

OLD BELIEVERS

SONGS OF THE NEKRASOV COSSACKS



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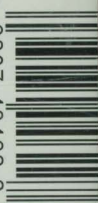
OLD BELIEVERS SONGS OF THE NEKRASOV COSSACKS

Compiled, and annotated by Margarita Mazo with the assistance of Olga Velichkina

This is the first recording of the a capella singing of the Nekrasovtsy Cossacks to appear outside Russia. Like the famous Bulgarian Women's Choir, Old Believers' music has a multi-voiced texture, with intense and rich women's voices. Includes lyric songs, ballads, wedding songs, sacred music, and laments. Digitally recorded in 1989 and 1990 in Russia, extensive liner notes complement the recordings. *Produced in association with "Russian Roots; American Branches: Music in Two Worlds" at the 1995 Smithsonian Festival of American Folklife.*

- 1 **Po seniam, seniam** (Along the passageway) 2:15 2 **Shelkovaia v pole travushka** (The silken grass in the field) 1:50 3 **Chto pri vyshnem bylo pri vysokom** (Near a high mound) 3:06 4 **Soloveikia moi** (My nightingale) 2:59 5 **Khoromy moi, khoromushki** (The mansion, my mansion) 3:54 6 **Oi, tuman, tuman** (The fog) 2:50 7 **I krestnushka ty nasha** (Oh, our godmother) 7:46 8 **I matushka moia** (Oh, mother of mine) 3:30 9 **Ne iz sadu** (Not from a garden) 2:29 10 **Vo Vilone, vilone slavnom gorode** (In the city of Babylon) 2:55 11 **Kak poshel zhe nash tsar Konstantin ko zautrene** (As our czar Constantine went to morning prayer) 1:38 12 **Potop strashen podymalsia** (The fearful flood was rising) 1:38 13 **Kak u kniazia u kniazia nashego Vladimira** (At the Duke's, at our Vladimir's) 2:32 14 **Ne za rovniushku** (Not for an equal one) 2:51 15 **U nashego svata** (At our svat's) 2:11 16 **Khozhu ia khozhu po zelenoi travke** (I am walking on the green grass) 1:25 17 **Oi da tam na gorochke** (There, on the mountain) 2:17 18 **Potianite vy, vetry sil'nye** (You, strong winds, blow) 2:39 19 **At the plastering of a new house** 4:40 20 **Ei, ty zimushka** (Oh you winter) 1:56 21 **Zharna-zharna zharnitsa** (Dawn, Dawn) 0:27 22 **Voh voh yarma da mashchala** (Turkish Song) 1:38 23 **Tuku-tuku mak** (Pounding poppyseeds) 2:18 24 **Zagoralasia kovyl' travushka** (The feather-grass caught fire) 3:12 25 **Volkhvy Persidskie Tsari** (The Magi, the Persian kings) 3:00 26 **V chernem more** (In a black sea) 3:14

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Produced in association with "Russian Roots; American Branches: Music in Two Worlds" at the 1995
Smithsonian Festival of American Folklife

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(Along the passageway) 2:15
Choir from the village of Kumskaia Dolina
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(The silken grass in the field) 1:50
Elena Gulina and Anastasia Nikulushkina
- 3 **Chto pri vyshnem bylo pri vysokom**
(Near a high mound) 3:06
Evlantii Banderovsky (zapevala), Mefodii Banderovsky and Vasilii Popov
- 4 **Soloveikia moi** (My nightingale) 2:59
Anastasia Nikulushkina
- 5 **Khoromy moi, khoromushki**
(The mansion, my mansion) 3:54
Anna Ramzaeva (zapevala), Seraphima Babaeva, and Ekaterina Sanicheva
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Elena Gulina, Anastasia Nikulushkina, Varvara Gorina
- 7 **I krestnushka ty nasha**
(Oh, our godmother) 7:46
Maria Elesiutikova and Anna Ramzaeva
- 8 **I matushka moia**
(Oh, mother of mine) 3:30
Anastasia Nikulushkina, Elena Gulina, Varvara Gorina
- 9 **Ne iz sadu** (Not from a garden) 2:29
Ivan Banderovsky
- 10 **Vo Vilone, vilone slavnom gorode**
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Women's group from the village of Novokumskaia. Zapevala Anastasia Pushechkina
- 11 **Kak poshel zhe nash tsar Konstantin ko zautrene** (As our czar Constantine went to morning prayer) 1:38
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(The fearful flood was rising) 1:38
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HISTORY. MEMORY. SONG: VOICES OF THE NEKRASOV COSSACKS

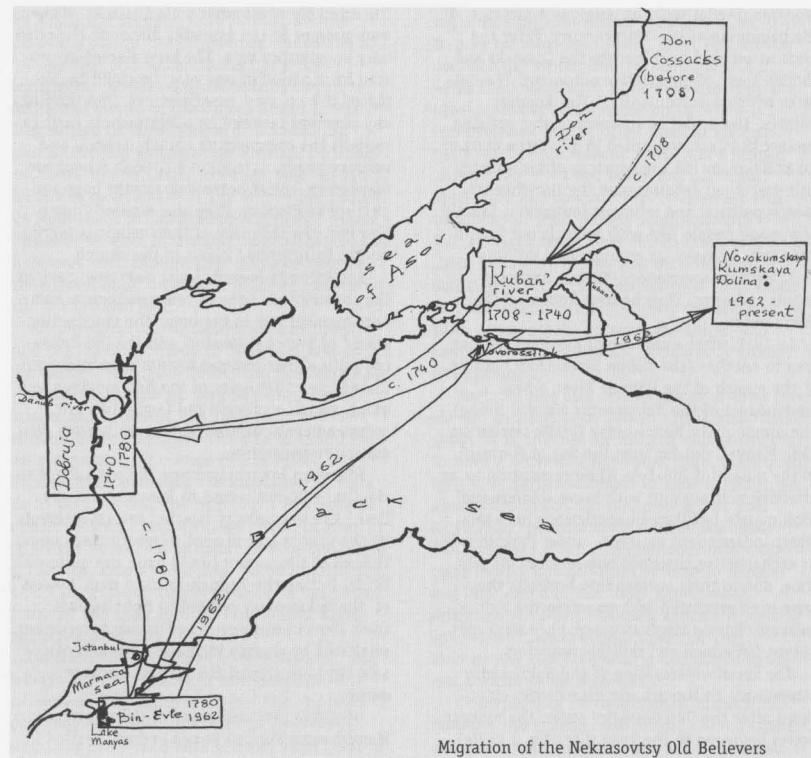
Introduction to the Recording
by Margarita Mazo and Olga Velichkina

The Russian singers presented on this album identify themselves as Cossacks, as the *Nekrasovtsy*, after the name of their 18th-century leader Ignat Nekrasov, and as Old Believers, for the specific religious practice they subscribe to. Each designation is an important component of the identity they have carefully guarded wherever they lived during two and a half centuries of voluntary exile from Russia. They are proud they have been able to preserve their faith and cultural legacy. They kept the language, traditional dress, legends, tales, and, certainly, their songs, many of which had been long forgotten in Russia. After returning to Russia in 1962, the Nekrasovtsy way of life changed. They had to adjust themselves to the new socialist order. They realized that keeping their three-part identity intact while living among fellow Russians is just as difficult as it was in exile, among "strangers."

Since this is the first public appearance of the Nekrasovtsy's music outside Russia, we selected excerpts from their repertoire that will acquaint the listener with the wealth and diversity of their musical heritage. One Nekrasovtsy song can last up to twenty minutes so this precludes a full presentation of each song in this album. The commentary provides a summary of the lyrics of each song in its entirety.

During the 17th century, the Russian empire went through enormous religious and social changes culminating with the 1650s reform of the Russian Orthodox Church by Patriarch Nikon and later, around the turn of the century, the secular reforms made by Peter the Great. These reforms aimed to modernize, unify, and westernize the Russian Church and the entire way of life. Patriarch Nikon's religious reform precipitated numerous factions and dissent movements. The largest group of dissenters called themselves *Starovery*, the Old Believers. They felt that the reforms undermined the true faith, and took it upon themselves to maintain all pre-Nikonian Orthodox practices intact. The old order of life, particularly in Russian villages, did not compartmentalize life and faith the way contemporary city-dwellers do. Thus the Old Believers' not only perpetuated religious concepts and rites but also the old way of living, including the relations between the individual and the community, family structure, rituals, customs, dietary practices and, certainly, the language and songs. Conscientious traditionalism has defined the Old Believers world view since the mid-17th century.

The Nekrasovtsy are descendants of those Old Believers who were part of Don Cossacks communities (the Don Cossacks were peasant military in the steppes along the Don River). The Cossacks were independent settlers paid by the government to protect the southern borders of Russia. They welcomed many who fled from Central Russia, whether runaway soldiers, bankrupt



Migration of the Nekrasovtsy Old Believers

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peasants, feudal serfs, or religious dissenters. At the beginning of the 18th century, Peter the Great attempted to subjugate the Cossacks and abolish their administrative autonomy. The Cossacks resisted undauntedly. After Kondrat Bulavin, the leader of an unsuccessful uprising against the Czar, was killed in 1708, the ataman Ignat Nekrasov led the Cossacks of his military unit and their families over the Don River to escape political and religious repression. Exactly how many people fled with Ignat is not known. They left, however, as an organized military unit, with its commander, banner, treasury, horses and arms. They became known as the Nekrasovtsy.

In 1812, after a century of moving from one area to another (the Kuban River, then Dobruja, at the mouth of the Danube River, where descendants of the Nekrasovtsy are still living), one group of the Nekrasovtsy finally settled on Lake Manyas, not far from the Sea of Marmara, in the village of Bin-Evle. Their reputation as an effective military unit with brave soldiers and high morale facilitated negotiations for a relatively independent existence under Turkish rule in exchange for their military services. At one time, due to their outstanding honesty, they were even entrusted with guarding the Sultan's treasure. During times of peace, they were competent fishermen and skillful navigators.

The social organization of the Nekrasovtsy community on Manyas was democratic, structured after the Don Cossacks' order: the highest power belonged to the krug (literally, a circle),

the assembly of all adult male Cossacks. Women were present at the assembly although they had only an advisory vote. The krug elected an ataman for a period of one year; he could be displaced if he proved unsatisfactory. One-third of any payment received by a Nekrasovets went to support the community's church, school, and military needs. Attending a Turkish school was mandatory, but at home Nekrasovtsy boys and girls spoke Russian. They also studied Church Slavonic, the language of their religious service, taught by respected elders of the church.

According to legend, Ignat Nekrasov, devised the community's code or commandments. First, each member was to preserve "the two guiding stars," of personal freedom and the Old Believers' faith. Other commandments supposedly regulated the entire order of the Nekrasovtsy's religious, social, economic and family life. The commandments were passed on orally from generation to generation.

Following Ignat's directive "Do not submit to the Czar—Do not return to Russia under any Czar," the Nekrasovtsy rejected several attempts by the Czarist government to return them home, though at times their life in exile was quite difficult. During the Turkish-Russian wars, however, the Nekrasovtsy refused to fight against their own countrymen. The Turkish government retaliated by sharply increasing taxes; it also sold the land around the lake to a private owner.

In 1912–1913 one group of Nekrasovtsy from Manyas came back to Russia and was settled in

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the Krasnodar steppes. Only in 1962 did the remaining part of the community, consisting of 215 families, also return to Russia. A few Nekrasovtsy families did not want to return to Russia and moved to the United States instead. They settled in various parts of the country, some in Oregon, among other Russian Old Believers. Those who returned to Russia were settled by the Soviet government at the foot of the Caucasus Mountains, in the Stavropol steppes, where they were to work in the state vineyards. They do their work well, though they still love fishing (they travel quite a distance to do it), and fish still is a favorite food.

All the songs on this album were recorded from the Stavropol group in 1989 and 1990 in two villages, Kumskaia Dolina and Novokumskaia.

Visual aesthetics are very important for all Russian Old Believers, and their hand-written religious books, lavishly decorated in bright colors, represent their culture in a symbolic way. Radiant colors permeate the Nekrasovtsy's daily life as well. An outsider who sees a Nekrasovtsy woman walking along a village street, or who enters her house will be astonished by the bright and shining colors of clothes, wall decorations, rugs. They express the people's joyful, outgoing character and their love for fast dances, drinking, and a good joke.

Unlike other Old Believers' communities, the Nekrasovtsy have chosen to communicate with the surrounding cultures. In Bin-Evle, we were told, they lived with the Turks as good neighbors. They often held festive meals together; dur-

ing a drought, sometimes the Turks asked them to pray for rain. Even today, older Nekrasovtsy occasionally switch into Turkish, particularly when they don't want to be understood by the others. Sitting cross-legged on the floor is inconceivable among other Russian villagers, particularly for a woman. Here, it is a normal posture that does not invite any comment. Spicy food and special sweet cookies are also reminders of their former neighbors. The Nekrasovtsy's traditional outfits (they still wear them to Sunday liturgy and on other festive occasions) carry visible evidence of their multicultural intermingling: brightly colored Turkish silks, coins, ornate buttons, sea shells, and uncommon for traditional costumes in Russia, live flowers.

Their singing also reveals traces of their travels and contacts with Balkan, Greek and Turkish songs. It is unusual for Russian village singing to have a tense and somewhat nasal voice quality (particularly noticeable in male singing), an abundance of melodic ornamentations and, most of all, peculiar timbral embellishments. The latter are short glissando outbursts that glide swiftly upward into the falsetto register and end with a glottal stop. Experienced Nekrasovtsy singers skillfully adorn the melody with these timbral embellishments. The Nekrasovtsy still love to sing and dance to several Turkish songs (track 22).

Underpinning this apparently mixed style, however, are several hundred old church chants and folk songs that are preserved by the com-

munity as a legacy of the old Russian culture. It is amazing how much of this heritage they have kept while living in foreign ethnic and cultural environments for over two and a half centuries. Despite the Nekrasovtsy's acquisition of cultural elements from different neighbors, their secular repertoire contains all categories of traditional Russian songs, fairy tales, narratives, and other genres of folklore that are known to have existed among the Don Cossacks. Some of them long forgotten by other groups, have been preserved only by the Nekrasovtsy.

The Nekrasovtsy sing their songs *a cappella*, mostly using heterophonic texture. This is a multi-voice texture that consists of one general melody rendered differently by each performer and thus presented in simultaneous variations. In contrast to other South-Russian traditions, elaborate part-singing with a clear functional separation of voices (as, for example, the bass, middle voice and prominent descant characteristic of Don Cossack singing) are rare among the Nekrasovtsy. The women's voices are especially rich; they sing in a plain and intense manner, using the chest register.

Full sound characterizes large-group Nekrasovtsy performances, particularly outdoors or during community events, when everyone participates. Another favorite way of singing is by a small group of performers who are used to singing together. We also met some exceptional solo singers. All three performing styles are represented on this album.

The majority of Nekrasovtsy songs have a

strophic structure. Each stanza, as everywhere else in Russia, begins with a solo *zapev*, a melodic opening sung by a soloist, *zapevala*, who usually leads the song to the end. Some songs "go to the roof," as performers say; both the general pitch level and the volume gradually rise. Expert leaders begin these songs in a lower register and softer sound, allowing the song to fire up.

Like other Old Believers, the Nekrasovtsy preserved pre-Nikonian forms of Russian **liturgical singing** (tracks 25, 26). They still use the oldest chants, the *znamennyi*, notated in manuscript books by Russian medieval notation, the *kriuki*. The Nekrasovtsy have maintained this rare art continuously through centuries, although their way of singing the chants was probably gradually modified. Traditionally, Orthodox liturgical singing has been a part of written tradition, and church singers were trained to sing from the *kriuki*. Currently, however, the Nekrasovtsy have no formally trained singers, and chant melodies are transmitted only orally. Unlike folk songs, also transmitted orally, the chant melodies have to be memorized in a more exacting way, leaving much less room for improvisation. While singing, church singers always hold a manuscript book with the *kriuki* notations, but they only look at the words.

Old Orthodox singing is based on the Byzantine system of melodic modes or tones, called *glas*y (pl.; sing. - glas). Each glas is distinguished by the placement of its final note and also by characteristic melodic gestures. The

annual Orthodox service is divided into eight-week cycles, and most chants sung during one week use the same *glas*. Accordingly, there are eight *glas*y in the Orthodox modal system. To maintain the yearly service, church singers memorize several hundred melodies, some very complex and elaborate. Singing is done in unison, and only men are allowed to sing during worship.

For the Nekrasovtsy, history is not a distant past recorded and stored on bookshelves; history continuously lives in the present, through the experience of each generation. As a living memory, history is passed from one generation to another through legends, stories, and in songs—all indispensable in the Nekrasovtsy's daily life.

Ignat Nekrasov is the hero of many favorite songs called *Ignatovy*, or Ignat's songs (track 17). Many historical songs have become part of weddings and other family rituals, or have integrated with seasonal work and other community events or festivals (tracks 3, 17). In songs, with the passage of time, actual events and people, idealized and mythologized in oral traditions become inseparable from legends and tales. Often a historical song departs from an event or a real person to complete a story in its own way. Other songs, those called *pod Ignata* (songs after Ignat), do not mention specific historical events directly; their connections with the Nekrasovtsy's history and Ignat's personality are metaphorical (tracks 9, 24).

With the *Ignatovy* and *pod Ignata* songs, his-

toric figures, events and the past in its entirety are the most cherished guests at any festive gathering; thus the bond between past and present is powerfully perpetuated.

Like Ignat in the *Ignatovy* songs, other characters of the past are perceived as real people, good neighbors or friends. For example, the ruler of 9th-century *Kievan Rus'* Prince Vladimir lives into the present through an episode from a celebrated epic, the so-called *bylina*, performed at every wedding (track 13). The Nekrasovtsy, like other Cossacks living in Southern Russia, sing their *byliny* as choral songs in a strophic form, with long and elaborate melodies and short texts. The texts consist of only one or two episodes from a long narrative (tracks 10, 13). This is in contrast to the long texts of North-Russian *byliny*, narrated by a solo performer who builds his melody from repetitions of short declamation-like phrases.

Sometimes, an ancient story about a single mythological character becomes the basis for songs of different genres. The Evil Serpent, a being who rules over water, clouds and storms, is a character of a *bylina*, *Vo Vilone* (track 10), and also of a *dukhovnyi stikh* (a spiritual verse), *Kak poshel zhe nash tsar Konstantin* (track 11). In the latter, the story about the Flying Serpent, pre-Christian in origin, is entwined with a long narrative about the Byzantine Saint Theodore Tyron, his life and struggle for true Christian faith. This *stikh* is a rare treasure. As far as we know, it has not survived anywhere else in Russia. Russian spiritual verses are usu-

ally based on stories from the Bible and Apocrypha, although the characters act and speak like personages from *byliny*, folk tales, or songs. Here, the Byzantine Saint acquires the Russian name Fiodor Tyrinin, and he also summons the forces of nature in a way similar to folk songs and charms: You strong winds, blow/You stormy clouds, throng/You strong rains, pour/Wet the wings of the Serpent/You, the Serpent,/Become not the Flying One/But the Crawling One. Their melodies, as well, are often similar to folk songs.

Although the subject matter in spiritual verses is always religious in nature, they are actually secular songs, which are never performed within the church. During Lent, however, when singing secular songs at home is prohibited by the church, spiritual verses are permitted. Among the Nekrasovtsy, spiritual verses belong to the family's private life; quite often, families are unaware of how their neighbors sing the same *stikh*. It is not surprising, then, that different melodic versions of the same *stikh* are recorded from the Nekrasovtsy. Often, spiritual verses incorporate later melodic styles (track 12).

Keening, or the lamenting by female relatives of the deceased, is an indispensable part of Nekrasovtsy funeral and remembrance rituals. Unlike some other Russian traditions, the Nekrasovtsy do not hire professional lamenters: "If you are not a relative, tears would not come," they say. Women usually listen to a lament carefully and later discuss it in great

detail. The quality of the lament is important for them. We were told that an older woman, concerned about the quality of keening at her own funeral, would sometimes ask her younger sister or other relative "to show how you will lament for me when I die."

At some moments of the ritual mourning, several women lament simultaneously (tracks 7,8). Both examples of keening in this album were recorded outside the context of actual ritual. At first, the performers did not want to lament for the recording, and only when they were encouraged to recreate ritualistic moments in remembrance of a deceased relative did they agree. The "roles" of the deceased's relatives were carefully chosen and discussed before the women began to lament, to ensure a close semblance to an actual situation. Though their lament began somewhat reserved, as the women gradually became absorbed and involved emotionally, memories seized them entirely, and they cried.

Each excerpt resembles a sort of a free musical canon. The voices repeat the same melodic pattern (predetermined by the local tradition), often even at the same pitch level. Yet, each participant improvises, creating a unique rendition of the pattern. The verbal content is structured in a similar manner: each lamenter improvises the text, although it is based on traditional structures and poetic formulas. Each excerpt is a dialogue of laments; the partners talk simultaneously, each expressing herself and each being inspired by the other. At the same

time, each participant obeys the requirements of the local tradition.

For various reasons, simultaneous keening by several lamenters has rarely been recorded in the field, and, perhaps never included on an album. The two excerpts here illustrate that this little-known traditional form contains a variety of expressions. The lament by two women *I krestnushka ty nasha* (track 7) strikes the listener as an open expression of grief. Emotions rise high, and often—on the verge of tears, a lamenter is unable to complete her line. The breathing is loud: voiced inhalations, gasps, sobs, a soft whine and nasal tone all identify the lamenting of both women with crying and wailing. In contrast to this excerpt, three women in the next lament, *I matushka moia* (track 8), are able to sustain a reserved and restrained mood for a long time. They lament with great confidence. While lamenting, they claim they do not listen to each other but lament independently. Yet, in fact, they create a coherent aural whole: the overall sonority is like a sphere filled with sound. The inside of this sonorous sphere vibrates and is continuously transfigured. Constant and almost imperceptible changes within each melodic line support this impression of infinite change and sound vibration within the sphere.

The wedding ceremony in Russian villages is usually long and elaborate. A Nekrasovtsy wedding lasts three days and three nights. Ritual episodes take place simultaneously or in turns

at the bride's and the groom's residences creating a ritual continuum between the two houses or, metaphorically, between two branches of kin. The notion of a road as a path between them is very important in the ceremony: various processions of relatives, friends of the bride and groom, a special messenger, the *vestnik*, all circulate between the two houses at certain moments of the ritual. The wedding ritual is a rite of passage, its ritual elements provide a proper transition for the bride and groom from one state of social and personal existence into another.

It is essential for a bride, her mother and sister, her godmother and other female relatives to lament. This demonstrates their unwillingness to "give up" her family and girlhood. Similar to lamenting during funeral rituals, two or even three wedding laments can sound simultaneously. In addition, the wedding ritual calls for laments to be performed simultaneously with a special wedding song sung by female participants from the bride's side (track 14 part 1). Several melodic layers, each with different words, in a different character and even tempo, appear simultaneously, creating a complex sonority and a powerful whole. When this occurs, the sound of the bride's lament is "hidden" by the laments of her relatives and by the loud choral song. The singers and other lamenters symbolically "protect" the bride by standing around her in a tight circle. The bride sits within the circle surrounded by relatives who join her in turn. One at time, they make

their way inside the circle and sit very close to the bride, often hugging her or touching her shoulders.

The melodic phrases of wedding laments are usually shorter than in funeral laments; they are also considered by the performers to be lighter in mood, with less anguish and sadness. At a certain point, the *muzychka* (harmonica, the only musical instrument used by the Nekrasovtsy) and the shouts of older women, "Enough, enough! Stop it!" signal to the singers and the lamenters to stop and turn the tears into joyful dances accompanied by clapping and blithe shouts (track 14 part 2).

During our recording session, the women continued to lament for a while and stopped unwillingly even after being interrupted by the harmonica. While recreating the situation, each woman remembered her youth and her wedding long ago in Turkey. They spoke with nostalgia about the time when each bride and the bridesmaids were required to lament. We were told they even had to practice lamenting before the wedding ritual. Now brides do not lament, although the bride's elder relatives sometimes do.

Other songs of the wedding ceremony are more cheerful. There are special greeting songs with which the bride's and groom's sides address each other during the ritual; these songs are only performed at weddings. Special teasing songs often mock the best man and the bride's brother (track 15).

The wedding ritual became a repository for

many traditional performances, including *byliny*, historical, lyric, and dance songs (although they can be sung outside the ritual as well). The wedding marks a communal event for the families of the young couple and also the entire community. While the Nekrasovtsy lived in exile, the ritual was particularly important for the well-being of the brotherhood. Nekrasov's commandments forbade marriages to "other faiths," and while the community was in Turkey, we were told, this commandment was never broken. Sometimes a young wife would come from another group of Old Believers, but eventually it became almost impossible to find a spouse who was not a close relative. That was one of the reasons for the Nekrasovtsy's return to Russia. After their return, however, mixed marriages happened often and older women complain "now our daughters marry Georgians and Armenians. Our children prefer to live in big cities, in Stavropol, but not to stay with their parents. They are educated professionals and have a good job in the city. They enjoy the company of others, not of their parents..." The community is gradually losing its ethnic and cultural homogeneity and close family ties. The older Nekrasovtsy are not happy about this situation but they understand the natural course of life and no longer forbid their children to marry outsiders.

As in other Russian folk traditions, the most sizeable group of the Nekrasovtsy repertoire consists of the so-called **lyric songs** and **ballads** (tracks 2,4,5,20). Nekrasovtsy sing them "any-

time and everywhere; at night when we worked on fetching straw, at youth gathering (*na besiodakh*), at any party, or whenever one feels like it." They often call these songs *besiodnye* (from *beseda*, conversation in modern Russian, but used in many rural traditions to identify youth gatherings). Not tied to any particular season or communal event, they are loved for their emotional expression. Certain images and metaphors, characteristic of Russian lyric songs in general, became particularly expressive and highly charged for the Nekrasovtsy. For example: a marriage to the river is a metaphor for death, while crossing over the river symbolizes passage through a crucial moment of life. Images of the road, or even a direct appeal to the road as one would address a close friend, commemorate the Nekrasovtsy's historical past.

No matter how sad or even tragic the content of an old lyric song is, its general tone is contemplative, and personal distress is never shown openly (tracks 2,4,5). Songs that tell a personal story in an impersonal and non-subjective fashion have been characteristic of village traditions all over Russia, but have not survived everywhere. The Nekrasovtsy have preserved hundreds of such songs.

The Nekrasovtsy also know and love songs in newer modes of expression. While on Manyas they were not totally cut off from their homeland. Messengers to and from the Cossacks, as well as contacts necessary to maintain the legitimacy of local churches, never stopped. The Nekrasovtsy accepted soldiers, peasants and Cos-

sacks who ran away from the mainland. There were also some ongoing contacts with Russian soldiers and seamen. Later, they were eager to obtain books, records, films, and all available information or news from Russia. Through these many channels, news of current events in their homeland reached them. The Nekrasovtsy were always interested in songs that revealed new tastes and the latest happenings in Russia. They learned songs about Napoleon's war in Russia; the late 19th-century romances and urban songs were (and still are) also much loved among the Nekrasovtsy. Their curiosity and musical sensitivity has not been lost since their return to Russia. They have accepted many contemporary Russian and Ukrainian songs and enjoy singing them, along with older songs, "anytime and everywhere."

Once the singers invited us to visit them while they gathered for a communal work party; they were working on plastering the new house. Traditionally, plastering is a "women's job," and five older women, all relatives, were doing it, while the young master of the house was running around, chatting with his friends and bringing in buckets of water and materials to make plaster. Singing was just one element of this dynamic occasion. Conversations, anecdotes, local news and rumors, jokes, laughter, commentaries on the lyrics of songs, job-related exchanges, and also noises of the work itself (slaps of plaster, stirring it, smoothing it out on the wall), formed a rich mixture of sounds. The voices, intensified by the empty space, were

rolling around; they were clear and loud. Not a single song was sung from beginning to end. Instead, song fragments alternated freely. Prompted by the whole situation, by the topic of an immediate conversation, by a certain turn of a phrase or even a word, and by the progress of the work, songs kept interrupting and replacing one another (track 19).

Seasonal songs are not numerous in the Nekrasovtsy tradition. Many of them are performed in a *krylo* (literally, a wing), a special springtime festivity that is called *khoro vod* in other regions of Russia (usually translated as a round or circle dance). *Krylo* marks the arrival of spring; the communal celebration involves hundreds of villagers, all dressed in their festive costumes. *Krylo* consists mainly of processions and dances to *krylovye* songs; the latter include both slow procession-like and fast dance songs (tracks 1, 6, 16–18). Guided by a leader, the participants move in a huge circle or a chain, split into small circles and form other dance figures. No musical instruments are used, and no special singers are invited; the dancers sing themselves. *Krylo* should be performed outside the village, in an open field.

To celebrate the first spring after their return from Turkey, the Nekrasovtsy gathered at the outskirts of the village for the traditional *krylo*, but they were mocked by other villagers for their outmoded “ridiculous” costumes, dances and singing. Once was enough: they broke off the ritual and never tried to perform it again. They still remember and love the

krylovye songs and dance to them at parties; they occasionally perform the *krylo* for visiting ethnomusicologists and film producers, but not for themselves.

Nekrasovtsy women told us that they learned their songs when they were young girls living in Turkey. Then, they said, almost any daily activity was accompanied by singing. Whenever women gathered for domestic or communal work (for example, to shell and sort beans or to gather and fetch straw), or for festive gatherings, the girls heard women’s singing. There were also special children’s songs such as lullabies and nursery rhymes, sung to amuse the children. The latter include *potes hki* (from *tes hit’*, to entertain) and *ne bylitsy* (from *ne byl’*, not true). They are fantasies, stories with purposely reversed images, in which up becomes down, in becomes out and a dream becomes reality. Although the content of such songs appears absurd, scholars suggest they may contain elements of archaic beliefs and magical incantations (tracks 21, 23).

At certain times of the year, children were also expected to perform special seasonal songs on village streets. During the seven weeks of Lent, for example, they gathered in groups and shouted songs like *Zharna zharna zharnitsa* (track 21). Often these songs appeal directly to the forces of nature in a manner characteristic of seasonal songs sung by older girls or young women in other parts of Russia.

While living in Turkey, Nekrasovtsy children,

we were told, knew much more about their historical past than boys and girls who were born after their return to Russia. An eight-year-old granddaughter of Anna Ramzaeva (one of the best singers in the community), lives with her parents in a city and spends her vacations in the village, with her grandmother. She has not yet learned a single Nekrasovtsy song. Will she be interested later on? Her grandmother has her doubts, though she hopes it will happen.

When the Nekrasovtsy returned to Russia thirty years ago, they went through some difficult experiences. They were ridiculed for their outmoded language, singing, customs and clothes. Their children were persecuted at school for wearing crosses and they had to fight for their right to perform religious ceremonies. In order to overcome the isolation from their fellow Russians, they considered giving up some of their cultural traditions to become “like everyone else.” Many of their children and grandchildren did just that. Today, however, the situation has changed significantly. With the new freedoms in the former Soviet Union, they can now practice their religion freely, and they are even respected for having been able to maintain their faith and identity. As the desire to search for one’s own roots increases in the former Soviet society, the Nekrasovtsy are gaining the admiration of their fellow villagers for the continuous preservation of their history through songs and other traditional forms. The scholarly attention to Nekrasovtsy culture has also played a role. What once separated and dif-

ferentiated the Nekrasovtsy from their neighbors is now acquiring a positive value, not only from their own point of view but in the eyes of outsiders as well. Perhaps the Nekrasovtsy’s conscious identity will once again stimulate the preservation and perpetuation of their unique traditions.

THE PERFORMERS

Anna Ramzaeva (b. 1935) is a true leader of the community's musical life (tracks 1, 5, 7, 13-14, 18-20, 22-24). She is mindful of the future of traditional singing and generously shares her knowledge of repertory and performing experience with younger singers. She is genuine, straightforward and witty. Her heart (and her house) is always open to anyone who seeks help, support or knowledge, whether the person is from her community or an ethnomusicologist whom she just met. She can not read or write in Russian, but her memory and her thirst for songs are tremendous. She loves performing on stage and she loves traveling to new places, particularly with the village chorus.

She can hardly be called beautiful, but she is wise, noble, and charming. Her personality is such that the villagers call her *czarina Anna*, queen Anna. She was married at fourteen and gave birth to thirteen children who now live all over Russia, from Stavropol to the Ural Mountains.

Anna's two older sisters, **Seraphima Babaeva** (b. 1914) and **Ekaterina Sanicheva** (b. 1922), live twenty miles away from her, in the village of Novokumskaia (tracks 5, 19, 24). Unlike Anna, they live a more secluded life. They say that traditional songs still live undisturbed in their memory and they continue singing the same way they did in Turkey. They know old songs that no one else remembers, and their versions of songs known to others are often

much more complete. Anna, who is considered to be the greatest authority on songs, often checks with them about a melody or the words of a song, and their opinion carries a lot of weight with her: "The sisters said so," and no further discussion is necessary.

Although it is physically difficult for the older sisters to sing, they have artistic control. They are so attuned to each other's voice and way of singing, that each knows exactly when the other will breathe, so the song proceeds uninterrupted. The life-long experience of singing together allows them extraordinary flexibility and freedom in their vocal interaction and a phenomenal subtlety in their individual interpretations.

Unlike the three sisters, **Anastasia Nikulushkina's** personality as a singer is best expressed in solo performance (b. 1935, tracks 2, 4, 6, 8, 10-11, 15-17). Her gift for melodic embellishment and rhythmic freedom takes her rendition of a song to the edge of what the tradition allows. Nikulushkina's mastery is undisputed among all the villagers, but her interpretations evoke heated discussions. She never joins in discussions about her singing and seems unconcerned about them. Nikulushkina herself is a quiet and humble woman, but once she starts singing, she is transformed. Her blue eyes are wide open and stare absently ahead without noticing anything around. She sits motionless and cross-legged like a stone figure, listening only to her own internal sound. Her voice is very soft and flexible, and she improvises so

much that other singers often feel confused; it is indeed difficult to sing with her. Those who have sung with her often and are willing to support her by complying with her guidance are rewarded by the feeling of participation in a truly musical experience.

Elena Gulina (b. 1950) is the daughter of a local priest (tracks 2, 6, 8, 10-11, 15-17, 19, 21). She is relatively young, but she has mastered the entire traditional repertory. She claims to remember a song (both melody and words), after listening to it only once. Gulina is also an outstanding storyteller and the owner of an exceptional collection of traditional outfits. Her memory is uniquely holistic, she vividly remembers her childhood on Lake Manyas and her youth in Russia. She is a fine solo singer; she is also indispensable in any group singing.

The cheerful personality and the artistic gifts of **Maria Elesiutikova** (b. 1936) allow her to play an important role among other Nekrasovtsy women (tracks 1, 13-14, 18, 20). She is witty and loves to joke about herself and others; many people fear her wisecracks. She uses many proverbs and jokes, and often speaks in rhymes; she has a funny or scary story for any occasion or is always ready to invent one. She is a natural entertainer and loves to perform before an audience.

Semion Milushkin (b. 1935) is loved and respected in the community for his ringing voice, unique memory, and rare knowledge of both liturgical chants and village songs (track 12, 25, 26). During the service, he usually leads

all the chants, even though most of the other church singers are much older than Milushkin. In singing both religious chants and secular songs, he likes to use ornamentation and different timbral qualities.

Other soloists and zapevala who appear on this recording include: **Maria Chizhikova** (b. 1936; tracks 1, 13, 18); **Ivan Banderovsky** (b. 1913; track 9); **Varvara Gorina** (b. 1938; track 6, 8, 16, 19).

Tracks 1, 14 and 18 feature a choir from the village of Kumskaia Dolina: Evlantii Banderovsky (born in 1943), Kirill Banderovsky (1936), Fekla Banderovskaia (1951), Mefodii Banderovsky (1949), Elena Banderovskaia (1942), Vasilii Popov (1948), Anna Ramzaeva (1935), Maria Elesiutikova (1936), Maria Chizhikova (1936), Seraphima Elesiutikova (1949), Anna Babaeva (1942), Anastasia Pronina (1938), Evdokia Babaeva (1948), Fekla Chizhikova (1948), Seraphima Banderovskaia (1938).

Track 10 features a group of women from the village of Novokumskaia: Elena Gulina (1950), Anna Chernyshova (1938), Stepanida Eluplina (1924), Domna Lebedkova (1937), Polina Pronina (1940), Anastasia Pushechkina (1945).

COMMENTARY

1 **Po seniam, seniam** (Along the passageway). A krylovaia song. A choir from the village of Kumskaia Dolina.

A young woman is walking along the new passageway of a house and wakes up her beloved. "Get up, your black horse has torn off its tether and trampled down your garden, your snowball tree, sweet raspberries, and black currants."

A krylovaia in a fairly quick tempo. The clear-cut structure, clapping, cheerful shouts, bouncing melody and rhythm are characteristic of krylovye songs.

2 **Shelkovaia v pole travushka** (The silken grass in the field). A besiodnaia song. Elena Gulina and Anastasia Nikulushkina.

The silken grass spread out in the field, my beloved was ready to leave, and he did not say goodbye. He was caught by a sea storm and sunk. I will go out on the steep bank and see my beloved. I will take his hand and say farewell to him, I will kiss his face. Oh, my mother, you did not want me to marry him, your heart felt that it would not last long.

Each singer in this duo is musically gifted in a unique way. Two voices delicately entwine, complementing each other harmonically; at the same time the singers always retain their own individual manner. A subtle interplay between the fundamental melody (Gulina) and its adorned rendition (Nikulushkina) marks their performance of this beautiful song.

3 **Chto pri vyshnem bylo pri vysokom** (Near a high mound). A song *pod Ignata*. Evlantiia Banderovsky (zapevala), Mefodii Banderovsky and Vasilii Popov.

Near a high mound, these were not nine dove-colored eagles who flew together from wide-open countries, but nine generals. They took a prisoner, a tenth general. They conquered the land and then cursed it: "Oh you damned land of Konya!"

Konya is a province in Turkey where a small colony of Nekrasovtsy migrants from Manyas settled in the mid-19th century. After several cruel epidemics of malaria, almost the entire colony perished; the survivors returned to Lake Manyas. In Nekrasovtsy memory, Konya remains a symbol of suffering.

The song is considered to be a men's song, and it is usually performed at weddings by the groom's party as their response to the ritual offering of wine by the bride's family. In spite of the festive occasion, the song is rather gloomy in its mood, especially in the version presented here, sung in a strict manner with little vocal embellishment. Unlike the previous duo, the voices stay close together, singing almost in unison.

4 **Soloveikia moi** (My nightingale). A besiodnaia song. Anastasia Nikulushkina.

Oh, my young nightingale with your high soft voice! Don't follow me and my poor fate. I was in a faraway land, I've lost my kin, my family, my mother. I found a grave in the field, on which I sit down and try to awake my parents.

This and the following songs are representative

of Nikulushkina's style saturated with melodic and timbral embellishments. The melodic density is high, as it moves through several up-and-down curves in the course of a relatively concise stanza. The compositional economy in the use of a wide vocal range and the smoothness of the melodic flow are masterful.

5 **Khoromy moi, khromushki** (The mansion, my mansion). Anna Ramzaeva (zapevala), Seraphima Babaeva, and Ekaterina Sanicheva.

Oh, my mansion, my high tower room! You have no master, no house keeper. Only my cruel mother-in-law is here. Oh, my sisters, my girlfriends, you go to sleep and I am waiting alone for my beloved. He came at daybreak, and the silver door chime tinkled making my heart tremble.

The heterophonic texture with frequent timbral embellishments (glissandi, glottal catches) are used here particularly economically and effectively. These embellishments are rendered by individual singers frequently but non-synchronously. The use of a phrygian second is one of the melody's distinctive features. The performers start singing modestly, in a reserved mood and soft voice, and gradually build up a mighty and all-powerful sonority.

6 **Oi, tuman, tuman** (The fog). A krylovaia song. Elena Gulina, Anastasia Nikulushkina, Varvara Gorina.

Oi, fog, fog, a fog with the bright beautiful sun hiding in it. As the cold dew fell down before the warm sun rose, a bitter melancholy came

down on my beloved and froze his heart. He is a major, he is the son of Pashin.

A clear cut structure combined with a constantly changing meter and syncopated rhythm contribute to the melody's charm and grace.

7 **I krestnushka ty nasha** (Oh, our godmother). A funeral lament. Maria Elesiutikova and Anna Ramzaeva.

Elesiutikova: Oh, my unfortunate godmother! You spoke so tenderly to everybody. I will never forget you. Your ill-fated daughter is now left with five small children, without your support and help.

Ramzaeva: Oh, my sorrowful mother! You have suffered so much; you have carried everything on your shoulders. You told me: "My dear daughter, don't cry over me, for you have very small children." Nobody will help me now, and nowhere can I lay down my poor head.

8 **I matushka moia** (Oh, mother of mine). A funeral lament. Anastasia Nikulushkina, Elena Gulina, Varvara Gorina.

Daughter: Oh, my beloved mother, my red little sun! [an idiomatic expression of endearment]. You, who cared for all of us, be with us for one more day. To whom will we now trust all our sorrows?...

Granddaughter: Oh, my dear grandmother, my beloved little sun! Where did the fire carry you off to? Your soul is flying so far and so high. You were our precious beloved guest. We will look for you everywhere and find you nowhere...

Niece: *Oh, my poor unfortunate aunt! No matter how hard your own life was, you never passed by without a word of sympathy; without asking about my life and my children. Now you will never come to me again...*

9 Ne iz sadu (Not from a garden). A *pod Ignata* song. Ivan Banderovsky.

Two brothers came to cross the Danube River; the younger brother crossed the river first, the older one had a misfortune and sank. He asked his brother to take home his farewell to the whole brotherhood, to his mother and father, and to his young wife. "Tell her that I married again and took the Mother River Danube as my wife."

Ivan Banderovsky is the oldest singer in the community (he was eighty at the time of the recording). In spite of his weak and hoarse voice, unsteady tempo, and breathing difficulties, his performance conveys a very personal, delicate, and contemplative interpretation of this well known song.

10 Vo Vilone, Vilone slavnom gorode (In the city of Babylon). A *bylina*. Women's group from the village of Novokumskaia. Zapevala Anastasia Pushechkina.

In the glorious city of Babylon, a huge Serpent appeared. It had twelve heads and seven trunks. It circled the whole town with its body and threatened the townsmen. In the blue sea a storm began; eagle fledglings perished in the nest. Their mother flew high in the sky and fell down to the earth, cursing her misfortune and

the Serpent.

Unlike *Kak u kniazia* (track 13), this *bylina* is not associated with a specific ritual. Sung by a small group of women, the performance focuses on the narration of a story. The melody, although complex in structure, is sung syllabically and follows ascending and descending inclinations of speech. The change from a major to a minor third in the second half of the melody distinguishes this song.

11 Kak poshel zhe nash tsar Konstantin ko zautrene (As our czar Constantine went to morning prayer). A *dukhovnyi stikh* (spiritual verse). Elena Gulina.

Fiodor Tyrinin (Theodore Tyron), an eight-year old boy, saves the Byzantine czar Constantine and his city from hordes of enemies. Led by the Mother of God, he fights against them alone and wins. Right after his victory, while a feast celebrating the victory proceeds, the Serpent flies in and kidnaps Fiodor's mother and horse. Fiodor summons the winds, clouds, and rains to soak the Serpent's wings. With their help, Fiodor conquers the Serpent and frees his mother; he then fights alone with an enormous army of enemies of the true Russian faith, and he wins. Only a fragment about the Flying Serpent from the middle of this *dukhovnyi stikh*, starting with *Kak vstrechali zhe liudi dobye Fiodor Tyrinina* (As good people fave met Fiodor Tyrinin), is included in this album.

"When we're doing some housework, and the children are sitting around, we tell them the

stikhi," said Elena Gulina. According to her, spiritual verses are spoken, not sung, and this explains the gentle, narration-like manner of her performance of this *stikh*. Her melodic inventiveness while repeating a short melodic pattern and her use of minute voice inflections are remarkable. This particular version of the *stikh* resembles a liturgical recitation and employs melodic gestures used in *glasy*.

12 Potop strashen podymalsia (The fearful flood was rising). A *dukhovnyi stikh* (spiritual verse). Semion Milushkin and Evlantii Banderovsky.

A version of a Biblical story about the Great Flood. Unlike the previous *dukhovnyi stikh*, the melody of *Potop strashen*, with its regular symmetrical phrases and melodic gestures outlining basic harmony, reveals features of a much later composition. It is particularly close to *psal'my* and *kanty*, a form that came from Europe via Poland and Ukraine and became extremely popular in 18th-century Russia.

13 Kak u kniazia u kniazia nashego Vladimira (At the Prince's, at our Vladimir's). A *bylina*. Choir from the village of Kumskaia Dolina, zapevala Maria Chizhikova.

During a feast at Vladimir's house, people were eating and drinking, cheering and bragging. Poor people bragged about their poverty, rich ones about their wealth; a powerful one bragged about his strength, a silly one about his silliness. Only Danilo bragged about his wife.

A fragment from a famous *bylina*, this song describes a feast at Prince Vladimir's. The Nekrasovtsy usually sing it at the end of the wedding feast, when relatives of the newlyweds divide a ritual *karavai*, a round loaf of homemade bread. Perhaps because of this wedding connection, or because of its relatively simple melody, even young people know this *bylina*. The massive and rich sound of a larger performing group and an unhurried and steady pulse are characteristic of many Nekrasovtsy songs and even some dances.

14 Ne za rovniushku (Not for an equal one). A wedding song with laments by the bride and her relatives. Choir from the village of Kumskaia Dolina, zapevala Maria Chizhikova.

Song: *A beautiful girl is given in marriage to a man who is not of the same age. He combs his curly hair in the evening and goes out of the house for the whole night, returning at day-break...*

Lament by mother: *Oh, my young daughter Mariushka, my baby, my green seed! No more will you walk in your spacious yard. I am giving you to someone else, to unknown people, to a stranger's family. Be obedient, my baby, respect all people, young and old, don't step in their way, and don't forget us either...*

Sister and aunt lament in approximately the same words: *Oh, my sister (my niece), you were the youngest among us and the most beloved, my little sister (niece) Mariushka! You are given to strange people, be tender, be obedient to them...*

Bride: *Oh, my dear mother, you taught me everything! You are giving me to a big, unknown family. How will I visit you, it is so far from here! Oh, my sister, dear sister! I'm leaving you, how shall I say farewell to you, how shall I forget you? I'm leaving to go very far away...*

Only the first stanza of the song is presented on track 14, part 1. Track 14, part 2, taken from the end of the same episode, starts with the sound of harmonica that marks a transition of laments into a dance.

15 *U nashego svata* (At our *svat*'s. Russian *svat* has several meanings: the best man, a male matchmaker, and also a male relative in marriage). A wedding mocking song. Elena Gulina and Anastasia Nikulushkina.

The house of our svat is open, and everything is in disorder. You, bride's brother, sold your sister so cheap. You were lazy, and in your idleness you let your sister slip away.

This song is performed by the bride's girlfriends when her brother "sells her braid" to the best man. The text contains old Russian words, as well as Turkish words that acquired Russian grammatical forms.

16 *Khozhu ia khozhu po zelenoi travke* (I am walking on the green grass). A *krylovaia* song. Elena Gulina, Anastasia Nikulushkina, Varvara Gorina.

I am walking on the green grass, I saddle a horse for my darling. "Don't leave me alone, stay with me even for one night." "I would, but I am

afraid to wake up too late and miss my comrades' drums and music."

Performed by a trio of expert singers, the melody flows uninterrupted, without even pausing at the end of a stanza; it is sung to a faster dance, also in a *krylo*.

17 *Oi da tam na gorochke* (There, on the mountain). An *Ignatova* song; the first song sung in a *krylo*. Elena Gulina and Anastasia Nikulushkina.

A white, fine-silk tent was placed on a steep hill. Ignat lived in it. Three young soldiers noticed this white fine-silk tent. They rode their horses, they came into the tent and said: "God be with you, Ignat! Let's debate, who among us will split the Cossacks."

The song is about the 1740 split in the Nekrasovtsy community, when one group moved to Turkey and the other stayed on the Danube River. Although it did not happen until after Ignat's death, the song treats him as a participant in this important event.

18 *Potianite vy, vetry sil'nye* (You strong winds, blow). A *krylovaia*. Choir from the village of Kumsakaia Dolina.

You strong winds, blow, bring stormy rains on our green forest. Our green forest rustles and green leaves from the tops of its trees fall down.

The strong and massive sound of a mixed chorus is characteristic of *krylovye* songs performed in the open air by many participants. This song is suitable for processions, it is not danced to.

19 *Excerpts recorded during plastering of a new house.* Anna Ramzaeva, Elena Gulina, Seraphima Babaeva, Ekaterina Sanicheva and Varvara Gorina.

Fragments from recordings during several hours in the afternoon, while the women were trying to finish their work. The first excerpt, *Akh, nochka tiomnaia* (The night is dark), is a traditional *besiodnaia* song, probably chosen for its words (by this time it was getting dark outside). The song is interrupted by a conversation with the master of the house. The women want to go home and are unhappy with the young man, whose reluctant attitude toward work slows down the plastering. Anna, his mother-in-law, starts *Na zakate khodit paren' vokrug doma moego* (At sunset, a young man goes around my house), one of the most popular Soviet songs from the 1960s. Soon the singing turns into a humorous discussion of the song's text. After a while the mood of the workers becomes lighter and Seraphima exclaims loudly: "Well, girls, it looks as we'll be here until morning!" and her playful voice, rolling slowly within a huge pitch range, betrays her light disposition. The next song, *Oi, ty volia moia volia* ("Oh, my freedom"), once again implies the women's desire to end the work. A conversation prompts Varvara to sing a few stanzas from the end of a dance song, *Khozhu ia khozhu* (track 16).

20 *Ei, ty zimushka* (Oh you winter). A ballad. Anna Ramzaeva, Maria Elesiotikova and Maria Chizhikova.

Oh you winter, cold winter, I am afraid you will freeze me, and if not me, then my husband. A wife, who hated her husband, slew him and hung him in the garden. "You sleep here, and I will go home and sit at the table with another falcon. I will drink wine and mix it with tears. It is a misfortune to live with a cruel husband, but not having him is even worse. I will go to the garden and take my husband back. Come home, my darling. Haven't you enjoyed hanging for so long, eating sweet apples and listening to birds singing?"

This ballad is popular all over Russia, although its local interpretations vary greatly. Here, the story is treated with a humorous twist, mocking the luckless wife and her rash decision. The cheerful dance-like melody differs considerably from other *besiodnye* songs on this album. In fact, the Nekrasovtsy also sing a version of this melody as a *krylovaia*, *Oi tuman, tuman, tumanushek* (track 6).

21 *Zharna-zharna zharnitsa* (Dawn, Dawn). A children's song. Elena Gulina.

Dawn, Dawn, you beautiful girl! You have lost the key, you have stolen the sun and put it into a box, locked it and tied it with a silk handkerchief. The moon saw it.

A search for lost keys needed to release the sun that is being locked up by the winter cold is a motif typical of seasonal spring songs throughout Russia and other Slavic countries.

22 *Voh voh yarma da mashchala.* Turkish wed-

ding song. Sung in Turkish.

Oh, how I'm dancing, I will be healthy and rich. I went to pick up a watermelon, but there were no watermelons. I went to pick up grapes, but there were no grapes. I went home, but there was no mother. I cooked food, but there were no spoons. (Translated into Russian by the performers.)

"When the Turks went to the bride, as soon as someone started this song, they all would go dancing right away," performers commented. Evidently, the manner of singing and dancing is their own, and quite similar to the rest of the Nekrasovtsy's repertoire.

23 Tuku-tuku mak (Pounding poppyseeds). A lullaby. Anna Ramzaeva.

Pounding poppyseeds/I dropped a crumb/A mouse seized it/And ran under the stove./Where is your stove?/It is under water./Where is your water?/Bulls drank it./Where are your bulls?/Pillars hit them./Where are your pillars?/Worms ate them./Where are your worms?/Hens pecked them./Where are your hens?/They flew over the sea./Where is your sea?/Flowers grew upon it./Where are your flowers?/Girls plucked them./Where are the girls?/Tartars kidnaped them./Where are the Tartars?/They fell down through the Earth.

Typically for Russian nursery rhymes, the text unfolds through questions and answers, a simple device to grasp the attention of the baby to whom it is addressed. It is set to one short melodic phrase repeated with endless small varia-

tions. The tonal structure of this song is also used in other narrative songs of the Nekrasovtsy repertoire (four tones within the range of a fifth, with the final tone in the middle and with a shifting pitch of the upper tone). The nasal voice quality and timbral embellishments are characteristic of other Nekrasovtsy songs.

24 Zagoralasia kovyl' travushka (The feather-grass caught fire). A *pod Ignata* song. Anna Ramzaeva (zapevala), Seraphima Babaeva, and Ekaterina Sanicheva.

As the feather-grass caught fire, the feet and wings of an old eagle were burnt. Black ravens flew over him and mocked him. "Wait you black ravens, I will ask storm clouds to pour strong rains. My wings will grow again, I will fly over you and return your mockery..."

The text suggests a metaphoric interpretation of the story of Ignat and Nekrasovtsy's exile.

25 Volkhyv Persidskie Tsari (The Magi, the Persian kings). A Christmas *stikheron* in the fifth *glas*. Semion Milushkin.

This *stikheron* re-tells the Biblical story of the three Magi and their precious gifts for the eternal newborn.

The recording was made in the private setting of Milushkin's house; a solo performance of this chant would not be permitted during a church service.

26 V chernem more (In the Black Sea). *Bogorodichen* in the fifth *glas*. Semion Milushkin

and Evlanti Banderovsky.

Bogorodichen, a chant in praise of the Virgin Mary, is one of the most important chants in the Orthodox liturgy. An elaborate melismatic melody in an arch form and a gradual buildup of the melodic range are characteristic of *znamennyi* chants. Though *znamennyi* chants are supposed to be sung in strict unison, the singers often depart from each other, especially before cadences. They split for a short time, and sometimes even a dissonant interval may occur in passing. Milushkin embellishes the melody constantly, while Banderovsky supplies the basic chant.

Short Discography and Bibliography

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About the Authors

Margarita Mazo is Professor of Music History at the Ohio State University. Though she moved from Russia to the United State in 1979, she still conducts annual fieldwork in various parts of her native country. She has written extensively on Russian village music and rituals, connections between Russian folk, "art," and church music, and on continuities and transformations in traditional cultures. She has been a scholar-curator of two Russian programs at the Smithsonian Festival of American Folklife (1988 and 1995).

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Margarita Mazo

Credits

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 Production assistance: Katie Gruber and Richard Kennedy
 Map: Olga Velichkina
 Cover photo: Yuri Lunkov
 Back cover photo: Nekrasovtsy women take a break from plastering to eat lunch and sing. Photo courtesy of Margarita Mazo.
 Rear card photo: Nekrasovtsy women from the village Kumskaia Dolina sing during a recording session. Photo courtesy of Margarita Mazo.
 Mastering: David Glasser at Airshow, Springfield, VA
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