

Collective identity and social capital of the contemporary Russian folklore movement

Rostislav Kononenko, Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russia

Evgeniya Karpova, Saratov State Technical University, Saratov, Russia

The purpose of this article is to analyze the features of a modern social movement from the perspective of social capital as a combination of knowledge, skills and social practices, existing and reproduced in social networks. First we will discuss the social and historical context of societies in the era of late socialism when the groups of people interested in folklore and traditional folk culture began to appear. We will also discuss some features of the folklore lovers' community as well as its features as a social movement aimed at the study, rebirth and spread of ethnomusical traditions. Further, we will discuss the way cultural memory, being formed in the process of collective actions of the movement members, becomes a resource of their group identity and the basis for accumulated social capital. The study is based on an analysis of four in-depth, face-to-face interviews held in 2010 and eight interviews held online in 2011 with representatives of several generations of folklore movement members, as well as on long-term participant observation.

Folklore as a counter-culture

The popularity of folk music began to grow rapidly in the 1960s in the USA due to the countercultural movements espousing values of anti-consumerism as opposed to postwar conformism and values of the mass market (Cantwell 1996). With the growth of professionalization of folk music its definition as non-profit and amateur performance became irrelevant. Methods of resistance to mainstream culture were rooted in consumption practices (Tachi 2004: 187-211).

While in Soviet Russia folk culture was used and controlled (as well as produced) by government policy and institutions, beginning in the 1960s and especially the 1970s and 1980s there was increasing interest in popular culture "from below" - as a reaction to the dominance of technocracy and authoritarianism. Throughout Eastern Europe and the USSR there was a massive spread of collective mobilizations that valued folk singing. Groups of young people who initiated this movement used the symbols of "authenticity" in different ways - as an aesthetic element of self-determination or as a political strategy. Similar in a number of features to other social movements, "song nationalism" was nevertheless unique.

A special feature of this counter-cultural movement was the active use of symbolic codes of local folklore. "Singing nationalism," according to Aarelaid-Tart, had largely become synonymous with national identity: "Estonians are a singing nation", "Our famous festival tradition keeps us together" (Aarelaid-Tart 2004: 77 – 98). With the end of socialism, tens of thousands of Estonians suffered cultural trauma as a result of fear of serious social disruption and loss of identity. After the Soviet Union collapsed, in fact, the need to protect and nurture Estonian folklore as a counter culture value was eliminated. "Singing nationalism" rapidly began to lose its importance (ibid.).

And even though the values of traditional culture in the 1990s receded into the background under the pressure of market and political transformations, in the post-Soviet period in the Baltic States and Central and Eastern Europe, there was a new wave of intellectual movements associated with ethnography and folklore. For example, in 1996 in Estonia a new journal *Studies in Folklore and Popular Religion* was established, with a selection of articles of folklore specialist V. Anderson published in the first issue. According

to James Grayson's review of the first issue, Anderson worked at the universities of Kazan and Tartu in the 1920-30s and inspired the students to the systematic study of local folklore as a resource for national identity against "Russian and Soviet domination" (Grayson 2000).

Some authors associate the increased attention to folklore and ethnography in the 1990s in Eastern Europe with the problems of building new nation-states (Verdery 2007). These scholars are concerned about the fact that ethnology and allied subjects are used by relevant groups and parties for ethnic nationalism and xenophobia (Bitusikova 2003: 78). After all, arguments from "history" allow members of a society to build and rebuild collective memory through sharing, passing on and constructing the information (Halbwachs 1992). Not the memory of society as a whole but its segments or groups which, being interested in the past, through celebrations, anniversaries, and heritage, seek to establish and rethink themselves as a community (Rozhdestvenskaia and Semenova 2011: 27). It is the preference of some variants of the collective memory above another which was one of the reasons for the dramatic processes of re-establishing imagined communities and nation-states in Eastern Europe in the 1980s-1990s.

The development of the folklore movement in contemporary Russia is largely similar to what happened in other socialist countries. The movement here was being developed under the influence of romantic intellectual currents in Soviet literature and the humanities since the 1960s, as well as considering the changes in daily life and cultural choice of people, and growing freedom of choice. Such changes could have taken place in the time of political thaw (from the mid-1950s to the early 1960s) when there was an increase in interest of intellectuals to peasant folklore and Orthodox Christianity (Gavriliachenko 2007: 79-83), and then in the period of Perestroika.

In the 1980s initiatives and experiments of folklore researchers and professional musicians were conceptualized as being in opposition to the existing "People's choirs" (scenic choirs with members dressed in stylized "ethnic" costumes, with repertoire consisting of remakes of folk songs and music composed by Soviet musicians). These initiatives of bringing to light authentic folklore from the countryside were picked up and appreciated by a large number of enthusiasts. Urban youth went in search of fundamentally new forms of practical development of folk art, privileging the performance of authentic folk material (Zhulanova 1999). Some turned the desire to learn and play authentic folk into an important part of their biography or even into a second profession.

In addition to the stage presentation of authentic folklore, many members of the movement shared the ideology of "falling back to roots" and "revival of traditions". Therefore they tried to find or create situations in an urban environment which could be favorable to performance and attraction of viewers to participate in the traditional songs and dances. Gradually these practices went beyond the scope of youth and the city: the movement became multigenerational and involved rural artists in practices which in some cases were of a hybrid nature. On the one hand, the rural population could be "carriers" of tradition who had been aware of it since childhood, and on the other hand, regarding the spirit, purposes and methods of work such associations followed the pattern of urban communities.

In socialist countries and the Soviet republics the growth of the folklore movement was motivated by opposition to Soviet and Russian rule, represented anti-government and anti-technocratic protest, and was driven also by aesthetic values. And, although the activity of young romanticists engaged in folk songs often overlapped with some radical patriotic movements, such contacts were sporadic and later were evaluated negatively by members of the folklore movement. Lack of ethnonational "abjection" in the imaginary collective memory mixed protest accents, tying them for the time being not to national, but to social issues (Gavriliachenko 2007: 79-83). Beginning in the 1990s, the movement had Orthodox tendencies which became more pronounced in the 2000s. The cooperative movement with the

Cossacks and the church contributed to that. However, compared with the nationalist speeches of far-right (or extreme right) organizations, the national idea of the folklore movement, according to its participants, contains neither ideas of violence nor negative attitudes towards other cultures.

The “Russian folk union” organization, being the heart of the folklore movement, may, in the opinion of its leaders, have some impact on the cultural policy of the state. The movement itself consists of folklorists and folk musicians. Members study song traditions, the way of life and history of the Russian people—usually focusing on local tradition—and accumulate knowledge and skills to represent traditions on stage, conferences, forums and festivals. They are supplemented with new members who join the creative team after visiting a concert or other event. Since the communication in this case goes beyond the scope of the concert or expeditionary activity, we can consider these collectivities as a community.

Community in motion

In accordance with the ideas of Louis Wirth (1938: 1-24), in view of the high-density, large volume and diversity of the urban population, blood ties, neighborhood, solidarity and traditions’ community in big cities give place to competition and bureaucratic control mechanisms. Wirth pointed out the segmentation of human relations that occurs when urban people have close physical but distanced social contacts. Therefore, a citizen has to make efforts to join other people on the basis of common interests for achieving his or her goals. Urban communities of folklorists or lovers of folklore in the 2010s practice a lifestyle in which a modern way of life is combined with elements of traditional culture, understood as the source and linkage of generations:

The way that we spend weekdays and celebrate holidays is explained by the fact that we don’t want our children to feel the isolation and lack of roots that we used to feel (Interview 1).

Throughout Russia, many community members communicate and regularly see each other taking part in various festivals. This “folk group,” having exceeded the bounds of a city, provides access to communication without limits. Participants, starting to communicate, expand their social networks, which can mobilize outside interests connected with folklore. Here we are considering community which is based on regular face-to-face communication and on Internet networks, as well as on the collective mental image of its likeness. This image follows from the shared myth of common ancestry and romanticized character of popular culture.

It appears that this community can be classified as a kind of social movement. Its members in the vast majority are not bonded with labor contracts or other official documents with any employers. Like other social movements, it can be viewed as a collective enterprise “seeking to establish a new order of life”; they “derive their motive power on one hand from dissatisfaction with the current form of life, and on the other hand, from wishes and hopes for a new system of living” (Blumer 1969: 99). The members of this movement see their mission in the preservation of traditions, promotion of traditional culture, and the creation of ethnic identity: “*Without this, we, being people, nation, ethnic group (you can call it as you like) would not exist*” (Interview 7). They seek “*to create an environment that will share our values,*” as one of the informants said. The thesis of the creation of Milieu, as a social environment with shared values, points out the formation of social capital.



Dmitri Pokrovski's essemble, one of the first ethnographic folk groups of folklore movement (Moscow, 1970s-1980s)

This focus on changes in beliefs, values and norms is similar to those movements that defend local culture or environmental values as opposed to modernization vector of politics, business, and modern consumer society. Such movements, according to Seyla Benhabib (2002), can be defined as a struggle for recognition, and a movement for identity, uniqueness, and cultural rights. Being a member of a group gives participants existing or potential resources, “support in the form of collective capital ‘reputation’ which enables them to obtain loans in every sense”, i.e. social networks which can be a resource for benefits by contributing to the reputation and trust and functioning in accordance with the rules of interaction in social networks. Social capital is “made up of social obligations (‘connections’), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility” (Bourdieu 1986: 243). The meaning of social capital is concentrated on the concept of “connections” since it is through being realized in the relations between people that such capital is generated. These relationships exist in the form of material and/or symbolic exchange, which contribute to their maintenance.

Symbolic exchange in the communication between members of the group allows for building a collective identity based on similar practices. According to one informant, one’s interest in folklore is not just a hobby, but a certain way of life:

What’s the difference between a weekday and a holiday for a person today?
There’s almost no difference. Going to the restaurant? Many people go there on weekdays. Watching any TV-programs? Watching TV is usual for everyone. So, for me and my family, for example, the difference is that on the most important twelve great feasts, especially on Easter, we’re going in the national dress to church. That on holidays with members of the group we join together and sing folk songs (Interview 1).

The performative character of lifestyle practices in this case is very important to convey the meaning of distinctiveness that involves staging and events. The lifestyle of the modern folk movement member involves participating in the events related to the performance of traditional folk music from the stage and in everyday life.

In contrast to the instrumentalist logic of political movements, in the case of the folklore movement it comes to expressive logic, which can be seen in the arguments about the “integrity of the tradition”:

You cannot just be a folk band that performs only with songs. Because if you sing, then sooner or later you have to understand what it is to sing and how to sing, how to move, and when to sing, is that possible to sing – it may be fast or festival - what will be on the table, who will be at the table. All these features, of course, have to be understood, that's the integrity of the traditional culture; it is present in the work of the group (Interview 1).

The idea of the integrity of the traditions for participants of the movement is connected with the romantic notions of harmony, the “way” of rural life: “*When you meet a grandmother from the country, you understand that she is a strong personality, all is in harmony, ...and she lives correctly!*” (Interview 6).

The “bearer” of tradition in this case is the ideal, even a role model. “Grandmothers” or “folk artists” are often defined as “our teachers”. As our informants say of their involvement in the folk movement, there is a constant process of reflection of their attitude to folklore, “attempts to understand and rethink” (Informant 2). Folklore is understood by our informants as cultural memory that exists in current practices. While studying ethnographic sources and thinking of “ethnic” resemblance to their informants from villages or hamlets, members of the folklore movement draw symbolic lines to distinguish themselves from others. The so-called “stage bands,” having decided to focus on the pop vector of professionalization and using the techniques of academic and popular music culture, also broadcast cultural memory, but in a different interpretation. Our informants think that in this case the cultural memory is collected apart from the emotional experience of traditional culture bearers.

Representatives of the movement who focus on the “reliability” in study and transfer of the image of the folklore tradition, easily distinguish failures and inaccuracy of groups’ performances playing authentic folklore, and especially of those who fit the category of the so-called “*klyukva*”.¹ Using clothes (often authentic) as a cover - a marker of cultural authenticity, such artists are “wrong”, according to the informants, in the content of the representation, violating the sequence and consistency of elements of any ethnographic tradition. Putting forward one’s arguments, informants confirm their opinion by judgments made by “bearers of traditions” (Interview 3).

Despite the apparent blurring of the term “folklore”, participants create symbolic classifications of “ins” and “outs”, which are expressed in terms of “authentic folklore” and “authentic folklorist” as opposed to “stage” or *klyukva*. The term *klyukva* (cranberry) means either the author’s text of a “folk” song, or heavily altered ethnographic material - music, lyrics, motion, clothing or way of performance.



Nadezhda Kadyshcheva, lead singer of the musical group “Gold Ring” (Золотое кольцо)

Distinction of groups aimed at authenticity or showing a stylized scene of folk art, is constantly refined in the communities, and is divided into branches depending on the attitude of participants to the traditional culture: repertoire (*klyukva*, “piped-in” songs, local folklore, collected in expeditions, rare samples) and stage clothes (obviously stylized, original, collected in the expeditions, handmade in accordance with samples of relevant tradition); in accordance with introduction to ethnomusical tradition (orally, by ear, by expedition notes - or with the notes, playing piano or using tuning-fork); communication with the “medium” of authentic folklore; methods of stage presentations, and other criteria. Some teams have a double life: on the one hand, they desire to perform not *klyukva* but authentic folklore, and take part in expeditions; on the other hand, while working on concerts and being paid, they perform music which is in demand and is available for consumption by a mass audience.



“Obereg” ethnographic folk group from Saratov, Russia, in 1990

The complexity of classifying folk ensembles is implied by the variety of ways to work with cultural memory: “Groups which take part in expeditions and with an orientation towards ethnography are all different, too” (Interview 2); “there are groups that collect ethnography, they really do that, but then they reproduce it another way. And there are groups that collect ethnography, but an alien one, and somehow they have all the wrong turns, they treat it in some different way” (Interview 3). Additional differences our informants identify are located on the axes “professional and amateur”, “scientists” vs. “illustrators”, theorists vs. masters of genre, and “those who earn money” vs. “those for whom this is life”. “Gone with the tradition” is another interesting category - lovers of folklore who have chosen a traditional way of life:

In the city, inside the apartment the samovar is turned on, so the kitchen is blackened, they open a window, the smoke goes outside <...> they turned on the samovar. They don't go to the hospital to give birth, they do it at home, because it is a tradition, or they do not accept drugs; [others] do not go to the doctor, or do not let a wife go out outside alone, etc., [even here] in the twenty-first century ... (Informant 3).

Among the participants of the folk movement, there are those who are Old Believers, and others are Orthodox, trying to observe religious traditions. Nowadays, religion and a religious way of life have become a part of tradition for adherents of the folklore movement. In an effort to follow the tradition, the modern folk movement is getting closer to the church.



People without national costumes dancing in the street activity held by Zabava ethnographic folk group in Saratov in 2010

However, one cannot speak of the full emotional and uncritical engagement of folklore movement members in a mythologized past. For many members, folk acts as an element of creative projects, “social action” or a game, without a complete “solution” in the tradition: “Our goal is not to dress everyone in folk costumes, and to learn traditional folk songs and dances. The folklore group is only “worth” leisure time, communication, and cultural education” (Interview 4). Projects are implemented by different communities that use ideas of cultural memory differently. For one of our informants - the head of an art project - folklore became a way of self-realization, promotion of one's own art: “We are concentrated on the project ... [which includes] lyric songs, wedding songs, some roundtables, conferences, participation in presentations ... every interactive event, which is interesting for us”(Interview 1). These are creative and modern people who are “playing in the old days,” and doing so skillfully and with interest and pleasure.

But the performance implies a change of roles. Performance of folklore repertoire and presentation of oneself in ethnographic “appearance” is often performed just “on the scene”, while being “behind the scene” a person is transformed: “[During the break] girls walk on by, with terrible make-up, they swear, smoke, and so on, and then they appear [on stage], smiling ...” For those who find it difficult to treat folklore “as the group for practice of dancing” because folklore “penetrates life” (Informant 2), such behavior is shocking:

[Once] a family [participated in the festival] ethnographic group ... So, and in the breaks the kids were laying on mattresses, did not go out anywhere and listened to slang pop music on the phone. This is what they did. Can you imagine that, I cannot ... (Interview 2)

Folk material, understood by fans of the folklore movement as the core of life, in their opinion cannot exist only as a stage show, but should penetrate into life, and become a part of everyday culture folklore.

Collective memory as a resource of identity in folklore movement

Collective memory is the inherent image of a group throughout history up to the present day, thanks to which it seems that the group remains unchanged, but its relations or contacts with others change (Halbwachs 1992). Social attitudes of folklore movement participants are closely related to the cultural memory, as the connection to the “roots”, in their opinion, must necessarily translate into actual everyday life.

Dynamics of production and reproduction of collective memory are closely linked to the formation of cultural identity among the members of the sociocultural social movements whose strategies are based on the expressive logic. This idea, in particular, is proposed by Ron Eyerman (2002: 443 – 458) in his study of movements of various trends: in promotion of civil rights in the United States and the Scandinavian extreme right. He points out the role of “black” music, and a musical style called White Power (and other, including visual forms of expression) in the recruitment of new members, increasing the degree of group solidarity, formation of sense of belonging, and team spirit. He analyzes music as a source of inspiration and strength to participate in collective action, and finally, as a source of financial capital (ibid., 447).

The change of symbolic capital into material assets is carried by the “creative industry”. The subject of folk culture is widely sought in the market of handicrafts, crafts, music records and cultural services. In some Russian cities there is specialized production, stores, and fairs where “crafts”, video and audio recordings, and foodstuffs are sold. Commodification, or the conversion of folk culture into commodity, is feasible due to Internet resources. Consumption of cultural artifacts related to cultural memory is not the individually- , but collectively-oriented practice, grounded in communication; it is specific symbolic consumption, in which the characters’ generational communication and social identity are valued.

It is not only the consumption itself, but cultural practice, immersed into urban experience, and closely linked to the concept of “Russianness” and “tradition” as well as to communication and identity construction. Herewith “the image of tradition is based on selectively chosen elements of culture and on stereotypes” (Vlaskina 2011). Joint action to preserve, develop and promote the Cossack culture with commercial profit leads researchers to consider this process as a trend of “ethnocultural branding of the Cossacks” (Kiblitky 2011: 109-110). Researchers argue that the dynamics of the Cossack identity were affected by the transformation of the physical and symbolic boundaries of the nation-state (Nikiforova

2003: 71-81). Therefore the movement for the revival of the Cossacks is based on revaluation of the historic experience of repression, but in the first place on terms of the recovery of lost status in a group (Kiblitky 2011: 109-110).

Many of our informants are bound together by conversations or “reminiscences” of repression of the Cossacks and peasantry, but they are bound not only as social classes or strata, but also in terms of cultural repression. Appeals to the negative influence of the communist regime’s policy on the state of the collective cultural memory are widespread. According to the informants, “Once we have learned to live without folklore” even though folklore is required for life, just like language (Interview 5); “folklore must nourish our lives as it always did” (Interview 8).

Collective memory plays an important role in the formation of individual and collective identity, when “moral aspects of the past and ideological manipulation” are reflected (Trubina 1998). Folklorists and historians speak with convincing evidence of the suppression of folk culture by the official (Arkhipova and Neklyudov 2010: 84-103; Neklyudov 2007: 77-86), of the displacement of the “collective and spontaneous or individual memory ... by organized memory” (Koznova 2000). Keynotes of the stressful and negative experience of past generations become a starting point for creating an imaginary collective memory, including being broadcasted and pop performers of folklore. In particular, popular singer Pelageya, a performer of Russian folk songs, appeals to the traumatic past: “Russian folklore was suppressed during the Soviet era - it was forbidden to put emphasis on ‘big brother’ so it stood out against the small republics” (Pelageya 2011).

Although folklore “in its pure form will not enter our houses, but as a story, a sign of Russian character, it must go back to our memory” (Pelageya 2011), - in the words of a popular singer, small people and political dissidents were being repressed in the Soviet Union, but the processes of “extinguishing” folklore were rather subject to broader trends of modernization. But this thesis implies a cliché of injured and repressed ethnic identity. And it turns out that this identity can be pieced together, “by certain characteristics”, and the memory is represented as a kind of reservoir where you can take away something, or, vice versa, invest or accumulate. The use of the phrases “our home” and “our memory” point out the formation of collective identity.

Strategies for accumulating social capital

Participants of the folklore movement take part in expeditions, look through previously collected research materials, and lead projects, many which are connected with the organization of massive, regularly-held events. The booklet of the Sixth Moscow social and cultural forum “Living Tradition” (4-6.11.2011) contains the slogan “Keep the origins”, which contains key codes of collective memory understood as reputation basis and social capital of the community. The strategy of collective memory reproduction includes festivals, concerts, forums and seminars, educational projects and international cooperation.



Ethnographic “ensemble of Siberian song” from Moscow dancing at a festival in Nizhni Novgorod region, 2012

Ron Eyerman writes of the “residual” forms of culture which under certain conditions can change the dominant culture. In his opinion these conditions include certain actions of the state, mass media and social movements. He gives an example of the culture of the black population of the American South that became a powerful social force in the struggle for civil rights. It is explained by legal reforms and the development of the youth subculture of popular music fans. “Black” music (including jazz), having once been an inspiration for participants of the movement for civil rights, later became a popular musical style which, in his opinion, helped to overcome racist attitudes among young people (Eyerman 2002: 457). With the course of time, cultural artifacts and their specific social and historical context became separate, and were differently posed in the media. It may contribute to the remembering of cultural forms, the review of old traditions and origin of new ones.

The development of the Internet has caused a revolution in the development of social and cultural movements. “*By virtue of social networks—live, electronic, and virtual—the folk movement increases and multiplies*” (Interview 3). Now the work of imagined communities is on the rise. Members of the folklore movement add literary meaning to Marshall McLuhan’s (1962) concept of the “global village”, discovering there the real village, or countryside, i.e. the folklore aspect:

For example, the [online] social network *vkontakte* is called *a new village* because everyone knows all about each other. If someone has 500 friends, one knows everything about them. You read news, look at photographs. This is a kind of a new village. *Vkontakte* is popular in the folk movement for communication and for the announcement of events (Interview 3).

To organize an event, the community resorts to the Internet technologies, and members organize flash mobs, open evenings (with communication, dancing and singing songs), and discussions on the forums. Many members practice for themselves—they are not seeking the transfer of knowledge to another person; it is only their hobby that they enjoy. Still there are those who want to transfer their knowledge to “newcomers”, so they gather a team of associates and “pupils”.

In the modern folk movement there are dynasties and family ensembles, and many of the folklore ensembles’ members joined as children when their parents (themselves

participants or heads of ensembles) took them to rehearsals: “This is the group where I was probably born, because my father and mother were members and began to take me there” (Interview 3). The interviewee can’t give a precise answer to the question what has attracted him in the folklore movement, since “*he was never asked whether he wants to be engaged in it*”. He retained vivid memories of his childhood: “... I remember a party, that was cool, I remember rehearsals in basements, in some buildings” (Interview 3). Folklore in this case is not only a hobby but also a part of the childhood and family memory.

Following Jan Assman (2005), the collective memory is a process based on everyday communication. In a way, it is similar to the processes of oral transmission in traditional folk culture but it also includes textual and visual forms detached from the everyday. Lost by previous generations, ethnic identity is being updated and becomes a basis for the life strategies (Brednikova 1997: 70-71). In case of inability to find the wished-for “roots” in the biography of one’s family, young members of the movement may construct their ethnic identity on the basis of collective, rather than family, memory. Those who could find in their family tree ancestors of the Cossacks and peasants became happy owners of the cultural capital of ethno-cultural affiliation to previous generations. In this - always selective - search for “roots” are intertwined mechanisms of individual, family and group memory:

... We are the part of this tradition since childhood. We know some rhymes, something else from our grandmothers, and it is really folklore. ... And it does come from one environment, we just know from our relatives, really know it and feel [it] ... (Interview 2)

In a family there are stories which are connected to those relatives whose life and deeds are mythologized in accordance with the matrix of cultural codes of collective memory. And the collective memory becomes not just a place to keep joint memories but also a mechanism for social control as it contains “collective assessment important for present behavior” and serves for members of the folklore movement as a kind of mental map that allows condemning or justifying, selecting, interpreting and acting.

In other words, the joint image of the past is a collective biography to which individual biographies are compared. Facts and people that do not fit the matrix of collectively endorsed history are erased from the memory, and suitable fragments found in photo albums, archives, and stories told by relatives are carefully collected. They are a kind of echo of cultural memory. This scrupulous memory activity simultaneously makes the structure for ideology of the group and corresponds to it:

Traditions are still present in our family. ...we listen to folk music and we like it, we are Orthodox, we want to give our children some knowledge of folk culture, we read Russian classics, we try to dress well. I do not stitch shirts but I like handmade. We dream of living in the country and we love Russian nature. (Interview 9)

The recognition of “one’s own” takes place at festivals, both Russian and foreign, among people who think the same way. But cases of “recognition” when representatives, or “carriers” of traditions recognize urban artists as relatives, are an important reward and contribution to social capital. “We have been attending it for a long time and listening to bands on the stage, but only here we heard how people have sung before in our villages” (one of the remarks at the open-air folk festival).

Thus, the folk movement can be considered an agent of politics of cultural memory. Its participants create an ethno-cultural identity based on reproduction and experiencing collective cultural memory, and the lifestyle strategy of the community necessarily includes performative elements. Markers of cultural memory can be commodified, turned in cultural goods, and the cultural memory turns into an instrument for the commodification of the past. Cultural memory becomes one of the elements of social capital, the foundation on which collective identity is being built. Being at work on the cultural memory, participants develop a common language and understanding of the challenges, including the “rebirth” of the outgoing traditions, opposition to popular culture and transfer of values to the future generations. In the implementation of these tasks the social capital of the folk movement is collected and used, and its reputation and the nature of social networks are used as well. To strengthen social capital both traditional and modern means of communication are used. In this sense, cultural memory is a system of values, but because the community itself is very heterogeneous, and it lacks a clear structure and unified management, this point of view cannot be considered the official ideology. Nor is it universal, the same for all practice. Differences are underlined in the way of presentation of folklore, involvement to tradition, and definition of ethnic identity, based on the production and experience of cultural memory.

Description of field data

Interview 1 m, 31, teacher, Tomsk
Interview 2 f, 24, female, graduated of a humanitarian university, Moscow
Interview 3 m, 25, postgraduate of a humanitarian university, Moscow
Interview 4 f, 44, head of folklore group, Saratov
Interview 5 m, 50, engineer, Moscow
Interview 6 f, 26, St. Petersburg
Interview 7 m, 17, Omsk
Interview 8 m, 35, Moscow
Interview 9 f, 23, journalist, Moscow
Interview 10 f, 20, student, Moscow
Interview 11 f, 35, St. Petersburg
Interview 12 f, 35, Moscow

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¹ *Klyukva*, meaning cranberry, is a metaphor for the false representation of Russia. It is based on the story that a foreign traveler to Russia described sitting under a “branching cranberry” to have a cup of tea. “Branching cranberry” is an oxymoron, since the cranberry is a bush, not a tree. Hence, it is not possible to sit under a cranberry bush for tea. Based on this metaphor, the musicians who play modified, academised folklore are called *klyukva* by the members of the folklore movement who believe they represent a “false” culture.