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Berezutska Maryna

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# Ukrainian music in shaping of national identity: a 65 years-long creative path of a bandura ensemble in the Dnipro city's cultural space

Berezutska Maryna 

Department of Folk Instruments, M. Glinka Dnipropetrovsk Academy of Music, Dnipro, Ukraine

## ABSTRACT

The musical landscapes of cities largely reflect and at the same time determine the cultural identity of the townspeople. In this research, we defined the influential role of the bandura ensemble 'Charivnytsy' in framing the city's cultural space. Their national repertoire includes pieces by local composers, which create the unique musical landscape of Dnipro. This musical landscape reflects both the national and regional identity of the Dnipro's townsfolk. The regular presence of the bandura ensemble music in the cultural space of Dnipro forms a sense of belonging to the Ukrainian nation and regional community among the residents of the region.

## KEYWORDS

National identity; cultural identity; national music; cultural space; bandura ensemble; musical landscapes

## Introduction

In the twenty-first century, the century of globalization, internationalization, and multiculturalism, each city has its own distinctive features, its own identity. The cultural identity of a city is made up of many factors: language (local dialect), clothing, cuisine, alcoholic drinks, architectural, and musical landscapes. The national belonging of the city is recognizable, first of all, by national brands, for Ukraine these are: 'Soloviina Mova' ('Nightingale Speech', the melodious Ukrainian language), embroidered shirts (folk style of clothing), Ukrainian borsch with pampushkas (donuts), horilka (vodka) with pepper, and bandura music. The historically established and newly created national brands are important national symbols (Dinnie, 2015). The music that the residents of the city listen to and perform has a special place. A British academic, professor Ray Hudson states: 'There is no doubt that music – in both its production and consumption – can be an important influence in shaping the typically hybrid identities of people and places, of engendering a sense of place and deep attachment to place' (Hudson, 2006, p. 633). Ray Hudson believes:

the production of place through music – like the production of place in general – is seen to be a contested process, while the dynamic interrelationship between music and place suggests that music plays a very particular and sensuous role in place making (Hudson, 2006, p. 627)

and uses the expression 'making music, producing places' (Hudson, 2006, p. 627). Dnipro is no exception. The musical landscapes of Dnipro (known by the name of Dnipropetrovsk till 2016) became the foundation of a unique place-based cultural identity. 'The universal presence and importance of music means that the implications of these two simple features (our musical tastes and our musical practice) are profound and far-reaching. Therefore, music is inextricably and fundamentally linked to our sense of self' (MacDonald et al., 2017, p. 6). Modern scholars developed 'the music cities paradigm' based on a terrestrial and online connection 'between music, space and identity, from city scenes to the music of nations' (Connell & Gibson, 2003, p. 18). A music city is a form of urban cultural policy, (is all of) the location in regional, national and global networks, (all of) the arena wherein music communities form and reproduce themselves (Baker, 2019). Dnipro has its own urban cultural policy too. Many professional, student, and amateur musical groups, as well as solo performers, contribute to the creation of the city's cultural space. The performers are 'active producers of musical culture, not passive respondents to commodification, creating something qualitatively new, with its own dynamics, rather than just a dilution or corruption of something formerly authentic' (Connell & Gibson, 2004, p. 357).

Nevertheless, the contribution to the formation of the cultural identity of cities made by music performers has been studied only partially. A British musicologist Sara Cohen studied the role of the local rock culture in shaping the cultural identity of Liverpool (Cohen, 1991). An American musicologist Denise von Glahn analyzed the role of American composers in the formation of cultural identity of American places and cities (Von Glahn, 2003). Australian musicologists John Connell and Chris Gibson studied the way music becomes inextricably linked to place through performance, listening, and interaction in real space. They discuss music as a product of social and regional organization (Connell & Gibson, 2003). An interdisciplinary team of British researchers – Sheila Whiteley, Andy Bennett, and Stan Hawkins – examine urban and rural spaces in which music is experienced, produced, and consumed (Bennett et al., 2017). British researchers Brett Lashua, Karl Spracklen, Stephen Wagg, and Selim Yavuz attempt to answer these twin questions in their monograph: 'What can popular music tell us about cities, and what can cities tell us about popular music?' (Lashua et al., 2014, p. 3; Lashua et al., 2019, p. 4).

Dnipro is a big modern Ukrainian city and the processes of globalization have not spared its cultural space: the city's musical landscapes are filled with samples of world music and global music. John Connell and Ross Gibson observe a common pattern:

Though local spaces survived – however the 'local' is defined – they were mediated by regional, national and international influences – technological, commercial and creative. Musical instruments diffused rapidly in the twentieth century, tending to add to or replace 'local' instruments with those from the West. (Connell & Gibson, 2003, p. 279)

However, neither in Ukraine nor in Dnipro, the instruments from the West were not able to replace bandura because 'the bandura is the most significant folk instrument in Ukraine. It became not only a symbol of Ukrainian identity, but also a means of preserving traditional values' (Filenko & Bulat, 2001, p. 368).

The bandura ensemble 'Charivnytsi' ('The Charmers') of M. Glinka Dnipropetrovsk Academy of Music stands out among many popular musical groups of Dnipro. The ensemble's diverse concert activity in the cultural space of Dnipro has been invariably high for 65 years. Its repertoire has always corresponded to the artistic tastes and cultural needs of

the townspeople, which determined the ensemble's continued popularity. The bandura ensemble 'Charivnytsi' has an individual performance style, its own repertoire (hereafter – Charivnytsi's music), which consists of arrangements made by the leaders of the ensemble and the pieces by Dnipro's composers. A British sociomusicologist Simon Frith noted:

the issue is not how a particular piece of music or a performance reflects the people, but how it produces them, how it creates and constructs an experience – a musical experience, an aesthetic experience – that we can only make sense of by taking on both a subjective and a collective identity. (Frith, 1996, p. 109)

By applying Simon Frith's thought in relation to the ensemble 'Charivnytsi', we can state that we are interested in both sides of the issue: the way the music of the ensemble reflects the image of Dnipro's townsfolk and the way it creates their collective identity. A British musicologist and academic Sara Cohen believes that 'music plays a unique and often hidden role in the production of place' (Cohen, 1995, p. 445). The role of Charivnytsi's music in the production of Dnipro's cultural space and shaping the cultural identity of the townspeople has not yet been studied and is, therefore, hidden.

## Materials and methods

The purpose of the research is to study the ways the creative activity of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble helps to produce and shape the cultural and national identity of the Dnipro's townsfolk.

The study focuses on solving two related questions. The first question is: What can Charivnytsi's music tell about the Dnipro's townsfolk? Using Simon Frith's words: which features of the collective identity of the audience (the Dnipro's townsfolk) are reflected by the music of the popular ensemble of the city? What is the semantic and ideological content of the ensemble's repertoire? In order to answer the first question, a study of the modern repertoire of the ensemble 'Charivnytsi' was conducted. The second question is: What can Dnipro's townsfolk tell about the Charivnytsi's music? In other words, how is the ensemble's music perceived by the audience and what feelings and associations does the music evoke? To get an answer to the second question, an unstructured interview with one open-ended question was carried out.

## Results and discussion

### *Part 1. What can Charivnytsi's music tell about the Dnipro's townsfolk?*

In the context of the task at hand, this question can be formulated in a different way: who needs the music of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble and why? 'Listen! If stars are lit, it means – there is someone who needs it. It means – someone wants them to be' (Mayakovsky, 1987, p. 28). If the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble has been existing, giving concerts and teaching new bandura players for 65 years, it means that there is someone who needs it all this time. It means – someone wants them to be. Those who want the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble to be and give concerts are the residents of Dnipro and the Dnipropetrovsk region. This means that Charivnytsi's music reflects the worldview of Dnipro's townsfolk and their collective cultural identity. The analysis of the ensemble's repertoire helps to answer the question 'What can Charivnytsi's music tell about the Dnipro's townsfolk?'

The bandura ensemble 'Charivnytsi' of M. Glinka Dnipropetrovsk Academy of Music is a bright, unique and at the same time typical representative of Ukrainian bandura art. Bandura itself is a unique Ukrainian folk instrument. Almost all other Ukrainian folk instruments (cymbals, violin, sopilka, etc.) are considered their folk instruments not only by Ukrainians, but also by many other peoples. Bandura is the only musical instrument that no other people except Ukrainians claim. The history of the bandura art shows that the bandura appeared in the sixteenth century among Cossacks who struggled for freedom, independence, and unity of the Ukrainian nation. For more than five centuries bandurists' songs have reflected not only the important historical events but also all the aspects of Ukrainian life. The repertoire of bandurists allows us to understand the worldview of the Ukrainian people. Their love for the motherland was reflected in patriotic songs that celebrate the beauty of the native land, religiosity, and spirituality – in canticles and psalms, the desire for freedom, unity, and independence – in dumas and heroic-historical songs, the philosophy – in socio-philosophical songs. The bandurists' songs reflecting the ideas of Ukrainians about themselves at all stages of historical development, therefore, gave an answer to a very important question for any nation: who are we? At all stages of Ukrainian history, the bandura united Ukrainians and helped them share their grief of losses as well as the joy of achievements. That is why bandura is the favorite musical instrument of the Ukrainians and the musical symbol of the Ukrainian nation (Berezutskaya, 2021; Filenko & Bulat, 2001).

The popularity of the ensemble 'Charivnytsi' among the Dnipro's residents has been invariably high for 65 years: it means that the semantic and emotional content of Charivnytsi's music has been reflecting feelings, desires, and dreams that are important for the Dnipro's townsfolk. Throughout this period, the ensemble's repertoire expanded and updated in accordance with the needs of the audience; the total number of pieces performed has reached 250. The current repertoire (last 15 years) consists of 100 pieces. The dynamics of the repertoire reflects the evolution of musical preferences of the Dnipro's residents and, at the same time, the process of the ensemble's professional growth. The repertoire of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble is a certain cultural heritage of Dnipro reflecting the history of the city's culture and its inhabitants. According to an American archaeologist, John Schofield 'heritage is also about the intangible, the music itself and the stories behind it, and what those stories contribute to understanding the city' (Lashua et al., 2014, p. 282). The 65-year-old repertoire of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble and the stories behind it contribute to understanding Dnipro's townsfolk.

### *The repertoire of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble and its ideological content: what semantic and emotional content is inherent in their music?*

The modern repertoire of the ensemble is represented by pieces of various styles (folk, jazz, pop, baroque, classicism, romanticism, impressionism, etc.) and genres (songs, romances, sacred music, instrumental miniatures, arrangements of folk songs, etc.). All this diversity, as it can be easily traced, reflects the national character in 95% pieces of ensemble repertoire. The modern repertoire of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble consists of Ukrainian folk songs (15%), pieces of Ukrainian composers (56%), pieces of regional composers (24%), pieces of foreign composers 5%. The repertoire was systematized, after which four groups were formed.

- (1) Ukrainian folk songs. Folk songs have historically been the basis for the development of any kind of national music. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) in his book «*National Music*» 1934 wrote: 'Folk-song is not a cause of national music, it is a manifestation of it. [...] folk-song is, by nature, necessarily national' (Williams, 1934, p. 114). The words of Ralph Williams are also true for Ukrainian national music: folk songs have been invariably present in the repertoire of bandura players throughout the entire existence of the bandura art. A famous Ukrainian musicologist and ethnographer Hnat Khotkevych (1877-1938) in 1933 wrote about the bandura in his book 'Bandura and the Repertoire': 'The Ukrainian folk created an instrument for its song, and that's where bandura is unrivalled ... that's the true calling of the bandura' (Khotkevych, 2009, pp. 216–217). Hnat Khotkevych could not imagine the bandura art without the Ukrainian folk songs. In 1907, in the first edition of his 'The Bandura Musician Handbook', he wrote: 'As long as our song lives, the bandura will also live with it' (Khotkevych, 2004, p. 20). The repertoire of 'Charivnytsi' vividly demonstrates that he was right. 'Charivnytsi' have been performing Ukrainian folk-songs for 65 years. Folk-songs have become a musical expression of the national identity of Ukrainians due to the fact that they gradually, one after another, absorbed the most characteristic features of the Ukrainian mentality: sentimentality and dreaminess – in lyrical songs *O, mylyi mii* ('Oh, My Dear'), *Khustochka* ('Handkerchief'), humor, fun, and cheerfulness – in comic and dancing songs *Vid Kyieva do Luben* ('From Kyiv to Lubny'), *Kucheriava Kateryna* ('Curly Catherine'), irony and wit – in satirical songs *Oi, divchyno, shumyt hai* ('Oh Girl, the Grove is Rustling'), *Oi, u poli zhyto* ('Oh, in a Field of Rye'), hardworking traits – in the songs on everyday themes *Porizala palchyk* ('She Cut Her Finger'), *Oi khodyla divchyna* ('Oh, the Girl Was Walking'), careful attitude to family values – in daily life and family-ritual songs *Chom ty ne pryishov* ('Why Didn't you Come'), *Ne stii verbo* ('Don't Stand, Willow').
- (2) The pieces of Ukrainian classical and contemporary composers. The national character of the repertoire can be traced not only in Ukrainian folk songs but also in the musical works of Ukrainian composers both classical (M. Leontovych, S. Hulak-Artemovsky, K. Stetsenko, Y. Stepovy, S. Lyudkevych) and contemporary (A. Kos-Anatolsky, O. Bilash, I. Shamo, I. Poklad, I. Karabyts, M. Skoryk) who follow the traditions of Ukrainian folklore. Ralph Williams wrote: 'The cultivation of folk-songs is only one aspect of the desire to found an art on the fundamental principles which are essential to its well-being. National music is not necessarily folk-song [...]. You may truly have got past that stage of development that makes folk-song possible. Nevertheless the spirit may be there all the same, the spirit of nationality' (Williams, 1934, p. 114). Hnat Khotkevych had very similar views on the development of national music: 'That Ukrainian music will anyway develop – but not only in the form of a song. Ukrainian music will take the spirit from a song, not the motives, just as Glinka, Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov did not take the motives of Russian songs, but their musical works formed the national music. Our composers will do the same – and then they will have the right to use all means of modern technology' (Khotkevych, 2010, p. 72). Hnat Khotkevych's prediction turned out to be prophetic: Ukrainian composers took its spirit, from Ukrainian song, the spirit of nationality.

Significant part of the bandura ensemble's ('Charivnytsi') repertoire consists of musical pieces created by Ukrainian composers. It is only natural that the bandura

ensemble, being a symbol of the national musical culture, performs the pieces written by Ukrainian composers, which make up about 56% of the ensemble's modern repertoire. These pieces are imbued with Ukrainian themes, whether it is love for the motherland, pictures of Ukrainian nature, or tragic love between a Cossack and a girl. All images have a purely national flavor. For example, the famous 'Andriy's Prayer' from 'Zaporozhets za Dunayem' by S. Hulak-Artemovsky reproduces the spirit of an invincible Cossack's victory and his hopes for the happy future in his native land, 'Mermaids Chorus' by M. Leontovych depicts magical creatures having fun in the waters of Dnipro. Dramatic love of a young girl, her parting with a Cossack followed by his death is described in the romance Soloveiko ('Nightingale') by M. Kropyvnytsky. The beauty of the Ukrainian nature with its incredible expressiveness is shown in Vesniana barkarola ('The Spring Barcarolle') by B. Filts, Dniprovsky Vals ('The Dnipro Waltz') by I. Shamo, Krynytsa ('The Well') by O. Zuev. The respect for national values, the devotion to the motherland, and sincere patriotism are embodied in the songs Nad Ukrainoiu ('Over Ukraine') by O. Bilash, Dnipra zhyva voda ('Living Water of the Dnipro') by I. Karabyts, Ukraina ie, Ukraina bude ('Ukraine is, Ukraine will be!') R. Demchyshyn. Jokes and humor, love of fun and dancing are characteristic of the songs Na vulytsi skrypka hraie ('Violin is playing in the street') by I. Doskalov, Cherevyckyy ('The Shoes') by V. Yartsev, Lety, dusha ('Fly, soul') by S. Fomenko.

- (3) The pieces of local composers. Musical pieces by Dnipro's composers are dedicated to the Dnipro region and its history (the life of Ukrainians in the Dnipro region, the cities and villages, the beauty of its nature – forests, fields, and rivers). Therefore, these pieces have both regional and national character. A significant part (24%) of the modern repertoire of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble is represented by the musical works of a Dnipro's composer Valentyna Martyniuk. The composer takes into account the specific performance features of the ensemble 'Charivnytsi', which allows bandura players to maximize their originality. A distinctive feature of Valentyna Martyniuk's pieces is the reliance on Ukrainian folklore combined with modern means of the musical language. A vivid example is V. Martyniuk's cantata 'A Cossack Went through the Valley' to the lyrics of Cossack songs of the Dnipro region (2017) for bandura ensemble, soloists, percussion and piano. The main source of the musical-thematic material of the cantata was the Cossack's songs of the Dnipro region (which were collected in the folklore expeditions of M. Glinka Dnipropetrovsk Academy of Music). The significance of these songs is confirmed by the fact that in 2016 UNESCO inscribed Cossack's songs of Dnipro region on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (UNESCO, [n.d.](#)). The ensemble's repertoire also includes songs written by other local composers based on verses by local poets. There are songs dedicated to the Dnipro region such as Ridna Prydniprovshchyna ('Native Prydniprovshchyna') by V. Sydorenko as well as some region villages Selo moe Manvelivka ('My village Manvelivka') by I. Kolishenko. The stories behind all these local composers' musical pieces (using John Schofield's words to 'Charivnytsi' ensemble) contribute to understanding the Dnipro region and its townsfolk.
- (4) The pieces of classical and modern foreign composers. An insignificant part of the repertoire (5%) is represented by the music of classical and modern foreign composers, such as Barcarolle from 'The Tales of Hoffmann' by J. Offenbach, Poem by



Z. Fibich, Ave Maria by A. Piazzolla, Panis Angelicus by C. Franck. They sound Ukrainian thanks to the unique timbre of the bandura while performed by the ensemble 'Charivnytsi'. Famous modern Russian-born American ethnomusicologist Izaly Zemtsovsky believes: 'The timbre embodies the sound ideal of each ethnic culture, the national intonation features. Even Bach's fugues performed on Uzbek folk instruments sound like Uzbek folk music' (Zemtsovsky, 1976, p. 898).

### *The originality of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble's repertoire*

According to British musicologist and writer Nicholas Cook, the authenticity of the repertoire and the performing style is an important element in the collective musical self-identity of any music group (Cook, 2018, p. 47). The ensemble 'Charivnytsi' achieves its own repertoire originality in several ways. Firstly, the pieces of Dnipro's composers make up to 24% of the modern repertoire. Secondly, the arrangements created by the leaders of the ensemble Svitlana Ovcharova and Maryna Berezutska make up to 54% of the ensemble's current repertoire. Thus, the originality of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble's repertoire is 78%. In this regard, it would be appropriate to quote the words of an American musicologist professor Patricia Shehan Campbell who duly noted that a repertoire is 'musically in balance with the teacher and her musical life in a multicultural and global society' including 'music the local and regional cultures can offer' (Campbell, 1996, p. 23).

According to Swedish musicologist Göran Folkestad

the development of a musical identity is a result of the cultural, ethnic, religious and national contexts in which people live. Musical identities exist in parallel and on several levels – including the local, the regional, the national and the global. (Folkestad, 2002, p. 151)

At all levels of the multi-level cultural space, the ensemble represents the Ukrainian musical culture by performing the national repertoire (national level). At the same time, its cultural and musical identity is the result of the joint influence of national culture, local and regional culture (music of the local composers, arrangements of the leaders of the ensemble), as well as global culture (musical works of various genres and styles as well as musical works by foreign composers).

The ensemble's repertoire has ideological content, typical for the bandura art of Ukraine, the musical works reflect the history, worldview, and mentality of the Ukrainian people: striving for unity and independence, love for Ukraine, pride in belonging to the Ukrainian nation. At the same time, the ensemble's repertoire contains musical works dedicated to the history of the region and those reflecting the mentality of the inhabitants of the region: love for their 'small' Motherland (Dnipro and the region), pride in belonging to the regional community (the Dnipro's townsfolk). Contemporary researchers use the term 'civicism' to express the sentiment of urban pride (Bell & De-Shalit, 2013, p. 4).

All of the above can serve as an answer to the first research question: What can Charivnytsi's music tell about the Dnipro's townsfolk? People who choose Charivnytsi's music love Ukraine and their hometown, they are proud of being Ukrainians and residents of Dnipro. Can Charivnytsi's music serve as a marker of the national and regional identity of Dnipro's residents? To answer this question, it is necessary to evaluate the results obtained from the standpoint of modern ideas of leading scientists about the concepts of cultural and national identity.



### *Modern ideas about the concepts of cultural and national identity*

The definition and components of national identity have been debated over the last three decades (Lazic & Pesic, 2016). The famous British researcher of the phenomenon of nation and national identity, Professor Anthony David Smith defines 'national identity' as 'the continuous reproduction and reinterpretation of the pattern of values, symbols, memories, myths, and traditions that compose the distinctive heritage of nations, and the identification of individuals with that pattern and heritage' (Smith, 2008, p. 19). British sociologists David McCrone and Frank Bechhofer in their book «*Understanding national identity*» 2015 confirm that national identity is not only eminently observable, but knowable as well, that national identity is not *below consciousness*, off the radar, or inaccessible to empirical investigation, but rather located in the context-specific and explicit practices of ordinary people. They have looked to see how people make use of cultural markers such as place of birth, ancestry, residence, skin color, in assessing whether or not, and in what circumstances, to make claims to national identity, and to judge the claims of others (McCrone & Bechhofer, 2015, p. 18). A literary scholar and cultural historian professor Anne-Marie Thiesse expresses the opinion that most modern researchers listen to: national identities are not facts of nature, but constructions. The list of the basic elements of national identity is well known today: ancestral founders, a history, heroes, language, monuments, landscapes, and folklore (Thiesse, 2007, pp. 16–17; Thiesse, 2021, p. 10). Göran Folkestad highlights the importance of different cultural identities in the construction of national identity: 'the "official" definition of national identity is based on the different cultural and ethnic identities within the regions that are defined as a nation' (Folkestad, 2002, p. 153). The art of music is one of the basic elements in the constructions of national identity. Ralph Vaughan Williams wrote:

The art of music above all the other arts is the expression of the soul of a nation, and by a nation I mean not necessarily aggregations of people, artificially divided from each other by political frontiers or economic barriers. What I mean is any community of people who are spiritually bound together by language, environment, history, and common ideals and, above all ... continuity with the past. (Williams, 1934, p. 123)

Thus, from the standpoint of modern ideas about cultural and national identity, the bandura art in general and the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble in particular should be considered as one of the cultural identities of the Ukrainian nation. Anne-Marie Thiesse in her work 'The formation of national identity' notes:

The list of attributes of any self-respecting nation should possess is well established and includes the following: founding fathers, a historical narrative that provides a sense of continuity across the vicissitudes of history itself, a series of heroes, a language, cultural and historical monuments, sites of shared memory, a typical landscape, a folklore not to mention a variety of more picturesque features, such a costumes, gastronomy. (Thiesse, 2007, pp. 16–17)

The musical works from the repertoire of the ensemble 'Charivnytsi' reflect all the basic elements of Ukrainian national identity with no exception, for example: heroes of the struggle of the Ukrainian people for freedom and independence from Cossack Age to present time; historic sites of the Second World War and monuments to the soldiers who died in defense of Ukraine; the statue of great Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko; a typical Ukrainian landscape – the Dnipro river, the Carpathian Mountains, the Black Sea; as well as the Ukrainian costumes and gastronomy.

The bandura art of Ukraine for five centuries, and the ensemble 'Charivnytsi' for half a century have been carrying out the continuous reproduction and reinterpretation of the pattern of values, symbols, memories, myths, and traditions of Ukrainians. This repertoire is a distinctive heritage of the Ukrainian nation. Ralph Vaughan Williams emphasized the special importance of national music, he believed that music has spiritual value. It shares in preserving the identity of soul of the individual and of the nation (Williams, 1934, p. 124). The repertoire of 'Charivnytsi' carries the spirit of nationality, it is homogeneous in its national content, it unites audiences from different social groups offering them national and regional identity. Using the words of Ralph Vaughan Williams in relation to the ensemble 'Charivnytsi': Charivnytsi's repertoire can be called a music expression of common ideals shared by the Ukrainians. It is precisely those common ideals that spiritually bound Ukrainians together into a single nation. Charivnytsi's music shares in preserving the identity of soul of the Ukrainian nation and the Dnipro's townsfolk.

## ***Part II. What can Dnipro's townsfolk tell about the Charivnytsi's music?***

The analysis of interviews with the audience of the bandura ensemble made it possible to get a clear idea of how the Dnipro's townsfolk perceive the ensemble 'Charivnytsi' and Charivnytsi's music (their repertoire). Most of the interviews were conducted by the author after the ensembles' performances and concerts in the period 2016–2020, a number of interviews with famous figures of Ukrainian culture and art published in print and online publications in 2000–2020 were also used. None of the respondents insisted on anonymity. However, we found it appropriate not to give their names. Most of the interviews were conducted in groups (2–3 people) and the audience expressed very similar opinions. The total number of respondents was 100 people. The respondents' age varied from 15 to 82 (average age 45 years), 72% of the respondents were regular listeners of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble, 28% were present at the performance for the first time. 65% of the respondents were the residents of Dnipro; 35% were residents of the Dnipropetrovsk region. 95% of the respondents were Ukrainians, 5% of the respondents were of other nationalities.

Such a homogeneous national composition of the audience is natural, since the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble performs Ukrainian music in a region where the overwhelming majority of the population consider themselves to be Ukrainians. According to the State Statistics Committee of Ukraine in 1989, 71.6% of the population of the Dnipropetrovsk region considered themselves Ukrainians, in 2001–79.3% (State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, n.d.). In 2017, according to GfK (slogan's abbreviation: Growth from Knowledge, GfK is a world-leading provider of data and analytics to the consumer goods industry): 82% of the Dnipro's residents considered themselves Ukrainian (Center for Insights in Survey Research, n.d., p. 80). A feature of the Dnipropetrovsk region is the widespread use of the Russian language by the population along with the Ukrainian in everyday life. All respondents (100%) considered themselves bilingual (equally good in Ukrainian and Russian), 68% of respondents answered in Russian, 32% in Ukrainian. This data is consistent with the data of the official statistics: at this time, 70% of the population of Dnipro is equally good at both Ukrainian and Russian (Reference book, n.d.). The phenomenon of bilingualism of Eastern Ukrainians is explained by the fact that: 'the increasingly civic nature of Ukrainian national identity appears to be an important factor that allows

**Table 1.** The analysis of interview data.

№	Statement	Occurrence rate (%)
1	The ensemble 'Charivnytsi' are Ukrainians and the Dnipro's townsfolk who express their love for Ukraine and Dnipro in bandura music	81
2	Charivnytsi's music sounds Ukrainian and performed in an original Dnipro way	85
3	Charivnytsi's music evokes a sense of belonging to the Ukrainian nation and the regional community (the Dnipro's townsfolk) and a sense of pride of being Ukrainians and the Dnipro's residents.	80

people to speak Russian and still identify strongly with the Ukrainian nation' (Bureiko & Moga, 2019, p. 137).

In an unstructured interview, one open-ended question was asked: what do you think about the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble and the music they perform? All respondents gave several characteristics in their detailed answer to the question. Table 1 summarizes the opinions most often expressed by the respondents.

Below is a statement by a spectator of the concert dedicated to the 60th anniversary of the ensemble 'Charivnytsi' (2016). Her answer contains the thoughts expressed by the majority of respondents. She said:

these girls (the ensemble's members) are the same Ukrainians and the Dnipro's townsfolk as all those who attended their performance today. Like all of us, they grew up and became who they are in Dnipro, practically before our eyes: my husband and I have been attending their concerts for 15 years (the last 5 years – also with our son), my parents visited their performances too. Like other Dnipro's residents, they are very fond of our Ukraine, our native Dnipro, and our bandura. They differ only in that they can express their love in music and songs, as well as share their love with more people. Their music help us understand the beauty of Ukraine and Dnipro, realize our love for them and pride in being Ukrainians and the Dnipro's residents. Their music is in tune with our feelings and thoughts. (Interviews conducted by the author)

As can be seen from Table 1, more than 80% of all respondents used all of the listed characteristics. This means that only the complex of these interrelated characteristics reflects the collective perception of the ensemble 'Charivnytsi' and its music by the inhabitants of Dnipro and the region. The analysis below has shown that the townsfolk's subjective opinions have an objective basis.

### ***'The bandura ensemble 'Charivnytsi' are Dnipro's residents with banduras'***

The bandura ensemble 'Charivnytsi' was founded in 1956 by Lidia Vorina (1929–2017). Her many years of effort have created the conditions necessary for the formation of a distinctive regional school of bandura performance when the performing skills are passed on from a teacher (master) to students while maintaining the main features of the teacher's creative individuality. Many duplications of the teacher's cultural identity (from one generation to another) have led to the creation of a professional community of performers united by a common worldview, the manner of instrumental and vocal performance, and pedagogical approach. Paraphrasing a statement of Sara Cohen, we can say that the group of the Dnipro's bandurists can be seen as 'somehow more than just the sum of its members, existing above and beyond them, not just representing them but also defining them' (Cohen, 1991, p. 37). The 'Charivnytsi' ensemble became the basis of the

Dnipropetrovsk bandura school and a creative environment that ensures the transmission of traditions. The Dnipropetrovsk Music College (M. Glinka Dnipropetrovsk Conservatoire since 2006, M. Glinka Dnipropetrovsk Academy of Music and a Music College since 2016) has trained more than 250 bandura players over 65 years. All of them are aware of their belonging to the same school, honor the traditions of their professional brotherhood, and maintain close ties (Cherneta, 2009, p. 28).

Dnipro has always been a Ukrainian city with a lot of young people who enjoy listening to bandura music. Among them, there were the ones who chose their path to become a real bandura player. Their training lasts from 9 years (school – college) to 15 years (school – college – academy). According to a Swiss educational theorist and practitioner, Etienne Wenger, learning transforms who they are and what they can do, it is an experience of identity. It is not just an accumulation of skills and information, but a process of becoming – to become a certain person (Wenger, 1998, p. 215). For 9 years (learning), young musicians adopt from their teachers not only the bandura playing techniques and repertoire but also the worldview and traditions of the Dnipropetrovsk bandura school (an experience of identity). Thus, one becomes a bandura performer. Nicholas Cook puts this succinctly: 'In today's world, deciding what music to listen to (and what music to make) is a significant part of deciding and announcing to people not just who you want to be [...] but who you are. 'Music' is a very small word to encompass something that takes as many forms as there are cultural identities. When we speak of music we are really talking about a multiplicity of activities and experiences; it is only the fact that we call them all 'music' that makes it seem obvious that they belong together' (Cook, 1998, p. 5). The learning to become a bandurist includes a multiplicity of socio-cultural activities and experiences thanks to which the future musician realizes not just who he wants to be, but who he is, and who he has become. Thus, a musical, professional, and cultural identity of any bandurist is formed. Being a bandurist is a way of living in Ukrainian music, being part of the Ukrainian culture, presenting it to the audience, keeping the traditions of the Dnipropetrovsk bandura school, and planting them to your students. A famous Ukrainian bandura player, the current leader of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble, professor M. Glinka Dnipropetrovsk Academy of Music Svitlana Ovcharova recalled in one of her interviews: 'being part of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble kindled the fire of love to Ukraine and taught us to turn the state of our Ukrainian souls into the magical sounds of the bandura' (Cherneta, 2009, p. 92). The words of the leader of the Dnipro bandura ensemble are consonant with the thoughts of Vaughan Williams that 'national music is the expression of the soul of a nation'.

### ***'Charivnytsi's music sounds Ukrainian and performed in a Dnipro way'***

Eighty-five percent of the respondents used this exact phrase when describing their music, as if insisting that only a combination of these characteristics corresponds to their impressions of the Charivnytsi's music. The respondents motivated their opinion using the characteristics of the ensemble's repertoire as arguments: *'songs only in Ukrainian', 'many Ukrainian folk songs', 'only Ukrainian melodies', 'a lot of songs and music of Ukrainian composers'*. Almost all respondents insisted that *'bandura is the most Ukrainian instrument'*, because *'other Ukrainian instruments are also popular among other peoples, but only Ukrainians have bandura'* (from interviews conducted by the author).

Dozens of various professional orchestras and ensembles (symphonic, brass, chamber, folk, jazz, etc.), amateur pop and rock groups function in the Dnipro and the region, and there are also various folklore groups, whose performances include Ukrainian folk songs, Ukrainian folk instrumental music, Ukrainian folk dances. The 'Charivnytsi' ensemble differs from these purely folklore groups in its repertoire, reflecting the inextricable connection and continuity between Ukrainian musical folklore and modern Ukrainian music. At present, in Dnipro and the region all bandura ensembles (in music schools, colleges, philharmonia) are subsidiaries, their leaders have been trained in the ensemble 'Charivnytsi' and continue its traditions.

Many respondents (85%) said that 'any bandura music is associated with Ukraine but only Charivnytsi's music is perceived as our own, local, very Dnipro-style. Our bandurists sing a lot of songs that no one else performs. And even the most popular Ukrainian folk songs *O, mylyi mii* ('Oh, My Dear'), *Oi khodyla divchyna* ('Oh, the Girl Was Walking'), sung by them, somehow sound like performed in our own, Dnipro way' (Interviews conducted by the author). The audience gave a correct assessment of the ensemble's repertoire, which coincides with the results of the analysis of the 'Charivnytsi' repertoire (given in the first part of the article). Indeed, 95% of the ensemble's repertoire has a national character, 24% of the pieces in the repertoire are written by local composers and are performed only by the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble. Ukrainian folk songs and pieces by Ukrainian composers (54% of the repertoire) are performed by the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble in a unique arrangement by the leaders of the ensemble (therefore, they sound completely different from the performance of other bandura ensembles from other Ukrainian regions).

While analyzing the importance of music for the expression and perception of cultural identity, Simon Frith noted: 'First, that an identity is always already an ideal, what we would like to be, not what we are. But if musical identity is idealizing not just oneself but also the social world one inhabits, it is, secondly, always also real, enacted in musical activities. Music making and music listening, that is to say, are bodily matters, involve what one might call social movements. In this respect, musical pleasure is not derived from fantasy – it is not mediated by daydreams – but is experienced directly: music gives us a real experience of what the ideal could be' (Frith, 1996, p. 123). Charivnytsi's music evokes musical pleasure among the Dnipro's residents since it gives them a real experience of what the ideal could be, and this ideal is Ukrainian. A British historian, writer and academic Paul Gilroy in his discussion of cultural identity states that 'it (identity) is neither simply a social and political category nor a vague and utterly contingent construction, but it is lived as coherent experiential sense of self, it remains the outcome of practical activity: language, gesture, bodily significations, desires' (Gilroy, 1993, p. 102). A vivid illustration of Paul Gilroy's words can be seen in the performances of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble, materializing the Ukrainian cultural identity. The bandura performances entirely consist of national symbols: the Ukrainian language, the Ukrainian musical instruments (banduras), the Ukrainian traditional costumes, the Ukrainian melodies, the Ukrainian lyrics. The lyrics of the songs are filled with the semantic content of national character: lyrical songs about love for the native land and nature, songs about the heroic past of Ukraine, cheerful Ukrainian dance melodies, a little philosophical and moralizing songs about family values. A famous Ukrainian conductor Oleksandr Pereverziev said in his interview: 'the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble was and remains a sample of the real

Ukrainian art, exclusively the Ukrainian product of culture, the hallmark and a valuable property of Dnipro' (Cherneta, 2009, p. 105).

*'Charivnytsi's music evokes a sense of belonging to the Ukrainian nation and the regional community (the Dnipro's townsfolk) and a sense of pride of being Ukrainians and the Dnipro's residents'*

This opinion was expressed by 80% of the respondents. Each performance of the bandura ensemble 'Charivnytsi' is a celebration of the Ukrainian culture. For both Ukrainians and other ethnic groups, the bandura art is a cultural symbol of Ukraine. Even a range of planned concert performances of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble (for example, annual recitals) carry out a 'representative' function. The ensemble accompanies most of the solemn events in Dnipro: official meetings of important guests of the city, public holidays (Independence Day, Day of Unity of Ukraine, Constitution Day of Ukraine, etc.); numerous city holidays and celebrations (The Day of the City, Shevchenko's Days, presentations of important city projects, etc.). Many public events take place in the open air, so city squares and parks serve as concert venues for the ensemble (Figure 1). If for the guests of the city the ensemble 'Charivnytsi' is the hallmark of Dnipro, for the residents of the city it is a part of their cultural life. 'Live music creates local scenes and a sense of identity for those who are there: a social link between performer and audience, which reinforces the link between music and place' (Connell & Gibson, 2003, p. 278). The bandura performances and the Ukrainian music have long become a tradition of the city on holidays: beautiful girls in national costumes with banduras perfectly fit into the Dnipro's landscape. Live music of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble creates a social link between them and the



**Figure 1.** Ukraine's national holiday, Independence Day. Near the Dnipro Opera House, 2011.



townspeople, which reinforces the link between bandura music and Dnipro. Music plays a special role in the making of the cultural space of any city. Simon Frith writes:

but what makes music special for identity is that it defines a space without boundaries. Music is thus the cultural form best able both to cross borders – sounds carry across fences and walls and oceans, across classes, races, and nations – and to define places; in clubs, scenes, and raves, listening on headphones, radio and in the concert hall, we are only where the music takes us. (Frith, 1996, p. 125)

The local audience always welcomes the performances of the bandura players very warmly. The prominent Dnipro cultural figure Volodymyr Stukalo in his interview, characterizing the attitude of the Dnipropetrovsk's residents to the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble, used the words of the great Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko about the bandura players: 'And those who play (the bandura) are known and thanked by people ...' (Cherneta, 2009, p. 108).

The townspeople are accustomed to seeing the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble at the Dnipro's open concert halls on holidays; they perceive them as an essential attribute of the city's celebration. In interviews, people most often described their experiences with the following words: 'When we see the bandura players in embroidered shirts and hear them performing *Krasunia-zemlia* ('Beauty Land'), *O, mylii mii* ('Oh, My Dear'), *Ukripy nas, lubov!* ('Strengthen Us Love') and other familiar and favorite Ukrainian songs from the 'Charivnytsi' repertoire in the Dnipro's squares and parks, we feel that we are in our native Dnipro and that Dnipro is a Ukrainian city' (Interviews conducted by the author). Some respondents said that they take audio recordings of the ensemble 'Charivnytsi' with them on trips around the country and abroad and listen to them in order to '*feel a connection with their homeland and home*', '*to feel like Ukrainian and Dnipro's townsfolk*' (from interviews conducted by the author). A famous Ukrainian poetess Zoya Ruzhyn noted during an interview: 'With their songs and music, the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble generously sow in the souls of their listeners the immortal feelings of love for life, for the native land, for the native people, for their priceless heritage – the bandura and the song' (Cherneta, 2009, p. 98).

Raymond MacDonald wrote: 'Music is ambiguous, and no matter how composers or performers wish to imbue their music with particular intentions, listeners will construct their own meanings for the music: these meanings will never be wrong and will always be unique. Thus, all music making, all music listening, all music talking, all musicking is essentially an identity project. Music provides a forum in which we construct and negotiate our constantly evolving sense of who we are, and our place in the world' (MacDonald et al., 2017, p. 5). The repertoire of the Dnipro's bandura players makes their listeners think about the eternal questions: *Who are we? Where are we from? Where are we going?* The music of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble prompts the listeners to answer these questions: *I am a Ukrainian! I live in Dnipro! Dnipro is a Ukrainian city!* A famous Ukrainian bandura player Yuriy Zadoia recalled in his interview: 'The performances of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble stirred my heart and awakened the love for the bandura, the Ukrainian song, for mother Ukraine, for the city of Dnipro. And I carried this love through my whole life' (Cherneta, 2009, p. 99).

The concert activity of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble is not limited to participation in the official ceremonial and festive events. Most of their concerts take place on weekdays at



schools, universities, colleges, museums, libraries, and hospitals in Dnipro and the region (in regional centers, small towns, and even in villages). Usually, such concerts are implemented as a part of long-term projects, for example, the Regional project 'Building the New Dnipro Region' in 2010–2015 – concerts in towns and villages of the region. Most of the projects are organized by M. Glinka Dnipropetrovsk Academy of Music, including: 'Young talents of M. Glinka Dnipropetrovsk Conservatoire for the city's youth' (2015–2019) – concerts for students and professors of the city's universities, 'Schoolchildren's Club' (2018–2020) – concerts for the city's schoolchildren, 'Non-material musical heritage of the Dnipro's region in the prism of generations' (2018–2019) for teachers of secondary schools at M. Glinka Dnipropetrovsk Academy of Music, 'Student Philharmonic' in the Central Library for library readers. The largest number of the ensemble's concerts are organized by principals of schools and colleges, rectors of universities, who care about the cultural education of the younger generation.

By using MacDonald's worlds in relation to the ensemble 'Charivnytsi', we can state that the bandurists' performances help to express and preserve cultural expressions of national identity in music, and to educate the growing generation in order to encourage its members to become part of a national and ethnic heritage (MacDonald et al., 2002, p. 155). In universities and schools of Dnipro, bandura music sounds no less natural on weekdays than it sounds on holidays in the squares and parks of Dnipro: it reminds us that we live in a beautiful Ukrainian city (author's note: these words were often spoken by respondents in their interviews). According to Simon Frith, 'the point is not that a social group has beliefs which it then articulates in its music, but that music, an aesthetic practice, articulates in itself an understanding of both group relations and individuality, on the basis of which ethical codes and social ideologies are understood' (Frith, 1996, p. 111). The audience of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble is represented by the residents of Dnipro and the region, they are people from different social groups. Simon Frith notes: 'the question we should be asking is not what does popular music reveal about the people who play and use it but how does it create them as a people? Popular music is popular not because it reflects something or authentically articulates some sort of popular taste or experience, but because it creates our understanding of what 'popularity' is, because it places us in the social world in a particular way' (Frith, 1996, p. 121). Continuing Simon Frith's thought, we can say: the music of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble helps them understand themselves and define their national and regional identity, feel like Ukrainian and the Dnipro's townsfolk. The respondents noted that 'such emotions arose most strongly in the presence of a large audience (both in concert halls and in squares or in the parks of Dnipro) during national holidays and, especially, during festivals' (Interviews conducted by the author). 80% of respondents said that at these moments they also felt a sense of pride being Ukrainians and the Dnipro's residents. Such answers of the respondents are consistent with the results of the survey conducted by GfK in 2017. To the question 'Are you proud of your city?' – 55% of the Dnipro's residents answered: 'Definitely proud', 29% – 'Somewhat proud' (Center for Insights in Survey Research, n.d., p. 41)

Festivals play an important role in the formation of the regional cultural identity; therefore, modern researchers have introduced the term '*the festivalization of culture*': 'festivalization processes draw on collective understandings and practices of space, time and agency, which are then deployed so as to shape communal notions of identity and

belonging. Moreover, these events are interpellated into a community's calendar of memorable and narratable pasts, with the sociocultural rhythm of life in the present, and with anticipated futures' (Bennett et al., 2014, p. 230). A national festival of bandura art 'Dzveny, Banduro!' ('Ring, Bandura!') was organized by the leaders of the ensemble 'Charivnytsi' in 1996. The festival 'Dzveny, Banduro!' received the status of the national festival of the ensemble bandura art, which became recognition of the merits of the Dnipro's bandura players in the development of the Ukrainian culture. An American ethnomusicologist, professor Alan Karass believes that an important function of festivals is 'its role as a forum for the citizens to express their identity. Performances of music [...] at the festival frame and highlight what residents believe about themselves, and what they desire others to believe about them. [...] The festival is a public spectacle that reflects the symbols, beliefs, and values of the citizens' (Karass, 2017, p. 820). Paraphrasing his expression, we can say that festival 'Dzveny, Banduro!' is an opportunity for the Dnipro's bandurists to articulate through various performances what it means to be a bandura performer from their perspectives, and present these perspectives not only to themselves, but also to visitors. Contemporary researchers believe that 'in the case of music festivals, the music genres performed – the song lyrics, instrumentation, melodic structures or performance styles – are understood as constructions of identity that are associated with specific cultural groups or lifestyles' (Bennett et al., 2014, p. 229). Bandura players are truly a specific cultural group, whose music is their lifestyle. This is Ukrainian culture and Ukrainian lifestyle. Sergiy Bashtan (People's Artist of Ukraine, Professor of P. Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine) recalled in his interviews that 'The national festival of bandura art 'Dzveny, Banduro!' became a real holiday of our national instrument in the Dnipropetrovsk region' (Cherneta, 2009, pp. 86–87).

Every year the number of the ensembles-participants grew, the geography of the festival expanded. The bandura ensembles from different Ukrainian cities joined forces to represent the national musical art in its regional manifestations at the festival 'Dzveny, Banduro!'. In Ukraine, there are 6 regional bandura schools (Kyiv, Lviv, Odesa, Kharkiv, Dnipro, and Donetsk) based on bandura classes in universities or music academies in the cities where these regional bandura schools are located. At first sight, the ensembles differ little from each other: banduras, national costumes, national repertoire. However, comparison easily reveals the uniqueness of each ensemble. In different regions of Ukraine, there are significant differences in traditional national costumes (ornament and colors of embroidery), different bandura modifications (body shape and number of strings), ways of playing, and manner of singing. The most important differences are in the repertoire and performance styles of the ensembles. According to an American ethnomusicologist, professor Bruno Nettl, the 'uniqueness of musical style and incompatibility with the music of neighbors is an important feature of music as marker of a group's identity' (Nettl, 2010, p. 50). A British musicologist and writer Nicholas Cook pointed out: 'because music and its associations vary substantially from place to place (like clothes used to and food still does, just about), it functions as a symbol of national or regional identity' (Cook, 1998, p. 5). If any bandura music functions as a symbol of the Ukrainian national identity, then the music of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble functions as a symbol of the national and regional identity of Dnipro. Charivnytsi's music in its semantic content has a lot in common with the music of other Ukrainian performers and can be therefore referred to as national. However, this music has differences determined by

the influence of regional culture. In turn, these differences determine the influence of the ensemble on the cultural identity of Dnipro. The festival 'Dzveny, Banduro!' became a living illustration of Göran Folkestad's words: 'Nationality becomes the cement which makes different regions stay together despite their reciprocal cultural and ethnic differences' (Folkestad, 2002, p. 152).

The festival 'Dzveny, Banduro!' has acquired its own traditions: the final concert of the festival used to be held on the Monastyrsky (Monastery) Island near the majestic monument of Taras Shevchenko boasting picturesque views of the Dnipro river. The final concert started with all the festival participants (over 400 people) performing the festival's anthem *Dnipro-Rika Slavetna Ukrainy!* ('The glorious Dnipro-river of Ukraine!') written specially for the festival by a Dnipro's composer Valentyna Martyniuk to the words of a Dnipro's poetess Valentina Zdorenko.

Valentyna Zdorenko

*The glorious Dnipro-river of Ukraine!*

(Translated by Natalie Sholina)

Look in the deep – the history's in water.  
 I see courageous warriors and folks  
 Unconquered by the horde and never turned to slaves  
 Drawing their power from the Dnipro's waves.  
 The mighty Dnipro-river of Ukraine,  
 Life-giving current in its flow  
 Brought on your wings to future generations,  
 The gift of hope that your blue waves bestow.  
 The Dnipro flows – uniting villages and towns,  
 Enchanting with a mother's song.  
 The beauty of Ukraine is praised all around  
 That song is merry, and it rings beyond.  
 The Dnipro's water flows through time,  
 The dumas and the kobza's ringing  
 It carries forth Taras's rhyme  
 In swirls of water ever-living.  
 The glorious Dnipro-river of Ukraine,  
 Life-giving current in its flow  
 The gift of hope your wings bestow  
 The glorious Dnipro-river of Ukraine!

The apotheosis of the festival was the joint performance of the song to Taras Shevchenko's poem *Reve ta Stogne Dnibr Shyrokyi* ('The Mighty Dnipro'). This song is the spiritual hymn of all Ukrainians and, despite the fact that the authorship of the music is known (D. Krizhanovskiy, 1856-1894), the song is often called a Ukrainian folk song due to its extreme popularity among the Ukrainians (Kolomiyets, 2018). The sound of many-voiced singing of four hundred voices amplified by powerful speakers was carried far along the Dnipro and heard many kilometers around. This sound against the backdrop of the picturesque Dnipro landscape created an emotional atmosphere that encourages openness towards others and evokes a feeling of belonging to each other, to the Ukrainian nation, which covers all participants during the performance of this song. The festival 'Dzveny, Banduro!' on the banks of the Dnipro united two of the most significant cultural symbols of Ukraine: the poet Taras Shevchenko and the bandura art. The powerful sound



**Figure 2.** National festival «Dzveny, banduro! («Ring, bandura!») Dnipro, Monastyrsky Island, 2014.

of the song, beloved by all Ukrainians, combined with the sight of 400 singing bandura players in national costumes at the foot of the 20-meter monument to Taras Shevchenko erected at the highest point of the Monastyrsky Island in the center of the Dnipro River made a stunning impression on numerous spectators (Figure 2). Both the participants and the spectators of the festival subsequently recalled the appearance of a powerful spiritual uplift and a strong sense of unity with all Ukrainians with delight. The words of an Australian sociologist Michelle Duffy accurately describe the nature of such emotional response as ‘enabling an individual to connect with a shared collective identity is a significant aspect of participating in a festival. Music is one means to provide participants with possibilities to (re)connect with each other, sustaining or generating a shared sense of belonging in and through the festival space – a belonging that then may spill out into helping individuals make sense of their everyday lives’ (Bennett et al., 2014, p. 245). A famous Ukrainian conductor Oleksandr Pereverziev expressed the feelings of the audience in the pages of a local newspaper: ‘Everyone who was at the festival felt that we are Ukrainians and the bandura is our instrument’ (Pereverziev, 2002, p. 4).

### *The impact of the Dnipro bandurists’ activity on national and regional identity of the Dnipro’s residents*

The analysis of the Charivnytsi’s music (1st part of the article) and its perception by the Dnipro’s residents (2nd part of the article) showed that it (Charivnytsi’s music) is an effective way of forming the national and regional identity of the Dnipro’s townspeople. This is confirmed by many factors, such as a steady increase in the number of bandura players in the city and the region, an increase in the number of children who learn to play the bandura, an increase in the presence of bandura music in the cultural space of the region (both live and virtual), accompanied by growth in the number of the audience. In 2020, only in Dnipro, bandura ensembles exist in 19 music schools and 3 colleges. The same number of ensembles exist in music schools and colleges of cities and regional centers of the Dnipropetrovsk region. Each of the ensembles is organized in the image and likeness of the ensemble ‘Charivnytsi’, each supports the traditions of the ‘mother’ ensemble and regularly offers new applicants for it. With the traditions and repertoire

of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble, the affiliated ensembles first 'absorb' and then 'reproduce' (re-transmit) the cultural identity of the Dnipro bandura school re-transmitting at the same time the Ukrainian national identity. Each of these bandura ensembles gives several public performances annually.

The number of children who learn to play the bandura objectively reflects the conscious desire of children and their parents to designate their belonging to the Ukrainian nation and actively promote its culture. Studying at a music school in the bandura class has never been cheap due to the cost of the instrument: a new bandura today costs 60,000 UAH (hryvnia) (more than \$2,200). Even the simplest bandura (for children) costs 21,600 UAH (about \$800). The minimum salary in Ukraine is 5000 UAH (about \$180). Parents who pay for the education of their children, thereby pay their money to promote the development of national culture. In 1956 (the date of the creation of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble), in Dnipro (called Dnipropetrovsk at that time) and the region, about 20 children were trained in the bandura class. In 2020, in Dnipro and the region, this number is 640. The growth in the number of these children is a fairly reliable criterion of effectiveness of the bandura players' activity in the formation of Ukrainian cultural and national identity in the region.

Australian journalist, educator, and researcher Andrea Baker believes: 'music activity in urban areas is often an organic process which takes place in venues, public and private spaces, and also online and via virtual and augmented reality' (Baker, 2019, p. 302). Live and virtual music of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble has been giving rise to the very *sense of place* among the Dnipro's inhabitants for many years. Virtual music activity of 'Charivnytsi' ensemble is present in the form of video and audio recordings. National and regional TV and radio companies broadcast performances of the ensemble at events of national, regional, or city significance. Video recordings of concerts of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble, as well as other bandura ensembles, are present on YouTube channels and on social networks such as Facebook, Instagram, etc. Nowadays, virtual representation in the cultural space plays a very important role, especially for the young audience, who are the future of Ukraine. The importance of the virtual representation of musical groups has grown even more in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic: many annual performer contests have become online.

The production of place (city) through music happens as a result of different performers' participation. Even Ruud writes: 'When we listen to a piece of music, we locate it in our cultural soundscape' (Ruud, 1997, p. 10). When the Dnipro's townsfolk listen to Charivnytsi's music, they locate it in their cultural soundscape; thus, bandura music has been creating Dnipro's cultural soundscape for 65 years. Ray Hudson's expression '*Making music, producing places*' is fully applicable to the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble and Dnipro: Dnipro's bandurists producing their city.

The words of a well-known Norwegian ethnomusicologist Even Ruud give a precise characteristic of the process of formation of regional cultural identity: 'it is in this point of tension between our national and local belongings, and the international media world, that our identification with music finds its place' (MacDonald et al., 2002, p. 152). This is how Charivnytsi's music found its place in Dnipro's cultural space.

The analysis of the repertoire of the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble allowed us to find out what Charivnytsi's music can tell us about the Dnipro's townsfolk. Being national in its

ideological content, it is unique as it comprises both the local composers' musical pieces and the ensemble leaders' original arrangements. The repertoire of the ensemble 'Charivnytsi' expresses feelings, desires, and dreams of the Dnipro's townsfolk for 65 years. In other words, the ensemble 'Charivnytsi' is a peculiar 'musical mirror' of Dnipro and its inhabitants. The high popularity of this music among the Dnipro's residents testifies to their patriotism and civicism (feeling proud of being a member of the Dnipro community).

Interview with the Dnipro's residents made it possible to find out what the Dnipro's townsfolk can tell us about the Charivnytsi's music. The invariably high demand for the 'Charivnytsi' ensemble among the Dnipro's residents for half a century suggests that they perceive the Dnipro's bandura players as an integral part of urban culture. Dnipro needs the bandura ensemble 'Charivnytsi' to demonstrate the city's own cultural identity. Dnipro's residents need the bandura ensemble 'Charivnytsi' in order to feel they are Ukrainians and the Dnipro's townsfolk.

## Conclusion

Bandura art has been an integral part of Ukrainian culture over the past five centuries. It is the component of the basic elements in the construction of Ukrainian national identity. The bandura ensemble 'Charivnytsi' has been an integral part of Dnipro's region culture space for half a century and a component of the regional and national identity of Dnipro's townsfolk (and region). The repertoire of the ensemble 'Charivnytsi' is the cultural heritage of Dnipro reflecting the history of culture of the city and its inhabitants in a 65 years perspective. The multifaceted activity of the Dnipro's bandura players (concerts, festivals, virtual music) has been forming a sense of belonging to the national, regional, and city community in the Dnipro's residents. Thus, the ensemble 'Charivnytsi' is not only a cultural symbol of Dnipro, but also a bearer, keeper, and creator of the Ukrainian culture of the city. The number of Dnipro's bandura players and the scale of their creative activity are steadily growing from year to year, increasing their contribution to the formation of the cultural space of Dnipro and the region. The more bandurists are among the Dnipro's residents, the more bandura music (live and virtual) is represented in the cultural space of Dnipro and, consequently, the more Ukrainian this space becomes.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

## Notes on contributor

*Maryna Berezutska*, PhD in Music Art, an Associate Professor of Department of Folk Instruments, M. Glinka Dnipropetrovsk Academy of Music, and Leader of Bandura ensemble «Charivnytsi». Her science interests are bandura art, music education and history of music.

## ORCID

*Berezutska Maryna*  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-5511-2195>



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