan Provincial Council
ULFTA	Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association
ULTA	Ukrainian Labour Temple Association
UNF	Ukrainian National Federation
UNYF	Ukrainian National Youth Federation
USDP	Ukrainian Social Democratic Party
UWVA	Ukrainian War Veterans' Association
UWOC	Ukrainian Women's Organization of Canada

1. INTRODUCTION

Therefore, when we speak of Ukrainian ballet, it must be remembered that this ballet comprises a series of Ukrainian national dances symbolizing Ukraine's art, culture, and great historical [sic] past. These dances possess natural freedom, exhilaration, vigor and elegance.¹

Ukrainian stage dance² has defined Ukrainian Canadian culture for nearly a century. While there are other ways Ukrainian identity has been and continues to be expressed—including acquisition and maintenance of Ukrainian language, religious traditions, food, and folk arts and crafts—it is dance that truly resonates amongst both the participants and their audiences. Compared with language maintenance and religious adherence, dance is the most accessible and inclusive method of expressing cultural affiliation for Canadians of Ukrainian descent.³ Ukrainian dance is dispersed throughout Saskatchewan; a survey conducted in 1991 identified 48 Ukrainian dance organizations throughout the province and at least 5,280 direct participants.⁴ The accessibility of dance makes it an ideal means to study some broader issues in Ukrainian-Canadian, Saskatchewan, and Canadian society. By accessing the history of Ukrainian dance in Saskatchewan we can better understand the larger issues surrounding the intersection of politics and arts as they formed and defined Ukrainian Canadian identity throughout the

¹ “Ukrainian Folk Culture and Vasile Avramenko,” no date, volume 1 “Ukrainian Folk Culture and Vasile Avramenko,” Vasile Avramenko fonds, MG31-D87, Library and Archives Canada

² Stage dance refers to dance presented in front of an audience, as opposed to social dances or folk dances which are more participatory in nature.

³ My interest in this topic has partially stemmed from my experience with this situation. While the language and typically Ukrainian religions were closed to me, I participated in Ukrainian dance classes and performances from late 1993 to early 2000, at the Humboldt School of Dance and the Saskatoon School of Dance. I studied under two female Saskatchewan-trained instructor/choreographers, one of whom danced with the Pavlychenko Ensemble at the time, and one male Ukraine-trained instructor/choreographer.

⁴ “1991 Survey of Ukrainian Dance Organizations in Saskatchewan,” *SASKTANETS/Arts Newsletter*, Summer/2, 1991, 2. Note that only 19 of the 48 organizations returned their surveys, and they did not ask about the ethnic origin of the participants.

past century.

This thesis uses the history of Ukrainian stage dance to explore identity formation and presentation among Ukrainian Canadians in Saskatchewan. For the first time, primary archival sources are combined with interviews to record the history of Ukrainian dance, focusing on how and why dance came to represent both Ukrainian and Canadian culture in Saskatchewan. It seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the influence politics have had on the development of dance. This is particularly fruitful in Saskatchewan, as politics have divided the province along distinct geographic lines. Identifying and understanding the influence of key figures and organizations reveals whose ends the construction of specific Ukrainian Canadian images serve.

This thesis also partially addresses the under-representation of Saskatchewan Ukrainians in histories of Ukrainians in Canada. Many historical monographs focus on the Alberta bloc settlements⁵, while some discuss Ukrainians in Manitoba⁶ or, increasingly, in Toronto and other major cities.⁷ This under-representation is due to several factors, including the smaller total population here than in some other locales, the relatively scattered population (although bloc communities exist, they are smaller and more dispersed than in, say, Alberta, and there is not a single dominant Ukrainian centre in the province), and the lack, until recently, of a research group focusing on Ukrainian heritage within the province.⁸ While explainable, this under-representation is not

⁵ This large field of study includes a wide variety of studies. Examples include: Orest Martynowich, *The Ukrainian Bloc Settlement in East Central Alberta, 1890-1930: A History* (Edmonton: Alberta Culture, 1985); Manoly R. Lupul, ed., *Continuity and Change: the Cultural Life of Alberta's First Ukrainians* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1988); Robert B. Klymasz, "*Sviety*": *Celebrating Ukrainian-Canadian Ritual in East Central Alberta Through the Generations* (Edmonton: Alberta Culture & Multiculturalism Historical Resources Division, 1992); Rene Jeanne Hanchuk, *The Word and Wax: A Medical Folk Ritual Among Ukrainians in Alberta* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1999).

⁶ For example, Paul Yuzyk *The Ukrainians in Manitoba: A Social History* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1953); Vladimir J. Kaye, ed., *Dictionary of Ukrainian Canadian Biography, Pioneer Settlers of Manitoba, 1891-1900* (Toronto: Ukrainian Canadian Research Foundation, 1975); Michael Ewanchuk, *Spruce, Swamp and Stone: A History of the Pioneer Ukrainian Settlements in the Gimli Area* (Winnipeg: M. Ewanchuk, 1977).

⁷ This area of study is a very recent development, generally focusing on postwar immigration, such as in Vic Satzewich's study *The Ukrainian Diaspora* (London: Routledge, 2002) or in the unconventional work of Stacey Zembrzycki, such as her dissertation, "Negotiating an Ethnic Identity: Ukrainians in Sudbury, 1900-1945" (Carleton University, pending).

⁸ The Prairie Centre for the Study of Ukrainian Heritage (PCUH) was formed at St. Thomas More College at the University of Saskatchewan in 1999. For more information about the PCUH, visit their website at <http://stmcollege.ca/pcuh/> (accessed 20 January 2005).

excusable. Since the arrival of ethnic Ukrainians in Canada in the 1890s, Ukrainians have emerged as a prevalent ethnic group in Saskatchewan. Occasionally referred to as Galicians or Ruthenians, the initial migrations roughly coincided with the opening of the western prairies and the establishment of Ukrainians in Saskatchewan is inextricable from the growth of the province itself, as waves of arrivals settled throughout the province. The number of people identifying as Ukrainian on the census has steadily increased since 1901 (although it faltered slightly in the most recent census for which data has been released), with 121,735 people in Saskatchewan self-identifying in the 2001 census. This constitutes approximately ten percent of the province's population, although some respondents claimed multiple ethnic origins.⁹

Many Ukrainian Canadians in Saskatchewan participate in activities to express their ethnic identity within the relatively tolerant climate of contemporary society. However, the established cultural societies and artistic troupes of today are the result of considerable challenges overcome during the past century. This thesis outlines the history and development of Ukrainian dance, focusing on how dance came to represent both Ukrainian and Canadian culture in Saskatchewan. This study explores influences on this development and examines the changing role of Ukrainian dance in relation to Ukrainian identity formation.

This discussion will also explore the role of ethnicity in defining appropriate gendered roles within Saskatchewan and Canadian society. Ukrainian dance has sanctioned specific personal and group identities through the dances which have been taught and performed. These presentations, however, are not stagnant and have changed significantly over the years, adjusting to pressures from within the Ukrainian community and from the broader Saskatchewan and Canadian communities. In turn, Ukrainian Canadian identity as presented through dance has been modified. As dance became more open and accepting of non-Ukrainians as dancers and audiences, it also became part of a

⁹ "Population by selected ethnic origins, by provinces and territories (2001 Census)," 21 April 2004, <http://www.statcan.ca/english/Pgdb/demo26i.htm> (accessed 21 January 2005). As compared to statistics in Wsevolod W. Isajiw and Andriy Makuch, "Ukrainians in Canada" in *Ukraine and Ukrainians Throughout the World*, ed. Ann Lencyk Pawliczko (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 328, and Vladimir J. Kaye and Frances Swyrypa "Settlement and Colonization" in *A Heritage in Transition: Essays in the History of Ukrainians in Canada*, ed. Manoly R. Lupul (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982), 34.

broader Saskatchewan identity. Ukrainian dance is now a fully accepted part of festivals which celebrate prairie culture, not just those which celebrate ethnic diversity.

This study also examines various influences on the development of dance, primarily analyzing the effect that political organizations and key artistic leaders had on shaping Ukrainian dance and identity formation in the province. Using theories and secondary sources, the thesis also examines the changing role of Ukrainian dance in relation to Ukrainian identity formation. It also addresses some of the consequences of changes to the dances and costuming, and how these changes affect the relationship between authenticity and dance. Finally, this thesis acknowledges one area of Ukrainian Canadian culture which has been influenced by the latest generation of migrants from Ukraine, touching upon current debates on how they are shaping the expression of Ukrainian Canadian identity.

1.1 Overview of the Research Literature

Academic interest in Ukrainian Canadian history and culture is not new. The body of literature has developed differently between English and Ukrainian language works. Ukrainian language works have a more restricted audience and tend towards one of three focuses: commemoration (usually of anniversaries within organizations); memoirs; and general histories. These histories are rarely written by professional historians and have been described as “popular, personal, local, or partisan.”¹⁰ As well, because these are not often translated to English, these works seldom affect Canadian historiography. English language works, on the other hand, tend to follow general trends in Canadian historiography. Early works were authored by non-Ukrainians and, reflecting the era in which they were written, often focused on the assimilation of Ukrainians into mainstream society.¹¹ Varying approaches were utilized, including establishing the need for further assimilation, recording successes and failures of assimilation, or actively

¹⁰ Francis Swyrypa, “A Survey of Ukrainian-Canadian Historiography” in *A Heritage in Transition: Essays in the History of Ukrainians in Canada*, ed. Manoly R. Lupul (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982), 317.

¹¹ For example, see: William Paluk *Canadian Cossacks* (Winnipeg: Canadian Ukrainian Review Pub. Co., 1943) and Charles H. Young *The Ukrainian Canadians: A Study in Assimilation* (Toronto: Thomas Nelson, 1931).

encouraging the persistence of Ukrainian cultural traditions.

Postwar English studies, unlike their pre-1947 counterparts, are predominately written by Ukrainian Canadians. One of the most influential English-language works is Vera Lysenko's *Men in Sheepskin Coats: A Study in Assimilation*. Originally published in 1947, it was groundbreaking as it was the first history of Ukrainians in Canada written in English by a Ukrainian Canadian.¹² She included the experience of both men and women in her history, a rarity at the time.¹³ Building on Lysenko's work, other Ukrainian-Canadian studies focused on creating a unified narrative and establishing a general narrative. Michael (Mykhailo) H. Marunchak's *The Ukrainian Canadians: A History* was a seminal work in the field, originally published in Ukrainian in 1968, republished in English in 1970.¹⁴ General histories such as this one rarely acknowledge variations between experiences in each province, instead emphasizing similarities among all Ukrainian-Canadian experiences.

Several approaches arose to address this omission. Edited collections have become increasingly prevalent; they enable authors to focus on specific topics while still uniting this history under the label Ukrainian Canadian.¹⁵ Another trend was a move towards more theoretical and academic evaluations of Ukrainian Canadians. This is demonstrated in manuscripts such as Lubomyr Luciuk's geographical study *Searching for Place: Ukrainian Displaced Persons, Canada, and the Migration of Memory* published in 2000 and Vic Satzewich's 2002 study, *The Ukrainian Diaspora*.¹⁶ Both of these texts are heavily dependent on academic theory to both define and analyze their topics. The final trend was to relate and interpret personal stories within the broader

¹² The manuscript was not, however, accepted without controversy, as Lysenko was attacked by some Ukrainians for being pro-Communist. For further details of this controversy consult Alexandra Kruchka Glynn, "Vera Lysenko's *Men in Sheepskin Coats* (1947): The Untold Story," *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 14, no.1 (1991), 226.

¹³ Glynn, 219 and 222.

¹⁴ Revised editions of *The Ukrainian Canadians: A History* were published in 1982 (English) and 1991 (Ukrainian). Mykhailo Marunchak, *Ukrainian Canadians: A History* (Winnipeg: Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1982).

¹⁵ For example, Lubomyr Luciuk and Stella Hryniuk edited the popular collection *Canada's Ukrainians: Negotiating an Identity* in 1991 to show both similarities and differences within the Ukrainian experience. With this collection, they made some general observations of all Ukrainian Canadians, without creating the impression that the group is completely homogeneous.

¹⁶ Lubomyr Y. Luciuk, *Searching for Place: Ukrainian Displaced Persons, Canada, and the Migration of Memory* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000); Vic Satzewich, *The Ukrainian Diaspora* (London: Routledge, 2002).

group history and memory. An example of this is Myrna Kostash's *All of Baba's Children*.¹⁷ Originally released in 1977, its controversial commentary about personal identity and multiculturalism is still relevant today. These trends were, of course, not exclusive. For instance, Kostash, even with her accessible, non-academic writing style, incorporated theories about multiculturalism and identity into her work.

1.2 Conceptual Categories of Analysis

The Ukrainian-Canadian experience and identity is defined on many intersecting levels. To analyze the change in the culture and to contextualize the intersection of identities within the group Ukrainian Canadian identity, an interdisciplinary approach is useful. Various theories aid in the analysis of research literature, primary sources, and oral interviews. To trace Ukrainian Canadians' identity as formed and expressed through dance, I will apply theories about antimodernism, the invention of tradition, the creation of nationalism and community, and how groups define ethnicity and establish their boundaries. These issues are very complex and the body of literature regarding them is vast. This overview will focus on the areas which are most applicable to my study, as opposed to providing a complete critique of the fields.

Ukrainian Canadian identity has been shaped through selective retention of several aspects of culture. Fredrik Barth's "Ethnic Groups and Boundaries" originally published in 1969 presented the influential theory that ethnic groups define themselves in relation to what they are not. They do this through erecting stable and persistent boundaries that define social relations.¹⁸ These boundaries may be more or less restrictive, depending on how distinguishing and imperative the ethnic values of the group are. He elaborated, stating that "a drastic reduction of cultural differences between ethnic groups does not correlate in any simple way with a reduction in the organizational relevance of ethnic identities."¹⁹ However, in order to participate in the broader social life of Canada, a compromise must be reached between one group identity and another.

¹⁷ Myrna Kostash, *All of Baba's Children* (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1977).

¹⁸ Fredrik Barth, "Boundaries and Connections" in *Signifying Identities: Anthropological Perspectives on Boundaries and Contested Values*, ed. Anthony P. Cohen (New York: Routledge, 2000), 199 and 204.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 222.

This compromise is important because Ukrainian Canadian ethnic identity is not tied to a majority of its members' daily activities. Unlike many ethnic Canadians, Ukrainians are not visibly identifiable, unless they chose to be by, for example, wearing an “I am Ukrainian” t-shirt. Being Ukrainian is not therefore necessarily the sole determinant of their social organization or world view. Instead, ethnicity is showcased at important times, such as religious celebrations, folk dance classes, or in special language schooling. Thus, Ukrainian Canadians can maintain an ethnic group identity in Canada without experiencing much discrimination or restriction. Determining who is within the group, however, can be difficult. Among Ukrainian Canadians, a solution is often found by emphasizing one common level of identity, Ukrainian ethnic decent, over others, such as religion or regional differences (ie. Western Ukrainian versus Eastern).²⁰ While the re-introduction of regional ethnographic dances in recent years could challenge this unified identity, these dances are presented as variations on a national theme, rather than indicators of divisions between Ukrainians. There is still disagreement over the importance of other requirements, such as language ability and involvement in cultural or political activities, to determining membership in the group.

Ukrainian Canadian identity is used to define a Ukrainian Canadian nation. While the term “nation” is complex, I am invoking it here as it was used by Benedict Anderson to define a culturally created, rather than natural and unchanging, group.²¹ This construction is “both inherently limited and sovereign,” as it delimits its own members and places non-members beyond its borders.²² Although Anderson focused primarily on the rise of nation-states and nationalism in modern Europe, his ideas of comradeship, limitation and sovereignty are all observable in the Ukrainian Canadian community. Decisions are not made by any external powers, although policies and goals can be influenced by external forces such as Ukrainian and Canadian state policies. Instead, the community decides what its collective goals are and how these goals will be achieved.

²⁰ This step is described by Barth, 223.

²¹ Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* was first published in 1983 then revised and expanded in 1991. It established the idea that nations arise from specific cultural developments related to print culture, standardization of language, and the spread of capitalism inspires national consciousness. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, revised and extended ed., 2nd ed. (New York: Verso, 1991).

²² *Ibid.*, 6.

These goals, however, are not always universal within the group; for Ukrainian Canadians, primary divisions are due to religious and political affiliations. The limitation of the community is difficult to define as it is not determined by the spatial boundaries that Anderson focused on, such as the independent nation state. Instead, this community is limited by psychological aspects; it imagines itself as exclusive and therefore accepts some members while others are rejected. Beyond the Ukrainian Canadian community lie other communities including other hyphenated Canadians, such as German-Canadians and Vietnamese-Canadians and other nationalities, including Americans, Chileans, and Malaysians. As the dance groups accepted more non-Ukrainian dancers, this exclusivity was challenged.

To reinforce this identity, Ukrainian Canadians maintain a selective history; certain parts are maintained while others are forgotten. Anderson theorized that “out of such oblivions, in specific historical circumstances, spring narratives” which define the group.²³ For Ukrainian Canadians this may mean remembering Soviet oppression, but “forgetting” the role of Ukrainians in that oppression, or teaching about glorious Cossacks and ignoring the horrors they perpetrated on Catholic and Jewish populations. The feeling of camaraderie, which is created through a shared narrative, is tied to feelings of patriotism and nationalism. This attachment to the nation is demonstrated through the “cultural products of nationalism – poetry, prose fiction, music, plastic arts.”²⁴ Anderson's exclusion of folk arts is significant here as his focus on the elite arts provides an incomplete view of how nationalism may have affected common people. Although elites may have created nationalism, as Anderson supposed, these feelings were often adopted by the rest of the population. How these feelings of nationalism and national pride are expressed by these classes is important. It is insufficient for Anderson to ignore the wide variety of folk culture used to express nationalism, as it creates a sense of fellowship with other members. This is particularly true of the Ukrainian-Canadian community where the group is often identified through its folk arts.

An acknowledgment of the importance of folk arts to identity formation can be found in John Paul Himka's article “The Construction of Nationality in Galician Rus'.”

²³ Ibid., 204.

²⁴ Ibid., 141.

Himka demonstrated that the nineteenth century national movement in Galicia was politically motivated and that politics determined the cultural representations of nationalism. This meant that certain elements of traditional culture were selected to represent the nation because they were politically useful, such as the *pysanka* [decorated Easter eggs], which are a very aesthetically pleasing and demanding folk art.²⁵ Other cultural traits were rejected, such as regional dialects and night courting, because they created division in the community or represented the community as backward to outsiders.²⁶

The aspects of Ukrainian history which the Ukrainian Canadian community has maintained may be influenced by the community's fragmentary status. Louis Hartz's work, *The Founding of New Societies*, both in theory and its application are highly controversial, often sparking debates regarding its applicability to specific situations.²⁷ For this particular thesis, however, Hartz is informative as it helps explain why it is easier for Ukrainians abroad to imagine Ukrainian nationalism and an ideal Ukrainian homeland than for people in Ukraine to live that dream.²⁸ As well, dance and Ukrainian identity developed differently in this fragment than it had in the homeland, due partially to different needs and the political situations. Hartz implied that European immigrants and colonizers retain an identity defined by when they leave their home country; separation stunts the culture, preserving at least some aspects of it. Thus, late-nineteenth Ukrainian immigrants and their descendants retained some nineteenth century Ukrainian values, language, and culture and did not develop into the twentieth century in the same way the homeland culture did. Although Hartz focused on earlier colonizers, the challenge of immigrants entering the fragment is also discussed. As new immigrants

²⁵ John Paul Himka, "The Construction of Nationality in Galician Rus': Icarian Flights in Almost All Directions," in *Intellectuals and the Articulation of the Nation*, edited by Ronald Grigor Suny and Michael D. Kennedy (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 111 and 154.

²⁶ Ibid., 111. For further information about these lost traditions, see Himka.

²⁷ A noteworthy debate took place in the December 1988 issue of the *Canadian Journal of Political Science*. Nelson Wiseman argued that Hugh Donald Forbes's earlier article disputing the applicability of Hartzian theory to the French Canadian situation actually proved the theory correct ("Hartz-Horowitz at Twenty: Nationalism, Toryism and Socialism in Canada and the United States" 20 (1987)). Forbes responded in the same issue, rebuffing Wiseman's critique of his Hartzian theory, and responding instead to issues stemming from French Canadian history. Their debate, however, does not touch upon the Ukrainian situation in Canada.

²⁸ Hartz focused on the development of liberalism in the fragment, emphasizing that these fragments are able to separate European ideology from the struggles of Europe.

bring more recent memories of Europe with them, they threaten the fragment's boundaries and must be absorbed by the main culture, whether Canadian or Ukrainian Canadian.²⁹ Ukrainian Canadian culture, which originally developed from the merging of the Ukrainian and Canadian cultural traditions and experiences in the post-immigrant population, is still in flux.³⁰

Most scholars differentiate between recent immigrants and the ethnic group that forms following immigration. Guntis Šmidchens identified several features of the transition between immigrant and ethnic folklore. New immigrants' experiences are marked by many adjustments, including the acceptance of new foods, new languages, and new customs; they have immigrant folklore to offer but children of these immigrants are often ashamed of how their parents do not fit in and deny their heritage. Grandchildren, however, are distant from the memory of immigration and maintain their personal history and heritage through developing ethnic folklore.³¹ Šmidchens also described the important role of contacts within the homeland for maintaining traditions and ethnic identity among the new ethnic community.³² Although interaction between Ukrainians and Ukrainian Canadians was sporadic for years, interaction recently increased, affecting traditions and folklore in both Canada and Ukraine. Šmidchens also contributed to the discussion of variation within ethnic groups, whether based on religion, political ideology, class, gender or age.³³ He did not see variation as inherently divisive; it merely created a variety of experiences and impressions. Immigrant and ethnic identities, though closely related, are therefore different.

There are, of course, many types of Ukrainian immigrants including refugees, displaced persons, and landed citizens. There is also a category of immigrant referred to

²⁹ Hartz, 14. In *The Myth of Nations*, Patrick Geary confirms this Hartz's proposal that fragmented societies escape the European fluctuation, and that the culture brought to the new society is stuck in a certain time and within a certain history. Ultimately, this helps explain the occasionally strained relationship between Ukrainian Canadians, most of whom are third or fourth generation, and recent immigrants from Ukraine, who continued to develop within the European context.

³⁰ This is confirmed in Alexander I. Roman's dissertation about the experience of third-wave immigrants in Toronto, entitled "Ethnic Identity Among the Ukrainian Canadians: An Assessment of Generational Changes," (York University, 1988).

³¹ Guntis Šmidchens, "Immigrant and Ethnic Folklore," in *The Emergence of Folklore in Everyday Life: A Fieldguide and Sourcebook*, ed. George H. Schoemaker (Bloomington, Indiana: Trickster Press, 1990), 133-134.

³² Ibid., 133-134.

³³ Ibid.

as diaspora, which is distinct from the other forms of immigrants. The application of this label to Ukrainian Canadians, and to non-Jewish populations in general, is highly controversial. As defined by Charles King, it may apply to the Ukrainian Canadian situation. In his article “Nationalism, Transnationalism, and Postcommunism,” Charles King distinguished a diaspora from immigrants by defining diaspora as involving a dispersion for a specific region.³⁴ Ultimately, King concluded that “whether the diaspora label is analytically serviceable should be determined primarily by the degree to which given states and ethnic populations act as if a diasporic relationship exists, not by the extent to which the ethno-cultural community possesses a prescribed list of static cultural or historic traits.”³⁵ The presence of a Ukrainian-Canadian group is important for both Ukraine and Canada; however, its relationship with modern Ukraine is contested by Ukrainians.

In forming their identity, Ukrainian Canadians invented and reinvented dance traditions. These invented traditions often use older materials to create a new tradition with a new purpose.³⁶ The idea of the invention of tradition is closely related to the creation of a collective myth. Hobsbawm claimed that studying invented traditions could illuminate historians’ understanding of the group’s relation to the past “for all invented traditions use history as a legitimator of action and cement of group cohesion.”³⁷ This is demonstrated in how dance instructors used and presented Cossack history, starting with ballet master Avramenko and continuing to the dances performed today. Understanding

³⁴ King was responding to William Safran's archetypal definition of diaspora. He claimed ideally a diaspora should experience a high level of group ethnic organization (essential to stave off assimilation and to maintain group identity); should mostly reside outside its homeland (which excludes seasonal migrants and at least some refugees), and that the community must be torn between its commitment to the homeland and its requirement of living in the host state. Charles King, “Introduction: Nationalism, Transnationalism, and Postcommunism,” in *Nations Abroad: Diaspora Politics and International Relations in the Former Soviet Union*, ed. Charles King and Neil J. Melvin (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1998), 6 and 7.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

³⁶ Hobsbawm described three types of invented traditions that appeared since the industrial revolution. The most prevalent invented traditions are ones that help establish cohesion for a group, such as patriotism. The second type involves traditions that are designed to legitimize institutions or the status of a group. The third type describes traditions that socialize people by teaching them common values, beliefs and conventions. Eric Hobsbawm, “Introduction: Inventing Traditions,” in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 6 and 9.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 12.

invented traditions is relevant because tradition is one of the reasons people participate in Ukrainian artistic activities. In 1983, Eric Hobsbawm proposed that while traditions may claim to be ancient, they are actually often quite recently created for nationalist purposes.³⁸ The term “invented traditions” refers both to traditions actually created and instituted, as per Hugh Trevor-Roper’s description of the creation of highland dress in Scotland,³⁹ and “those emerging in a less easily traceable manner.”⁴⁰ Encouraging group cohesion and, in the case of many Ukrainian Canadians, nationalism are two common goals for the community. These goals must be understood in order to identify if they are also evident in the arts. Class, gender, race and religion are all aspects of the artists' identity, the art itself, and how and by whom the art is used. For example, in his article “Mass Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914,” Hobsbawm noted the class distinctiveness of certain invented traditions, a factor which may be important in artistic expressions of Ukrainian Canadian identity.⁴¹ All of these aspects must be examined together as they define and determine the development of identity and art.

The theories outlined are not without their critics. Alexander Motyl’s 1999 work “Inventing Invention: the Limits of National Formation” criticized the constructivist approaches of Anderson and Hobsbawm for uncovering trivial and unimaginative conclusions and for dependence on non-elites accepting elite creations, respectively.⁴² Motyl instead proposed that the conditions necessary to create national identity are a lifeworld and a national belief system, which related to origins and boundaries as defined by Barth.⁴³ Ultimately, Motyl was unconvincing in his arguments which were dependent on modernity, and dismissed Anderson much too quickly. Ernest Gellner also criticized Hobsbawm, although Gellner focused more on the dangers of an uncritical and excessive application of Hobsbawm's theory. Gellner argued that researchers must recognize that

³⁸ Ibid., 1 and 6.

³⁹ Hugh Trevor-Roper, “The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland,” in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

⁴⁰ Hobsbawm, “Introduction,” 1.

⁴¹ Eric Hobsbawm, “Mass Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914,” in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 305.

⁴² Alexander J. Motyl, “Inventing Invention: The Limits of National Identity Formation,” in *Intellectuals and the Articulation of the Nation*, ed. Ronald Grigor Suny and Michael D. Kennedy (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 60 and 64.

⁴³ Ibid., 67.

cultures both persist and change and warned them against solely looking for “cultural’ rather than organisational explanations” which can prejudice their research.⁴⁴

The relationship between invented traditions and authenticity is also controversial. Michael Harkin, who focused on Canadian aboriginal experiences in his article “A Tradition of Invention: Modern Ceremonialism on the Northwest Coast,” traced the revival and recreation of a potlatch tradition and its relationship to authenticity. He concluded that “traditions may be authentic in that they move people affectively... despite the fact that they may be 'artificially' constructed and framed.”⁴⁵ Harkin's research demonstrated that even if a group knows a tradition is invented, they do not necessarily conclude that it is inauthentic and false. Pauline Greenhill also discusses authenticity in her work, *Ethnicity in the Mainstream*, relating it to power issues.⁴⁶ The community has the power to define itself and establish the authenticity of its own traditions. The freedom to express this identity is also related to power. This is an important aspect of Ukrainian Canadian arts. Robert B. Klymasz stated in his dissertation that folk festivals, such as the annual Canada's National Ukrainian Festival in Dauphin, Manitoba, emerged from blending new and old, internal and external, but still “provides a socially sanctioned outlet for the demonstration of Ukrainian ethnicity.”⁴⁷ Many dancers and choreographers realize that their art is not precisely the same as its claim to tradition implies, but for them it still provides a means to express very powerful feelings of ancient ties.

Andriy Nahachewsky’s body of work on Ukrainian Canadian dance described how folk- and ethnic dances are founded in tradition but have changed over time, regardless of claims to the contrary.⁴⁸ He outlined how the nationalistic performance on

⁴⁴ Ernest Gellner, *Nationalism* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997), 94.

⁴⁵ Michael Harkin, “A Tradition of Invention: Modern Ceremonialism on the Northwest Coast,” in *Present is Past: Some Uses of Tradition in Native Societies*, ed. Marie Mauzé (New York: University Press of America, 1997), 98.

⁴⁶ Pauline Greenhill, *Ethnicity in the Mainstream* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's Press, 1994).

⁴⁷ Robert B. Klymasz, *Ukrainian Folklore in Canada* (New York: Arno Press, 1980), 117. This thesis was later published as a manuscript.

⁴⁸ Nahachewsky's work is part of a large, international field of dance history studies. This area of research tends to explore the development of both western (especially ballet) and non-western (generally “tribal” world dance) dance, often focusing on movement aesthetics. Nahachewsky, like many others in this field, has attempted to create an encompassing theory about how and why dance is used in society. Whether or not his theory is applicable to all cultural situations is debatable but, as it was developed specifically out of his work on Ukrainian dance, it is applicable within the scope of this thesis. For

stage is very far removed from peasant dances in the homeland.⁴⁹ He distinguished between folk and ethnic dances, categorizing folk dances as improvised and focused on participation, not presentation while New World dances are ethnic because they are performed by members of a cultural minority. He categorized all ethnic dances as recreational, national, or theatrical.⁵⁰ From the 1920s when the Ukrainian emigrant choreographer Vasile Avramenko standardized Ukrainian Canadian dances in Canada until the 1960s, Ukrainian dance fell into the national category, as it was a symbol of the national group.⁵¹ During the 1960s and after, the dances became more theatric and athletic in style.⁵² These dances broke from the standardized patterns and steps and concentrated on expressing a Ukrainian or Ukrainian-Canadian spirit instead of reproducing old dances for authenticity.⁵³ While these new dances are clearly invented, they draw on a perception of tradition, at least in spirit, as well as contemporary, urban, and artistic dance movements.

In order to analyze the artistic developments within invented traditions, an understanding of antimodernism and Gramscianism is important. Gramsci's key theoretical contribution was to use cultural hegemony—the idea that the ruling class controls the working class by inspiring them to follow an individualist, competition-driven ruling class ideology—to reconcile Marxist theories predicting worker revolutions with a conflicting reality. For Ukrainian dance, this hegemony may be enforced through various groups' or leaders' control over the images and identities created, presented and reinforced by the dances. He also redirected folklore studies when he proposed in the 1930s that folklore should be studied as a “conception of the world and life.”⁵⁴ This challenged anthropologists' work to that point, which had focused on collecting folklore and looking for the original folk culture. This work included recording village dances, as performed by Verkovynets and others. Gramsci also

more on these controversies and other developments in the field of dance studies, see publications and proceedings from the Society of Dance History Scholars.

⁴⁹ Nahachewsky, “Conceptual Categories,” 138.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 137-138.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 143.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 145.

⁵⁴ Antonio Gramsci, *A Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings, 1916-1935*, ed. David Forgacs, trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1988), 360.

proposed that folk arts and “the national” are closely-tied concept. The politics which were active within and between dance organizations speak to this development.

In his brief introduction to the second section of *Antimodernism and Artistic Experience: Policing the Boundaries of Modernity*, Benedict Anderson explained that antimodernism arose following the First World War, as people increasingly sought their roots and questioned their identity.⁵⁵ One reason people participate in Ukrainian dance is the search for roots, both directly through dance tours to Ukraine and indirectly through the cultural expression. Lora Senechal Carney built on Anderson's theory through her discussion of the relationship between “Modernists and Folk on the Lower Saint-Lawrence.” She explored the relationship between folk artists, government and handicraft demands in this article. She also outlined how disagreements between folk art and professional art arise, as well as conflicting definitions of authenticity. Ukrainian Canadian dancers and choreographers also experienced these conflicts, and how they negotiated such demands in their choreography and costuming illuminates another facet of Ukrainian Canadian artistic expression. Carney’s presentation of the debate surrounding the authenticity of the folk rugs is also applicable because it outlines how the authenticity of an object is determined by the authenticity of the people who created it.⁵⁶ In her article “Modernity, Nostalgia, and the Standardization of Time,” Kim Sawchuk also linked the idea of nostalgia to antimodernist sentiments. Specifically, she defined nostalgia as “a melancholia caused by a protracted absence, a wistful, excessively sentimental, and even abnormal hankering for the return of some real or romanticized period or irrecoverable condition or setting in the past.”⁵⁷ Antimodernism is tied to nostalgia because nostalgia is the reaction to the standardization of time by modernity, and nostalgia provides the necessary ideal image for inspiration.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Benedict Anderson, “Introduction to Part Two: Staging Antimodernism in the Age of High Capitalist Nationalism,” in *Antimodernism and Artistic Experience: Policing the Boundaries of Modernity*, ed. Lynda Jessup (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 98.

⁵⁶ Lora Senechal Carney, “Modernists and Folk on the Lower St. Lawrence: The Problem of Folk Art,” in *Antimodernism and Artistic Experience: Policing the Boundaries of Modernity*, ed. Lynda Jessup (Toronto: UTP, 2001), 110-111.

⁵⁷ Kim Sawchuk, “Introduction to Part Three: Modernity, Nostalgia, and the Standardization of Time,” in *Antimodernism and Artistic Experience: Policing the Boundaries of Modernity*, ed. Lynda Jessup (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 161.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

Finally, individual experiences of gender, class, religion, age, and geographic location have a great deal of influence on what is expressed through art and how it is expressed. These experiences must be acknowledged and understood in order to interpret actions and consequences. Although he was instructing anthropologists in their craft, Clifford Geertz's comments regarding the importance of understanding signification are also relevant to this study. His essay "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture," originally printed in 1973, specifically discussed how the actions of people and organizations cannot just be recorded, they must be interpreted knowing that the same action may be intended to convey different meanings.⁵⁹ To help interpret these actions, then, some understanding of the characteristics of individuals is necessary. So, while the same Avramenko dances were performed by many dance troupes, each concert may have its own drive, and convey a different meaning.

Social roles were constantly defined and redefined for Ukrainian-Canadian women and men involved in dance. Gender is especially significant because it is demonstrated through the arts, both in images created and in available roles for women and men, and these socially constructed roles have changed in Ukrainian dance over the years. Joan Wallach Scott's 1996 article "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," defined gender as a "constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power."⁶⁰ Gisela Bock also believed that gender must deny biological explanations for differences between men and women or historical analysis will affirm "traditional visions of gender."⁶¹ Gillian Creese and Veronica Strong-Boag presented the additional complication that both femininity and masculinity are socially constructed and that both of these constructions must be examined.⁶² Creese and Strong-Boag's article "Taking Gender into Account in British Columbia: More Than Just Women's Studies"

⁵⁹ Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture" in *Turning Points in Qualitative Research: Tying Knots in a Handkerchief*, ed. Yvonna S. Lincoln and Norman K. Denzin (New York: AltaMira Press, 2003), 150.

⁶⁰ Joan Wallach Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," in *Feminism and History*, ed. Joan Wallach Scott (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 167.

⁶¹ Gisela Bock, "Women's History and Gender History: Aspects of an International Debate," *Gender & History* 1 (Spring 1989), 15.

⁶² Gillian Creese and Veronica Strong-Boag, "Taking Gender into Account in British Columbia: More Than Just Women's Studies," *BC Studies* 105-106 (Spring/Summer 1995), 9 and 13.

built on earlier work from Michael Roper and John Tosh, which advocated the study of masculinity. Roper and Tosh argued both that masculinity has a history and that masculinity involves “an interweaving of men’s social power with a range of cultural representations, both dominant and subordinate;” this complicated the previously simple construction of patriarchy and the association of patriarchy with all men.⁶³ It also informed some of the developments of men's roles in Ukrainian Canadian dance. In *Wedded to the Cause*, Francis Swyripa explored the special place in Ukrainian-Canadian culture of *baba* [grandmother] and women in general. She demonstrated that the “major postwar symbols of Ukrainian Canadian identity represented the work historically done by women.”⁶⁴ Women's Ukrainian identity and life center on the kitchen and the family, which created a very restricted cultural role.⁶⁵ As well, *dido*, the grandfather, is not considered the head of the household and is overshadowed by *baba*; *dido* is often instead a silly character used for comic relief.⁶⁶

1.3 Research Literature Specific to the Topic

Applicable research for this topic is wide-ranging and includes discussion about issues surrounding multicultural policy and definitions of diaspora, as well as the development of gender roles, artistic movements and individual and group identity. Combined, it provides a background for this study. There is a small field of work specifically addressing the development of Ukrainian dance. This field is divided into general histories, such as much of Alexandra Pritz's work, recordings of specific dances and dance steps, such as those created by Myron Shatulsky and Bohdan Zerebecky, and histories of specific dance groups and key individuals. These works demonstrate that Ukrainian dance is a vibrant and active form of artistic expression and that the dances have developed over the years. They also outline the defining moments in the development of Ukrainian dance in Canada. These moments often mirror the waves of

⁶³ Michael Roper and John Tosh, “Introduction: Historians and the Politics of Masculinity,” in *Manful Assertions: Masculinities in Britain Since 1800*, ed. Michael Roper and John Tosh (New York: Routledge, 1991), 1, 8-11, and 14.

⁶⁴ Swyripa, *Wedded*, 246.

⁶⁵ Swyripa, *Wedded*, 232.

⁶⁶ Swyripa, *Wedded*, 245, 249, and 255.

migration, and include Vasile Avramenko's work, the formation of the first semi-professional dance troupes in Saskatchewan in 1960, tours of dance ensembles from Ukraine, and the celebration of key cultural anniversaries and centennials throughout these years.

Within the broad historiography, there is a body of literature that discusses Ukrainian art and identity. Much of this literature is based on exhibitions of material artifacts in art galleries. Examples of these documents include *Tkanya: An Exhibit of Ukrainian Weaving* and *A Woman's Work: An Introduction to the Art of Ukrainian Ritual Breads*.⁶⁷ Although highly specialized, such documents help place the art and craft into a historical and cultural context, providing information about the art, its development, and its place in Ukrainian Canadian culture. The most complete discussion of the tie between Ukrainian Canadian arts and ethnic identity is *Art and Ethnicity: The Ukrainian Tradition in Canada*, which was compiled by the Canadian Museum of Civilization and edited by its curator, noted folklorist Robert B. Klymasz.⁶⁸ This collection is one of the few publications from a gallery or museum that is not limited to a particular artist, artistic expression, or organization.

Beyond the art galleries and museums, there exists a small body of literature about Ukrainian performing arts. Alexandra Pritz's 1978 thesis "Ukrainian Cultural Traditions in Canada: Theatre, Choral Music and Dance, 1891-1967" is still one of the most complete overviews of historic developments in performing arts in Canada.⁶⁹ Other theses, such as Brian Cherwick's recent dissertation "Polkas on the Prairies: Ukrainian Music and the Construction of Identity" and Andriy Nahachewsky's earlier work "The Kolomyika: Change and Diversity in Canadian Ukrainian Folk Dance" have provided information about specific performing arts and their role within the Ukrainian

⁶⁷ Radomir Bilash and Barbara Wilberg, eds., *Tkanyna: An Exhibit of Ukrainian Weaving* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1988); Olya S. Marko, curator, *A Woman's Work: An Introduction to the Art of Ukrainian Ritual Breads* (Winnipeg: Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre, 1987).

⁶⁸ Robert B. Klymasz, ed., comp. Canadian Museum of Civilization, *Art and Ethnicity: The Ukrainian Tradition in Canada* (Hull, Quebec: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1991).

⁶⁹ Alexandra Pritz, "Ukrainian Cultural Traditions in Canada: Theatre, Choral Music and Dance, 1891-1967" (Master's thesis, University of Ottawa, 1979).

community.⁷⁰ Selections from theses have also been published as articles in collections and journals, helping popularize their information.⁷¹

Overall, research into ties between cultural activities and Ukrainian identity is underdeveloped. Most references to the role of arts and crafts in defining identity are hidden within works which focus on other topics. For instance, while most of the study focused on women's organizations, Swyripa devoted a chapter to imagery, age and gender roles in *Wedded to the Cause: Ukrainian-Canadian Women and Ethnic Identity, 1891-1991*.⁷² Her analysis fluidly links gender, ethnicity, identity and art. Most other sources, such as Serge Keleher's article "Ukrainian Church Iconography in Canada: Models and Their Spiritual Significance" in *The Ukrainian Religious Experience: Tradition and the Canadian Cultural Context*, do not provide as complete an analysis, often because they separate the art from the cultural identity of the artists and audience.⁷³

One area of Ukrainian identity that has been more thoroughly researched is the trend towards the creation and reinforcing of a national identity. This is most commonly examined in conjunction with the history of the organizations.⁷⁴ *Our Stage: the Amateur Performing Arts of the Ukrainian Settlers in Canada* compiled by Peter Krawchuk (Petro Kravchuk) discusses the role of the performing arts as they developed within the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association (ULFTA) and the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians (AUUC).⁷⁵ Originally published in Ukrainian in 1981 and followed

⁷⁰ Brian Cherwick, "Polkas on the Prairies: Ukrainian Music and the Construction of Identity," (Master's thesis, University of Alberta, 1999); Andriy Nahachewsky, "The Kolomyika: Change and Diversity in Canadian Ukrainian Folk Dance," (Ph.D. diss., University of Alberta, 1991).

⁷¹ For instance, the collection *New Soil—Old Roots: the Ukrainian Experience in Canada* (Winnipeg: Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in Canada, 1983) edited by Jaroslav Rozumnyj contains several excellent articles about the arts by Alexandra Pritz "Ukrainian Dance in Canada: The First Fifty Years, 1924-1954" and Robert B. Klymasz, "Culture Maintenance and the Ukrainian Experience in Western Canada."

⁷² Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993.

⁷³ David J. Goa, ed., *The Ukrainian Religious Experience: Tradition and the Canadian Cultural Context* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1989).

⁷⁴ Many studies in have focused on Ukrainian-Canadian organizations. These groups are numerous, prolific, and powerful within the Ukrainian-Canadian community. The interest in organizations has led to the creation of histories about specific groups, such as *75 Years of Service, Friendship and Commitment* a history by Natalie Ostryzniuk of the Regina-based Daughters of Ukraine Branch of the Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada. These histories, while important to record, tend to be partisan and restricted to the local. The focus on a particular organization can leave the reader with the inaccurate impression that the entire community belongs to the organization reported upon.

⁷⁵ Peter Krawchuk, ed., *Our Stage: The Amateur Performing Arts of the Ukrainian Settlers in Canada*, trans. Mary Skrypnyk (Toronto: Kobzar Publishing, 1984).

by an English translation in 1984, this book outlines how the performing arts were developed within the ULFTA-AUCC. The most significant fault of this particular work is the lack of citation and bibliography, with only a brief mention of the use of ULFTA-AUCC records, programmes and memoirs to guide the reader.⁷⁶ Sources such as these demonstrate an intimate relationship between the development of Ukrainian art, Ukrainian Canadian identity, and Ukrainian Canadian organizations.

Government developments also influenced changes in Ukrainian Canadian arts, such as through the federal funding of the arts. Paul Litt's *The Muses, the Masses and the Massey Commission* provides an outline of the development of arts funding in Canada, focusing on the creation of the Canada Council. Council support helped fund and encourage certain Ukrainian artists. This encouragement, in turn, directed the development of Ukrainian-Canadian identity expression. Of course, as Maria Tippet's *Making Culture: English-Canadian Institutions and the Arts before the Massey Commission* demonstrates, arts existed in Canada before the Massey Commission and the Canada Council.

Another significant governmental influence upon Ukrainian-Canadian arts and identity came through the advocacy of multiculturalism. Growing out of the 1963 Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, multiculturalism was officially enacted as policy in October 1971. In discussing the origins of the policy, Jean Burnett criticizes the term "multiculturalism" for being inaccurate, inadequate, and harmful, but ultimately concedes it is here to stay and will adjust itself as necessary.⁷⁷ Roman Onufrijchuk takes this criticism one step farther, claiming that multicultural policy actually creates a peculiarly economic ethnicity.⁷⁸ He concludes that multiculturalism is an intermediary stage, preceding the end to ethnicity.

In her article "Folklore as a Tool of Multiculturalism," Carole Carpenter argues that the influential federal policy of multiculturalism restricts both desired changes by some Ukrainian Canadians and the development of a national Canadian identity.

⁷⁶ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 394.

⁷⁷ Jean Burnett "Multiculturalism 10 Years Later," in *Two Nations, Many Cultures* 2nd ed., ed. Jean Leonard Elliot (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1983), 241.

⁷⁸ Roman Onufrijchuk, "Post-modern or Perednovok: Deconstructing Ethnicity" in *Ethnicity in a Technological Age*, ed. Ian H. Angus (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1988), 8.

Specifically, she criticizes how folklore has been used to “promote differences and dissension over commonalities and cohesion.”⁷⁹ Although multiculturalism was supposed to instantly create an array of Canadian traditions, it instead alienated many Canadians who no longer felt “a sense of owning their culture.”⁸⁰ Carpenter also discusses how ethnic Canadians when traveling to their “homeland” find that they are foreign and that “something evidently had happened to them and their traditions in Canada.”⁸¹ This has been experienced by Ukrainian Canadians who proudly travel to Ukraine only to discover that the language they speak is archaic and that Ukrainians do not always identify with Ukrainian Canadian folk dances. Neither Ukrainians nor Ukrainian Canadians have maintained a static identity; their self-definition is constantly developing, so what Canadians consider ethnically Ukrainian, many Ukrainians do not regard as important to their identity.

Whether or not multiculturalism, as both policy and reality in Canada, has positively contributed to defining Canadian identity, it has contributed to the maintenance of a culture that is distinct from the one lived in the homeland. In his book *The Quest of the Folk: Antimodernism and Cultural Selection in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia*, Ian McKay ties together the use of folk images to create nationalism and the creation of the folk through art. He uses Benedict Anderson’s concept of imagined communities to demonstrate the need for Nova Scotian society to use folk images to create a marketable and believable identity.⁸² McKay’s work explores several interesting avenues, particularly the connection between provincial economic and social needs and the development of its identity or of uses of other groups’ identities.⁸³ The interpretation of culture is presented in a different way in *Hiding the Audience: Viewing Arts & Arts Institutions on the Prairies* by Frances W. Kaye.⁸⁴ It focuses on analyzing the interpretation and presentation of First Nations culture through the lens of orientalism,

⁷⁹ Carole Carpenter, “Folklore as a Tool of Multiculturalism,” in *Twenty Years of Multiculturalism: Successes and Failures*, edited by Stella Hryniuk (Winnipeg: St. John’s College Press, 1992), 149.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 154.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 156.

⁸² Ian McKay, *The Quest of the Folk: Antimodernism and Cultural Selection in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia* (Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1994), 15.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 31 and 33.

⁸⁴ Frances W. Kaye, *Hiding the Audience* (Edmonton: University of Alberta, 2003).

and discusses the development of the audience on the prairies. Specifically, Kaye argues that the demands of the audience determine precisely what is shown and how it is interpreted. For Ukrainian-Canadian folk arts, the audience affects how the ethnic images are created and how they are presented.

Although these contributions provide excellent background to analyze some developments in Ukrainian Canadian dance and identity, it also leaves much unknown. Research needs to address the questions of when, why, and how Ukrainians become Ukrainian Canadians. While some research has examined the varied reactions of Ukrainian Canadian organizations to this change, little academic work has focused on individual's reactions to developments in Ukrainian Canadian identity. Even less work has been completed on the motivation of individuals to become involved with the Ukrainian community, in the arts, and in expressions of ethnic identity in general. Finally, although some excellent research has been done on the roles created by this involvement, it is still not fully understood how this identity has changed over time.⁸⁵

1.4 Research Procedures

To explore these issues in the Saskatchewan context, three main types of sources were accessed: interviews, paper records and other primary sources held by archives, and secondary source analysis. In taped interviews with dancers and dance leaders in the Saskatchewan community, I recorded their experiences throughout this time period. They are a very valuable source as they were often involved both in creating the artistic expression of Ukrainian-Canadian identity in Saskatchewan and in experiencing it. I conducted five separate interviews involving a total of seven informants. Interviewees were primarily from the dance leadership, included male and female respondents, and were generally second generation Canadian, city-based and spoke at least some Ukrainian.⁸⁶ Various archives, including DanceSaskatchewan, the Ukrainian Canadian

⁸⁵ The only explicitly gendered study, Swyripa's *Wedded to the Cause*, primarily discussed roles created for women.

⁸⁶ All interviews were conducted in English. I conducted one other in-person interview which I do not cite, as well as several phone interviews and email conversations. Unlike the other interviews, these conversations were not conducted with leaders who were active in Ukrainian dance prior to 1985, which is the approximate end date of this thesis. While these interviews may provide a starting point for future work, they do not fit within the scope of this project nor did they contribute further insights into

Congress—Saskatchewan Provincial Council, the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, the Saskatchewan Archives Board and Library and Archives Canada contained records and information on the role of political organizations in creating and disseminating Ukrainian activities and defining Ukrainian identity. Video and film available at the Saskatchewan Archives Board in Regina and Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa enabled me to view dances, costuming, and instruction materials from the 1930s through to the 1990s. To place the interviews and documents into the broader Canadian historical context, I accessed various supplementary sources, such as reports on federal policies including those concerning multiculturalism and arts funding. Newspapers, other media, and secondary sources completed the research procedure, filling out the analysis with further information, theories, and recorded experiences.

This study is limited by geography, time, and artistic interest. The limit of geography is two-fold. First, as previously alluded to, this study focuses on Saskatchewan. This is due to its large but generally under-studied Ukrainian Canadian population, which is very involved in Ukrainian artistic expression. As well, while many similar developments occurred across the country, the Ukrainian population is dispersed throughout Saskatchewan, rather than having a single overriding cultural center such as Edmonton in Alberta or Winnipeg for Manitoba.⁸⁷ The second geographical limit is its focus on the Canadian experience. This focus excludes much discussion of developments in Ukraine or other countries, except where these intersect with the Saskatchewan experience. For instance, in the Ukrainian Canadian paradigm, Ukraine is imagined as an oppressed country struggling for self-expression and full statehood.⁸⁸ This central ethic of survival demonstrates that Ukrainian culture was not just maintained in Canada to express group identity here, it was also maintained on behalf of the oppressed people left behind in Ukraine. This partially accounts for the popularity of nationalist ethnic traditions within Ukrainian-Canadian identity.

the earlier history of dance.

⁸⁷ Many Saskatchewan residents would likely identify Yorkton as the Ukrainian hub of Saskatchewan but the influence of the considerably larger cities of Saskatoon and Regina cannot be easily dismissed. Saskatoon and Regina are both political and artistic leaders in the Ukrainian community with the Ukrainian Museum of Canada, several large and influential touring dance groups, and the Ukrainian Canadian Congress—Saskatchewan Provincial Council headquarters.

⁸⁸ Swyripa, *Wedded*, 3-4.

The other limitations are time and scope. Temporally, this study traces the effects of four waves of migration on the development of Ukrainian dance, beginning with the Avramenko years in the 1920s and proceeding through the 1990s. This is a natural start as Avramenko considerably altered Ukrainian dance and its place in Ukrainian Canadian society, while inspiring many of the developments in Ukrainian dance. The dissolution of the Soviet Union in the 1990s also significantly affected Ukrainian dance. While an entire study could be devoted to this, it will still be touched on briefly. Finally, this thesis focuses on dance. While other forms of artistic expression are widespread and important, this work will concentrate on a single, significant and popular form, Ukrainian dance.

1.5 Definition of Terms

This thesis is not without complications. One significant challenge is defining and naming Ukrainian and Ukrainian Canadians. Some people identify first and foremost as Ukrainian, while others define themselves as Canadian, hyphenated Ukrainian-Canadians, or Canadians of Ukrainian heritage.⁸⁹ In this thesis, unless a source identifies otherwise, the terms Ukrainian Canadian and Canadian of Ukrainian heritage will be used, following the style of the Canadian Oxford English Dictionary.

The use of these terms is not meant to imply that there is one completely cohesive group of Ukrainian Canadians. In fact, there are also divisions within these Canadians of Ukrainian heritage based on their religion, language abilities, participation in activities and organizations, village or region of origin, and wave of migration to Canada. To help determine who defines a group and who is included and excluded, a borrowed definition is useful. Frederick Barth uses the term “ethnic” to refer to a group that:

(a) is largely biologically self-perpetuating; (b) shares fundamental cultural values, realized in overt unity in cultural forms; (c) makes up a field of communication and interaction; (d) has a membership which identifies itself, and is identified by others, as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ This last term was popular with the federal government at this time.

⁹⁰ Frederick Barth, “Ethnic Groups and Boundaries,” in *Process and Form in Social Life*, vol. 1 of *Selected Essays of Frederick Barth* (Boston: Routledge & Keegan Press, 1981), 200.

The final point is essential because it restricts membership in the group to people who claim it and whose claim is recognized by others. This double-check system excludes those who have Ukrainian heritage but do not acknowledge it and those who may feel a connection to Ukrainian culture but whose membership the community does not recognize, and will be used to define Ukrainian Canadians. Any expression of belonging to this group will be termed “Ukrainianness,” as borrowed from Alexandra Pritz among others. The division and variation of experiences within the group is acknowledged, when appropriate, throughout this thesis.

In *Varieties of Cultural History*, Peter Burke recognized the difficulty of defining culture. Traditionally, it has been equated with high art, literature and ideas.⁹¹ However, this has been challenged, and increasingly the definition is expanded to include a variety of other arts as well as non-artistic traits, such as a society's customs. This whole-world concept is how culture is used in this thesis. Burke critiques cultural history for its emphasis on invention, which may “exaggerate human liberty” and therefore obscure other factors in changes to traditions and cultures.⁹² As well, he discusses how difficult it is to resist over-fragmenting the society without instead assuming that it is wholly unified.⁹³

With these concerns in mind, this thesis explores the relationship between a specific artistic expression, Ukrainian dance, and the development of an ethnic identity. I will examine how, why and by whom traditions were invented. Tracing the affects, if any, of federal policies on the development of ethnic arts will contribute both to Ukrainian Canadian studies and to Canadian studies in general. Finally, the relationship between ethnicity, group identity, the arts, and gender roles will also be examined, contributing to each of these fields of study.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

I have chosen to focus on dance in Saskatchewan. The specific political conditions in the province, particularly the existence of strong Ukrainian communities in both large cities,

⁹¹ Peter Burke, *Varieties of Cultural History* (Ithica, New York: Cornell University Press, 1997), 184.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 198.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 199.

as well as outside these cities, made the Saskatchewan situation unique. Of course, many influences on the development of dance and Ukrainian identity have come from beyond the provincial borders.

Sources to help examine specific issues have also been difficult to locate. In particular, the dance groups organized solely by the churches did not leave accessible records for this thesis. As well, religion was rarely mentioned in either printed sources or in the oral interviews as a factor for the development of dance. The rural groups which were contacted were unable to provide any information about their development or about any dance groups which may have existed in their communities prior to their establishment. The lack of information made these potentially elucidating avenues impossible to explore.

One of the significant primary sources was oral interviews conducted with multiple informants from the Ukrainian Canadian dance community. They were able to compensate for a lack of printed records discussing issues such as gender roles and costuming. Unfortunately, these interviews also introduced complications, since each informant was raised within the Ukrainian Canadian community. The informants were involved with political organizations within that broad community, and come from the leadership within the Ukrainian dance community, strongly influencing the artistic and organizational development of dance. This may have biased their perceptions of developments. The few interviews conducted with people who were involved solely as dancers proved less productive. It was not possible to locate and interview dancers from the 1950s or earlier, due to the lack of contact information.

As well, the recollection of the informants may be coloured by the current political climate. As will be discussed, the dissolution of the Soviet Union heavily affected the AUUC and its members. Changes which are still taking place today influence perceptions of the importance and influence of authenticity in the past. For instance, many of the informants were choreographers in Saskatchewan and they have since been replaced by new immigrants from Ukraine.

While this thesis focuses on the influence of the political organizations upon dance to create a Ukrainian identity, there are some alternatives available to explain the

development of Ukrainian dance. Dance companies and instructors have financial needs which must be met. The economic factor, however, has proven difficult to track. This information, such as precisely how much Avramenko was paid to instruct each dance school, is either unavailable or incomplete. There are also only general records of what the dancers were taught in their classes. While some of this can be compensated for by watching film records of dances available in the archives, it still does not determine how much extra political, cultural or religious knowledge may have been disseminated in class. Comments from dancers have helped overcome this lack, however it was still not possible to fully examine the classes themselves.

1.7 Summary

Although some research has been done on changes in Ukrainian Canadian folk art and dance, as well as on gender roles in the community, the development of gender roles and ethnic identity through artistic expression among Ukrainian Canadians has not been well explored. A desire to understand how gender, ethnicity, nationalism and dance interact to define Ukrainian Canadian identity follows from the popularity of Ukrainian dance. An analysis of those who have created this identity, focusing on the historic questions of why and how, is important. As part of this, individual actions and reactions are situated into a broader Ukrainian ethnic identity and history. Exploring the presentation of these images both within and outside the community is key to understanding the creation of the Ukrainian identity in Saskatchewan. Ultimately, Ukrainian dance has been used to both reflect and reinforce gender and ethnic ideals to create a Ukrainian identity, and those ideals are a product of the agenda backstage.

2. “PRIMAL HARMONY”?: SETTLEMENT AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DANCE

From 1891 to 1914, the first wave of immigration of Ukrainian settlers swept the plains, joining settlers from many other ethnic groups. This time was characterized by peasant immigrants establishing farms, usually in bloc settlements. In Saskatchewan, most Ukrainian settlements were located in the Parklands, stretching from Yorkton to North Battleford, following the CNR line.¹ New Canadians were not universally accepted by mainstream, British-dominated Canadian society. The common desire of the new immigrants to retain at least some of their “old-country ways and attitudes” created tension between the Ukrainian immigrants and their new home.² Eventually most assimilated into the host culture, adapting their Ukrainian identity from a daily lived experience to a more restricted identity, expressed only at specific times or places and which emphasized different events, rituals, and ethnic characteristics than their ancestors. Thus they created the Ukrainian Canadian.

Although settling the prairies was an arduous, time-consuming task, settlers found time for celebrations and gatherings. Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Canada, folk dances brought from Ukraine were often performed at weddings and community socials, along with other popular dances of the time, such as the foxtrot and polka.³ The Ukrainian dances were participatory social dances, with village-specific movements, music and timing.⁴ As most first wave Ukrainian emigrants

¹ The Canadian Northern Railway line (later nationalized and renamed the Canadian National Railway) was so well-known among Ukrainians as a line of settlement that it was actually referred to as the Сіенарський (pronounced “Ce-en-ar-sky”) line in a press release about a large fall 1927 dance tour.

² Frances Swyripa, *Wedded to the Cause: Ukrainian-Canadian Women and Ethnic Identity, 1891-1991* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 4.

³ Andriy Nahachewsky, “Group Dances Performed by Ukrainians in Swan Plain, Canada,” in *Dance-Choreology-Humanities: Jubilee Volume Dedicated to Professor Roderyk Lange*, Ed. Dariuz Kubinowski (Poznań, Poland: Rhythmos, 2002), 225.

⁴ Andriy Nahachewsky, “New Ethnicity and Ukrainian Canadian Social Dances,” *Journal of American Folklore*, 115 no. 456 (2002): 178-179

to Canada originated from western Ukraine, the most popular common dances were from these ethnographic regions. In particular, variations of two circle dances *arkan* and *kolomaya*, could be found in most settlements. These were participatory dances, featuring repetitive, village-specific steps and special music that were passed on through the generations. The dances were not performed for an audience, nor was special costuming required to perform these dances. For many older and first-generation immigrants, this often meant traditional peasant clothing from Ukraine. Over the years modern “Western” clothing was increasingly adopted by the younger generations. Although a few of the village dances were maintained for several decades, they have all but been replaced now and are only distantly related to the *kolomayas* performed at *zabavas* [a community party; literally “diversion”] and weddings today.

By the 1920s, these settlers had established their own farms, churches, businesses, and schools. The creation of numerous church and political organizations indicates a drive from within the community to preserve its ethnic and political identity. This was aided by encouraging interest in national myths, language, costumes, and dance throughout this time period. The particulars of this identity, however, were still very fluid and only loosely defined. In Europe, a history of repression and division between Russian, Austro-Hungarian and Polish rule prevented the development of a universal Ukrainian identity.⁵ Politically, the creation of a Ukrainian identity, distinct from the Ukrainians' neighbours in both the European and expatriate context, was one of the first steps in legitimizing the Ukrainian organizations. It also helped establish a basis for Ukraine's demands for recognition as an independent, unified country (i.e. an indistinct culture would not be its own nation or need its own country). Thus, it became necessary to unite the many varied ethnographic groups from the Carpathian mountains to the plains of Poltava under a giant Ukrainian umbrella, particularly for the intelligentsia. This would complete the country in the eyes of the Ukrainians, and create a nation large enough to be politically influential.

Considerable disagreement emerged over the shape of Ukrainian identity in Canada. Many trademark traditions—including embroidery and Easter egg patterns,

⁵ Upon entering Canada many immigrants who would later identify themselves as Ukrainians, were identified as Ruthenian, Austrian, Hungarian, or another ethnic or national group.

colours, and techniques—demonstrated the significant variance between villages and ethnographic regions within Ukraine, presenting the possibility of highlighting difference rather than commonality. As predicted by Barth and Hobsbawm, a unified Ukrainian identity arose through selective retention of aspects of peasant folk life, religion and traditions brought from Ukraine. This process was aided by the merging of families from various villages through the years. Political, intellectual, and religious organizations further assisted the establishment of a common identity by encouraging or discouraging specific activities, traditions, and identities. Initially, however, the community now broadly identified by both members and outsiders as “Ukrainian,” was divided on both secular and religious levels, especially on the prairies.

Secular Ukrainian organizations were generally political in nature and include: monarchists, represented by the *Sich* organization established in 1924; progressives, led by the Ukrainian Labour Temple Association established in 1918; and the nationalists. While there were several nationalist organizations, the most active nationalist organization in the pre-war period in Saskatchewan was the Ukrainian National Federation, established in 1932. Most Ukrainians supported either the nationalist or progressive political movements. Both camps were initially strong across the province but eventually the progressive AUUC became most influential in the southern Regina area while the nationalist organizations were more successful farther north, around Saskatoon.

Political animosities were, however, often secondary to religious divisions. As Ol'ha Woychenko observes in her pivotal history, *The Ukrainians in Canada*, “there are few secular Ukrainian organizations in Canada free of church influence which do not question the religious beliefs of their members.”⁶ The two primary Ukrainian churches in Canada are the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (established in Canada in 1913) and the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church of Canada (1918), both of which are examples of eastern-rite Christianity. Whereas the Catholic church is historically larger than the Orthodox church in Canada, the reverse is true in Ukraine.⁷ This difference is derived

⁶ Ol'ha Woycenko, “The Ukrainians in Canada” in *Canadian Ethnica*, vol. 4 (Winnipeg: Trident Press, 1968), 81.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 80.

from the pattern of migration to Canada, which was primarily from the western Catholic regions, as opposed to the predominately Orthodox eastern areas. With the official establishment of the Orthodox Church, however, the factions began competing directly with each other for members, and the spiritual struggle tended to filter into the larger Ukrainian community.

This context of political and religious division is important for Ukrainian dance, which at this same time shifted from participatory folk dances performed at weddings and other social gatherings, towards staged dances performed for the community as part of Ukrainian drama nights or concerts presented by the organizations.⁸ The churches and political organizations were influential during this transition in several ways. They often created and controlled the places to perform and display Ukrainian culture. They built, owned and maintained community halls, which provided a location to teach, practice and perform. They also heavily influenced their members by choosing whether to sanction participation in events (such as Ukrainian dance schools or concerts). While each local group could follow guidelines established by its parent organization, they controlled the presentation of the new unified Ukrainian culture, and therefore helped define this growing identity.

The establishment of religious and political organizations by the mid-1920s aided the organization of performances and encouraged the development of formalized dance instruction. With the arrival of Vasile Avramenko, a trained dancer and choreographer from Ukraine in 1924, dance in Saskatchewan was ready to move beyond its village roots and begin its transformation into the theatrical performances of today.

2.1 Arrival of Avramenko: Promoting “the Patriotic Duty of All Parents”

The development of staged dance was closely tied to the arrival of a second wave of immigrants, which followed World War I. Although it included some more farmer-settlers, the second wave is distinguished from the first because it brought over more political refugees and intelligentsia. This highly educated and politically persecuted

⁸ As described by Andriy Nahachewsky in “Conceptual Categories of Ethnic Dance: The Canadian Ukrainian Case,” in *Canadian Dance Studies*, ed. Selma Odom and Mary Jane Warner (Toronto: York University, 1997).

group was considerably more concerned with establishing Ukrainian independence and maintaining a connection with Europe than the first wave of settlers or the second-generation Canadians. They also introduced an influx of politically sensitized Ukrainian intelligentsia to the prairies. This group had survived not only the ravages of the First World War, but had also witnessed the declaration of Ukrainian independence and the failed attempts to create a unified, independent Ukrainian state between 1918 and 1921. Significant political events included the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (which had controlled Western Ukraine), the declaration of the Ukrainian National Republic in 1917, the temporary rule of the Ukrainian Hetman (1918), the creation of the Western Ukrainian National Republic (1918), wars with Poland and the new Soviet Union. By 1920, Ukraine had also lost territory to Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania as sanctioned by the Paris Peace Conference, and the Ukrainian National Republic government was in exile.

Vasile Avramenko was a member of this wave. He was born in Stebliv, a village in what is now central Ukraine, in 1895. He was literate and attended a teacher's college in Vladivostok, Russia before World War I. He served with the Russian Army until 1917. He then moved to Kyiv, where he pursued theatrical and dance training and participated in the Sadovsky Theatre. Avramenko studied under Vasile Verkhovynets, helping the renowned anthropologist-choreographer collect folk dances from villages across Ukraine.⁹ By 1919, Verkhovynets had identified and named common steps, and created a method to transcribe these dances. Avramenko, in the meantime, joined the Ukrainian Army, and fought for Ukrainian national independence against the Soviets and the Polish. In 1921, while interned at a camp in Poland, he started teaching Ukrainian dance to the other inmates. From 1921 to 1924, he traveled to other internment and refugee camps through western Ukraine, Czechoslovakia, and Germany, teaching dances and holding concerts.¹⁰ These concerts helped Avramenko solidify the connection he perceived between the maintenance of dance traditions and the hope for the creation of

⁹ This was typical work of Ukrainophiles at the time, who sought to record and glorify Ukrainian culture as a form of opposition to the repressive regimes controlling Ukrainian lands. Avramenko's Ukrainophile tendencies are particularly evident through his clothing—he was always seen wearing a traditional Cossack outfit. For a complete explanation of this and other aspects of Ukrainophiles, see Serhy Yekelchuk, “The Body and National Myth: Motifs from the Ukrainian National Revival in the Nineteenth Century,” *Australian Slavonic and East European Studies* 7, no. 2 (1993).

an independent Ukrainian nation-state, as well as hone his teaching skills and repertoire. Looking for an escape from the precarious political situation and convinced of the power of dance to inspire the return of a new, strong Ukraine, Avramenko left Europe for Canada in 1925.¹¹

Within a few years Avramenko had traveled and taught across the country, determined to spread Ukrainian dance throughout Canada. Starting in Toronto, Avramenko set up a Ukrainian dance school, using his knowledge and experience from Europe to instruct students in Ukrainian dance and culture. He taught a set repertoire of dances he brought with him from Ukraine, thereby effectively standardizing Ukrainian dancing in Canada.

These dances formed a bridge between the village dances and the dances performed today, as they were the first adaptation for staged presentation. They maintained the repetitive style similar to folk dances, featuring closed circles and patterns, which did not always present the steps to the audience. As well, while the Avramenko dances were taught in a classroom setting (as opposed to passed on through the generations at village events), they were not as polished nor did they feature as much artistic styling as dances developed after World War II. Avramenko's dances, however, did serve his purposes: he highlighted those dances he felt would inspire feelings of Ukrainian pride and nationalism in both the dancers and the audiences.¹² Avramenko performed, presented public lectures and incorporated Ukrainian culture into his dance classes, using all the opportunities at his disposal to strengthen what he perceived as a weakening Ukrainian community in Canada. Avramenko felt it was his personal mission to teach proper Ukrainian behavior and Ukrainian nationalism, particularly to the youth, along with the maintenance and improvement of Ukrainian dance as an art form. He encouraged his students to take pride in their Ukrainian identity and history, using his passion and the appropriation of cultural icons to reinforce this message.

Avramenko focused on uniting his dancers and all Ukrainian Canadians under

¹⁰ Bohdan Zerebecky, *A Survey of the History of Ukrainian Dance* (Saskatoon: Ukrainian Canadian Committee, 1986), 26-27.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹² Nahachewsky explains in "Conceptual Categories of Ethnic Dance," that spreading nationalism differentiated this period from the village dances before and from the theatrical, ethnic dances which followed.

strong symbols in order to inspire the fight for an independent Ukraine. The Cossacks presented in Avramenko's dances were very influential. The Zaporozhian Cossacks were based in central Ukraine, the same area that Avramenko hailed from, and were stringent adherents to the Orthodox faith. While the Cossacks that Avramenko promoted may not have emphasized the Orthodox connection (the evidence is unclear), they were presented as strong, successful defenders of the Ukrainian nation and identity, worthy of emulation. Cossack history was present in the steps Avramenko demonstrated, such as the *prysiadky* [deep plié kicks], the stories he told to the children at the beginning of his course, and the clothing he wore, always a full Cossack costume for public appearances.¹³ This part of Ukrainian culture was also reiterated in the advertisements used to announce the course and the concerts, which featured photos of dancers in Cossack costumes. Through his instruction, Avramenko helped elevate the Cossacks from what was historically a central Ukrainian phenomenon to a broader symbol of general Ukrainian resistance to external foes.

Despite the potentially divisive implications of promoting the Orthodox Cossacks as a pure and honourable ideal for all Ukrainians, Avramenko attempted to unite Ukrainians with dance, not divide them with religion. He taught dancers regardless of their religion, often providing one of the few social events where Catholic and Orthodox adherents interacted. He advertised his concerts and courses at all churches and nationalist Ukrainian organizations, and instructed in church halls with little regard for the church's affiliation.¹⁴ Avramenko may have somewhat overestimated his own potential influence through dance but, as one of his students remembers, Avramenko believed it was “the patriotic duty of all parents to make their children like Ukrainian dancing.”¹⁵ Everyone was called to action, inspired at least in part by Avramenko's passionate nationalism and powerful imagery.

Avramenko always worked with large groups, teaching the same dances at the

¹³ Pritz, “Ukrainian Cultural Traditions,” 163. For a full description of various *prysiadky*, see Bohdan Zerebecky's *A Record of the Basic Movements of Ukrainian Dance: Part I—The Central Region*, 2nd ed. (Saskatoon: Ukrainian Canadian Committee Saskatchewan Provincial Council, 1986), 35-40.

¹⁴ Pritz, “Ukrainian Cultural Traditions,” 164.

¹⁵ Mary Ann Herman, “Vasyl' Avramenko—As I Knew Him,” in *The Ukrainian Folk Dance: A Symposium*, ed. Bohdan Klymash (Toronto: Ukrainian National Youth Federation, 1961), 18.

same time regardless of individual talent or age. Since Avramenko was less concerned with creating great dancers and more interested in popularizing dance, most of the class time was spent learning the dances rather than perfecting technique.¹⁶ Gender was the sole divider in the classes. Each dance had separate male and female roles or was designated for performance by only one gender. Although basic movements were taught in common, the male dance roles were taught only to the men and the female roles were taught only to the women.

Avramenko's first Canadian school performed at various concerts in Toronto for both the Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian communities. Although his troupes reached many audiences across the country, it is important to note that Avramenko's dancers were not the first to perform for a non-Ukrainian audience in North America. For instance, a group from the Ukrainian National Home in Toronto performed a Ukrainian dance at the Canadian National Exhibition in 1924, to rave reviews. One reviewer commented on the athleticism and pace of the dancing, saying:

Oh such dancing, men and women lined up on opposite sides, then meeting, pairing, separating and massing again; the men dropping to their knees and dancing gnome-fashion before the advancing and retreating damsels, then leaping high and all joining hands and spinning in a circle like a giant plate or dished cart wheel, their heels almost together in the centre of the circle, their heads radiating like spokes. They spun around, leaning so far back that the ladies' ribbons, and even the short cropped hair of the men, swept the floor. Then up and away again, at a furious pace, the riding boots clicking a whirring accompaniment to the cello and the violin and the zither's almost oriental tune.¹⁷

Avramenko was, however, able to capitalize on the reviewers' and audiences' enthusiasm for Ukrainian dance performances, while spreading dance performances across the continent.¹⁸

Such reviews helped attract dancers and increase interest in Ukrainian dance

¹⁶ Pritz, "Ukrainian Cultural Traditions," 164.

¹⁷ "Gay Cossack Dances and Songs of the Steppe—Newcomers From the Ukraine Charmed Admiring Fellow-Canadians", *The Evening Telegram* (Toronto), 29 August 1924. The concert referred to was the first performance of staged Ukrainian dance for a non-Ukrainian audience in Canada reported in the mainstream English press. Unfortunately, little more is known about the dance itself, the instructor or choreographer, and this group may not have performed again.

¹⁸ Pritz, "Ukrainian Cultural Traditions," 155.

schools, and Avramenko often took his groups touring.¹⁹ Avramenko often followed his tours by returning to the cities and teaching Ukrainian dances to the population there. From 1926 on, Avramenko continued this pattern of teaching, performing course-end concerts, touring to raise interest in other communities, and teaching in those new communities. This style resulted in his holding (with the help of the instructors) over 120 concerts in just two years.

In 1926, Avramenko took a small group of Ontario students to perform at a concert in Winnipeg. Soon after, he set up a Ukrainian dance school there and Winnipeg, with its large Ukrainian population, became his new Canadian base of operations. He intensified his touring through the West, embarking on a large-scale, seventy-day tour of the prairie provinces with his best students in the fall of 1927.²⁰ The dancers performed in many locations, including venues operated by and for Ukrainians, such as the *Narodny Domy* [“National Homes”, secular community halls designed to foster Ukrainian culture and language] in Norquay, Goodeve, and Saskatoon, the Ukrainian Sichovim Home [affiliated with the monarchist Sich organization] in Ituna, and in the Ukrainian hall in Foam Lake. These locations indicate a strong presence of Ukrainians in each of these communities and suggest Avramenko's intended audience. The use of alternative locations may indicate that there were no Ukrainian organizations in these other towns, or that the facilities were inadequate for Avramenko. In Theodore, they performed in the “English Hall,” and in Moose Jaw the performance was held at McIntyre's Rose Room.

The tours encouraged interest in Ukrainian dancing in each community visited, often leading to the creation of dance schools. Several schools formed in Saskatoon between 1927 and 1928. Instruction at the Saskatoon schools was provided by

¹⁹ Pritz, “Ukrainian Cultural Traditions,” 155.

²⁰ I. Pihuliak, “Порядок Виступів Труппи” [roughly, Troop Performance Order], 1927, volume 12 “1927–August, Prairie Provinces”, Vasile Avramenko fonds, MG31-D87, Library and Archives Canada; “До Хвальної Редакції,” n.d., volume 2 “1927–Correspondence”, Vasile Avramenko fonds, MG31-D87, Library and Archives Canada; “Труппа В. Авраменка Виступає” [V. Avramenko Troop Performances], n.d., volume 2 “1927–Correspondence”, Vasile Avramenko fonds, MG31-D87, Library and Archives Canada; Pritz, “Ukrainian Cultural Traditions,” Appendix A, 218-219. There were over twenty-five stops in Saskatchewan, including Kamsack, Calder, Norquay, Goodeve, Ituna, Theodore, Foam Lake, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Hafford, North Battleford, Moose Jaw, Regina, Melville, Yorkton, and Canora.

Avramenko or his personally appointed instructor, usually Ivan Pihuliak. Pihuliak, a dancer from Winnipeg, became Saskatchewan's primary Ukrainian dance instructor, coordinating all aspects of the dance schools. He used Saskatoon as his base for travel to locations around the province, including Yorkton, Canora and Wakaw, to teach Ukrainian dancing, and constantly communicated with Avramenko and other instructors to arrange concerts, costuming, new schools and graduations.

Between 1927 and 1928, schools were set up at the Petro Mohyla Institute in Saskatoon.²¹ Although named after an Orthodox leader and loosely affiliated with the Orthodox church, it was officially non-sectarian so it could draw both Orthodox and Catholic students. As Avramenko hoped to overcome the religious animosity within the Ukrainian community in Saskatoon by encouraging cooperation between participants from both churches, it was an ideal base for his operations. To further his aims, he also established classes at other two locations, St. George's Church Hall / Prosvita Hall on Ave M South and at the combined Orthodox Hall / *Narodny Domy* at Ave J South. His students were required to attend practices at both locations and he freely mixed the



Illustration 1: Avramenko's School of Dancing, P. Mohyla Institute in Saskatoon [1928]. Avramenko is seated seventh from the left in the front row. George E. Dragan / Library and Archives Canada / PA-088551

²¹ "The St. Petro Mohyla Institute Story in Brief," n.d., <http://www.mohyla.ca/history.htm> (accessed 5 September 2005). The Mohyla Institute in Saskatoon was established in 1916 as a home for Ukrainian students from across Saskatchewan while attending high school, Normal School, or the University of Saskatchewan.

Orthodox and Catholic students during instruction and dancing.²² This proved only a limited success; while his approach may have been thought-provoking for Ukrainian Canadians of both churches, it did not lead to a permanent unification of the dancers. Soon after the school ended, the Orthodox and Catholic students separated. Although both groups continued to prepare the dances for celebrations, dancers only met infrequently and the two groups rarely practiced together.

The first dance course in Saskatoon was conducted from May to June in 1927 and involved approximately one hundred and twenty children.²³ The course-end concert was held at the Prosvita Hall.²⁴ An advertisement from the summer of 1927 announces that 28 June will be “the first performance of Vasyl' Avramenko in Saskatoon.”²⁵ However, by this time, his name was already very powerful within the Ukrainian community. The anticipated audience was predominately Ukrainian, as several of the advertisements for this concert were in Ukrainian and specifically called for Ukrainians to attend.²⁶ The program from this concert, however, lists the dances in both Ukrainian and English. This may acknowledge that non-Ukrainians were expected to attend; however, it more likely demonstrates an awareness that the Ukrainian language was being lost in the community, especially among young Ukrainians, who were Avramenko's target audience. The program also mentions that costuming for the concert came from “[Avramenko's] own wardrobe collected from different parts of Ukraine,” which was shipped between concerts across the prairies. However, some costume pieces may have also belonged to individual dancers or their families, if they passed Avramenko's approval of their authenticity and suitability for dance.

The second concert by this group was held on 1 July, and was part of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations. It presented Ukrainian dance to non-Ukrainians on a very large scale for the first time in Saskatoon. The concert was held at the Exhibition

²² Bohdan and Marcella Zerebecky, interview by author, Saskatoon, SK, 16 April 2005.

²³ Zerebecky, interview; Orest Martynowych, “All that Jazz!: The Avramenko Phenomenon in Canada, 1925-1929,” *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 28 no. 2 (Winter 2003), 9.

²⁴ Pritz, “Ukrainian Cultural Traditions,” Appendix 4, 217.

²⁵ Advertisement, volume 12 “1927,” Vasile Avramenko fonds, MG31-D87, Library and Archives Canada.

²⁶ For examples of posters, see volume 12 “1927” and “1928,” Vasile Avramenko fonds, MG31-D87, Library and Archives Canada.

Grounds, and featured a program outlining a history of the development of Canada. The concert began with a pageant of the provinces, then moved on to addresses from prominent speakers, and finally presented the arrival of “Strangers” to Canada through folk dance performances.²⁷ The immigrant dances included “Black Pirate Dance,” “Maypole Dance,” “Scottish Folk Dance,” “Irish Jig,” “Welsh Folk Dance,” and finally “Ukrainian Folk Dance” as performed by “Ukrainian Ballet School” under the direction of Pihuliak.²⁸ Following these dances, the evening closed with “God Save the King,” the Royal Salute, a bonfire and then a jitney dance.

This performance is important as it presented Ukrainian dance to a predominately non-Ukrainian audience and as part of a nationalist Canadian celebration. Julian Stechishin, a prominent Ukrainian community leader remarked after the concurrent Edmonton concert that he “was extremely satisfied because [he] sensed that the public, which included many Englishmen, enjoyed the performance. Perhaps this will improve their perception of [Ukrainians] at least partly.”²⁹ While acceptance into Canadian society was not Avramenko's aim, this sentiment reflected a goal for many Ukrainian Canadians, as they struggled to find a place within Canadian society without fully assimilating.

Avramenko continued to travel, lecture and teach dance through western Canada, maintaining a demanding schedule. For instance, a letter dated 22 February 1928 outlines his plans for the coming months, stating that he was giving a lecture in Saskatoon that day, then traveling to Edmonton for the rest of February and March, returning to Saskatchewan to give public lectures in Yorkton and Canora from the 16th to 18th of March, and finally returning to Saskatoon for the graduation of a Ukrainian dance school from the 22nd to the 24th. This frenzied pace appears to be typical of his time on the prairies.

²⁷ Programme of the Celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of Confederation, 1 July 1927, volume 12 “1927 (July 1) Saskatchewan,” Vasile Avramenko fonds, MG31-D87, Library and Archives Canada.

²⁸ Ibid.; This pageant of cultures reflected a presentation of various ethnic cultures, perceived as an external “other,” rather than an understanding of Canada as a multicultural society, as developed later.

²⁹ Julian Stechishin, Diary of Julian Stechishin, as quoted in Orest T. Martynowych. The negative perception of Ukrainians to which Stechishin refers was common across the prairies. Ukrainian settlers were considered backwards and ignorant by the majority of Canadian society at the time, including the dominant British settlers in Saskatchewan.

In May 1928, Avramenko left Canada, responding to requests for instruction of Ukrainians in the United States. In America, he set up 71 Ukrainian dance schools, establishing his headquarters in New York.³⁰ He was joined by Pihuliak in April 1929.³¹ In the 1930s, during his stay in the United States, Avramenko branched out artistically, creating elaborate film versions of Ukrainian legends, including *Natalka Poltava* and the *Zaporozhian Cossacks*. None of these films were great successes, although he invested a great deal of money into them and often ran up huge debts in the process. In 1931, he also filmed a Ukrainian dance concert at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City. The footage shows the style of dancing, styling, and costuming typical of Avramenko in this time period, both in the United States and Canada, and is a valuable source for those interested in the development of dance, particularly choreographers and dancers who wish to reproduce the style today.³²

Through the remainder of his career, Avramenko returned periodically to Canada to teach dance, screen his films, lecture and promote his work. However, by the 1940s his name no longer held the sway it once did. This may have been because of his time spent away from Canada, his ongoing financial difficulties in the United States or even his scandalous marriage to and subsequent divorce from a dancer from Winnipeg. Avramenko's decreasing influence, combined with new postwar situations, led people to break out of the Avramenko mould. He greatly disapproved of these changes, however he could not control them.³³ He died in New York City in 1981, never achieving his dream of an independent Ukrainian State.

Avramenko is widely recognized as the father of Ukrainian dance in North America. By standardizing dances and teaching them across Saskatchewan and Canada, Avramenko was able to reinvigorate young Ukrainian Canadians and interest them in preserving their heritage. In the ensuing years, this youth would use Ukrainian dance as a means to their own political ends. The loss of Avramenko and Pihuliak left Ukrainian dance open to influence from other Ukrainian organizations, however, and for the next

³⁰ Irka Balan, *Vasile Avramenko: A Legacy of Ukrainian Dance Exhibition Catalogue* (Winnipeg: Ukrainian Canadian Foundation of Taras Shevchenko, 2006).

³¹ Martynowych, 16.

³² Vasile Avramenko, *The Metropolitan Opera House* (1931), section 3, VI 8811-0007, Library and Archives Canada.

³³ Herman, 20-21.

thirty years, two groups divided almost solely by politics attempted to fill that void.

2.2 “An Antidote to the Drabness of the Days”: 1930s to the 1950s

Saskatchewan was still a vulnerable young province when the drought and depression of the 1930s hit. The agricultural economy suffered, and with that so did the small communities and ethnic bloc settlements. The search for employment and opportunity initiated a general migration trend of rural residents to urban areas that persisted throughout the twentieth century. As migrants from the Ukrainian bloc settlements moved into Saskatoon, Regina, and Yorkton, they often sought out and joined religious, political and cultural organizations to help them maintain their ethnic heritage and identity. By this time, the religious orientation of Ukrainians in Saskatchewan was dominated by the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox church (loosely affiliated with Kyiv and Moscow) and the Ukrainian Catholic church (tied to L'viv and Rome). These churches had both fairly recently gained independence from their early influences and worked hard to encourage adherence to their unique religious and ethnic heritage.³⁴ During the 1930s, however, there were quite a few Ukrainian organizations to choose from, each with a slightly different purpose or target audience.

This period saw explosive growth among politically oriented organizations. The nation-wide groups included the Ukrainian Self-Reliance League, the Canadian Sich Organization, and the Ukrainian Labour Temple Association, which changed its name in 1924 to the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association (ULFTA), and the Ukrainian War Veterans' Association which later developed into the Ukrainian National Federation (UNF). There were also many smaller local organizations such as *Prosvita* [enlightenment] societies, *ridna shkola* [Ukrainian school] associations and others.³⁵ Although each organization had its own primary purpose, they shared a common approach to building community. Both political and cultural organizations emphasized ethnic commonalities and rural-urban linkages during this period, and the arts in

³⁴ *Ukrainian Canadians: A History* mentions building community halls as one of the actions of the now-defunct Independent Greek Church. This helps demonstrate the religious organizations' social importance to their communities, as well as the form their religious guidance sometimes took (my interpretation, from page 106).

³⁵ Marunchak, 422-23.

particular “flourished, perhaps as an antidote to the drabness of the days but more probably as evidence of a maturing society.”³⁶

The organizations also attempted to overcome perceived and actual divisions within the Ukrainian population based on religion. For instance, the Self-Reliance League in its foundational document stated that “there was a time, which many of us still remember, when Ukrainians in Canada did not have any discriminative differences amongst them ... were not split into parties, and even lived in agreement in their religious adherence, although some were Catholics and others Orthodox” and went on to provide examples of the “primal harmony that existed among the first Ukrainian settlers in Canada, even in the religious affairs.”³⁷ It is noteworthy that, despite often sharing a common purpose, such as anti-Communism, relations between political and religious organizations were strained. For instance, the Catholic and Orthodox church felt threatened by the Nationalist organizations. Despite their common goal to destroy Communism, the leaders bickered over who would be the primary shaping influence in Ukrainian Canadians' lives.³⁸

Most of the organizations sought to remain financially accessible during the lean economic years. For example, the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association reduced membership fees for unemployed members and recommended a silver collection for their concerts instead of set admission prices.³⁹ Despite the economic difficulties of the depression, representatives from many Ukrainian organizations frequently traveled throughout the province, spreading Ukrainian artistic activities along with their group's broader political or religious message. Non-Ukrainian organizations also played a role in maintaining Ukrainian heritage in the province, as evidenced by activities of groups such as the Saskatoon Arts and Craft Society.⁴⁰

³⁶ John H. Archer, *Saskatchewan, a History* (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1956), 244.

³⁷ Myroslav Stechishin “Self-Reliance League in Canada, Principles and Programs” (Winnipeg, 1928), 12 as quoted in Marunchak, *Ukrainian Canadians*, 101.

³⁸ Mychailo Orychiwsky, Confidential Report of the Hafford and District Convention to the Ukrainian National Youth Federation, 1946, “Correspondence–Ukrainian Cavalcade February-July 1946,” MG28-V8.17, Library and Archives Canada.

³⁹ Peter Krawchuk, *Our History: the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Movement in Canada, 1907-1991*, ed. John Boyd, trans. Mary Skrypnyk (Toronto: Lugus, 1996), 43.

⁴⁰ This group formed in 1922 as part of the Saskatoon Local Council of Women, later becoming an independent women's organization focused on locating, recording and then marketing ethnic handicrafts from across Saskatchewan to the rest of Canada. When they disbanded in 1953, they

Many organizations used theatre, dance, and music to gain support and followers in Saskatchewan communities. The departure of Vasile Avramenko and Ivan Pihuliak in the late 1920s left a gap in the leadership and organization of Ukrainian dance in the province. Churches, political and cultural organizations soon took over this role themselves, organizing instruction and performances of Avramenko's dances. These groups provided the eager dancers, space to practice and perform, and an audience for the final performance. The majority of organizations on a local, provincial or national level helped locate, billet and assist instructors, organize the rental, manufacture or purchase of costuming, and provide other resources essential to learning and performing Ukrainian dance.

Many of the early dance groups were brought together just for one performance within their community. As such, very little is known about the participants and the groups' activities. This is particularly true for the dance instruction offered directly through the churches and the *ridna shkola*, where there are few remaining records or community knowledge about instruction or performances. The political organizations, on the other hand, tended to maintain records discussing their involvement in dance. These sources include newsletters, minutes of meetings, reports on activities to local, provincial and national headquarters, and programmes from concerts.

The two dominant organizations were the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association (ULFTA) and the Ukrainian National Federation (UNF) with their youth wing, the Ukrainian National Youth Federation (UNYF). These two groups reflected the political division between self-identified progressives, represented by the ULFTA, and nationalists, like the UNF. Unlike the dance courses and concerts offered by various church organizations, these groups were highly organized provincially, influencing the development of dance in Saskatchewan and leaving many records.

2.3 'Pioneer-Propagandists': The Ukrainian Temple Associations and the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians

The Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association formed from Ukrainian progressive

donated many of their Ukrainian handicrafts to the newly formed Ukrainian Arts and Crafts Museum in Saskatoon.

organizations created before World War I. The war and the success of the October Revolution in Russia put pressure on ethnic progressive organizations in Canada, including threats and arrest of leaders and members. Peter Krawchuk, in his official history of the ULFTA, *Our History: The Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Movement in Canada, 1907-1991*, outlines how in response to this pressure, the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party (USDP) decided in 1918 to broaden its programming, becoming involved in more cultural and educational events. They reasoned that although the political organization may be banned, through this new society its other activities would be able to continue on.⁴¹ They also hoped that this new organization “would be able to attract into its ranks numbers of Ukrainian settlers who for various reasons were not prepared to accept socialist ideas.”⁴² After quickly exploring several options, in 1918 the USDP set up a Ukrainian Labour Temple Association (ULTA) in Winnipeg, just months before the USDP was banned by the government. The Ukrainian Labour Temple was soon involved in both educational and artistic activities, as well as political activities such as the Winnipeg General Strike. Following their first organizational meeting in 1920, the ULTA quickly attracted members from many of the territories formerly organized by the USDP, creating a strong new national organization.⁴³

At what became the first national meeting, the ULTA created a constitution where its stated purpose was “to give moral and material aid to the Ukrainian working people and to the labour cause in general.”⁴⁴ They outlined various means to achieving this goal, including the organization of lectures, concerts and plays, and a commitment to create and maintain more Temples,⁴⁵ although the activities offered by each Temple were restricted by the instructors that could be found.⁴⁶ The organization later officially encouraged the formation of and support for dance groups as a means to achieve its purpose. At their fifth convention in 1924, in recognition of—and in order to appeal to—a perceived increase in progressive ideals among farmers, the association officially changed their name to the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association (ULFTA).

⁴¹ Krawchuk, *Our History*, 31.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., 32-33.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 34.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 87.

It is also noteworthy that their constitution “emphasized that all illiterate Ukrainian workers and farmers, men and women, be encouraged to attend these courses, regardless of membership.” This officially opened up the ULTA programming to anyone of Ukrainian origin. Although it is not clear how many of these non-member participants eventually joined the organization, there is evidence that these activities were popular in the community. For instance, in a survey of Canadian-born members by the organization in 1965-66, Anna Lapchuk of Regina reported that she had joined the youth wing of the ULFTA in Fort William [Thunder Bay], Ontario in 1925. She really enjoyed the cultural activities as “*Prosvita* was the only cultural institution at that time that offered Ukrainian school, music, choir, dancing, etc.” and this “was of prime concern to [her] parents at that time.” Although she does not explain that final sentence any further, it is clear that she became enamored with the organization, maintaining her membership throughout her life and eventually becoming Provincial Secretary for the association.

Just as Avramenko used tours to encourage interest in his dance instruction, from the outset the ULFTA used dance tours to spread their cultural programming and the organization. The Saskatoon branch of the ULFTA had a Children's Mandolin Orchestra which toured to Wakaw, Canora, Kamsack, and Dunver in 1925.⁴⁷ For Ukrainian dance, however, the most influential tour was the Western tour of the Winnipeg Girls' Mandolin Orchestra in the summer of 1926. These eighteen high school and university women toured locations across the prairies, generally focusing on larger centres and mining communities, targeting opportunities to perform for workers.⁴⁸ Their tour included stops at Regina, Saskatoon and Yorkton, where they were met with rave reviews and packed crowds.⁴⁹ The Orchestra played many sold-out concerts, including one in Veregin, Saskatchewan where they had to erect a temporary stage because there was not enough room in the hall.⁵⁰ The Orchestra included singing and dancing as part of its performances. Since it was an all-female group, the male parts were danced by girls in

⁴⁷ Ibid., 70.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 71-72.

⁴⁹ “Girls' Musical Club Arrange Ukrainian Folk Song Concert,” *Regina Leader Post*, 6 July 1926; “Ukrainian Concert is Well Received,” *Regina Leader Post*, 8 July 1926; “Ukrainian Orchestra to Give Program,” *Saskatoon Daily Star*, 24 August 1926; “Ukrainian Orchestra Heard Here,” *Saskatoon Daily Star*, 25 August 1926.

⁵⁰ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 75.

male Cossack and Hutsul costumes with fake mustaches.⁵¹ There do not seem to have been any negative reactions toward this aspect of the performance. The Association was very pleased with the publicity brought by the tour and, as M. Volynets observed in his article “The Winnipeg Mandolin Orchestra at Home,” at least some members of the organization felt that concerts were “a fine example to those workers and farmers who are still outside our organization, help them realize that their place is in the organization, [and] that it convince the parents that the Ukrainian schools of the ULFTA will educate their children to become conscious and cultured members of the worker-farmer community.”⁵² In his book *Our Stage: The Amateur Performing Arts of the Ukrainian Settlers in Canada*, translated by Mary Skrypyk, Peter Krawchuk concludes that:

This first tour was an event of great importance. For the first time, an orchestra brought Ukrainian music, song and dance into communities where they had never been heard or seen, perhaps never even imagined that such existed. This especially relates to people of non-Ukrainian origin and the English in particular. The mandolinists were pioneer-propagandists of Ukrainian musical culture in these localities. Their concerts popularized the ULFTA within the Ukrainian Canadian community and among people of other national backgrounds. As a result of this tour, the organization grew in membership. New branches of the ULFTA were formed, especially in a number of farmer communities where mandolin orchestras were also organized.⁵³

While the tour was a resounding success, those who were inspired by the tour to seek out Ukrainian dance training discovered one key barrier: a lack of competent instructors within the Association. Three members of the ULFTA, Ivan Grekul, Ivan Goy, and Nick Mateychuk attended Avramenko's first school of dance in Toronto.⁵⁴ Grekul then organized a school of folk dance for the Toronto Temple of the ULFTA based on Avramenko's dances.⁵⁵ Inspired by the success and the popularity of Ukrainian dance and Avramenko among the Ukrainian population in general, the Central Executive Committee decided to organize their own dance courses. These courses were initially instructed by Grekul and were open to anyone age 6 and up, including youth and adults.

⁵¹ Ibid., 86.

⁵² Ibid., 76.

⁵³ Ibid., 77-8.

⁵⁴ Krawchuk, *Our History*, 336.

⁵⁵ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 86.

Their announcement for the first course which was offered in Winnipeg, as reported in the *Ukrainian Labour News*, noted that “in cultivating Ukrainian music and song in our organization, we have been unable, to this date, to cultivate the art of Ukrainian dance through lack of an instructor. With the arrival of I. Hrekul [Grekul], we have acquired such an instructor and are now taking care of this gap in our cultural work.”⁵⁶ The School of Ukrainian Folk Dance set up its own constitution, which included the statement that “the school accepted all without regard for their nationality or political affiliation.”⁵⁷ Although precise figures are unknown, it is likely that at least a few students signed up for the dance school without a previous affiliation to the ULFTA, because dance was so popular among the Ukrainian population during these years. Due in part to the popularity of dance and to Avramenko's teaching style (used by the majority of instructors in this time), there was soon a core group of boys in most dance groups. This meant that it was no longer necessary or, it is implied through their exclusion from male dances, *appropriate* for girls to perform the male roles.⁵⁸

Having secured competent instruction, the next major challenge was to arrange adequate costumes and music. The Central Executive assisted by publishing four booklets of sheet music for 24 dances. These were arranged for piano, violin, clarinet and cornet, and were in great demand.⁵⁹

Despite the general interest in and appreciation of Ukrainian dance, within the ULFTA, there was controversy over the place of the performing arts among the overall priorities of the organization. Starting with the 12th Convention held in Winnipeg from July 15-20, 1931, the ULFTA was increasingly publicly controlled by the Communist Party.⁶⁰ The more politically minded members felt that the performing arts distracted from what they believed the ULFTA's main focus should be, class struggle.⁶¹ Other members, such as Mathew Shatulsky and Anna Lapchuk, felt that the performing arts

⁵⁶ *Ukrainian Labour News* (21 October 1926), as quoted in Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 87.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 366. It is notable that girls do still perform male roles and male dances today, and it has become increasingly popular in recent years. These dances are occasionally performed due to a lack of boys for the dances, but the girls' desire to perform the modern, acrobatic male roles seems to be a far greater influence today.

⁵⁹ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 88.

⁶⁰ Krawchuk, *Our History*, 388.

⁶¹ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 117.

were excellent cultural-educational resources, particularly as a means to educate and proselytize to outsiders, to raise funds and to increase their membership numbers. In fact, in 1938 Shatulsky argued that the performing arts were being neglected by the organization, in particular because they were not discussed at branch or executive meetings,⁶² implying that artistic endeavours were treated as a secondary concerns. Shatulsky, by contrast, claimed that cultural celebrations should be recognized as one of the organization's primary activities.

This controversy persisted throughout the decades. A Membership Questionnaire distributed in 1965-66 recorded several impressions of the importance of the arts to progressive organizations. In her response, Anna Lapchuk mused how “[c]ulture reflects the life of the people—their feelings and aspirations” and went on to remind the Association not to “isolate itself from Community work. If people do not come to us – lets go to them with performances, displays, Teas [sic], etc.”⁶³

Regardless of the debate, ULFTA dance groups continued to learn, practice and perform. The Regina segment traveled throughout the province, especially through the northeast where there were many Ukrainian bloc settlements. On tour in 1937, they performed over 32 concerts, under the direction of Peter Lapchuk.⁶⁴ That same year in Saskatoon, the Temple was very active, often performing for non-Ukrainian audiences. For example, they, along with a Scottish group, were one of only two ethnic dance groups represented at the “Cosmopolitan Exhibition” held in the Bessborough Hotel in March 1937. The *Star Phoenix* reported on 17 March 1937 that the Ukrainians “played, sang and danced in their colourful national costumes. The dance 'Zaporozhets,' performed by Peter Woloshyn, Joseph Senon and Fred Hawrylkiv, was greeted with thunderous applause.”⁶⁵

Inspired by the popularity of this and other concerts, and to officially address early concerns the organization's focus should be elsewhere⁶⁶, the National Executive Committee decided in 1938 to hold a National Festival of Ukrainian Song, Music and

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Anna Lapchuk, “AUUC Membership Questionnaire (Canadian Born),” volume 5 “17-AUUC-Membership Questionnaire (Canadian Born) 1965-66,” Association of United Ukrainian Canadian fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁶⁴ Peter Lapchuk's Eulogy, volume 38, file 12, AUUC fonds, MG28-V154 Library and Archives Canada.

⁶⁵ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 115.

Dance.⁶⁷ The magnitude of this project was unprecedented in both the Ukrainian Canadian community and Canadian history at this time.⁶⁸ Held 15-16 July 1939, in Toronto, it highlighted the cultural achievements of Canadians of Ukrainian origin to all Canadians and combined choirs, orchestras and dance groups from across Canada to perform together.⁶⁹ A program booklet was compiled and distributed, presenting the history of Ukrainians in Canada, their folk arts, and information about the ULFTA.⁷⁰ The concert involved about 1500 musicians, singers, choirs, and dancers, including individuals from as far away as Vancouver and groups from as far west as Regina and Saskatoon.⁷¹ The quality of the performers varied widely across the country, so Nick Hocolak, the Artistic Director of the festival, visited each community to help them prepare. The concert was a resounding success; it was received very enthusiastically by the audience. It was so popular that the Saturday concert reportedly sold out the 10,000-seat Mutual Arena and more people were turned away at the door.⁷²

The Ukrainian community felt that the success of this concert indicated that “the cultural heritage of the Ukrainian people, with great difficulties and with the expenditure of great effort and energy, [was] breaking through and making its way into the treasury of general Canadian culture.”⁷³ However, the prairies were under-represented at this exhibition, due to the geographic and economic constraints of transporting large groups a great distance. Only the orchestras from Saskatoon, under the direction of Volodimir Bonchar, and Regina with director Peter Lapchuk were able to participate as a group from west of Winnipeg.⁷⁴ Furthermore, plans for an immediate reprisal in 1940 were

⁶⁶ The 12th Convention of the ULFTA, held in 1931 and heavily influenced by the Communist Party (Krawchuk, *Our History*, 189), officially established the focus of the organization on class struggle, to the detriment of cultural activities, as these could be considered harmful or, at the very least, unnecessary. These beliefs were tied to contemporary developments in Soviet Ukraine, where cultural activities were considered corrupted by the nationalists. At the 16th Convention in 1937, several resolutions were passed to correct this direction and encourage the arts. With regards to dance, the Convention recommended that the newly-expanded Central Cultural Committee obtain new instruction materials and “lift this art to a higher cultural level of performance.” Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 117-122.

⁶⁷ Krawchuk, *Our History*, 338.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 131.

⁷¹ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 133.

⁷² Krawchuk, *Our History*, 339.

⁷³ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 129.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 127-8 and 132.

necessarily put on hold with the outbreak of World War II.⁷⁵ The memory of the successful first concert would persist and inspire more festivals, both at a national level and smaller gatherings, providing new opportunities to showcase talent from the prairies. These activities, however, would not occur under the umbrella of the ULFTA.

Just weeks before the second festival was to be held, with preparations well underway, the federal government banned the ULFTA, declaring all its activities and its press illegal.⁷⁶ This brought a sudden end to performing troupes which had fought hard to gain momentum and prominence, forcing 210 orchestras, 120 choirs, 170 drama groups and between 20 and 40 dance groups affiliated with the ULFTA to seek new affiliations or disband completely.⁷⁷ Practice and concert halls were lost when Temple buildings were seized by the government, and dance instruction lapsed when male leaders and members were arrested and interned for sedition. Members who were not incarcerated, including the wives of the leaders, continued their involvement and activities, albeit more subdued, in their homes and in the halls of sympathetic organizations.⁷⁸

When the Soviet Union joined the Allies during the war, the former ULFTA membership was able to establish new organizations. These organizations, such as the Ukrainian Committee to Aid the Motherland (UCAM), had a dual purpose: to aid the Canadian war effort and to help the Red Army liberate Ukraine from Nazi occupation.⁷⁹ At a national convention of the UCAM June 1942 in Winnipeg they changed their name to the Association of Canadian Ukrainians (ACU) to reflect their interest in broader issues. Although most of the ULFTA leadership was still interned during the 1942 convention, as they were released they usually immediately joined the ACU, increasing administrative ties to the former organization.⁸⁰ While the ACU did participate in a few cultural activities at this time, most efforts were directed at providing war aid. They

⁷⁵ *The Western Producer*, 23 May 1940 as quoted in Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 145. The Second Canadian Ukrainian National Festival was due to be held in Edmonton July 13 and 14, 1940, following a warm-up provincial festival in Saskatoon July 5-7.

⁷⁶ Krawchuk, *Our History*, 339 and Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 146.

⁷⁷ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 147.

⁷⁸ For more complete details and analysis of this time period, see Rhonda Hinthel, "Sincerest Revolutionary Greetings': Progressive Ukrainians in Twentieth Century Canada," (PhD diss., McMaster University, 2005).

⁷⁹ Krawchuk, *Our History*, 73 and Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 151. The full Ukrainian name is available in the Ukrainian edition of *Our Stage*.

⁸⁰ Krawchuk, *Our History*, 75.

changed their name again in 1948, this time settling on the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians (AUUC).

After 1945, the Labour Temples were returned to the ULFTA, or payment was provided if the seized building had been sold by the government. These groups then disbanded and donated their assets to the ACU/AUUC.⁸¹ The ACU/AUUC, for its part, realized the majority of its members were at least 35 years old and had been born in Ukraine, even though most Ukrainian Canadians were born in Canada, and decided to place a greater emphasis on attracting younger, Canadian-born members.⁸² In 1946, at its Second National Convention, the ACU adopted a resolution endorsing the performing arts as activities “organically tied to the emergence and development of the Ukrainian progressive organizations in Canada.”⁸³ Based on that understanding, the ACU encouraged membership by offering education in the development of the arts, assisting local branches in acquiring costumes, and organizing tours for performing groups.⁸⁴

In 1946, the AUC reprised a piece of its history: the Second National Festival from 1940. The concert was hosted in Edmonton, as per the original plan, but it was renamed the Western Canadian Festival of Ukrainian Song, Music and Dance. There were about 1000 performers in the concert, including representatives from Moose Jaw and Saskatoon, and over 15,000 people attended the concert.⁸⁵ Most significant, however, was a delegation of political and artistic leaders from Ukraine who attended the festival and then toured western Canada.⁸⁶ This was the first clear sign of what became very close artistic and political ties to Ukraine and the Ukrainian government for the AUUC, despite increasing Cold War tensions over the next forty years. The artistic ties were essential for the AUUC as they had to rebuild their artistic leadership due to wartime membership losses. To achieve this, they worked with the Ukrainian government's foreign branches, the Ukrainian Society for Cultural Relations with Countries Abroad and the Ukrainian Society for Cultural Relations with Ukrainians Abroad [*Society Ukraina*]. They were able to send students to study with musicians,

⁸¹ Ibid., 79.

⁸² Ibid., 80.

⁸³ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 156.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 157.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 160 and 165.

⁸⁶ Krawchuk, *Our History*, 339.

conductors, and dance instructors in Kyiv starting in 1950, among whom was Alex Lapchuk, a dancer and dance instructor from Regina.⁸⁷

2.4 'Domivky' and the Common Cause: The Ukrainian National Federation and the Ukrainian National Youth Federation

Much like the ULFTA, the Ukrainian National Federation (UNF) was formed by an earlier Ukrainian Canadian organization. The roots of the UNF trace to the Ukrainian War Veterans' Association. This organization was created in 1927 by former Freedom Fighters from Ukraine. They were recent immigrants to Canada, and despite having lost the independent Ukraine for which they had fought, they wanted to continue the struggle in any way possible, so they created the Ukrainian War Veterans' Association (UWVA).⁸⁸ They soon had branches in Ukrainian communities across the country, including Yorkton and Saskatoon, and their numbers quickly grew as more Ukrainians emigrated to the country. This organization prioritized the needs of Ukraine and Ukrainians over those of Canadians and Ukrainians in Canada. This created tension between them and the Ukrainian Self-Reliance League even though both organizations were trying to work to unify Ukrainians in Canada. At the third convention of the UWVA, they approved the creation of a new nationalist organization, shared by the veterans and the general public.⁸⁹ In so doing, they also created an organization which bridged two generations of Ukrainian immigrants, one of the first organizations to do so.⁹⁰

The Ukrainian National Federation was officially formed in 1932, establishing its first branches in Saskatoon and Edmonton, and quickly growing across the country. In 1934, the Ukrainian National Youth Federation was formed in Saskatoon. Also in that year, the headquarters of the UNF moved from Edmonton to Saskatoon, along with those of its affiliated organizations: the UWVA; the Ukrainian Women's Organization of Canada (UWOC), which had developed from the women's branch of the UNF; and the newly formed youth wing, the UNYF. Although each of these groups were formed with

⁸⁷ Ibid., 340.

⁸⁸ Marunchak, *The Ukrainian Canadians*, 398.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 400.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

slightly different mandates, they all encouraged unity among Ukrainian Canadians, and abandonment of their internal religious controversy and intolerance. They wanted to use this unity to fight what they called the “Russian-inspired Communist movement among the Ukrainian Canadians and to work for the common goal of winning liberty and statehood for Ukraine.”⁹¹ To provide a religiously neutral place for Ukrainian Canadians to meet, many branches of the UNF built community halls, which they called *domivky* or *Narodni Domy* [National Home].⁹²

Throughout the 1930s, the UNYF focused on a vaguely paramilitary preparation of its youth for the fight for Ukrainian independence, also offering occasional dances, lectures and debates for its members.⁹³ For example, in a report to the national organization, the Bedfordville (Ituna) group reported that it held three dances, no lectures and no debates in 1939.⁹⁴ However, the organization had many ties to Ukrainian dance. For example, Paul Yuzyk, one of the organizations' founders and a future Conservative Senator from Manitoba, was part of the original Avramenko school of dance held in Saskatoon in 1927.⁹⁵ Although dance was not the focus of the organization, as part of their regular language courses students at the Saskatoon UNF Hall were also taught about Ukrainian culture, including Ukrainian dances. As well, whenever Avramenko visited Saskatchewan, he traveled to the UNF hall to teach dances or, in later years, to show his films. These dancers performed several concerts, including a special concert held in 1939 for Queen Elizabeth in Saskatoon. A group of dancers from the UNF hall trained with Pavlot Karchuk, one of Avramenko's original students in Edmonton, just for this event.⁹⁶

One of the first areas the UNYF in Saskatchewan expanded was Moose Jaw in 1946. A letter written soon after the formation of this group indicates that the new club members were excited about the organization and that they were very interested in

⁹¹ As quoted in Ol'ha Woycenko, “Community Organizations,” in *A Heritage in Transition: Essays in the History of Ukrainians in Canada*, ed. Manoly Lupul, 184.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Taras Pidzamecky, “Ukrainian National Youth Federation of Canada: Five Decades of Youth Leadership,” *Forum* 58 (Spring 1984).

⁹⁴ “Report from Bedfordville (Ituna) Branch”, volume 3 “Correspondence with Branches–1937-39,” Ukrainian National Youth Federation fonds, MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada.

⁹⁵ Zerebecky, interview.

⁹⁶ Zerebecky, interview.

learning Ukrainian dance. To assist the new group, Nancy Korpus visited from the UNF organization in Regina and taught them “a few dance sequences.”⁹⁷ Unfortunately, the UNF lacked the instructors, general resources and knowledge required by the number of people interested in participating in Ukrainian dance. And even when they had the resources, they still had to transport them, so even if a dance was known in one community, an instructor would need to be sent from there to teach the dances elsewhere. This was especially true if the dance was difficult or if the students were beginners.⁹⁸ Dance costumes were also a frequent topic of discussion between local and national offices. Although some props and certain costume pieces were easy to get and lasted a long time, the footwear, particularly the *postoly* worn for the Hutsul region dances, were practically impossible to locate in Saskatchewan.⁹⁹ In response to both this difficulty in locating footwear and the recognition that shoes were also very expensive in traditional Ukrainian villages, at least some performances were done in bare feet.¹⁰⁰

Due to the popularity of dance and the desire of the UNYF to expand its membership, the organization decided to implement a National Organizing Tour in 1946, led by Michael Orychiwsky. In Saskatchewan, he headed first to the Hafford area, just north of Saskatoon. In a letter to his friend Stan Szszepanuik in Montreal dated 15 July 1946, he outlined some of the difficulties he faced trying to organize the community. Aside from his obvious disdain for the farmers, cowboys, and lack of indoor plumbing, he also mentioned that he is planning, on his own, “a convention and also a concert which is to be held on June 21st. And beleive [sic] you me it is’nt [sic] as easy as it was at home. This town has a population of 450, all of which are Ukrainian, ecept [sic] for about 5 frenchmen [sic]. They have two Ukrainian churches and one hall.” The concert

⁹⁷ From M.W. to A.M. (?Andrew Melnyk], 9 December 1946, volume 6 “Correspondence with Branches–Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan 1936-49,” Ukrainian National Youth Federation fonds, MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada.

⁹⁸ From Dominion Executive to Helen Suknacky, Saskatoon, 11 September 1946, volume 17, “Correspondence–Subject–Ukrainian Cavalcade Aug-Oct 1946,” UNYF, MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada.

⁹⁹ From Dominion Executive to Stan Kuziv, Saskatoon, 16 September 1946, volume 17, “Correspondence–Subject–Ukrainian Cavalcade Aug-Oct 1946,” UNYF, MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁰⁰ Lusya Pavlychenko, interviewed by author, Saskatoon, SK, 9 May 2005 describing a harvest dance “Zhintsi”; Cover photo, *MYHbeams* (1956), volume 25 “MYH Beams 1956,” UNYF fonds, MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada.

was a mix of choral singing and dancing, performing Avramenko's numbers. It was successful and in his final report to the Dominion Executive, Orychiwsky reported that although the Catholics were told not to cooperate with the nationalists, the community now understands that the UNF “is a powerful organization, which has done and is still doing work for the welfare of all Ukrainians in Canada and in Europe. It is an organization that they must trust, and beleive [sic] in and above all they must help it to continue.”¹⁰¹ Orychiwsky then traveled to Prince Albert, Saskatoon, Yorkton, Ituna and Regina, as well as other locations across western Canada, arranging many concerts and cavalcades within the next year. When arranging the concerts, Orychiwsky often included performances and speeches by dancers and prominent UNF members from outside the host community, including a few dancers from Saskatoon and Paul Yuzyk, one of the founders of the UNYF from Saskatchewan. Orychiwsky also coordinated the sharing of dance costumes between organizations and communities, although occasionally there were still too many enthusiastic dancers for the costumes available.¹⁰² He found the young Ukrainian Canadians very eager in Western Canada. In a letter dated 2 August 1946 to Mr. Andrew Melnyk in New Britain, Conn., Orychiwsky observes that:

“The work out here is completely [sic] differt [sic] than that of the east. The people are also differt [sic], but on the other hand they are very friendly, and above all willing to work and do something for the common cause. The only thing that our youth here lacks is leadership. You see if they had this they could do so much. I remember when I was in Prince Albert the youth knowing that I know the Ukrainian folk dances, made arrangements that I teach them. And do you know that for the week that I was there, we had dancing rehearsals every night. That is something that our youth would never do out in the east.”¹⁰³

Orychiwsky's and UNF's difficulties with the Ukrainian churches were far from over. In his report on his activities in North Battleford, he states that he suspects the

¹⁰¹ Mychailo Orchiwsky, “Confidential Report of the Hafford and District Convention to the Ukrainian National Youth Federation,” volume 17 “Correspondence Ukrainian Cavalcade Feb-July 1946,” UNYF fonds, MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁰² Mychailo Orchiwsky, “Confidential Report of the Ukrainian Youth Cavalcade in Regina, Sask to the Ukrainian National Youth Federation,” volume 17 “Correspondence Ukrainian Cavalcade Aug-Oct 1946,” UNYF fonds, MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada (hereafter cited as Orychiwsky, “Regina Report,” MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada).

¹⁰³ Volume 17 “Correspondence–Subject–Ukrainian Cavalcade Aug-Oct 1946,” UNYF fonds, MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada.

Orthodox and Catholic groups are more opposed to the UNYF than perhaps even the Communists (ie. the AUUC).¹⁰⁴ Both churches feared that the UNF and UNYF would distract the youth from religious pursuits and replace the religious youth organizations. To overcome their concerns, Orchiwsky reassured members of the Catholic Youth and CYMK, the Orthodox youth group, that “above all we [believe] that these organizations are necessary for both the churches but we must also have a group that will donate most of its work to a nation.”¹⁰⁵ This resistance was painful as the UNYF was organized to unite all Ukrainians regardless of religious affiliation. Conflict with the churches, however, did not dissipate. Ten years later in 1957 the UNYF placed an article in its publication, MYHBeams entitled “When Are Ukrainian Catholics Allowed to Dance?”¹⁰⁶ In the article, they explain that religious strictures dealing with compact weeks forbid dancing at that time because they “are times of spiritual joy. Dancing does not add anything to it.” The article also notes that three exarchates, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Ontario, repealed that stricture so dancing is only forbidden within their jurisdictions during Advent and Lent. It also links restrictions against dancing on Fridays to the Passion and death of Jesus Christ. Although this knowledge may not prevent the scheduling of dance practice or concerts for Friday nights, it does show that religious traditions were recognized as a powerful force in the Ukrainian community and that the churches were respected by the UNYF.

The concerts Orchiwsky arranged were well attended, often by members of both churches, as were the youth dance lessons he arranged in preparation for the cavalcades. Supportive reviews of the concerts were published in the *Prince Albert Herald*, the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* and the *Regina Leader Post* following each concert.¹⁰⁷ Their enthusiastic descriptions of the costuming and dances in particular may have increased

¹⁰⁴ Mychailo Orchiwsky, “Confidential Report of the North Battleford Convention to the Ukrainian National Youth Federation,” volume 17 “Correspondence–Subject– Ukrainian Cavalcade Nov-Dec 1946,” UNYF fonds, MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁰⁵ Mychailo Orchiwsky, “Confidential Report of the Prince Albert District Convention to the Ukrainian National Youth Federation,” volume 17 “Correspondence Ukrainian Cavalcade Aug-Oct 1946,” UNYF fonds, MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁰⁶ The first three letters of MYHbeams is the Cyrillic acronym for UNYF's Ukrainian name; MYHbeams is pronounced “moonbeams.”

¹⁰⁷ “Ukrainian Youths Hold Convention,” *Prince Albert Daily Herald*, 29 July 1946; “Ukrainians Hold Dinner Meetings,” *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* 29 July 1946, “Colorful Folk Dances and Songs of Ukraine Featured,” *Saskatoon Star Phoenix*, 1 August 1946.

the prominence of both the UNF/UNYF and Ukrainian dancing in the province. Whereas before the concerts, there were often “only ten people who knew the Ukrainian folk dances” or fewer as in Saskatoon and Regina, following the cavalcade there was definite enthusiasm for learning and performing more.¹⁰⁸ Inspired by a concert presented by Regina and Saskatoon, the branch at Moose Jaw wrote to the national office requesting further information on dancing, including more steps and sequences, and choreography.¹⁰⁹ This renewed interest in dance, however, did not always lead to success for the branches. Both the Regina and the Moose Jaw branches floundered financially and with low membership figures for years. While dance in Saskatoon grew due in part to the early activities of the UNF, the dancers there moved out of the organization’s control after a few years.

Buoyed by the success of the Organizing Tour, the Dominion Executive of the UNYF attempted to arrange a national touring cavalcade for 1947. It intended to portray “the beauty of our Ukrainian Culture before the eyes of the English-speaking people of Canada.”¹¹⁰ Unfortunately, the cavalcade was canceled as it was too difficult for the organization to arrange and was not considered financially viable. However, other non-touring cavalcades were held over the years, providing performance opportunities for UNYF members and outreach opportunities for the organization. Through submissions to MYHbeams, it is possible to trace the development of some dance groups in UNYF. The Saskatoon branch, for example, had a very active branch correspondent who submitted many reports to MYHbeams. The rising prominence of Lusya and Nadya Pavlychenko, sisters from Saskatoon, is evident. Submissions to MYHbeams reported their performances for Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian audiences, their increasing dance instruction, and Lusya's travel to England to study ballet for three months. As well,

¹⁰⁸ Mychailo Orychiwsky, “Confidential Report of the Ukrainian Youth Cavalcade in Saskatoon to the Ukrainian National Youth Federation,” volume 17, “Correspondence Ukrainian Cavalcade Aug-Oct 1946,” UNYF fonds, MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁰⁹ From [Mary Waslen?] Moose Jaw headquarters to Dominion Executive, November 1946, volume 6, “Correspondence with Branches—Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan 1936-49,” UNYF fonds, MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada.

¹¹⁰ From the Dominion Executive to Mr. K. Pidzamecky, Toronto, 26 May 1947, volume 17 “Correspondence—Subject—Ukrainian Cavalcade May-June 1947,” UNYF fonds, MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada. This desire harks back to the 1927 Dominion Day concerts, and reflects a continuing perception of the need to rehabilitate the image of Ukrainian Canadians, which persisted at least to the 1940s.

MYHbeams provides the first indication that Ukrainian dance was doing particularly well in Saskatoon, as the branch shipped an instructor to the Toronto organization in 1955, which was a significant improvement from the desperation of 1946.

2.5 Conclusions

The inter-war experience laid the foundations for the evolution of Ukrainian stage dance in the postwar period. As Ukrainian settlers established themselves in Canada, they began defining their nation¹¹¹ by establishing political and social organizations. These organizations, in turn, began defining a single, homogeneous ethnic group—Ukrainian. In this time, Ukrainian dance shifted from the wedding halls to the performance stage, although it was still often viewed as secondary to plays and choral concerts by the cultural directors. Ukrainian dance was also occasionally presented to non-Ukrainian audiences. Through both types of concerts, Ukrainians established and redefined their ethnic boundaries. While the dances themselves began to demonstrate “Ukrainian” rather than “Bukovynian” or “Hutsul” ethnographic cultures they also increasingly defined Canadian, as their inclusion in Canada Day concerts presented. Following World War II, these definitions were further challenged as the dances developed artistically. At the same time, Ukrainian dance grew more important, particularly for defining Ukrainian Canadian identity within and beyond the Ukrainian Canadian community.

¹¹¹ Again, as defined by Benedict Anderson, nation is used to define a culturally created group. For further details, see page 7.

3. “CAPABLE OF DOING MARVELS”: NATIONALIST AND PROGRESSIVE GROUPS IN THE POSTWAR PERIOD

The 1950s saw many difficulties for the Ukrainian political organizations. A new generation of immigrants from Soviet Ukraine challenged these groups by demanding they focus on Ukraine, rather than responding to the needs of Canadians of Ukrainian descent. Although the majority of these new immigrants, like many in the postwar era, settled in large centres such as Toronto, Montreal or Vancouver, they still affected Saskatchewan's Ukrainian population through instituting changes within the organizations. These groups' Canadian members, some of whom were now second or third generation Canadians, on the other hand, were increasingly loosening their personal ties with Ukraine; factors such as intermarriage with non-Ukrainians and the loss of language skills weakened Canadians' link to Ukraine.

In 1940, multiple nationalist groups reorganized into the Ukrainian Canadian Committee (UCC).¹ It was an umbrella organization, designed to unite the nationalist Ukrainian groups in their fight against Soviet oppression of Ukraine and support the Canadian war effort. Later, it would serve people of Ukrainian heritage in Canada and present a nationally united Ukrainian-Canadian opinion on matters to the federal government.² It did not replace its member organizations; so, for example, although the Ukrainian Self-Reliance League and the Ukrainian National Federation (UNF) were both members of the UCC, they retained their separate memberships and independent organizational goals.³ While that was considered positive by the organizations, the Government of Canada viewed this as weakness, believing the UCC was too financially

¹ Later renamed the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, preserving the acronym. For more information about the creation of the UCC, see Maruchak, *Ukrainian Canadians*, 549 to 553.

² Maruchak, 550.

³ By the 1980s, the UCC had effectively eclipsed its member organizations to become the primary cultural and political nationalist organization in Canada, organizing concerts and conferences, and speaking with politicians.

dependent on these organizations and therefore prone to internal political struggles.⁴

While a new wave of energy spread through the Ukrainian organizations through this time, they still encountered challenges, occasionally from its own members. In Regina, Orychiwsky reported that while “all the members were very enthusiastic about the concert ... it was the older people that were very much against this affair, saying that it was absolutely impossible to do this.”⁵ He went on to describe how “this group is much greater in number than our Saskatoon branch, they are capable of doing marvels and yet they lack the most important thing in an organization—a ‘leader.’”⁶ The concert was held, featuring five experienced dancers and 25 new ones, and was quite successful.⁷

The UNF also organized summer educational courses for youth, held in Winnipeg.⁸ The courses lasted approximately six weeks, and cost \$15 for registration and \$50 per month for room and board in 1949.⁹ At these courses, young nationalists were taught Ukrainian language, art, culture, and history. As part of the program, instructors from across North America taught dances, primarily following Avramenko’s syllabus, and provided information about other aspects of dances, including regional Ukrainian costuming and embroidery.¹⁰ The quality instruction also focused on disseminating information about Ukrainian culture. Lusia Pavlychenko who attended the summer school twice, recalls the excellence of her teacher, *Pani* Koshetz, who was an authority on costumes. Pavlychenko claims she “learned from the best, [right from] the beginning.”¹¹

⁴ “Weaknesses of the Ukrainian Canadian Committee: Confidential memorandum from the Director of the Citizenship Branch to the Deputy Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, May 1958, Describing Weakness of the Ukrainian Canadian Committee,” in *A Delicate and Difficult Question: Documents in the History of Ukrainians in Canada, 1899-1962*, ed. Bohdan Kordan and Lubomyr Luciuk, 168.

⁵ Orychiwsky, “Regina Report”, MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid. The Hutsul dances were very popular, as Orychiwsky had emphasized perfecting them since most of the audience members’ families had emigrated from the Carpathian region in Ukraine. For more information see: “Ukrainian Cavalcade” *Regina Leader Post* 14 September 1946 and “Colorful Cavalcade,” *Regina Leader Post*, 23 September 1946.

⁸ These courses were called Вещці Освітні Курси [Higher Educational Courses].

⁹ From the Dominion Executive to Walter Nychka, Moose Jaw, 22 June 1949, volume 17 “Correspondence–Subject–Ukrainian Summer Courses 1945-56,” UNYF fonds, MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁰ L. Pavlychenko remembers *Pani* Tetiana Koshetz’s instruction about costuming in particular, as does Anita Drebot (Pavlychenko, interview; Anita Drebot, interviewed by author, Regina, SK, 10 May 2005).

¹¹ Pavlychenko, interview.

The school aimed to create leaders for the future through its programming. The list of participants included: Chester Kuc, who later founded the Shumka and Cheremosh performing ensembles in Edmonton; Peter Haladin (Hladun), who started the Rusalka ensemble in Winnipeg; and Nadia and Lusia Pavylchenko from Saskatoon.¹² The schools were a catalyst for a renaissance in Ukrainian dance throughout Canada. Zerebecky also noted that these schools encouraged the students to experiment with the dances, which was very rare in Ukrainian dance at the time.¹³

Lusia and Nadia Pavlychenko became dance instructors at the UNF hall in Saskatoon, and the Saskatoon UNYF group soon began performing concerts. One report submitted to the December 1954 issue of MYHbeams, the UNYF monthly publication, described their preparations for a big concert at the Bessborough Hotel and mentioned that 1954 had been “one of our bigger and better years as far as dancing goes.”¹⁴ They practiced twice weekly and had 38 dancers in the group, both impressive accomplishments.¹⁵

In the meantime, active branches of the progressive AUUC had emerged in Moose Jaw, Regina and Saskatoon. However, the AUUC branches were plagued with low membership numbers and poor finances, leading to the closure of most of its rural branches by the 1970s. Initially the Saskatoon branch was the largest and most active branch in the province, which may have been due at least in part to the large Ukrainian population in the city.¹⁶ However, as the Moose Jaw and Saskatoon branches failed to attract and retain young members, Regina soon overtook Saskatoon as the primary AUUC branch in Saskatchewan.¹⁷

As in the interwar years, concerts were popular attractions and activities for members. In early concerts, Ukrainian folk dancing was an aside to the main concert

¹² Zerebecky, interview. Nadia Pavlychenko was also trained in modern dance, and Lusia Pavlychenko was trained in ballet, Pavlychenko interview.

¹³ Zerebecky, interview.

¹⁴ Report submitted to MYHBeams, n.d., vol. 23 “MUN Beams Correspondence– Saskatoon 1954-1961,” UNYF fonds, MG 28-V8, Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁵ Michael Zaluskchuk, report submitted to MYHBeams, 2 Dec 1954, vol. 23 “MUN Beams Correspondence–Saskatoon 1954-1961,” UNYF fonds, MG 28-V8, Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁶ Myron Shatulsky, “Alberta Saskatchewan 100,” in *Ukrainian Canadian Herald* vol. 14 no. 168 (April 2005), 2.

¹⁷ Alex Lapchuk, interviewed by author, Regina, SK, 4 February 2006.

program which focused on choral performances or orchestral numbers, which were the main audience attractions.¹⁸ As dancing developed into a more flashy, artistic and athletic style during the postwar period, it became a highlight of the program. Alex Lapchuk, heavily involved in the development of dance through the Regina AUUC Poltava Ensemble, notes that audiences increasingly related with the dance whereas they previously were more interested in music.¹⁹ Changes to their audience was also a factor in the growing appeal of dance.

Festivals were held frequently throughout the 1950s and 60s. They provided an opportunity for dancers across the country to work collectively, creating enduring friendships over the years. These concerts featured dancers from many clubs performing simultaneously, with hundreds of dancers on stage at a time. Due to the scale, these concerts were usually presented in arenas, and they were marketed to both the Ukrainian and the non-Ukrainian public.²⁰ For instance, the provincial festival in 1950 was held at the Saskatoon Arena, and featured 200 performers from the Regina, Moose Jaw and Saskatoon branches with more than 2000 people in attendance, including the mayor of Saskatoon and the provincial Minister of Reconstruction.²¹ These concerts drove the Poltava group to learn new skills, such as the ability to write and interpret choreography in 1959, improving their performances and increasing their artistic opportunities in Saskatchewan and beyond.²² Anna Lapchuk from Regina noted that working together toward this festival greatly strengthened the cultural groups in Regina which had only 25 members at the 1950 provincial festival in Saskatoon.²³

Following the Provincial Festival, a core group continued to gather to dance in Regina. In 1952, they formed the Poltava Dancers.²⁴ Their first major performance was an appearance at the AUUC Ukrainian Jubilee Festival at the Grand Theatre in Regina to celebrate the province's jubilee.²⁵ They performed alongside dancers from Kamsack,

¹⁸ Lapchuk, interview.

¹⁹ Lapchuk, interview.

²⁰ Lapchuk, interview.

²¹ “Успішний фестиваль в Саскатуні” *Ukrainian Word* (Winnipeg), 12 July 1950.

²² Alex Lapchuk, “Portrait of a Dance Ensemble,” *Ukrainian Canadian*, December 1970, 8.

²³ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 201.

²⁴ Lapchuk, interview.

²⁵ Alex Lapchuk, “Poltava: An Ongoing Story,” *Ukrainian Canadian*, April 2002, 11.

Moose Jaw, and Saskatoon.²⁶ This festival, held June 26, was widely acclaimed. A *Leader Post* critic admired the female dancer's costumes, commenting on the “riot of beaded, braided and embroidered color,” and also noted the dances were stirring, exciting and of a decided athletic nature, particularly the sword dance.”²⁷ The program also included a greeting from the premier of Saskatchewan, Tommy Douglas, who praised the Ukrainian settlers for their economic and cultural contributions to the province.²⁸

Over the years, the Poltava Ensemble continued to grow. The AUUC, as the sponsoring body of the Poltava ensemble, provided a place to practice and organized concerts and instructors. As the AUUC had a clear ideological agenda, the dancers within the Ukrainian community were soon identified as “going to the Red Hall.”²⁹ The ideology of the AUUC, however, was directly presented at the summer seminars and not the weekly dance classes.³⁰ All members of the AUUC in Regina were able to participate in any of the cultural activities of the organization, including the Poltava dance classes. As Poltava developed into its own entity, the AUUC members were automatically granted membership into Poltava. Poltava members, on the other hand, were welcome to join the AUUC but were not obliged. If they joined, they received a few incentives, such as financial assistance from the national body for travel to performances. Although the record is unclear about how many Poltava dancers eventually joined the AUUC, some certainly did. In a letter dated 9 March 1971, Anne Lapchuk wrote to the NEC about a new member, Russel Ritco, reporting that “as a youngster he attended the school of folk dancing and was a member of the Junior Section. Two years ago he came back joining the senior group of dancers. A few months ago he joined the WBA and to-day [sic] the AUUC. We are very pleased and credit goes to Al Lapchuk.”³¹

The AUUC provided organizational leadership and promoted interaction with the national body and between communities. They also encouraged innovative ideas, such as

²⁶ Lapchuk, “Portrait,” *Ukrainian Canadian*, December 1970, 8.

²⁷ “Ukrainian Festival Presented,” *Regina Leader Post*, 27 June 1955.

²⁸ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 232.

²⁹ Lapchuk, interview.

³⁰ Lapchuk, interview.

³¹ From Anne Lapchuk to the National Executive Council, 9 March 1971, volume 9 “AUUC–Saskatchewan [1971],” AUUC Fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

that smaller centres establish mixed ensembles of singers, musicians and dancers for local concerts. The Association supported their performing arts by organizing periodic tours of dance experts through the country. Several instructors were sent to teach dances for the National Festivals, including a number who had trained at the Choreographic Institute in Kyiv, Ukraine. Based partially on this experience, Myron Shatulsky encouraged the creation of “a unified system of teaching Ukrainian folk dance” and the preparation of courses for the leaders of each cultural activity.³² These developments helped the National Festivals by providing a solid base of performers with similar training, upon whom the program managers would be able to draw.³³

3.1 Shevchenko Concerts

The growth and prominence of Ukrainian dance in Saskatchewan accelerated considerably following the 1961 Shevchenko Centennial concerts. These concerts, held separately by the UCC and the AUUC, commemorated the centennial of the death of the renowned Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko. While the concerts were unique, both prominently featured Ukrainian dance, and both political factions proclaimed Shevchenko a personal symbol of the Ukrainian spirit.

In Saskatoon, the Ukrainian Canadian Committee hosted “The Life of a Poet as a Centennial Commemoration to Taras Shevchenko” at the Capitol Theatre on Sunday April 30, 1961. The concert featured choirs, soloists and dancers, and was directed and choreographed by Nadia Pavlychenko. This was a major achievement as it marked one of the first successful Ukrainian choreographies in Saskatchewan. The choreographer, Nadia Pavlychenko, founded the Yevshan Folk Dance Ensemble in 1959 in part to execute the dance. This group was billed as an independent, apolitical group of around 30 dancers who wanted to present dance “in its most aesthetic form.”³⁴ “Membership was not confined to any one group, but open to all youth who were interested,” and they drew members from “various Ukrainian youth organizations in the city,” as well as a few

³² From Myron Shatulsky to National Executive Council, 1 February 1990, volume 5 “11 – AUUC–NEC–Minutes [1990],” AUUC Fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

³³ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 227.

³⁴ Yevshan Ukrainian Dance Ensemble, “Reflections” 1960-1980 programme, DanceSaskatchewan Archives.

who were not previously involved with any group.³⁵

To commemorate the same event, the National Shevchenko Festival, hosted by the AUUC in 1961, was actually a series of concerts held nationally and provincially. While discussing the geographic difficulty of coordinating practices between performers from Moose Jaw, Saskatoon, and Regina, Mitch Sago, Secretary of the National Shevchenko Festival Committee, clearly stated that “for us, in terms of the dance collective in Saskatchewan, the main dance group is in Regina. I was not aware of any dance group in Moose Jaw—although this doesn't pose a problem. As for Saskatoon, the dance group is exceedingly small and only two or three of them will be involved in the National Festival.”³⁶ Despite these disparities, the Provincial Festival Coordinator still believed that “to put on a successful Provincial Festival we must have the participants of all three centres.”³⁷

Although smaller than the National Festival, the provincial festivals served as a commemorative event for the people who did not travel to Toronto for the larger celebration. In Saskatchewan, the first Provincial Shevchenko Festival was held May 20, 1961 in Regina at Darke Hall, with a subsequent performance in Saskatoon. The Regina dancers advertised the provincial and national concerts through two half-hour videos produced at a local television station.³⁸ The 700 person capacity audience included Premier Douglas and the Regina Mayor, H.H.P. Baker.³⁹ On behalf of the people and the government of Saskatchewan, Douglas congratulated the performers “for their excellent contribution to the growth and development of the province of Saskatchewan and to Canada as a whole.”⁴⁰ His comments reflect the shift in public sentiments over the

³⁵ Yevshan, “Reflections”, DanceSaskatchewan Archives. “Membership was not confined to any one group, but open to all youth who were interested in developing a cultural area of Ukrainian folklore – ‘the dance!’” Due to its founding family's political background, Yevshan was associated by the community with the Ukrainian National Federation and the Ukrainian Canadian Congress. Notably, restrictions against dancers suspected of Communist ties continued for many years within nationalist and former nationalist groups, through carefully phrased requirements that all dancers be Christian.

³⁶ From Mitch Sago, the Secretary of the National Shevchenko Festival Committee, to Joe Sawchyn, Chairman Saskatchewan Festival Committee, 6 March 1961, volume 29 “7 – National Shevchenko Festival Correspondence,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

³⁷ From Joe Sawchyn, the Chairman of the Saskatchewan Festival Committee to Mitch Sago, Secretary, National Shevchenko Festival Committee, 4 March 1961, volume 29 “7 – National Shevchenko Festival Correspondence,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 273.

⁴⁰ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 274.

previous twenty years, which were tied to developments such as the introduction of the Saskatchewan Bill of Rights in 1947 by the Douglas-led CCF government.⁴¹ Progressive organization-affiliated Ukrainian Canadians had gone from being classified as enemy aliens in 1940, to being officially recognized as an integral part of both the province and the country in the postwar period.

This concert was among the first to move to a style of dance influenced by ballet and study in Soviet Ukraine. The 150 performers presented three new, modern Ukrainian dances from the ballet “Lileya” and several others from “Canadian Dance Suite,” both choreographed by Michael Shatulsky, from Winnipeg. Although these dances were scaled down from the original choreography, they were considerably different from their predecessors, the Avramenko dances, demanding higher calibre dance technique and training to perform.⁴²

The National Festival took place at Varsity Arena in Toronto on July 1 and showcased 1200 performers from sixteen cities across Canada. Tickets ranged between \$1.50 and \$3.00 each.⁴³ The concert featured three original dances, two suites and a duet, and was about an hour long. The “Lileya Suite” was based on a popular Shevchenko poem, as was the *pas de deux*. The Canadian Dance Suite, however, was designed to fulfill another goal of the National Festival committee: to create a truly Canadian dance, representative of the Canadian people.⁴⁴ It presented pieces of folk dances from many groups, including Ukrainians, Russians, Scots, French, Slovaks, and First Nations, united in one folk ballet. A review by Steve Macievich published in *Ukrainian Life* on July 5 describes the two-fold accomplishment of the Suite: “this folk ballet showed how the Ukrainians in Canada preserved their own national cultural traditions, but were Canadians and lived as one whole with other citizens of Canada—Canadians of various

⁴¹ The Saskatchewan Bill of Rights (1947), among other things, prohibited discrimination on the basis of ethnic or national origin. It preceded both the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom (1982).

⁴² Myron Shatulsky, “The Story of the Festival Dances” in the National Shevchenko Festival Programme booklet (1961), volume 29 “5 – Shevchenko Festival [Leaflets],” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada (hereafter cited as Shatulsky, “Story,” MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada).

⁴³ Promotional material for the National Shevchenko Festival, volume 29 “6 – Shevchenko National Festival [Invitations],” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁴⁴ “‘The Canadian Dance Suite’ Comments and Arrangements,” volume 29 “3 – National Shevchenko Festival,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

backgrounds.”⁴⁵ Other critics commented on the sheer size and extravagance of the production. Peter Prokop, Secretary of the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the AUUC, reported that critics “simply couldn’t understand how such a successful festival could be presented by ordinary people without any help from the government.”⁴⁶

The Shevchenko Festival season was very successful, stimulating growth in the cultural activities of the AUUC across Canada. While they often performed for AUUC members and their sympathizers from other organizations, the dancers also performed outside the AUUC hall, often at the Performing Arts Centre or Darke Hall.⁴⁷ Within the AUUC, there was some discussion about the effect that performing outside the AUUC halls would have on the organization itself. The December 1971 edition of the *Ukrainian Canadian* contained a scathing critique of the activities of the AUUC expressing concerns that “the sharp contrast in the emphasis on cultural projects away from our halls, with all due regard for the size and demands of such events, is partly due to the desire for the widest kind of identification with the community as such. This strongly felt need for a wider community identity has tended to obscure or minimize the identity of the organization as a sponsor of the events.”⁴⁸ This contributed to the distance between the AUUC and Poltava, which continued to grow through the next thirty years.

3.2 Dance ‘in its most aesthetic form’?: Politics, Feeder Schools and the Ensembles

Following the concerts, the popularity of Ukrainian dance in Saskatchewan continued to grow. Although the dance troupes were formed specifically for the concerts, they continued training, touring and performing, honing their skills and artistic talents. These new groups, however, faced several challenges.

⁴⁵ *Ukrainian Life* (5 July 1961) as quoted in Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 280.

⁴⁶ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 270.

⁴⁷ Lapchuk Interview; From Anne Lapchuk to National Executive, 21 March 1961, volume 29 “9 – National Shevchenko Festival,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada. This hall, known as the Ukrainian Labour Temple prior to the banning of the ULFTA during World War II, was renamed the Ukrainian Cultural Centre. As the Provincial concert was exceptionally large, they held it out-of-house. Following the unexpected conversion of the Nortown Theatre into a bowling alley right before the Provincial Shevchenko Festival, they moved to Darke Hall, a premiere concert hall in Regina.

⁴⁸ Mitch Sago, “AUUC Cultural Conferences: Review Role in the Seventies,” *Ukrainian Canadian* (December 1971), 13.

In Saskatoon, the Yevshan dancers decided to continue training and performing, despite their artistic director, Nadia Pavlychenko, moving to Toronto. Her sister Lusia became the new director. The group's next major performance was for the Saskatchewan Diamond Jubilee in 1965, when they performed in the documentary film, commissioned by the Saskatchewan Diamond Jubilee and Canada Centennial Corporation.⁴⁹

1967 was an exciting year for the group. Highlights of the busy touring year included performing for the Queen in Ottawa on Dominion Day, at the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto, and at Expo '67 in Montreal (they had won the right to represent Saskatchewan at the latter).⁵⁰ At Expo, the delegation from the USSR Pavilion was so impressed with their performance that Yevshan was invited on a personal tour of their pavilion. While visiting the pavilion, Lusia Pavlychenko, who was pregnant and not feeling well, chose to watch videos of Ukrainian dance performances rather than tour the pavilion and discovered how similar her choreography was to the dances on the tapes.⁵¹ This experience encouraged her, confirming that her style and interpretation of the music was appropriate.⁵²

This hectic year of training and touring created disagreements in the company. By the end of the year, Yevshan had incorporated, instituting a Board of Directors.⁵³ Due to irreparable conflicts between the Board and Pavlychenko, Pavlychenko left the company, taking about twenty the dancers with her.⁵⁴ They formed the Pavlychenko Folklorique Ensemble, who went on to perform at two more Expos, Spokane in 1974 and Vancouver in 1986, as well as the 1976 Montreal Olympics, the 1978 PanAmerican Games, and many smaller concerts across Saskatchewan, Canada and around the world.⁵⁵ Although the two performing ensembles diverged, it is notable that both included ballet training as

⁴⁹ Yevshan Ukrainian Folk Ballet Ensemble, "Tenth Anniversary: 'Night of *Ivano Kupalo*'" programme, 30 April 1971, volume 35 "Program Booklets," UNYF fonds, MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada (hereafter cited as Yevshan, "Tenth Anniversary," MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada).

⁵⁰ Pavlychenko, interview. Pavlychenko said that they competed against performers from across the province and a variety of artistic backgrounds.

⁵¹ Pavlychenko, interview.

⁵² Pavlychenko, interview.

⁵³ Zerebecky, interview.

⁵⁴ Pavlychenko, interview.

⁵⁵ Pavlychenko, interview. Pavlychenko would like to emphasize that the name for the company was chosen by the dancers to make it impossible for the company to be taken away from her.

the basis for good Ukrainian dance.⁵⁶

An increased number of dancers also led to internal conflicts within the dance troupes. Although both Yevshan and Pavlychenko were created as amateur performing ensembles, in 1976 a new semi-professional group was formed in Saskatoon. The Vesnyanka Ukrainian Dance Company was created as a summer stock group of Ukrainian dancers to provide entertainment and part-time employment for student dancers.⁵⁷ They also ran several influential workshops in the late 1970s, including a December 1977 workshop specifically aimed at instructors.⁵⁸ Zerebecky was heavily involved in this group but in the late 1970s and early 1980s, he and Marcella Cenaiko expanded their artistic training by traveling to London, England to study ballet and dance instruction at the London School of Classical Dance.

Upon returning to Saskatoon, Zerebecky was employed by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress—Saskatchewan Provincial Council (UCC-SPC) to create much-needed authoritative English-language Ukrainian dance resource booklets. Working out of the provincial head office in Saskatoon, Zerebecky published booklets containing descriptions of key steps and dances and ethnographical information for several Ukrainian dance regions and a brief history of Ukrainian dance. Two years later, in 1988, they published a Ukrainian dance curriculum and teacher's guide, designed to ensure the safety of young dancers with age (and gender) appropriate training. The resource booklets were one of many joint efforts between the provincial council of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC-SPC) and dance groups in Saskatoon.

Another effort, Kaleidoscope, a semi-annual concert, was launched in 1982 and intended to help facilitate joint choreographic creativity and cooperation between the dance groups. The dances were taught in a group setting and were choreographed for between 250 and 500 young dancers. This approach to a concert was similar to the AUUC's Festivals or Avramenko's concerts from the early 1930s; the concerts did not catch on and were soon discontinued. The UCC-SPC also began publishing

⁵⁶ Pavlychenko, interview; Zerebecky, interview; Yevshan Dance Ensemble "Yevshan: In Retrospection," DanceSaskatchewan.

⁵⁷ This group has no connection to a similarly-named, more recently founded dance school called Vesnianka Academy of Dance in Saskatoon.

⁵⁸ From Bohdan Zerebecky to "Dear Dancer," 21 November 1977, volume 30, "13 – Vesnianka Dance Instructors Workshop," AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

“SASKTANETS / Arts Newsletter,” which was based on the design of Altanets, a Ukrainian dance magazine in Alberta. It contained information about dance activities in the province and activities run by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress. It was later renamed *Visnyk / Bulletin* to reflect its increased use as an information source about the UCC, although it continues to report activities of various dance groups across the province.

Other events united the dance clubs in Saskatoon, and they were not always organized by the UCC. The Vesna festival was started in 1973, loosely marketed as a traditional Ukrainian spring celebration, and designed to share Ukrainian culture “with society at large in Canada.”⁵⁹ The inaugural festival featured a cabaret, with live bands and performances by Continental, Pavlychenko, Rozmai, and Yevshan. The festival later expanded to include more dance schools and performing ensembles from Saskatoon and beyond. Although these groups did not often perform together, they were able to meet and watch the other performers. By its tenth anniversary in 1983, it attracted 1250 people each night for three nights.⁶⁰ Saskatoon’s annual multicultural festival, Folkfest, also provided opportunities for competing schools and ensembles to appear on the same stage at the traditionally Ukrainian Orthodox-aligned Karpaty Ukrainian and the Ukrainian Catholic-aligned Kiev Ukrainian pavilions.

Yevshan continued training and performing, directed by some of its senior dancers, including Bohdan Zerebecky who became the company’s first Artistic Director in 1975.⁶¹ In 1969 they created their first full-length folk ballet, “The Legend of Yevshan Zillia,” which premiered in Saskatoon on 28 June 1969. They then toured to several Ukrainian strongholds, including Yorkton and Canora in Saskatchewan, as well as Edmonton, Alberta and Dauphin, Manitoba. This ballet told a traditional folk story, mixing ballet technique with Ukrainian culture, steps, and regional costumes. The 105-minute narrative ballet was a success with critics and audiences alike, and marked an important development in the choreographic ability of Ukrainian dance in Saskatoon and Saskatchewan—the introduction of a full-length plot, which framed and organized the dances.⁶²

⁵⁹ “Tenth Vesna Festival 1983,” *Forum* 53, Winter 1982-83, 4.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁶¹ Zerebecky, interview.

⁶² Yevshan, “Tenth Anniversary,” MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada.

Nationalist Ukrainian dance also developed in Regina. Although there were some dance classes offered in the 1950s, predominately in church basements, there were few performances and little organized training.⁶³ The lack of organized activities for youth led to a decline in youth membership in the UNF and UNYF, until 1962 when the UNF sent Anita Drebot from Ontario to Regina to revitalize the club. Her considerable skills in dance, embroidery, and Ukrainian language were passed on through classes in Regina and Moose Jaw. Having trained with Avramenko, Drebot began her dance classes teaching the Avramenko steps to the beginners, paying attention to hand positions and technique, such as ensuring the dancers did not shuffle or stamp.⁶⁴ Although the group's knowledge of dance was minimal and they had no costumes, they wanted to perform as soon as possible. She later branched out into original choreography. In February 1963 they held their first concert for the parents and other members of the nationalist Ukrainian community, using the 100 Poltava costumes Drebot had quickly created for the club.⁶⁵ The club went on to perform many more concerts. A letter dated 7 May 1963 from Emelia Yaciw from UNYF Regina to the President of the UNYF listed their achieved and planned concerts for the year, including a performance for Senator Paul Yuzyk, a UNYF founder, a Mother's Day Concert, a tour to Ituna, and a forty minute performance as part of Regina's 60th Jubilee, which compared favourably to the other groups "which [were] allowed only 20 minutes."⁶⁶ With all these performances, it is unsurprising that the company was already requesting additional Ukrainian dance material as soon as possible.

Due to conflicts over the direction of the UNYF dancers, several factions developed. Groups of dancers left the UNYF, forming new, usually politically-independent, dance schools. As conflict over artistic or leadership styles resurfaced, more dance schools were founded. While some schools were created due to conflict between the Orthodox and Catholic churches or artistic strife, the majority were formed

⁶³ Ostap Leo and Olga Piasta, interviewed by author, Ituna, SK, 20 June 2005.

⁶⁴ Drebot, interviewed by author.

⁶⁵ Drebot, interview.

⁶⁶ From Emelia Yaciw, UNYF Regina, to Klymkiw, UNYF President, 7 May 1963, volume 7 "Correspondence with Branches-Regina, Saskatchewan 1945-50," UNYF fonds, MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada.

to remove Ukrainian dance from the control of the political organizations.⁶⁷ Chaban was the first of many splinter groups and was formed in 1973. In 1979, Leo Piasta led another group of dancers from the UNF, forming Barvinok, which was later renamed Tavria.⁶⁸ The 1990s saw the creation of two more dance groups, Zapovit and the Regina Ukrainian Dance Ensemble (RUDE). Each of the four groups has its own performing ensemble and dance school, although they do occasionally perform together, such as for the Mosaic multicultural festival. The creation of so many groups in such a small Ukrainian population strained the resources of the city. Drebot noted that this was particularly evident in the general lack of sufficiently talented male dancers for all of the dance groups.⁶⁹

Also in Regina, the Poltava dancers, affiliated with the progressive AUUC, experienced a parallel increase in interest after 1961. Following the Festival, the AUUC dancers and orchestra organized several provincial tours, television spots, and trips to perform at Expo '67 in Montreal and Disney World in Florida. Over the years, however, these performers encountered additional hardships and setbacks. They bore political attacks and anti-Communist sentiments, all the while expanding their artistic range.

In 1970, the AUUC and the Poltava dancers merged the dance, orchestral and singing activities operated through the AUUC into a single performing group, creating the Poltava Ensemble of Song, Music, and Dance.⁷⁰ This retooling provided both opportunities and difficulties for the performers. It further encouraged the dancers to perform to live music, which was difficult for both the dancers and the musicians but provided valuable experience for the performers and the audience. As their experience and talents grew, so did the public exposure of Poltava. In his recent summary of their activities for the *Ukrainian Canadian*, Alex Lapchuk notes that “in one cultural season, the Ensemble performed before over 16,000 people. No small feat for an amateur group from a small Canadian city. In Regina itself, it performs before 6000 patrons at the AUUC Poltava Pavilion during the city's annual Mosaic Festival. ... In addition, the Ensemble has been touring Saskatchewan since 1980 under contract to the Organization

⁶⁷ Drebot, interview.

⁶⁸ Piasta, interview.

⁶⁹ Drebot, interview.

⁷⁰ Lapchuk, “Poltava: An Ongoing Story,” 11.

of Saskatchewan Arts Councils in its [year-round] concert series *Stars for Saskatchewan*.⁷¹ They were not, however, warmly received at all concerts.

Poltava encountered anti-Communist prejudice in some of the communities in which they performed. While some dancers took this as a further reason to “do one's best,” as reported by Alex Lapchuk, others may have avoided the organization because of its stigma in the nationalist Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian community.⁷² One conflict played out in the *Moose Jaw Times-Herald* after the daily paper ran an article in 1960 about an AUUC Ukrainian dance performance in the city. The nationalists responded with a letter to the editor where Stanley Szach, President of the Dominion Executive of the Ukrainian National Youth Federation of Canada, bemoaned the decision to run a story about the AUUC, an organization they called “a Communist-front group” and which they claimed constituted a very small minority of Canadian Ukrainian youth organizations.⁷³ Szach went on to assert that the *Moose Jaw Times* reporter “was not told that as well as teaching children folk dances, this group teaches its youngsters the fundamentals of Marxism and the Communist struggle to bring about a social revolution in Canada.”⁷⁴ Such intense anti-communism sentiments continued to surface sporadically throughout the Cold War years.⁷⁵ For example, in 1972 the Poltava groups' first concert appearance in Yorkton since the late 1930s was nearly cancelled. The Ukrainian Professionals⁷⁶ and some church leaders asked the concert sponsor to withdraw and the

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ From Stanley Szach, President, Ukrainian National Youth Federation of Canada to the editor of the *Moose Jaw Times-Herald*, 26 February 1960, volume 6 “Correspondence with Branches – Moose Jaw 1959-67,” UNYF fonds, MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ While the anti-communist hysteria which gripped the United States was more subdued in Canada, it was nonetheless present, and effected the development of the AUUC and Ukrainian dance. Investigations by the RCMP following the Gouzenko affair focused on exposing subversive elements in Canadian society, including Communists and suspected Communists. As these investigations are increasingly accessible through the Access to Information Act, scholarly studies on the RCMP in this time should increase in the coming years. For further information on Cold War Canada, see Merrily Weisbord, *The Strangest Dream: Canadian Communists, the Spy Trials, and the Cold War* (Montreal: Vehicule Press, 1994), Robert Bothwell, *The Big Chill: Canada and the Cold War* (Toronto: Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1998), Steve Hewitt, *Spying 101: the RCMP's Secret Activities at Canadian Universities, 1917-1997* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), Reg Whitaker and Steve Hewitt, *Canada and the Cold War* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Co., 2003), Richard Cavell, ed, *Love, Hate, and Fear in Canada's Cold War* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004).

⁷⁶ Ukrainian Professional and Businessmen's Club, a group which provides fellowship, leadership and support for the Ukrainian community.

RCMP to investigate allegations of Communist activities by the group. Upon contacting the Regina division of the RCMP, the Yorkton police learned that not only was the organization not Communist, they were also excellent performers.⁷⁷ The Yorkton RCMP bought 26 tickets to the concert, contributing to a near capacity crowd in the new nearly 800 seat high school auditorium.

Artistic merit was also used to overcome anti-Communist and anti-AUUC challenges two years later in Saskatoon. Lusia Pavlychenko, daughter of a founder of the Ukrainian National Organization and formerly involved with the UNO-affiliated Yevshan Ensemble, invited the Poltava mandolin orchestra to perform as guest artists at a concert at Centennial Auditorium on 1 March 1974. The highly-skilled orchestra was the only Ukrainian orchestra active in the province at the time, so they provided a novel artistic experience for the audience and the dancers in Saskatoon. Lusia was pressured by several Ukrainians in Saskatoon to cancel the invitation, which she refused to do. To help alleviate some of the pressure, as Anne Lapchuk related to the National Executive Council, the AUUC agreed “that the musicians shall be wearing Ukrainian costumes and not the red and white stage costumes”⁷⁸ and they assured her they would not distribute any kind of leaflets. This invitation and concert was ground-breaking. As Alex Lapchuk noted “I suppose this is somewhat historical...in that two diverse (politically) Ukrainian groups will appear on the same stage...with TOYK the guest artists.[...] Our appearance with Pavlychenko does not make her a 'progressive' by any means...her father was a member of the Tsentralna Rada and founder of UNO in Canada...but it's a start!”⁷⁹ Unfortunately, a long-term relationship did not grow out of this concert, as no further mention of such collaborations is evident.

The Poltava dancers also challenged themselves by exploring opportunities to increase their training and artistic skill, often by looking beyond the Ukrainian community. In 1963, they entered the Moose Jaw Ballet and Music Festival, a competition for ballet, jazz, tap, and folk dancers. At the festival, they were adjudicated

⁷⁷ From Alex Lapchuck to NEC, 4 April 1972, volume 9 “14 - AUUC–Saskatchewan Provincial Committee,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁷⁸ From Anna Lapchuk to NEC, 27 February 1974, volume 9 “17 - AUUC – NEC Saskatchewan Provincial Committee, 1974,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁷⁹ From Alex Lapchuk to NEC, 20 February 1974, volume 9 “16 - AUUC – NEC Saskatchewan Provincial Committee (1973-74),” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

by ballet choreographers Muriel Jolliffe from Lethbridge, Alberta and Arnold Spohr from the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. As neither was trained in Ukrainian dance, they instead provided feedback on the artistic performance, helping improve the dancers' technique. As well, Alex Lapchuk received a scholarship to study at the Banff Summer School of the Arts. The group continued to participate in this competition for many years, and in 1971 the senior dancers, the Poltava Dance Ensemble, were awarded the Helen Tait award in recognition for receiving the highest mark out of 800 entries in the festival. The dance was Russian entitled "Reflections of Old Russia."⁸⁰ Such accomplishments highlighted the high level of artistic skill which had developed in the group, as well as demonstrating the popularity of dances from other ethnic groups within the dance community.

To further their knowledge of Ukrainian dance, however, they looked overseas. Starting in the 1950s, the AUUC worked with *Society Ukraina* to send students to Ukraine to study music, dance, and choreography in Kyiv.⁸¹ Alex Lapchuk, an important dance leader and original member of the Poltava dancers, went to Kyiv to study from 1966 to 1969. There he danced with an amateur group, the University Vesnianka Ensemble, recorded choreography, and studied Ukrainian language and history.⁸² Upon his return to Canada, Lapchuk adapted some of the dances he learned for the Canadian amateur situation. This involved adjustments to accommodate smaller groups, with less ballet training and more individualistic dancers than in Ukraine. Such innovations attracted new people to the AUUC dance groups.⁸³ As well, starting in the 1970s, the AUUC and Poltava also organized shorter seminars in Ukraine and Saskatchewan for both instructors and dancers. These seminars spurred further development of Ukrainian dance by introducing Ukrainian choreographers and instructors to Canadian dancers.⁸⁴

By the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, the AUUC School of Performing Arts averaged between 50 and 75 dance students each year, while the performing group the Poltava Ensemble had between 20 and 30 regular members. Both groups had become

⁸⁰ From Alex Lapchuk to NEC, 28 April 1971, volume 9 "13 - AUUC-Saskatchewan" [1971], AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁸¹ Lapchuk "Poltava: An Ongoing Story," 11; See also Krawchuk *Our Stage*, 382.

⁸² Lapchuk, interview.

⁸³ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 382.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

almost wholly independent from the AUUC. The AUUC, for its part, had declined over the years. As early as 1968, Anne Lapchuk had reported to the NEC that they were having difficulty raising funds because “our pioneers of the AUUC, faithful press readers and longtime friends of our organization in Sask. have passed away, many are ailing and a great number are on pension. These are the people who have contributed generously throughout the years. Their number is declining and so are the funds.”⁸⁵ These difficulties increased over the years as the core membership of the AUUC continued to age.

The independence of the performing group, first established through concerts held outside the hall, indicated a rift between the cultural and political activities of the AUUC. In the December 1971 edition of the *Ukrainian Canadian*, Mitch Sago wrote that “[c]onfusion over the nature of the autonomy of our cultural groups within the framework of the Association hasn't helped matters, and has only served to aggravate the problem [of decreased identification between the AUUC and its cultural activities].” He went on to highlight that the organization's “desire to encourage a higher degree of autonomy in the work of our cultural groups has led to some distortions in their relationships to the parent body. This confusion, not widely held as yet, has given rise to ideas and expressions of complete autonomy and separate identity as part of the search for new forms and directions of growth in the so-called larger community.”⁸⁶ The increase in Canadian-born Ukrainian dancers may have contributed to the decline in interest in the political aspects of the AUUC and a decreasing desire to identify with the organization until the fall of the Soviet Union.⁸⁷

3.3 Expanded Programming: Rise of the Schools

The ensembles were formed primarily to present high-quality Ukrainian dance to both Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian audiences. They soon realized, however, that they needed a continuous stream of talented young dancers to maintain their dancer base. Senior

⁸⁵ From Anne Lapchuk to NEC, 13 June 1968, volume 9 “11 – AUUC Correspondence–1968, Saskatchewan Provincial Committee,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁸⁶ Sago, “AUUC Cultural Conferences,” 13-14.

⁸⁷ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 371.

dancers often retired following marriage or having children, or left due to injury, which was common due to unsafe training practices⁸⁸ and the increased athleticism of the dances. Thus, the feeder school was created. Although Ukrainian dance instruction had existed in Saskatchewan for many years, these new schools were based on a clearly defined progressive training program with regular advancement and, through their ties with specific performing ensembles, encouraged their dancers to strive to join particular groups as a capstone.

While there were children's dance classes provided by various Ukrainian organizations and churches, the creation of the Saskatoon Ukrainian Folk Dance Association in the early 1970s unified children's dance in Saskatoon, establishing a curriculum and grade system for the city. The Association tried to guarantee that its two- to three hundred dance students would receive adequate dance training.⁸⁹ This, in turn ensured “a continued flow of talent into Yevshan, which [was] the ultimate aim of many of the little dancers.”⁹⁰

Over the years, parents and dancers grew dissatisfied with the Saskatoon Ukrainian Folk Dance Association, and broke off to create new schools. By the 1975-76 dance season, there were many new schools, usually with between twenty and thirty dancers each.⁹¹ Each school attempted to attract the best instructors and achieve success at competitions and community performances to attract dancers, although the variation of skills taught between the schools was often negligible. Some dance schools established their own performing ensembles, such as Rushnychok. The Saskatoon School of Dance, which was founded by Lusya Pavlychenko in 1954 to teach ballet, tap, jazz and modern dance, expanded into Ukrainian dance and was affiliated with the Pavlychenko Folklorique Ensemble. There were also a few dance groups still run by the churches; the largest were at Saints Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral and Holy Trinity

⁸⁸ This could include inadequate warm ups, insufficient strength or technique training, or poor flooring for dancing in the training facilities, for example.

⁸⁹ Zerebecky, interview.

⁹⁰ Yevshan, “Tenth Anniversary,” MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada.

⁹¹ This list includes Rushnychok, Sonia’s School of Dance, the Boyan Ukrainian Dance Association, Sonechko Ukrainian Dancers, and the Ukrainian Dance School. Rushnychok also created a performing ensemble.

Ukrainian Orthodox Church.⁹² Although the unified Ukrainian Folk Dance Association dance school only lasted about nine years, in that time it affected how Ukrainian dance was taught and firmly established the Yevshan and Pavlychenko performing ensembles as future goals for young Ukrainian dancers in the city.

3.4 Outside the Cities, Outside the Organizations

Ukrainian dance clubs also emerged outside the major centres and eventually outside the major political organizations. This included informal classes, such as those offered at the Yorkton private Catholic high schools, St. Joseph's and Sacred Heart, in the late 1940s.⁹³ The students learned the Avramenko dances and did not create any of their own choreography; however, the best dancers did form a group which performed locally and one of them, Leo Piasta, eventually furthered his education and dance training in Regina.⁹⁴ If the number of Ukrainian organizations in the smaller communities was any indication, there was great potential for Ukrainian dance; 72% of the 272 registered Ukrainian organizations in Saskatchewan in 1978 were outside Saskatoon and Regina.⁹⁵

The strongest impetus for growth occurred when the performing ensembles and dance schools from Saskatoon and Regina started teaching in smaller cities and towns. It is notable that the AUUC did not create dance schools outside of their AUUC halls, and so missed out on both the potential headaches and potential recruitment possible with the schools. Yevshan, for example, created an official Extension Division to send instructors to nearby towns in the early 1970s, traveling to many communities including Prud'homme, Vonda, Cudworth, Hafford, Blaine Lake, Alvena, Humboldt, Rosthern, Meecham, and Wakaw.⁹⁶ Between this division and their Saskatoon-based children's community, they taught over 700 children, youth, and adults each year.⁹⁷ The extension programming provided Yevshan with an even greater selection of dancers for their

⁹² Zerebecky, interviewed by author.

⁹³ Piasta, interview. Leo Piasta first learned Ukrainian dance here, taught by another student, Mike Dudah from Winnipeg.

⁹⁴ Piasta, interview.

⁹⁵ Volume 19, "41 – AUUC–Regina 1976-84," AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁹⁶ Zerebecky, interview.

⁹⁷ Yevshan, "Yevshan: In Retrospection," DanceSaskatchewan Archives.

performing ensemble.

Individual teachers often traveled between many communities each week, affecting Ukrainian dance across the province. This was particularly true for Piasta, who taught in Wynyard, Estevan, Prince Albert, Whitkow, Canora, Ituna, Goodeve, Yorkton, Theodore, Sheho, Estevan, Wishart, Foam Lake, Wadena, Quill Lake, Norquay, Steenen, and Kamsack, as well as Saskatoon and Regina.⁹⁸ Piasta intended each club would be independent of the political groups, although they could remain attached to specific dance schools or performing groups, as it provided easy access to instructors. Ideally, the parents would run the dance school in their community, so the instructors and materials could travel from Saskatoon and Regina solely to instruct. This independence became increasingly essential as the initial instructors from the cities, such as Zerebecky and Piasta, became exhausted from the traveling and teaching and could not administer the schools themselves. The dance classes, although usually only once a week, were very popular and success in one community often led other adjacent communities to request classes. For instance, when Piasta first offered courses in Canora, about 150 students attended. Shortly thereafter, the Ituna Recreation Board requested a dance school, and another 150 students signed up there. The word spread and the Yorkton, Theodore, Sheho, and Wishart schools soon followed. Although the registration numbers were not usually sustained over the years and the dance instructors have changed, many of these dance clubs still exist.

By 1981, there were at least fourteen Ukrainian dance clubs in the province, from Swift Current to Prince Albert, and North Battleford to Yorkton.⁹⁹ These small town dance groups tended to focus upon dance competitions, rites of passage between the levels, and the virtually interminable search for dance instructors, rather than preparing their dancers to dance in the cities. The majority of the instructors were dancers from the amateur ensembles, supplementing their unpaid dancing with teaching. As such, the dances performed by these groups tended to reflect developments in the cities. For example, as new ethnographic regions were introduced to the cities, these filtered down

⁹⁸ Piasta, interview.

⁹⁹ Ukrainian Canadian Cultural Resource Centre Database/File, 20 February 1981, Ukrainian Canadian Congress—Saskatoon Provincial Council Archives.

to the smaller communities. The tie to the ensembles often bred loyalty into the rural students who, if they left their hometown, tended to join the teacher's dance troupes or associated schools in Saskatoon or Regina. The feeder school–performance ensemble dynamic gave Ukrainian dancers something to work towards and Ukrainian dance ensembles the ability to maintain their high performance standards and troupe size.

3.5 Conclusions

A third stage in the development of dance started in the mid-1950s, as new groups were formed and dance was fostered throughout Saskatchewan, to the detriment of other Ukrainian ethnic expressions. By the postwar period, the attraction of popular Canadian culture for second- and third-generation Canadians greatly affected Ukrainian culture in Saskatchewan. Notably, the exposure of Ukrainian dancers to ballet and the Soviet folk-staged dance initiated a movement within Ukrainian dance to make it more artistic.¹⁰⁰ Encouraged by increasing athleticism and artistic styling, stage Ukrainian dance, all but non-existent thirty years prior, in this time rose to become one of the most significant defining traits of the Ukrainian Canadian fragment.

Reflecting these influences, Ukrainian dance developed through this time period, moving beyond staged ethnicity. Dance was increasingly recognized as art by dancers, choreographers and audiences. As the performance ensembles distanced themselves from their parent political organizations, Ukrainian dance was partially freed from the controlling influence of Ukrainian Canadian politics. It instead became increasingly ensnared by the personal politics of the arts, as groups struggled to balance artistic creativity with antimodernist tendencies of tradition. Although several organizations were still involved throughout this period, the nature of their contribution changed as an increasing emphasis on artistry over identity developed. As the political organizations fell to the wayside, new artistic leaders filled the need for activity and entertainment within the Ukrainian Canadian community. Independence, combined with an almost exclusive use of English-language instruction, enabled the ensembles to open up their membership first to all Ukrainians, then to all interested and talented dancers. As such,

¹⁰⁰ Nahachewsky, "Conceptual Categories," 142-143.

and in response to the evolution of Canadian society, Ukrainian dance was able to increasingly symbolize a multicultural Canadian society, rather than just the Ukrainian Canadian ethnic population.

4. SITES OF CONFLICT, SITES OF INTERACTION

While Ukrainian dance has undergone significant changes, certain issues have persisted throughout the years. Attracting sufficient numbers of well-trained dancers and retaining instructors, as well as determining the artistic vision and direction for the group, has been problematic. This chapter examines several campaigns employed to address these concerns in the postwar period. It also discusses the local consequences of several national controversies during this era, including the multiculturalism debates and increasing interaction with Soviet and post-Soviet Ukraine; national policies complicated the local dance scene by fermenting tensions which had existed since the first wave of settlement. Finally, this chapter examines the affect of the fourth wave of immigrants on Ukrainian dance in Saskatchewan, focusing primarily on new choreographies, the development of costumes and continuing debates on authenticity.

Three key issues arose which created areas for interaction between the vying dance factions: the nature of ties with Soviet Ukraine; the best direction of artistic growth for Ukrainian dance; and the creation of an official policy of multiculturalism in Canada. With that interaction, however, often came conflict. From the first tour of a Soviet Ukrainian dance troupe in 1959, the influence of Ukrainians from Ukraine upon Ukrainian Canadian dance was a divisive issue. Conflicts surrounding the nature of ties to Soviet Ukraine were exacerbated when the AUUC started holding dance seminars in Kyiv and Saskatchewan in the 1970s. As will be outlined, there was a great deal of discussion about various artistic changes to Ukrainian dance. Artistic differences primarily focused on the issue of balancing authenticity and creativity, particularly with regard to new choreographies and the creation of costumes. Finally, when the federal government officially adopted a policy of multiculturalism, the Ukrainian organizations and the dance groups both stood to benefit. However, organizational stands on what multiculturalism was and what it should be magnified conflict between the political

factions, playing out on the federal stage. The policy contributed to the creation of multicultural festivals, which in turn provided an outlet for the presentation of Ukrainian culture to non-Ukrainian Canadians and firmly entrenched the position of Ukrainian dance as a primary marker of Ukrainian culture. The festivals also helped encourage the association of Ukrainian culture, as presented, with Saskatchewan and Canadian culture.

4.1 “An Arbitrary Conglomeration of Ethnic Groups:” Multiculturalism and Ukrainian Dance

Multiculturalism as a policy and a reality helped change the face of Ukrainian dance in Saskatchewan. The reality was reflected in an increasing prevalence of intermarriage between Ukrainians and non-Ukrainians, which introduced many non-Ukrainians to Ukrainian Canadian culture. Although there was resistance from some dance groups to incorporating non-Ukrainians into the performing troupes, once the instructors determined that this interest from non-Ukrainians was a show of respect for the culture, they were welcomed.¹

Once more dividing Ukrainian Canadians based on their political beliefs, Ukrainian organizations actively participated in the federal multiculturalism debates of the 1960s and 70s. The issue of the place of Ukrainian Canadians in Canadian society predates the start of the official debates on multiculturalism. A brief article from *The Rosetown Eagle* dated 4 July 1946 about the first All Canada Ukrainian Canadian Congress mentions that “instead of poulting an inferiority complex by wailing for legislation against racial discrimination, or braying for bilingualism, these Ukrainians settle with satisfaction into the duties of full Canadian citizenship. They know they are good Canadians and know others must eventually know it.”² Such social opinions, whether positive or negative, were impossible to change through a single federal policy. Instead, the new debate launched with the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism was primarily relevant to the Ukrainian cultural groups as the definition of Canada as either bicultural or multicultural would determine future participation in certain opportunities in the future and access to federal funding.

¹ Pavlychenko, interview; Lapchuk, interview.

² “Ukrainian Meeting an Eye-Opener,” *The Rosetown Eagle* (4 July 1946).

The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism was established in 1963, launching a debate over whether Canada was, or should be, multicultural or bicultural. Both the AUUC and the UCC became heavily involved in this debate. The UCC argued that there was a “Third Force” in Canada, made up of aboriginal and diaspora populations, including Ukrainians, which was ignored by claims of biculturalism. The AUUC opposed the idea of a “third force,” claiming that “an arbitrary conglomeration of ethnic groups does not a nation make.”³ They maintained that to be a strong country, Canada could only have two main cultures and languages, and that everyone else would fit into either the French or the English society.

The Commission requested submissions from representative ethnic organizations. The UNYF, a member of the UCC, held several meetings to discuss their submission to the Commission; they felt it was vital to make an effective submission because they were the only Ukrainian youth group to submit a brief.⁴ The President’s Conference highlighted organizational concerns that while many people know about the commission, “most people are unaware . . . that the minority groups in Canada – among them Ukrainians – will be greatly affected by the findings of the Royal Commission on Biculturalism and Bi-lingualism.”⁵ These predicted effects included the development of cultural activities, as this Commission debated the basis for financial support for language instruction and concerts. The UNF, also a member of the UCC focused on entrenching multiculturalism in a new constitution, creating a new federal department for culture and education, and commissioning new films from the National Film Board about ethnic groups. They also emphasized the “Third Force” idea in their submissions, requesting that similar rights and recognition be granted to all ethnic groups.⁶

The AUUC responded to the actions of the UCC members, officially releasing a Statement on Multiculturalism in 1973. This reiterated their earlier position that two

³ Submission to the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee by the National Executive Committee, Association of United Ukrainian Canadians, March 1981, volume 23 “19 - AUUC–Submission to the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee (1981),” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada (hereafter cited as Federal Cultural Policy Submission, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada).

⁴ *Bulletin* (no date), volume 3 “Newsletters–Regular–1964-67,” UNYF fonds, MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

nations are “key to any valid assessment of history, to an understanding of the present crisis in Confederation.”⁷ They were suspicious of the political motivations behind the term “multiculturalism” claiming that it was “a new description for cultural pluralism, an old fact of our ethno-cultural composition” used to create allies in the ethnic community “against the national aspirations of the French Canadian people.”⁸ They were also upset with the implication from the federal government that there was only one “umbrella” Ukrainian organization in Canada, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress.⁹ As well, they challenged whether Ukrainian Canadians even constitute a diaspora, an idea which remains controversial today.¹⁰

There were several consequences for Ukrainian cultural activities following the adoption of multiculturalism. The availability of new federal funding opportunities, such as advertising campaigns in ethnic newspapers, provided new funds for the organizations.¹¹ These funds were not, however, equally distributed between the organizations. The AUUC lodged several complaints about the lack of federal advertising in their publication, *Ukrainian Canadian*.¹² They were discouraged as they believed their activities, “which have always been headlined by [their] performing arts and publishing programs,” promoted Canada’s best interests.¹³ The AUUC found more success with the Multiculturalism Council created by the Saskatchewan provincial government. For instance, a letter dated 19 September 1972 from Lapchuk to the National Executive mentioned that, although the federal funding application was unsuccessful, they received a grant from the Multiculturalism Council to fund a thirteen-stop tour of the western provinces, which included a televised concert broadcast to 170,000 people.¹⁴ Tours such as these encouraged the popularity of Ukrainian dance, and

⁷ “A.U.U.C. Statement on Multiculturalism,” (1973), volume 33, “23 – AUUC–NEC Seminar–Multiculturalism, 1973-1975,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ For further details see Satzewich, *The Ukrainian Diaspora*.

¹¹ There were other federal funding sources, such as the Canada Council for the Arts (1957). The Council, however, focused on funding arts in general, rather than ethnic arts in particular. As most of the dance groups were part of larger ethnic organizations in the early years of the Council, rather than independent artistic organizations, they were ineligible for and uninterested in Canada Council funding.

¹² Federal Cultural Policy Submission, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ From Alex Lapchuk to Bill [William Harasym], 19 September 1972, volume 9 “14 – AUUC–Saskatchewan Provincial Committee Correspondence–1972,” AUUC fonds, MG 28-V154, Library and

without government funding they may not have occurred.

The creation of folk arts councils, which resulted indirectly from the Commission, also affected Ukrainian dance groups. Through granting or denying membership to a Ukrainian dance organization, the legitimacy of the organization's activities was judged. While some groups, such as the Canadian Folk Arts Council, were considered private organizations by the federal government, they also often controlled national performance platforms, such as the Centennial Folk Arts Program.¹⁵ The AUUC was denied membership in the Canadian Folk Arts Council (CFAC) because an "invitation for Ukrainian participation has been extended to the Ukrainian Canadian Committee, which we understand is the spokesman group for the main body of Ukrainian church and secular organizations."¹⁶ Although no groups were officially barred from participating in the Centennial celebrations, membership in the CFAC was necessary to participate in the official programs and these programs were the only ones to "enjoy the support and funds of the government."¹⁷

Some existing organizations were modified to fit the new multiculturalism priority. The Regina Folk Arts Council was renamed the Regina Folk Arts and Multicultural Council, later settling on the Regina Multicultural Council (RMC) in 1973. These councils were all open to members from all ethnic organizations, ideally with two representatives from each group.¹⁸ They were created to encourage the preservation and presentation of folk culture and to organize the varied ethnic groups, encouraging collaboration and general awareness of the diversity of ethnic culture in the city.¹⁹

The creation of an officially multicultural country also spurred the creation of multicultural festivals, which provided a new forum for the presentation of Ukrainian

Archives Canada.

¹⁵ From Mitch Sago to Ralph Stewart, Centennial Liason Officer, Secretary of State, 18 July 1966, volume 23 "21 – Government Relations 1964-1967," AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada (hereafter cited as From Sago to Stewart, 18 July 1966, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada).

¹⁶ Correspondence with the Canadian Folk Arts Council as quoted in "Memorandum in Respect to the Exclusion of the AUUC", volume 25 "8 – Canadian Folk Arts Council, 1966-68," AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁷ From Sago to Stewart, 18 July 1966, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁸ Regina Folk Arts and Cultural Council Constitution and Bylaws, volume 25 "8 – Canadian Folk Arts Council, 1966-68," AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁹ Lapchuk, interview.

dance to a broader, non-Ukrainian audience. One of the most influential activities organized by the Councils was Mosaic, an annual multicultural festival. Mosaic encompassed the most marketable aspects of ethnic culture: dance, food, and crafts.²⁰ Requirements for participation in the festival stated that each pavilion must “meet certain standards of cultural programming for the MOSAIC [sic] Festival which include, but are not limited to performances, displays, and demonstrations.”²¹ Notably, it was “not a forum for essentially commercial, political, or sectarian activities,” which were officially forbidden.²² The first festivals featured representatives from many ethnic organizations working together to present a single, unified program at the Saskatchewan Centre of the Arts.²³ A letter from Lapchuk to the NEC mentions that the “Poltava Dance Ensemble will close the Regina Folk Art Council's Mosaic '71 Festival with ‘Reflections of Old Russia.’”²⁴ Starting with Mosaic '77, the festival changed to accommodate larger programs, hosted by each individual ethnic group. The Ukrainian organizations set up separate pavilions, Poltava Ukrainian (run by the AUUC) and Kiev Ukrainian (organized by the UCC). Bickering between the two pavilions included a nationalist newspaper campaign against the, according to them, socialist, Russified Poltava pavilion, which almost led to the “removal of KUK [the Cyrillic acronym for UCC is KYK] from the Council and the barring of the Kiev pavilion from Mosaic.”²⁵

With upwards of 8000 visitors to each pavilion annually, the Mosaic festivals became very effective places to showcase Ukrainian culture. Since the cultural activities promoted were more accessible to the general population than, say, language classes or Ukrainian plays, these festivals reinforced the popularity of Ukrainian dance, helping

²⁰ For further information see related work on multicultural festivals, including Pauline Greenhill “Backyard World/Canadian Culture: Looking at Festival Agendas,” *Canadian University Music Review* 19 no. 2 (1999); Cynthia Thoroski and Pauline Greenhill, “Putting a Price on Culture: Ethnic Organizations, Volunteers, and the Marketing of Multicultural Festivals,” *Ethnologies* 23 (2001); Cynthia Thoroski, “Adventures in Ethnicity: Consuming Performances of Cultural Identity in Winnipeg's Folklorama,” *Canadian Folklore* 19 no. 2 (1997).

²¹ Mosaic Booklet (1978) [Photocopy], volume 40 “36 – Booklet, Mosaic '78 Festival of Pavilions [Regina],” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

²² Ibid.

²³ Lapchuk, interview.

²⁴ From Alex Lapchuk to NEC, 28 April 1971, volume 9 “13 - AUUC–Saskatchewan” [1971], AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

²⁵ From Alex Lapchuk to NEC, 5 May 1977, volume 9 “19 – AUUC–NEC Saskatchewan, 1976-77,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

ensure it was the main showcase for Ukrainian culture.²⁶ While the prominence of politics may have been minimized at cultural festivals, such as Mosaic and Folkfest, its counterpart in Saskatoon, they were still present.

4.2 Ties to Ukraine: *Society Ukraina*

Ties with Ukraine were controversial within the Ukrainian Canadian community, but they were also very influential. Debates surrounding the necessity and legitimacy of ties with Soviet Ukrainians deeply divided Ukrainian Canadians for decades. Cultural and social divisions tended to follow the political split, with the AUUC actively seeking connections to Ukraine and the UCC and its member organizations campaigning against them. In particular, the AUUC hoped to introduce fresh, authentic dances using their connections to Ukraine. The nationalists claimed that the culture in Ukraine had suffered too much “Russification” under the Soviet system, making it dubiously Ukrainian at best.²⁷ The Ukrainian refugees who migrated to Canada following World War II added an extra dimension to the nationalist protests. These immigrants adamantly protested any involvement with the Soviet Ukrainian government, fearing any relationship would legitimize Soviet control and destroy any possibility of an independent, democratic Ukraine.²⁸ In Saskatchewan, however, this wave of migration had little direct influence as the majority of refugees and immigrants settled in major cities such as Toronto and were not generally heavily involved with Ukrainian dance.²⁹ The most lasting influences from Soviet Ukraine, however, were consequences of tours from Ukraine (starting in the 1960s) and the dance camps (first arranged in the 1970s), both products of an organization called *Society Ukraina*.³⁰

The 1946 AUUC National Festival in Edmonton featured a delegation of

²⁶ Drebot, interview. In her interview, Drebot was extremely adamant about this, believing it to be a very negative consequence of the festivals.

²⁷ The nationalists could not deny the culture was at least nominally Ukrainian as it was lived by Ukrainians in Ukraine, but they believed the Ukrainians were changing Ukrainian culture to become more similar to the Russian culture – Russifying it and bringing its authentic Ukrainianness into question. Russification is still a very controversial and divisive issue in Canada and Ukraine.

²⁸ For more details see Lubomyr Luciuk “‘This Should Never be Spoken or Quoted Publically!’ Canada's Ukrainians and Their Encounter with the DPs,” in *Canada's Ukrainians: Negotiating an Identity*, ed. Lubomyr Luciuk and Stella Hryniuk (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991).

²⁹ For further information about this wave and its activities, particularly in Toronto, see Vic Satzewich, *The Ukrainian Diaspora*.

Ukrainian diplomats, including officials from *Society Ukraina*. The AUUC expanded these ties with *Society Ukraina* over the ensuing years. This relationship provided the AUUC with access to music, instructors, and information from Soviet Ukraine. In some now outdated comments in *Our Stage*, the official history of the AUUC performing arts in Canada, Peter Krawchuk goes so far as to claim that:

If the Ukrainian Canadian community had not had access to this living and inexhaustible source, our cultural heritage would have been very poor and insignificant. That is why today ... more and more Ukrainians in the performing arts, born in Canada, are drawn to the rich creative source which is constantly being replenished by new and generous talents in Ukrainian lands, now united into the great Ukrainian Soviet Republic. And it is precisely this that strongly guarantees that our song, music and dance will not die or fade away on Canadian soil.³¹

As this quotation implies, by this time performance culture, particularly dance, was considered the primary method to preserve, maintain, and express Ukrainian culture. This is a great contrast from the early settlers who focused more on lived culture—language, religion, and clothing—and the creation of political, religious and educational organizations and institutions.

This interaction with Soviet Ukrainians also provided the ability for dance groups to expand in new directions, although these innovations were often derided by the nationalists as Russian or Soviet. For example, the introduction of the dance entitled “On the Cornfields” by the Poltava Ensemble in Regina was hailed as a success by the AUUC, noting that it was an audience favourite because they “related to it.”³² Zerebecky, along with other nationalists, however, viewed a dance about cornfield workers on a collective farm as Soviet socialist-realist propaganda, completely lacking in merit.³³

Society Ukraina also arranged all tours of Ukrainians to Canada, including folk

³⁰ *Society Ukraina* was the official tourist branch of the Soviet Ukrainian government. As the government organization for foreign relations, they controlled access to and from Ukraine, organized all travel for foreigners within the country, and awarded scholarships for study in Ukraine. Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 392.

³¹ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 392.

³² Lapchuk, “Portrait,” 8; Lapchuk, interview.

³³ Zerebecky, interview. Socialist-realist art is designed to glorify proletariat work and encourage the revolution. These dances are distinct from common agrarian dances in that the dancers represent workers, rather than independent farmers. This distinction is often reflected in the use of costuming, music, and props (such as sickles) to emphasize that these are modern collective farm workers.

dance ensembles such as the Moiseyev State Ensemble of Folk Dance, the Pavlo Virsky State Folk Dance Ensemble, and the Hrehory Veriovka State Song and Dance Ensemble of the Soviet Ukrainian Republic.³⁴ These groups usually traveled across North America, with stops in major Ukrainian centres including Saskatoon, Winnipeg and Edmonton. Their programs usually included Ukrainian dances, featuring both staples like Cossack and *chumak* (salt-trader) dances and new creations such as an embroiderer's dance and "On the Cornfield," as well as Belorussian, Russian and other dances from ethnic groups in the USSR.³⁵ Through their performances, the Ukrainian dancers were, according to Pavlo Virsky, trying

to tell about the life and work of the Ukrainian people in the historic past and nowadays. Our Company fosters the national characteristics and traditions of Ukrainian folk dance for they are sacred to us. ... The main principle of our work is not just to copy ethnographic patterns of national dances, but to give them creative interpretation and enrich them."³⁶

To create this new interpretation, Virsky and the other choreographers blended national folk dance traditions with classical ballet training to create a "high technique of performance and harmonious beauty of presentation."³⁷ Critical reviews of these ensembles tended to be positive, sometimes praising the costuming as much as the dances. For instance, one *Saskatoon Commentator* review of the Moiseyev troupe in 1970 even went so far as to state "before North American men began preening themselves in today's colorful styles, the Soviet males were demonstrating that bright clothing causes no loss in virility."³⁸

Both the selection of dances and their presentation were, however, cause for concern to some audiences. As all folk dance groups were state-sponsored, they were often also seen as mouthpieces for the Soviet Union. An editorial published in the 10

³⁴ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 382; Programme from Ukrainian Dance Company (P. Virsky) tour, 1967-68, Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute Archives.

³⁵ Program from Ukrainian Dance Company (P. Virsky) tour, 1962, Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute Archives.

³⁶ Program from Ukrainian Dance Festival "In Tribute to Pavlo Virsky" 25 March 1979, volume 9 "21 – AUUC–NEC–Saskatchewan, 1979-80," AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada. This concert was held at Darke Hall in Regina to commemorate Virsky's [b. 1905 d. 1975] contributions to Ukrainian dance and featured many Russian dances and labourer dances.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ "Russian Red Army Dancers Coming to Town," *Saskatoon Commentator* (June 1970): 11.

May 1958 edition of the *Globe and Mail* outlines those concerns, placing them firmly in their Cold War context. While praising the talent of the dancers and recognizing a positive story on the Soviet Union as a welcome change, Andrew Gregorovich of Hamilton, Ontario, reminds his readers that:

a cool war continues to be waged, however, and it is important for Canadians not to forget the Soviet Government is benefiting from the publicity of the visit. Although Igor Moiseyev in “Folk Dances of the USSR” has adapted to his work the well-known meaningless phrase, “Choreography, like all categories of Soviet art, is national in form and Socialist in content”, we can be certain the “Socialist” content of the dances will not influence us as greatly as a more subtle idea. This idea is that the nationalities represented are free nations having the power of national self expression. [...] It is a paradox that just those national differences in costume, music and dance which distinguish the Russians from the other nationalities are flaunted here in the freedom of North American, while in their native lands they are being suppressed.³⁹

This editorial was reprinted in *MYHbeams*, the monthly publication of the UNYF, to ensure nationalist youth would see it, as it reinforced their concerns with the touring dance companies.⁴⁰

Aside from the controversy, the Canadian choreographers and instructors who attended these concerts were impressed by the production. Although some choreographers initially dismissed these dances as “Russified,” the dance ensembles often adopted the new dances, occasionally even rejecting the Canadian innovations in favour of the new Ukrainian style. The most widely adopted dance was Virsky’s “Bread and Salt Welcome.” This dance was based on a traditional village welcome, and was

³⁹ Andrew Gregorovich, “Soviet Dancers in North America,” Opinion/Editorial, *Globe and Mail* (10 May 1958): 6.

⁴⁰ Other nationalist groups took more direct action, such as the Association for the Liberation of Ukraine (ALU). In May 1962 at the Ukrainian Dance Company’s concert in Toronto, the ALU distributed leaflets entitled “Russians Get Out of the Ukraine!”. The front of the pamphlet featured a cartoon of a strong young male Ukrainian kicking a short old male “Russian” out of Ukraine and back to Moscow over a fence, an interesting example of ethnic stereotyping. The back contains information explaining that, although the protesters “have nothing against dancers from Ukraine” they must take this opportunity to expose Russian imperialism. They also emphasize that Ukraine is not a free country and that they “are hoping that members of the dancing troupe will, somehow, convey to the people in Ukraine that we, of the free world, have not forgotten them.” Association for Liberation of Ukraine (Toronto), “Russians Get Out of the Ukraine!,” May 1962, volume 1, “Programs and Announcements of Events” Dmytro Fodchuk fonds, MG30-C86, Library and Archives Canada. There were also separate references to protests outside of Saskatoon Centennial Auditorium at a 1982 concert in the same file.

used to open the concert. Variations of this dance remain popular in the repertoire of ensembles today.

Inspired by both the success of students who had received scholarships to study choreography in Ukraine and positive feedback on the Ukrainian dance troupes, the AUUC and *Society Ukraina* developed several Ukrainian dance seminars. The first seminar was held in Kyiv in August 1971. Ron Morky, the director of the AUUC School of Dancing in Winnipeg, was heavily involved in the planning. He told *Society Ukraina* to expect dancers between 16 and 20 years old who had studied with an instructor who has studied in Ukraine, so they will be familiar with the character dance curriculum used in the choreography institutes. He also requested instructors that have taught amateur dancers, will teach character subject dances rather than *hopaks* and *kolomeykas*, and are able to choreograph for more female than male roles, as most dance groups had more female participants.⁴¹ These requirements were met and the seminar was considered a great success. The students returned with “an enormous amount of technical knowledge regarding Ukrainian Folk Dancing” which they were able to apply in their dance ensembles and incorporate into their own performances.⁴² However, there were also a few changes recommended, including that the seminars in the future be open to dancers and instructors from across Canada, that they be extended as three weeks was too short a time frame, and that they invite instructors to come to Canada, rather than travel to Ukraine. These suggestions were implemented, with varying degrees of success.

The 1974 Kyiv seminar marked the first time the camp was opened to nationalist dancers.⁴³ The dancers were taught ten dances, and the feedback on the course itself was generally positive. However, some of the young AUUC dancers responded extremely negatively to the nationalist dancers. For example, a letter from Donna Machuik and Joanne Laslo, both of Regina, described how they

⁴¹ From Ron Morky, Director of the A.U.U.C. School of Dancing in Winnipeg, to the Ukrainian Friendship Society with Ukrainians Abroad (*Society Ukraina*), 2 April 1971, volume 30 “6 – Folk Dance Seminar–Kiev,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁴² From Ron Morky, Director of the A.U.U.C. School of Dancing in Winnipeg, to the NEC, 10 September 1971, volume 30 “6 - Folk Dance Seminar–Kiev,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada (hereafter cited as Morky to the NEC, 10 September 1971, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada).

⁴³ Volume 30 “6 – Folk Dance Seminar–Kiev,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada; see also “Folk Dancers Get Scholarships” *Regina Leader Post* (11 July 1974).

felt that during this seminar the five individuals from the National Federation had [disappointed] our organization and the representation of our country, Canada, by not being present at most of the scheduled tours, appearing late at meals, being late for the occasional tour they did come on, and last but not least one individual from Winnipeg delayed our flight from Paris to Montreal.⁴⁴

While this may be dismissed as a complaint about impoliteness, within the broader political context it becomes clear that although the dancers traveled, studied and practiced together, they did not leave their politics behind.

Probably due to the cost and inconvenience of travel to Ukraine, the AUUC decided to hold their 1975 seminar in Saskatchewan instead of Ukraine. Although feedback on the Ukraine seminars had mentioned the importance of seeing Ukraine for the young participants, by hosting the seminar in Canada the cost of the program was reduced considerably, allowing more dancers the opportunity to participate.⁴⁵ “Dance Seminar ‘75” was a joint project of the Saskatchewan Arts Board and the Poltava Ensemble. It was held in conjunction with the Saskatchewan Summer School of the Arts at Fort San, Saskatchewan, 80 km northeast of Regina. It marked the first time dance instructors from Soviet Ukraine visited Canada to teach.⁴⁶ There were five people in the Ukrainian delegation: three instructors, led by Kim Vasylenko; one accompanist; and one representative from *Society Ukraina*.⁴⁷ A letter from Alex Lapchuk to the AUUC NEC dated 10 April 1975 noted that the local Secretary of State “suggested to play down idea of instructors from Ukraine, as Feds. don't like to spend money on out of country people. We mentioned this was the importance of the whole seminar and that funds received from them would be used for the purposes stated on the grant.”⁴⁸ This was not the only anticipated objection, as the letter goes on to state that “question also came up about possible boycott by other Ukrainians as with Ukrainian singers. We stated that it

⁴⁴ From Donna Machuik and Joanne Laslo to William Harasym and the NEC, 17 October 1974, volume 30 “9 – Folk Dance Seminar Kiev, 1974,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁴⁵ Morky to the NEC, 10 September 1971, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁴⁶ Wine and Cheese Reception for Soviet Dance Instructors Summary, volume 30 “11 – AUUC–Dance Seminar 1975,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁴⁷ From Alex Lapchuk to *Society Ukraina*, 5 May 1975, volume 30 “10 – AUUC Dance Seminar 1975,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁴⁸ From Alex Lapchuk to NEC, 10 April 1975, volume 30 “10 – AUUC Dance Seminar 1975,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada (hereafter cited as Lapchuk to NEC, 10 April 1975, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada).

might be possible, but that the quota would be filled without them and irrespective of calls by *KUK* [UCC] not all cultural forces will head.”⁴⁹ Their prediction was accurate as, of the 40 participants, only twenty of them were from AUUC groups; two others were from St. Peter and St. Paul’s Church of Saskatoon and the rest were from UNF or formerly UNF dance groups.⁵⁰

The course mainly involved teaching contemporary Ukrainian choreography, enabling participants to bring that choreography to their schools, as opposed to teaching primarily dance technique or a wide variety of steps.⁵¹ They were also given information on music, costuming and Ukrainian dance terminology.⁵² The three week seminar cost \$75 per week for in-province students and \$100 per week for out of province and was held from August 10-31.⁵³ As with the earlier seminars in Ukraine, the dancers were “without exception, Canadian born youth, mainly secondary school or university students.”⁵⁴ They came from British Columbia (Vancouver and Kelowna), Alberta (Edmonton, Calgary, Red Deer, and Rycroft), Saskatchewan (Saskatoon and Regina), Manitoba (Winnipeg and Dauphin) and Ontario (Toronto).⁵⁵

The seminar was considered an “unqualified success,” inspiring future efforts. It received excellent press coverage, including four articles and photos in the Regina *Leader Post*, a CBC Radio interview for the nationally broadcast “Identities,” and the creation of a video tape. Notably, the Canadian Press story was written “emphasizing the lack of Federal funding for the Seminar.”⁵⁶ By September 1975, planning had already started for Dance Seminar ’76. Although there was some discussion of the Saskatchewan

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Report and Evaluation of Dance Seminar 75, volume 30 “11 – AUUC–Dance Seminar 1975,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada (hereafter cited as Report Seminar 75, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada). This report also included a list of names of participants with their home dance group, many of whom went on to become dance leaders in Saskatchewan: Regina: Leo Piasta (Verkovyna / OUN), Donnalyn Bobyck, Deirdre Palyok, Marci MacNeil, Donna Machuk, David Bomey (Poltava); Saskatoon: June Fosty (Berezka), Lusia Pavlychenko, Darryl Yuzyk, Olexander Kapla, Ron Tryshchuk, Donna Baida (Pavlychenko), Ihor Papish and Debbi Korol (SS Peter and Paul).

⁵¹ Dance Seminar General Information Package, volume 30 “11 – AUUC–Dance Seminar 1975,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada (hereafter cited as Information package, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada).

⁵² Report Seminar 75, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁵³ Information package, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada

⁵⁴ Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 366.

⁵⁵ Report Seminar 75, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

Arts Board handling the seminar alone, the AUUC remained heavily involved.⁵⁷ Alex Lapchuk was hired as a coordinator for the program.⁵⁸ The 1975 program incorporated in some changes, such as moving to Fort Qu'Appelle to access its larger rehearsal space. As well, there were fifty participants, with thirty-three from the AUUC. There were participants from Regina and Porcupine Plain, as well as locations outside Saskatchewan, but no participants from Saskatoon.⁵⁹ This was likely due to the creation of the Verkovyna Dance Seminar in Saskatoon. Following the success and popularity of both the Ukraine and Saskatchewan seminars, in 1977, the seminars began alternating between Saskatchewan and Ukraine. They were held until the early 1990s, attracting participants from across the province including Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert, Wynyard, Swift Current, Fox Valley, Esterhazy, and Estevan.⁶⁰

However, not all the feedback from the seminars was positive. The lack of Ukrainian language skills caused some difficulty in understanding the instructors, slowing down the seminars due to the necessity to translate. Although some discussion ensued about creating a Ukrainian dance terminology dictionary, none was produced.⁶¹ The instructors themselves were disappointed that the dances were not perfected by the end of the seminars. They were concerned that authenticity and accuracy would be lost as “the way the dance goes home will inevitably be the way the dance will be performed.”⁶² Although letters from participants generally complemented the seminars, they also contained a few notable criticisms. For example, Marcella Cenaiko from Saskatoon attended the 1977 seminar in Kyiv. She liked the conditioning and ballet exercises and appreciated the regional dances, including Lemko, Volyn', and Poltava regions. However, she was unimpressed with the Russian Kalinka dance, as she did not travel

⁵⁷ Lapchuk to NEC, 10 April 1975, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁵⁸ From Alex Lapchuk to NEC, 18 September 1975, volume 30 “12 – Dance Seminar,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁵⁹ Report and Evaluation of Dance Seminar 76, volume 30 “12 – Dance Seminar,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada (hereafter cited as Report Seminar 76, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada).

⁶⁰ Dance Seminar '83 Concert Program, volume 30 “20 – Ukrainian Dance Seminar, Saskatchewan 1983,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁶¹ Report Seminar 76, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁶² Ibid.

there to learn Russian dance.⁶³ These sentiments are generally echoed by Andriy Nahachewsky, who added that he would have liked more background on the dances and the regions because he “had stressed before that there was a desperate shortage of literature on this topic which would be very valuable in Canada.”⁶⁴ Although more regions were introduced at the future seminars, including Bukovinian and Transcarpathian regions, the instructors also continued to teach non-Ukrainian dances, such as a Moldavian duet.⁶⁵

There were also some concerns about whether the seminars should be open to non-AUUC participants. Terry Polowy from Vancouver wrote after the 1976 seminar requesting that the seminars be closed to the nationalists and that that AUUC “turn inward for a period of time” to strengthen itself. Until the AUUC participants fully understand the political position of the AUUC, she claimed that they are not equipped to withstand the constant onslaught of politics from the nationalists. In particular, she objected “to taking classes with people who seem to find the verification of the Russification of Ukrainian dance in every movement which they are shown. And I object to ludicrous discussions with such people which lead to the assertion that in the Ukraine, the headpieces (vinke) are now being made in the shape of the Russian kokoshnik.”⁶⁶ She also was disappointed that the instructors did not defend Soviet Ukraine as much as she had anticipated, only hearing one whispered comment that an instructor appreciated knowing “that sympathetic supporters of Soviet Ukraine did exist in Canada.”⁶⁷ This attitude, she felt, demonstrated a general lack of political understanding among the instructors. These comments and observations, although made by one dancer at one seminar, reflect issues that prevented many collaborative efforts between the nationalist and the progressive Ukrainian Canadians.

⁶³ Marcella Cenaiko, Report on Dance Seminar of Kiev, Ukraine, 1977 submitted to the NEC, volume 30 “15 – Dance Seminar Group,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁶⁴ From Andy [Andrij] Nahachewsky to W. Harasym and NEC, 14 October 1977, volume 30 “15 – Dance Seminar Group,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada. Nahachewsky went on to address at least some of this shortage through his academic and personal work on the development of Ukrainian dance.

⁶⁵ Dance Seminar '83 Concert Program, volume 30 “20 – Ukrainian Dance Seminar, Saskatchewan 1983,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁶⁶ From Terry Polowy to NEC, 14 September 1976, volume 30 “12 – Dance Seminar [1976],” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

The introduction of a new performance standard brought by the Ukrainian dance tour groups helped transform Ukrainian dance concerts from their folk dance roots to a more professional show. The seminars held in Ukraine and Canada were an essential part of these changes in the dance performances. The ethnographic regions, ballet and character dance techniques, fresh choreography, and unique teaching style of the Soviet era in Ukraine were often incorporated into dance schools and ensembles across Canada. These ties, however, also highlighted existing concerns about the authenticity of dances and costumes from Canada and Ukraine.

4.3 Authenticity and Artistic Growth in the Dances

As the dances were reinvented in the postwar period, concerns about the authenticity of the culture that was being presented were raised with increasing frequency. Challenges to a dance's or costume's authenticity, such as accusations of Russification, were often more damaging than challenges to their artistic merits. This is intrinsically tied to the nature of folk dance, which draws its legitimacy from its claims to represent an authentic culture. Cultural values were found in the regional variations in steps, music and costuming, including details such as hand placement, head movements, and the colours and techniques of embroidery used in the costumes, so it was perceived as important for such details be preserved and maintained. Although all the dance groups were concerned that the culture they presented through their costumes and dances reflect Ukrainian culture, it was difficult to determine what was *truly* authentic due to the lack of information on Ukrainian dance.

The lack of resources about Ukrainian dance and Ukrainian history was important as groups branched away from the Avramenko dances. Dance leaders felt quite strongly that authenticity and legitimacy in Ukrainian dance could only come from knowing about and understanding Ukrainian culture. Presenting Ukrainian history and traditions was also considered a valuable way to educate the audience.⁶⁸ These ideas are confirmed in documents such as the 1985 Restructuring and Mission Statement from Yevshan, which outlined their aim for the “preservation, interpretation and expression of

⁶⁸ Piasta, interview.

historical and contemporary Ukrainian cultural values for public enjoyment through technical and artistic excellence in the art form of dance.”⁶⁹ However, obtaining this knowledge was problematic, particularly during the Cold War. As outlined earlier, the AUUC chose to forge ties with Soviet Ukraine, while the nationalists generally resisted this association. Lapchuk believes that their ties helped the Poltava dance group be truly “representative of the region” because they were taught about the culture directly through their association with Ukraine.⁷⁰ Goods produced in Ukraine were another potential source of information about Ukrainian culture. However, the books and music produced in Ukraine were often difficult to obtain and, at least for the nationalists, were considered untrustworthy as they generally reflected a Russified Ukrainian culture and dance system. As well, since second and third generation Canadians often could not read Ukrainian, the information contained in published materials was often completely inaccessible due to language barriers.⁷¹ However, as there were few other places to locate music, costume supplies or other dance-related goods, many people looked to Ukraine. The difficulty of moving such goods between Ukraine and Canada led to the rise of specialty stores, such as Paul’s Music and Bookstore in Saskatoon. The materials these stores were able to import indirectly contributed to defining the legitimate imagery of Ukrainian dance and culture in Canada, including items such as the printed flower skirts which were used for the Ukrainian beginners’ female costumes for decades.⁷²

Due partially to the lack of resources, instructors, choreographers, and artistic directors had to look elsewhere for inspiration. Choreographers who had a background in ballet were among the first to incorporate it into Ukrainian dance, and as they did so they created ballet-inspired innovations in Ukrainian dance which significantly deviated from the earlier Avramenko dances. The participatory folk dance style and movements, such as closed circles, were almost completely removed. Ballet also emphasized the importance of head movements, hand holds and the carriage of the body. As details such

⁶⁹ Yevshan Ukrainian Folk Ballet Ensemble, “1985 Restructuring and Mission Statement,” *SASKTANETS* 3 no.3 (1985): 25.

⁷⁰ Lapchuk, interview.

⁷¹ Drebot, interview. Drebot is very concerned about the loss of language ability. She believes that it is essential to know the language in order to understand the culture.

⁷² Based on observations by the author of costumes in the collection of the Ukrainian Museum of Canada, Saskatoon, SK.

as head movement were developed, a wider emotional characterization from the dancers was possible, without converting Ukrainian dances completely to ballets. For example, the dance “Pas de Deux” from the 1961 AUUC National Shevchenko Festival was billed as a dance that

expresses many shades of emotion ranging from the bold advances of Stepan to Lileya’s coyness and finally concluding in a deeply emotional setting of young love. While the duet is technically patterned after the classical “*pas de deux*”, the choreographer has been able to capture the intense dramatic feelings of the two young lovers by unerringly utilizing the basic characteristics of the Ukrainian folk dance.⁷³

By utilizing ballet training, the hand and foot movements also became more precise, eventually aligning themselves with the established standard ballet positions. As well, turns for both women and men were “spotted,” allowing for faster and cleaner turns.⁷⁴ *Barre* and centre work also provided excellent physical training and development for the dancers, enabling them to practice more often and for longer periods of time, while minimizing their injuries. This was important for the male dancers as their role became increasingly acrobatic, and therefore physically stressful and dangerous, over the years.

Ballet technique and training also assisted with the adoption of new ethnographic regional dances. The original Avramenko dances were generally identifiable as central or western dances, masking and minimizing much of the ethnographic diversity of Ukraine.⁷⁵ As other regional dances were brought over via ties with Soviet Ukraine, they were generally taught in the Soviet style. This approach separated the Ukrainian dances into specific regional steps and styling, such as hand placements that were typically Hutsul, Bukovinian, Volynian, or Poltavian, and taught these styles on top of universal dance movements. Both at the Ukrainian seminars and in the published material, explanations behind each region’s style were presented. For instance, the Bukovinian regional dances are danced with close, high steps because they live in wooded areas, near

⁷³ Shatulsky, “Story,” MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

⁷⁴ “Spotting” is a dance technique whereby designed to prevent the dancer from becoming disoriented while completing quick full turns. The dancer picks a “spot” (an object or a location), looking at it while turning until you cannot look any longer, then quickly turning his or her head and focusing on the spot again.

⁷⁵ Lapchuk, interview.

the Carpathian mountains and the women wear long tight wrap skirts. The Soviet instructors also created a character barre system, which further developed the style for certain characters, such as gypsies or soldiers, while providing physical conditioning.⁷⁶

The introduction of the new regions and characters was controversial. Some regions—such as Volyn', Lemko, and Transcarpathia—were adopted with little hesitation even though their costuming, movements and style were considerably different from the mainstream regional dances. Other dances were not so quickly accepted. The greatest controversies erupted over the suitability of gypsy, sailor, worker, and non-Ukrainian dances introduced from Soviet and post-Soviet Ukraine. The worker dances were denounced as Soviet propaganda and Soviet Realism by the nationalists, and they refused to adopt them.⁷⁷ Despite these associations, they were popular with audiences wherever Poltava performed them.⁷⁸ Some Ukrainian folk tales that have been adapted for the stage, such as Marusia, feature Persian and gypsy roles, providing an introduction to the dance style for the dancers.⁷⁹ None of these dances are considered Ukrainian but they have been performed by Ukrainian dance troupes in Saskatchewan since the 1970s; some feature very similar steps to Ukrainian dance regions. As these dances are performed in Ukrainian forums, such as the Ukrainian pavilions of the multicultural festivals, they imply close ties between the cultures. This can mask a history of problems between ethnic groups, and can confuse the audience's understanding of Ukrainian culture as presented through dance, particularly if they are not aware the dances are not Ukrainian.⁸⁰ Concerns have recently led the Kiev Ukrainian pavilion at Saskatoon's annual multicultural festival, Folkfest, to ban gypsy, sailor and military dances.⁸¹ Lapchuk, however, explained that these dances were not introduced for ideological reasons, but for their artistic merit and “because we [the AUUC] are not narrowly

⁷⁶ As viewed by the author in Mikhail Berkhut, *Character Dance Course “Level 2. Sailor's Dance. Gypsy Dance. Ukrainian” Original Choreography by Mikhail Berkut*, videorecording, directed by Andre Winstone (London: Berkut Dance International: c.1985), Library and Archives Canada.

⁷⁷ Zerebecky, interview.

⁷⁸ Lapchuk, interview. The Poltava Ensemble began dancing Russian dances after learning a Kuban Cossack dance. Although these Cossacks are Ukrainian, they are a separate group with a separate style from the more commonly emulated Zaporozhian Cossacks and their dance is similar to Russian dances.

⁷⁹ Zerebecky, interview. The dance was performed and choreographed by Shumka, originally a UNF dance troupe, from Edmonton.

⁸⁰ Drebot, interview; Zerebecky, interview.

⁸¹ Zerebecky, interview.

nationalistic.”⁸² The Russian and other cultural dances have persisted because they are unique, challenging, and so entertaining that “audiences can’t get enough of it.”⁸³

Concerns about the Russification of Ukrainian dance, however, were more difficult to address. As the dances changed in the postwar period, nationalists were critical of any evidence that Ukrainian dances were being modified to become closer to Russian dances and costumes. This was evident in discussions about the development of women’s *vinok*, flowered headdresses worn as part of the national dress. If they became too tall or too pointed above the forehead, they were considered too similar to the Russian headdresses. Concerns about Russification were also tied to developments in the dances. As more movements involving stamping and slapping were introduced, accusations developed that these were done in a non-Ukrainian, more Russian way.⁸⁴ This concern is tied to Avramenko’s insistence that dancers do not pound their feet. As his former student Drebot recalled, Avramenko questioned “why would you pound if you’re dancing on the grass, walking through wheat fields and mountains?”⁸⁵ To address their concerns, the nationalists minimized their exposure to Soviet Ukraine and its Russified Ukrainian dance, choosing instead to “filter” these changes, keeping only the most expressive elements rather than the full dances.⁸⁶ The AUUC workshops, however, flooded the province with new dances which many of the new groups quickly adopted.⁸⁷ This seems to have contributed to stifling much of the creativity and choreographic potential of Ukrainian Canadian dance.⁸⁸

4.4 Costuming: “*Babas* and Kids in Wreaths and Ribbons”

The evolution of the dances is closely related to the transformation of the costuming over the same period. Costumes help determine which steps can be executed, how the steps are performed, help create the overall feeling of the performance, and help teach the audience about the culture. They were often noticed by the critics, who generally

⁸² Lapchuk, interview.

⁸³ Lapchuk, interview.

⁸⁴ Zerebecky, interview.

⁸⁵ Drebot, interview.

⁸⁶ Zerebecky, interview.

⁸⁷ Zerebecky, interview.

⁸⁸ Zerebecky, interview.

complemented the costumes while commenting on the dances. For instance, a review by Jean Scott of a Poltava concert held 13 May 1972 in Moose Jaw, claimed the troupe “presented a beautiful concert at the Peacock Auditorium, delighting the audience with their wonderful presentation of the Ukrainian folk dance. The dances were performed by light-footed, beautifully costumed girls in Ukrainian dress and lively male dancers to the music of the Poltava Mandolin Orchestra.”⁸⁹ This short comment, loaded with gendered impressions of the dancers, is typical of concert reviews. The reviewers, however, were generally unaware of the issues surrounding the creation and maintenance of costumes. These included debates surrounding authenticity, difficulty locating costume material and patterns, and the effects the costumes had on the dances themselves. As the costumes changed with the dances through the postwar period, however, so did the impression the dances left on audiences.

The earliest Ukrainian dance costumes were often cobbled together from articles brought by the settlers and whatever materials were available in Canada. This created an uneven effect within a dance group and often meant that there was only one costume worn for all the dances, regardless of the dance's ethnographic region.⁹⁰ Groups also experienced difficulty locating enough costumes for their more increasingly frequent performances. Many dance troupes shared costumes within their organization but all had difficulty finding enough costumes, especially for larger performances such as the National Festivals or the Cavalcades. For instance, the report on the 1946 Regina UNF Cavalcade reported that “though we almost emptied two halls of these there still [were not] sufficient to dress all the dancers.”⁹¹ These chronic shortages led many groups to take on the significant cost of manufacturing their own costumes.⁹² As they did so, they began to move toward a more unified look. By creating ensemble costumes and wardrobes, each troupe was able to establish a signature look, which varied in style,

⁸⁹ As cited in Krawchuk, *Our Stage*, 357.

⁹⁰ Drebot, interview. Also evident in photos from the Avramenko fonds and other collections.

⁹¹ Orchiwsky, “Regina Report,” MG28-V8, Library and Archives Canada.

⁹² It was expensive; a letter from the Regina AUUC in 1967 mentions that it cost \$150 to make five women's central region costumes, which were considered essential to do as the groups began to perform more frequently. From Anne Lapchuk to NEC, 1 November 1967, volume 9 “11 – AUUC–Correspondence–1968, Saskatchewan Provincial Committee,” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

colour, and decoration between the dance troupes. Tours by Soviet dance troupes reinforced this trend for both nationalists and progressives. Their matching costumes were fully co-ordinated by the artistic director.⁹³

Through their wardrobes, dance organizations were also able to accommodate the demand for the creation of new costumes, which was essential as new ethnographic regions were introduced.⁹⁴ Unfortunately, the same deficiency in information available about the dances was also reflected in the costume information. While there were a few costume experts, such as Tetiana Koshetz for the UNF, there were virtually no patterns or other information.⁹⁵ Although some costume variations, such as embroidery colours and patterns, did not alter the dancers' abilities, they were still considered very powerful by all the informants. They believe that when the costumes did not reflect the ethnological differences, and many did not, it affected the feeling the audience experienced watching the dance, and negated the dances' didactic functions. Costume errors also made the more knowledgeable audience members, possibly former dancers or culturally educated Ukrainians, question the authenticity of the dance presented.

As with the dances, authenticity was often implied through following village traditions and realities as closely as possible. For Lusya Pavlychenko, this included wearing boots, ballet slippers, or bare feet when dancing, as opposed to character shoes, which became the footwear of choice by the 1970s. The footwear options reflected those available to Ukrainian villagers: purchased boots, homemade slippers, or nothing at all. Character shoes did not resemble any authentic footwear.⁹⁶ Often, however, authenticity was subject to the availability of materials.⁹⁷ Due to trade difficulties with Ukraine, authentic material was often impossible to locate, so substitutions were made. Drebot recalls that the UNF group used plaid tartans for the *platka*, the maiden's skirt in the

⁹³ Lapchuck, interview.

⁹⁴ Each region has its own embroidery colours, patterns and styles, based on the dyes available in each region. For instance, the Poltava clothing featured red and black and, by the end of the nineteenth century, cross-stitched flowers, while the Hutsul region in western Ukraine focused on yellow, orange and brown and used a satin stitch. Drebot, interview.

⁹⁵ Drebot, interview; Pavlychenko, interview; Piasta, interview. Drebot and Pavlychenko mentioned Koshetz in their interviews, Piasta mentioned the patterns.

⁹⁶ Pavlychenko, interview.

⁹⁷ The boots and *pstoly* for the UNYF in Saskatoon were made by *Pan* Bolubash based on researched period footwear designs. The design was adjusted to suit a dancer's needs by being made more pliable and accepting of an articulated foot. Pavlychenko, interview.

Poltava region, in the 1960s.⁹⁸

The importance of authenticity became evident with the advent of adjudicated dance competitions and “Miss Ukraine” beauty contests, where the style and accuracy of the costume was often awarded points.⁹⁹ The costume contests were held from the 1950s to the 1970s, and served as a further standardizing force in Ukrainian dance costumes. Although some creativity was encouraged and essential, these contests also tended to require the participants to adhere as closely as possible to a set pattern for the outfit. Many competitions were open only to girls at least 14 years old, wearing Poltava region girls' costume.¹⁰⁰

The focus on the Poltava, or central Ukrainian, woman's costume as a symbol for Ukrainian Canadian identity is noteworthy. Despite the fact that most Ukrainian Canadian immigrants did not originate in this area, by this time it was considered the national costume of Ukraine, both within and beyond the community. Ukrainian culture, once highly varied in early settlements in Canada, had now become fairly standardized and tied to the idea of a large unified nation, rather than reflecting the village or region of origin.

This region's costume designs changed throughout the postwar period, and were closely tied to the development of dance roles, which established gender- and age-defined roles.¹⁰¹ As athletic feats were more prominently featured for both male and female dancers, the costumes changed accordingly. Since the male dance roles for this region were based on Ukrainian martial arts, their costumes did not require considerable adjustment.¹⁰² The changes they did effect generally involved variations on tying the belt

⁹⁸ Drebot, interview.

⁹⁹ Pavlychenko, interview. The Official Syllabus of the Second Annual Canadian Ukrainian Music and Dance Festival which was hosted in Massey Hall from May 8 to 10, 1953, lists a costume contest and its rules. The contest was inspired by the previous year's festival, where “it was noted that optical impressions made by groups and individuals, choir groups as well as dancing ensembles, on the stage were much more pleasing when participants appeared in styled folk-costumes.” Official Syllabus of the Second Annual Canadian Ukrainian Music & Dance Festival in Massey Hall (May 8,9,10 – 1953), volume 2, “Announcements and Programmes of Events, 1930-1974,” Dmytro Fodchuk fonds, MG30-C86, Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ As the most common costume among the dance troupes was the Poltava region, my analysis will focus on the consequences of changes within this costume.

¹⁰² They were based on the clothes worn by the *Zaporozhian* Cossacks and consisted of large baggy pants, a men's long-sleeved embroidered shirt, a wide belt, boots and occasionally a hat. The pants were made in many colours, out of velvet, satin, or cotton, as available and depending on the dance groups' desire.



*Illustration 2: Dancers at Mohyla in the 1950s [c.1950s]
Photo courtesy of the Ukrainian Museum of Canada*

to keep the dancer from tripping on it, or gusseting the shirts and pants to increase the ease and range of motion.

The womens' costumes, on the other hand, underwent significant changes, due to a combination of aesthetic and practical reasons. Some of these were fairly minor. For instance, the tunics worn as part of the maiden's central Poltava region costumes in the 1950s tended to join on the bust line. By the 1970s, the right side of the vest folded over the left, attaching at the top of the shoulder. This aesthetic change was based on research into traditional costumes and was considered a return to the authentic costume, rather than a new innovation. The transformation of the skirts, on the other hand, was very influential upon the evolution of female Ukrainian dance roles.

The skirts changed greatly through the years, as both the slip and skirt hem rose,

and some dance clubs removed the panels on the over-skirt.¹⁰³ Improved dance techniques enabled the dancers to turn faster, and the introduction of more flamboyant and faster turns into the Ukrainian dance repertoire, such as whip turns, changed the way women moved on stage. Long skirts, however, restricted the speed of the women's turns. Ultimately, this necessitated shortening the skirt to approximately knee length.¹⁰⁴

Since that initial need, however, skirts have shortened even further for aesthetic reasons. As skirts shortened in mainstream North American fashion to reflect new ideas about femininity, attractiveness and sexuality, the skirts also shortened in Ukrainian dance costumes. The shorter, tighter slips have required the addition of slits at the back or side of the skirt or the removal of the slip altogether.¹⁰⁵ Some informants think that these changes destroy the "natural modesty" that they believe Ukrainian women should have.¹⁰⁶ These changes may be particularly offensive since this costume is the Ukrainian national folk dress. As well, items such as the slip have important historic cultural value. For instance, the embroidery at the bottom of the slip or long shirt was traditionally believed to ward off evil spirits. With the removal of the slip, the ethnographic cultural lesson is neglected.

Social norms surrounding age were also challenged by the choice of costume. While the maiden Poltava costume is the one most typically associated with female Ukrainian dance, there are several variations available depending on marital status. Girls below marriageable age should wear only a few flowers, not a full headdress, with a simple skirt, slip, embroidered shirt, and a few necklaces. Matrons should wear similar costumes to the maidens but instead of the *vinok* [flowered, ribboned headdress], they historically covered their heads with a kerchief. Due to the popular appeal of the maiden's costume, however, there are "*babas* [grandmothers] and kids in wreaths and

¹⁰³ One early photo of Lusya Pavlychenko on the cover of a 1956 edition of MYHbeams shows a tea-length Poltava skirt over an embroidered slip that nearly reaches the ankles. In the photos of many performance ensembles twenty years later, the skirts were about knee-length and the slips were slightly longer.

¹⁰⁴ In the traditional turns, the dancer essentially hops, keeping the knees together and bringing the foot to the opposite calf. For whip turns, the foot instead whips out in a circular motion, with the leg bent at the knee. Although for both steps the knees stay together, in order to whip the foot around, the lower leg must be completely unrestricted.

¹⁰⁵ Zerebecky, interview.

¹⁰⁶ Zerebecky, interview. Quotation is from Zerebecky, although similar sentiments were also expressed by Pavlychenko, Piasta and Lapchuk during their interviews.

ribbons.”¹⁰⁷ The married dancers' refusal to wearing a matron's costume reflects popular beliefs about age and beauty, as they choose to wear the costume designed for the younger women, regardless of its authenticity.¹⁰⁸

4.5 The Post-Soviet World

The Ukrainian declaration of independence in the fall of 1991 increased the interaction between Canada and Ukraine. Although there were some tours and trips to Ukraine during the Soviet era, interaction became considerably easier after independence. As well, the trips themselves changed as they were no longer arranged by *Society Ukrainia*. For instance, the trips to collective farms were no longer generally part of the tour.¹⁰⁹

The dissolution of the Soviet Union also created political waves in Ukrainian Canadian society. As early as the fall of 1991, the AUUC revoked many of its earlier statements defending the Communist Soviet government, although they claimed that their contact with Soviet Ukraine had contributed to building a free Ukraine.¹¹⁰ As well, they hoped that “[t]he dramatic changes in the Soviet Union and in Ukraine, have removed the sources of the long-lasting sharp division in the Ukrainian Canadian community. A path has been prepared for unity and all of Canada's Ukrainians—Canadians of Ukrainian origin who stand for an independent, sovereign, and democratic Ukraine.”¹¹¹ The groups did not, however, merge and remain separate entities to the present day. These organizational changes had very little impact on Ukrainian dance as the performing ensembles and dance schools were generally independent of their parent organizations by this time.

The changes since the mid-1980s allowed a new, fourth wave of migration from Ukraine to Canada. These immigrants were raised wholly under the Soviet system. This group likely spoke Russian better than Ukrainian, was unaffiliated with a religious

¹⁰⁷ Piasta, interview.

¹⁰⁸ Zerebecky, interview. The use of the maiden's costume may also reflect its identification as the national women's costume.

¹⁰⁹ From Zoya [Shmer?], Poltava Ensemble, to Bill [William Harasym?], 16 November 1981, volume 9 “23 – AUUC–Saskatchewan Provincial Committee (1981-83),” AUUC fonds, MG28-V154, Library and Archives Canada.

¹¹⁰ Mykola Hrynchyshyn, “Session II,” Paper presented at the Symposium of the Ukrainian Canadian Centennial Commission and Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 30 November 1991, Toronto: 46.

¹¹¹ Mykola Hrynchyshyn, “Session II,” 45.

denomination, and was formerly employed in the Soviet economic system. The dancers were trained in Soviet dance schools, where they learned Soviet methodology. They would then have gone on to become Artists of the State, working full-time as dancers or choreographers for the State-sanctioned ensembles. With the collapse of the Soviet economy, these dancers increasingly found themselves unemployed or underemployed in positions outside their field.

Canada once again seemed like a land of opportunity, with fresh, better paying artistic fields replacing the more mundane grainfields which had attracted earlier immigrants. Dance companies worked to attract Ukrainian choreographers, artistic directors, and adjudicators for competitions. The Ukrainians' choreographiesè geographic origins inspired a greater perception of authority among dancers and audiences, and quickly superseded those presented by Canadian-born and trained choreographers. While the assumption of authenticity is controversial and highly debated by several informants, the perception that work done by Ukrainian choreographers and artistic directors must, by virtue of being directly from Ukraine, be authentic is still popular within the Ukrainian Canadian community.

With the introduction of the new instructors from Ukraine, the uniquely Canadian choreographies, which had developed in the 1960s and 1970s, have all but disappeared. Some new influences have been added to the choreographies. For instance, the music for the dances has increasingly moved from traditional dance music toward modern pop and rock music imported from Ukraine. Much of the most commonly used music, particularly from the pop star Ruslana, features traditional beats, instruments, or modern versions of old songs. This balance of the modern and traditional may make the modern music more palatable to the audiences and adjudicators, providing the dance is done well.¹¹²

In terms of costuming, the new choreographers have also experimented with some non-traditional or vaguely traditional costumes, such as using the black polyester shirts popular in tourist markets in Ukraine instead of the more traditional white cotton shirts. The dances themselves also increasingly featured female dancers dancing male

¹¹² Personal observations at the PFE Dance Showcase, April 2006.

roles or steps, either cross-dressing in the male outfits or while wearing non-traditional costumes with very short tight skirts or black spandex pants. This increase in women dancing male roles may be due in part to generally low numbers of male dancers, similar to the Orchestra tour group in 1926. However, it has also come about by demands from the female dancers to have more active, physical, impressive roles in the dances than the traditional female roles grant them. The traditional role in dance is aptly summarized in the 1964 monograph *Ukrainian Woman in Choreography*. The author, Maria Pasternakova, a professional dancer from Western Ukraine, explains that

The woman in Ukrainian dances is a proud and highly respected person. She is graceful in her dancing. She is modest. Sometimes she even flirts. Yet she is always nobly reserved in her emotions. The men do their best in front of a girl with their special abilities, bravery and might. Sometimes such efforts in the form of high jumps, in “squattings”, and in the round-about turns assume the form of competition and of virtuosity.¹¹³

Pavlychenko believes, however, that there is a distinction between the Canadian female dancers and the Ukrainian ones. The Ukrainian dancers, she opines, work from within their appropriate gender role, as outlined above, and build a relationship on stage. Canadian dancers, on the other hand, are much more competitive, vying for recognition and applause.¹¹⁴ While the director of the troupe essentially establishes the personality of the ensemble,¹¹⁵ this competitive spirit feeds the search for new roles within Ukrainian dance.

4.6 Conclusions

Starting in the 1960s, Ukrainian dance branched off from its ethnic and national roots, as defined by Nahachewsky, into new artistic directions. The dances which originated in this time were “spectacular” rather than national in orientation.¹¹⁶ These new choreographies, which were influenced by ballet and Soviet character dances, introduced

¹¹³ Maria Pasternakova, *Ukrainian Woman in Choreography*, 2nd ed. (Winnipeg: Ukrainian Woman's Association of Canada, 1964), 11.

¹¹⁴ Pavlychenko, interview.

¹¹⁵ Pavlychenko, interview.

¹¹⁶ Andrij Nahachewsky, “Shifting Orientation in Dance Revivals: From 'National' to 'Spectacular' in Ukrainian Canadian Dance,” *Narodna Umjetnost* 43, no.1 (2006), 165.

many innovations, such as a storyline. They also indicated an explicit shift in the orientation of Ukrainian dance from an expression of national or ethnic identity, toward one emphasizing an aesthetically pleasing and novel performance

The rise of multicultural policy, combined with concerns the appropriateness of interaction with Soviet Ukraine and the introduction of new artistic influences from Ukraine, affected all the dance groups in Saskatchewan. Conflicts over multiculturalism emphasized the divisions within the Ukrainian community. As the main political factions fought over the definition and presentation of multicultural dance, however, they lost most of their influence upon Ukrainian dance and how it defines Ukrainian culture. Multi-ethnic concerts, such as the Mosaic festival, which were a by-product of multicultural policy and were designed to showcase the kaleidoscope of Canadian culture, also highlighted internal divisions within the community.

The differences between Ukrainian culture in Canada and Ukrainian culture in Ukraine was emphasized with the interaction in the postwar period. The Canadian fragment, which had increasingly used Ukrainian dance to define Ukrainian Canadian culture, was challenged by Soviet dancers starting in the 1960s. In Canada, Ukrainian dance was not a profession; dance troupes were composed of amateur dancers, unlike in the Soviet Union. Dance technique and artistic styling were also considerably different between the Canadians and the Soviet Ukrainians. Although most Canadian dance troops soon adopted the Soviet character dances, co-ordinated costuming, and artistic styling, it was not accepted by all Ukrainian Canadians. Among some nationalist-inclined Ukrainians, who believed they were part of a diaspora, there was a powerful drive to preserve what they felt was a pure art form. Authentic Ukrainian dance which could not exist in the Soviet-occupied homeland could be maintained and encouraged in Canada.

Each site of interaction was intricately linked to concerns over the authenticity of Ukrainian dance within the Ukrainian Canadian community. As choreographers started developing their own dances in the 1960s, they combined their personal versions of traditional culture with their artistic vision for Ukrainian dance. Their creations were unique because they were based on the individual choreographer's experience and exposure to the culture; however, once they were accepted as legitimate Ukrainian

dances, they became part of the Ukrainian Canadian identity. By maintaining cultural references, they were able to borrow existing cultural legitimacy while defining a new style of ballet-influenced Ukrainian dance. These dances also embellished Ukrainian Canadian identity, associating it with high-quality, artistic ethnic dances. Since choreographers started introducing new ethnographic regions and ballet training, the relationship between Ukrainian dance and Ukrainian traditions became more controversial. As ethnically-defined boundaries, especially gender roles, were challenged by both Ukrainian-born and Canadian-born dancers and choreographers, a new post-Soviet Ukrainian Canadian dance has started to emerge. The final shape of that ethnic tradition has yet to fully emerge, however.

5. CONCLUSION

Ukrainian dance is based on folk images, traditions and costumes. Although the dances today are considerably different than those danced in villages a century ago, they reflect an interpretation of the customs and roles within Ukrainian culture. The bright, colourful costumes and the athletic feats of the dancers attract a wide audience. Public performances define for non-Ukrainian and Ukrainian Canadians alike what it means to be Ukrainian Canadian. As such, developments in Ukrainian dance have been heavily contested by its stakeholders. Through an examination of Ukrainian dance history and development, we are able to observe the issues playing out behind the scenes, informing of the greater issues and political motives behind the definition of this identity. The internal community power struggle is also reflective of the greater struggle of an ethnic community, as it defines its role and identity within Canadian culture.

Through the twentieth century, dance became an increasingly popular and influential phenomenon. This thesis, with its broad chronology, has been able to trace the development of Ukrainian dance within Saskatchewan for the first time. This overview has highlighted the evolution of Ukrainian Canadian identity in the province, as ethnic identity was presented to both members and outsiders through dance. The dances, through their presentation of Ukrainians as noble Cossacks, peasant farmers, or Soviet workers, for example, taught the dancers and the audience different versions of Ukrainian culture and history. As Ukrainian Canadians moved from their perceived common agrarian, peasant roots, assimilating into mainstream Canadian society, dance seemed to be a way to maintain a tie to the culture. The evolution of dance is also significant because dance gave the opportunity for Ukrainian Canadians to express an ethnic identity that may otherwise be closed to them, due to a lack of language ability or their religious affiliation.

The evolution of dance also addresses other broad issues in Ukrainian Canadian

and Canadian society. From their foundation, political organizations fought to define and redefine Ukrainian identity in the province. Unlike many studies of Ukrainian Canadians, this thesis has traced the affect that both dominant political organizations have had on the evolution of dance. These groups, despite their divergent political goals, both tried to build a single, cohesive Ukrainian identity for the country; one which they could harness for their own political purposes, whether nationalist or progressive. As the political organizations lost exclusive control over the development of dance due to the rise of artistic leaders, they also lost control of the most prominent public presentation of Ukrainian culture. This decreased influence did not, however, completely remove politics from dance. Instead, the rise in artistic influences created yet another issue to divide dancers, as artistic variations increasingly became tied to debates surrounding authenticity, artistic license, and Ukrainianness.

Ukrainian dance has been closely tied to prominent celebrations, such as Dominion Day (now called Canada Day) presentations and recent Saskatchewan Centennial concerts. The evolution of dance adds to the under-researched history of the development of the arts, and dance in particular, in Saskatchewan. It has highlighted some effects that key arts developments, such as the Fort San arts camps, have had on the development of the arts in the province. As well, the geography of the province has had a profound effect on the development of the arts in the province, which is reflected in the difficulties that Ukrainian dance troupes faced when trying to plan joint practices and performances. Despite the challenges of distance, however, dance spread across the province, as instructors from the 1920s on traveled to teach.

This thesis is innovative for applying gender analysis to examine the changes in dance roles and costumes. Both male and female dances have become more athletic in the postwar years. While more work remains in examining the changes to male identity and masculinity, this thesis has laid some groundwork through its analysis of Cossack imagery, which has defined male roles since the 1920s. For women, the increase in athleticism has meant corresponding changes in costuming, as well as the introduction of new, more spectacular movements to compete with the men. This development has led to a corresponding decrease in prestige for more traditional women's roles. The changes

to female roles may have been related to the increase in female dance leadership in the postwar period. It is possibly due to these women's interest in choreographing more complex dances that female roles changed so considerably. While the artistry of the dances has increased, emphasizing grace and ballet-like technique, the dancers and choreographers seem less interested in more delicate, supportive roles from the earlier ethnic dance years. The female dancers are not content to be wallflowers clapping to support the male athletes.

This research is also unique for the inclusion of oral interviews, as well as a variety of archival records. Archival records were accessed at Library and Archives Canada, DanceSaskatchewan—an underutilized provincial resource—and the Saskatchewan Archives Board. This research uncovered key leaders who had directed the development of dance in the province. The archival records left by Avramenko, Pihuliak, and Grekul addressed the early activities while five separate oral interviews with more recent leaders provided further information on and perceptions about the development of dance in the province. Pavlychenko, Zerebecky, Piasta, Drebot, and Lapchuck are well-known names within the dance and Ukrainian communities. These male and female leaders established or re-established dance schools throughout the province, not just in the largest centres. While the collection of interviews is small, it is comprehensive and inclusive, as it includes representatives from the political and artistic factions.

By utilizing a wide variety of sources, this thesis has accessed the multiplicity of experiences of Ukrainian Canadians who were involved in Ukrainian dance, adding a new layer of analysis to earlier academic work on Ukrainian dance. Most Ukrainian dance studies have focused solely on choreography, or apply an anthropological approach to study developments of dance. Much of this work, such as Nahachewsky's theories about the stages of dance development, has been reinforced by this study. As well, it begins to address the general academic neglect of the history of Ukrainian Canadian culture in Saskatchewan, as much ethnological interest has focused on northeastern Alberta. This thesis has applied several theories about ethnic identity formation to explore issues of authenticity and immigrant societies. As such, it speaks to

broad academic issues surrounding the interaction of multiple generations of migrants, the interaction between gender and ethnic identity, and the mutual influence that politics, such as multicultural policy, and art may have on each other.

There are further issues surrounding the history of Ukrainian dance in Saskatchewan and Canada that remain to be explored. A sociological study examining why people participate in Ukrainian dance could shed more light on the personal motivation of the dancers. It would also be fruitful to look further into other aspects of Ukrainian identity in Saskatchewan. The development of some areas, particularly Ukrainian education, are unique to Saskatchewan as education is controlled provincially. Further research is also necessary into the history of Ukrainians within the province, since so many prominent Ukrainian organizations were founded here. As well, ethnographic studies could explore a wide variety of issues such as the development of folk crafts and culture, the tie between Ukrainian cuisine and identity in the province, and how rural depopulation is affecting Ukrainian Canadian communities, such as around the Yorkton-Canora area. Another aspect of Saskatchewan history which could be explored would be comparisons with the history and development of other ethnic dance forms in Saskatchewan. The creation of multicultural festivals such as Mosaic and Folkfest and a variety of concerts held as early as the turn of the twentieth century, invite a comprehensive, comparative study of all ethnic dance groups in the province. It could be illuminating to expose parallels in development and to analyze the influence broader political or artistic movements may have had on the development of all ethnic dances.

Ukrainian dance has sanctioned specific personal and group identities as a response to the move from lived culture due to the assimilation of Ukrainians. These identities have changed significantly over the years, adjusting to pressures from within the Ukrainian community and from the broader Saskatchewan and Canadian communities. As dance became more open and accepting of non-Ukrainians as dancers and audiences, it challenged Ukrainian Canadian identity while becoming increasingly ingrained in a broader Saskatchewan identity.

Within both Ukrainian Canadian and Canadian society, the role and importance of Ukrainian dance has been heavily contested. Some dance leaders have tried to utilize

dance to deliver political messages, which is why the soldier dances have been banned by a Folkfest pavilion. However, the belief that dance is a vehicle to maintain Ukrainian heritage is far more prevalent among the audience, dancers, and the leaders, from Avramenko on. There is, however, a great deal of debate surrounding why Ukrainian heritage needs to be preserved and maintained. For the nationalists, a pure Ukrainian culture needed to be saved in Canada, in contrast to the Russified and Sovietized culture developing in Ukraine. For the progressives, Ukrainian culture could help spread the social revolution, while entertaining the workers. With the rise in availability of non-ethnic activities for Ukrainian Canadians, as well as the loss of ethnically-specific skills, consumable culture has become essential for maintaining interest in Ukrainianness for Ukrainian Canadians at large.

This thesis has explored how Ukrainian dance, a popular form of Ukrainian folk art in Saskatchewan, has been influenced by several waves of immigration, artistic and political developments in Canadian society. Changes to dance have been directed by many individuals and organizations, sparking internal debates over the appropriate uses of and changes to dance. Despite the many changes to the dances, the dancers, and the performances throughout the years, however, one aspect is consistent: when Ukrainian dancers take to the stage, the performance is more than just a dance.

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