CHAPTER FIVE

Pushkin, Soviet Ballet, and Afterward

Russian ballet, which had achieved such a great level of technical and artistic accomplishment under Petipa, Fokine and Gorsky, had deteriorated artistically prior to the 1917 Revolution. Not only had the deprivations of World War I, the exodus of talent with Diaghilev, and the uncertainty and chaos associated with pre-revolutionary Russia impacted Russia's ballet institutions, popular support in St. Petersburg and Moscow was dwindling. Russian ballet was at a crossroads; the institutions either had to find a new artistic vision, or suffer the fate of ballet in Western Europe and become regarded as a second-rate art.

Dissatisfaction on stage and backstage was responsible for much of the problem. In the first case, audiences had grown tired of seeing on stage the same old ballets with recycled sets and costumes.[1] Backstage, outstanding dancers, choreographers and composers were being molded, but the management of the imperial theatres, especially the Maryinsky, was indifferent to this emerging talent that challenged the status quo. Choreographers and composers wanted to produce new works and dancers wanted new roles to perform, but the management continued to produce conservative ballets. A general feeling of uncertainty and unease made imperial institutions resistant to change,[2] which encouraged Diaghilev and his associates to take their talents to Western Europe in order to produce new works. This talent-drain at the Maryinsky was actually a boon for the Bolshoi Ballet in Moscow. As the great talents of the Maryinsky left, the status of the Bolshoi rose.[3] This would prove fortuitous after the Revolution when the seat of government was reestablished in Moscow.

The fear of change, talent-drain and lack of artistic vision at home in Russia was in sharp contrast to the reputation of Russian ballet abroad. Russian ballet was being hailed as the finest representation of the art worldwide outside of Russia while declining in importance and prestige at home:

> Thus before the 1917 Revolution, a paradoxical situation had developed in Russian ballet. Russia, being the seedbed of twentieth-century ballet, was reviving the balletic art throughout the world: yet at the same time Russia

> was cold-bloodedly forfeiting, at home, everything that it had gained (Demidov 1977, 9).

Despite this desperate situation, Russia's long legacy of fine training and popularity had built a solid foundation for the art. Furthermore, Russian ballet (as discovered in Western Europe) was indeed recognizable as a unique style. However, it would take much experimentation and a new artistic vision to rehabilitate Russian ballet at home. Ironically, during an era when change was so rampant, change in Russian ballet occurred by looking backward to Didelot and Pushkin for inspiration and affirmation that Russian ballet was part of the fabric of Russian society, not just a foreign import that should be discarded.

What was difficult to realize in Russia was that Russian ballet had developed its own style, and was not just a copy of the Italian and French models. The uproar caused by the *Ballets Russes* in Western Europe was not only because of the revolutionary nature of the choreography, music, sets and costumes. Russian dancers were different. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Russian ballet style had begun to contribute its own special characteristics to the genre. It built on the imported styles of Italy and France, but over time combined the two styles and enhanced this combination with its own unique characteristics:

> The Italian school was devoted to the principles of rigid virtuosity: a strict style that did now allow fluidity, flexibility, or gentleness. The French ballet cultivated romantic dance, charming for its unearthly beauty, ethereal nature, and faery-like fantasy. The Russian school endowed classical dance with a special spiritual abundance. It created its own style of broad movements, flowing and majestic, proud yet gentle…There is a good reason why the plasticity of arm movement began to play a tremendous role in Russian classical choreography. There had been no such thing in either Italian or French ballet (Demidov 1977, 4).

The exodus of talent, conservative mind-set, and failure to recognize the greatness of Russian ballet at home, almost caused the demise of the ballet. However, Russian ballet had proved tenacious over the years and the residual strength of the institutions provided a foundation sufficient enough to weather the 1917 Revolution and subsequent social changes.

Russian ballet had its own style of dancing, but the period of experimentation following the Revolution and Russia's extreme isolation from the West became an incubator for creating unique Russian works. Russian ballet was on the threshold of being just that--Russian Ballet. It has been estimated that forty percent of Russia's ballet personnel left immediately after the Revolution (Clarke and Crisp 1973, 206). Since so many talented dancers, composers and choreographers had left Russia, new artists had to be identified and trained. Furthermore, foreign talent was not flocking to Russia therefore Russian ballet was in effect forced to develop by using its own dancers, choreographers, and composers. For the first time in its history, Russian ballet was separated from contemporary foreign influences. This laid the foundation for creating Russia's own unique ballet. Russian dancers, choreographers and composers were being trained, but Russian themes for new ballets were not yet fully developed. For example, Gorsky, who kept the level of training high in Moscow, created ballets for the Bolshoi Ballet until the Revolution. However, all of his works were based on non-Russian themes.[4] In 1923 he presented one more work, *Tannhauser*, to music by Wagner.

It was not surprising that Russian ballet was in a state of turmoil during the early part of the 1900s. The entire country was experiencing massive social upheavals and transformations. The Revolution did not immediately decide the governmental future of the country. A bloody civil war between the Red (communist) and White (anti-revolutionary) Armies ensued, which the Red Army eventually won. Also, Russia was still at war with Germany until March 3, 1918, when the treaty of Brest-Litovsk was signed (Treadgold 1995, 118). In 1917 the power of the Russian Empire passed to the Communist Party only to be passed to Lenin and other leaders of the Central Committee in 1922. By 1924 this power had been transferred again to three men; Stalin, Trotsky and Nicholas Bukharin (1888-1938). Stalin eventually eliminated any potential competition for supreme leadership of the Soviet Union so that "not yet an autocrat at the end of 1929, Stalin by then was in a position to shape policy pretty much according to his desires" (Tucker 1974, 492).

As early as 1917, though, Lenin had a philosophical position on the arts in Russia. Lenin believed that religion must be destroyed in the Soviet Union and the only substitution for religion was the arts. However, he was not willing to give artists true

creative freedom. Lenin "recognized the fact that the artist claimed creative liberty, but he declared that the regime, not the artist, should and would determine the outcome in the arts" (Treadgold 1995, 180). Lenin was uncomfortable with the new artistic "isms" that were springing up around him and was noted for preferring the writings of Pushkin over many of the current writers' works of the revolutionary era. As it became evident that censorship would increase and freedom of artistic expression decrease, many of the best Russian writers left or fell silent in the new Soviet Union (Treadgold 1995, 181). Since the writings of those who left the Soviet Union were censored or banned, and those who remained behind were silent, new literary works to provide inspiration for ballets were not readily forthcoming.[5] This eventually forced choreographers to reexamine "acceptable" works, and Pushkin's importance was soon established.

The Russian ballet became known as the Soviet ballet. While the Bolshoi retained its simple name, the Maryinsky was first renamed the State Academy of Ballet and Opera in 1917 and then renamed the Kirov Ballet[6] after Kirov's assassination in 1934. However, for the purpose of this paper and for simplification, the ballet companies will continue to be referred to as the Maryinsky (Kirov) and Bolshoi. Also, the Soviet ballet will continue to be referred to as the Russian ballet because, after the fall of the Soviet Union, the Soviet ballet again became the Russian ballet. Despite these name changes, these two companies retained their own individual identities and strengths.

To some it is a miracle that these Russian ballet organizations survived the destruction and restructuring necessitated by the October 1917 Revolution. The aftermath of the Revolution featured sweeping reforms and generally a feeling of not only "out with the old", but "out with the foreign." Ballet in Russia embodied several characteristics that were considered undesirable by the new Soviet regime. First, ballet was introduced in Russia by French, Italian, Danish and Swedish teachers brought in to teach at the Tsarist courts (Swift 1968, 5). Secondly, ballet had been enjoyed primarily by members of the elite classes and was strongly identified with, and supported by, the Imperial Court. During the tsarist era, seats were indeed difficult to come by. As noted by former dancer Tamara Karsavina:

> A competition for seats, for the right to be a subscriber, well proved the interest it aroused. To obtain a seat, a petition to the Chancery of the Imperial Theatres had to be filed; the chance of success was so small that

> big premiums were constantly offered by advertisement to the original holders of the stalls. The subscribers held tenaciously to their prerogative (Karsavina 1948, 125).

Why did ballet, a foreign elitist art, survive the cultural cleansing after the 1917 Revolution? There were two main reasons for its survival: Lenin and popular support.[7] Both the Mayrinsky and Bolshoi Ballets were criticized for being antiquated, elitist, and out of step with the revolution. Others argued that ballet was part of Russia's cultural past and should be preserved. Lenin, after struggling with his proletarian conscience defended ballet against those who urged its demise, including a Comrade A. V. Galkin:

> It seems to me that Comrade Galkin has a somewhat naïve idea of the role of the significance of theatres. A theatre is necessary not so much for propaganda, as to rest hard workers after their daily work. And it is still early to file away in the archives our heritage from bourgeois art (Swift 1968, 5).

Furthermore, Lenin opposed demands for the complete rejection of the cultural past and told the Young Communist Organization in 1920:

> Marxism has won its historical significance as the ideology of the revolutionary proletariat because, far from rejecting the most valuable achievements of the bourgeois epoch, it has, on the contrary, assimilated and refashioned everything of value in the more than two thousand years of the development of human thought and culture. Only further work on this basis and in this direction, inspired by the practical experience of proletarian dictatorship…can be recognized as the development of genuine proletarian culture (McMahon 1985, 59).

It is possible that one key to the survival of Russian ballet during the 1917 Revolution lies in the fact that the audiences were not entirely aristocratic. Although seats were hard to come by, an enthusiastic lower-class audience attended the ballet. Again Karsavina asserted that:

> Less pontifical, but hardly of smaller importance, were the lesser "balletomanes", the pit and the gallery. They also crowned and dethroned. Erudition and the terminology of the ballet they may have lacked, but in spontaneity of admiration, in fantastical transports of young enthusiasm they far outstripped their colleagues of the stalls (Karsavina 1948, 126).

Neither the Maryinsky (Kirov) nor Bolshoi Ballets closed during the Revolution and subsequent civil war. Performances continued without heat, or other amenities, to full

houses. After a brief break in their seasons, caused by the chaotic aftermath of the Revolution, both ballet companies resumed performances to full houses. As Alexander Pleschevez, the senior St. Petersburg ballet critic noted in 1918:

> This season I considered as a question of "to be or not to be?" for the ballet. The question of whether the ballet would survive on the state stage or would be wiped out as an amusement and caprice of its elect admirers, was in the air of the theatre. The new audience, the masses who flocked to the ballet after its liberation from the subscribers, took a definite stand: It valued the ballet and chose it as an accessible art…The popular audience is sensitive, responsive and perceptive (Souritz 1990, 44).

The Russian ballet had survived the immediate crisis, but still lacked leadership and inspiration.

Control of the imperial theatres, including the Maryinsky (Kirov) and Bolshoi, was turned over to the Central Theatre Committee (*Tsentroteatr*) by a decree of the Council of People's Commissars of August 26, 1919. Some theatres were allowed to remain autonomous, but the *Tsentroteatr* was charged with insuring that the repertoire of these theatres adhered to socialistic ideals (Swift 1968, 32-33). The president of the *Tsentroteatr* was Anatole Lunacharsky (1875-1933), the people's commissar of education in the first Soviet cabinet under Lenin (Treadgold 1995, 182). By incorporating ballet under the auspices of the Soviets, ballet was ensured survival but lost much of its artistic freedom.

Although ballet in Russia weathered its rebirth surprisingly well, its adolescence proved difficult. Soviet censorship, general chaos in the newly created Soviet Union, and anti-utopian sentiments in the artistic communities complicated the development of Russian ballet in the 1920s and early 1930s. It would be the late 1930s before Russian ballet matured into a style and force of note.

Immediately after the Revolution, Soviet proponents for demolishing the ballet did not disappear, but redirected their criticism. These critics called for new Soviet ballets replacing tutus with overalls, swans with factory workers, and beautiful lyric music with pedestrian mechanical sound. Numerous new ballets were produced along these lines, but almost all had such short stage lives that they have been lost (Souritz 1990, 318).

Artistic censorship did not begin with the Soviet regime, it merely shifted emphasis. Prior to the Revolution, tsarist censorship policies restricted materials that

insulted personalities or disparaged religion, the government or morality. Russian artists were long accustomed to tempering their works within an acceptable range and generally acquiesced. Censorship under the Soviets was far more complicated and far more pervasive. It is not surprising that this censorship succeeded absolutely when one considers that government support of the arts was more important than ever since it was the only form of support available under the new Soviet system (Wallach 1991, 75).

During the 1920s, when art groups and censors under Lenin were less organized than later under Stalin, more experimental works appeared. At first, choreographers produced works that seemed to be exactly the kind of ballets that would be favorable to Soviet critics and the proletariat alike. In 1924 Fyodor Lopukhov (1888-1973), the director of the Maryinsky (Kirov) Ballet, produced the *Red Whirlwind*. Its purpose was to create an idealistic allegory expressing the greatness of the Revolution. However, the audience began leaving the theatre far before the end of the ballet and it only received two showings (Swift 1968, 63).

Kasyan Goleizovsky (1892-1970), a choreographer for the Bolshoi Ballet, produced a work which suffered a similar fate. Goleizovsky's 1927 ballet, *Smerch*, strived to show capitalists opposing the world of the proletariat and the death of the old order. Again, the audience left before the ballet ended (Swift 1968, 68).

These are just two examples of the many experimental works produced during the 1920s that were unable to generate public enthusiasm and critical acclaim. Choreographers were trying to please the censors, critics and audience, while simultaneously distancing themselves from the choreographic traditions and practices of the past. The result was disastrous (Souritz 1990, 285).

After several failed attempts to please the masses with Soviet themed ballets, the Soviet critics were in an awkward position. The proletariat had demonstrated vividly by leaving the theatre that it preferred the old classics (still performing to sold-out houses) to works based on Soviet themes. Since the proletariat could not be at fault for its predilection, then fault had to lie with the choreographers. The price for failure was severe. In the magazine, *Workers and Theatres*, Lopukhov was accused of "artistic bankruptcy…of the ballet and an absolute lack of understanding of the tasks facing the Soviet Theatre" (Swift 1968, 66). He later practiced *samokritika* (self-criticism) and

confessed to his mistakes in a 1929 declaration. Goleizovsky's works were declared to be "too impregnated with mysticism and erotics to meet with general recognition in the U.S.S.R." (Swift 1968, 69). He was later "rehabilitated" and his ballet *Don Quixote* appears in today's Bolshoi Ballet repertoire.

The previous brief review is just a microcosm of what befell numerous Soviet choreographers in the early 1920s. It is included to illustrate the difficulties inherent in producing successful Soviet ballets at this time.

Dance historians have debated why Russian choreographers in the 1920s chose such problematic subject matter for their works. Elizabeth Souritz claimed that it was a genuine desire to produce "Soviet" ballets reflecting societal changes and the new revolutionary spirit (Souritz 1990, 317). Serge Lifar and Mary Grace Swift disagreed noting that Soviet ballet was forced to experiment to survive. According to Lifar:

> Soviet papers are quite ready to publish didactic articles dealing with ballet's policy and what it ought to be, and this fact alone proves that Soviet ballet has its ideas imposed on it, it follows dictates which are foreign to art, and its evolution is unnatural, forced and artificial (Lifar 1954, 288).

Swift agreed with Lifar and stated that:

> The question of whether such ballets have been produced spontaneously, without state or party insistence, scarcely seems worth examining. Russian artistic ability in music, dance, painting, and literature captured the admiration of the entire world long before the revolution; few could dispute the fact that the people have inherent good taste and artistic potential (Swift 1968, 291).

This difference of opinion resulted from a difference of perspective. As a Soviet citizen, Souritz was more likely to see the experimentation as voluntary compliance with new Soviet ideals, especially since this experimentation was not limited to dance. As non-Soviet citizens, Lifar and Swift would be less inclined to see the value of these unpopular works, because ballet in the West during the 1920s was breaking new ground and developing original choreographic styles through the works of *Ballets Russes*' artists while modern dance was emerging as a powerful alternative to classical ballet.

Finally, on June 14, 1927, a new ballet, *The Red Poppy*, premiered and was praised by critics and enthusiasts alike. Its story concerned a Chinese tea house dancer

who sacrificed herself to save a Russian sailor. Although very popular, it was criticized for being choreographed in the "detestable old style" (Roslavleva 1966, 183). The music by Reinhold Gliere[8] (1875-1956) was "charming but uninspired" and the choreography by Tikhominov still contained the antiquated act of *divertissement* (Lifar 1954, 300).

The Red Poppy was important to the progress of Russian ballet because it brought ballet in Russia to its next stage of development: the dramatic ballets of the 1930s (Roslavleva 1966, 218). It was prominent in the history of the Russian ballet because it was the first successful attempt to render a modern theme (the evils of imperial colonization) on a Soviet ballet stage (Slonimsky 1947, 19). Furthermore, it proved to be extremely popular and was performed one hundred times by December 23, 1928 (Souritz 1990, 251). However, its popularity declined and it was removed from the Bolshoi's repertoire in 1960. It was initially successful because it bridged a gap between the old imperial ballet and the new socialist ballet, but was ultimately unable to survive as a classic:

> In judging *The Red Poppy* now and taking into account the development of Soviet ballet for the following half-century, one can understand both its close ties with its own time and the influence it had on the future. Created at a turning point, the ballet had new qualities destined to become definitive during the 1930s. But there was also much in it that should have served as a warning. *The Red Poppy* proved that classical dance had a right to exist, particularly in the form of extended ensembles, complex choreographic structures, and the very form of the 'grand ballet' with divertissements. But the ballet also made it clear that it is impossible to limit dance to a copy of the old, that classical dance had to be enriched (Souritz 1990, 253).

Basically a melodrama in three acts, the lead character, the Chinese tea dancer Tao-Hoa, is touched by the Soviet captain's humane actions towards a coolie and showers him with flowers, including a red poppy. They become friends (she begs him to take her to the Soviet Union but he declines), much to the chagrin of Tao-Hoa's rival, Li Shan-Fu. The British harbor master, Sir Hips, fears the influence of the Russians (Soviets) on the Chinese, and plans to employ Shan-Fu to kill the captain. Tao-Hoa witnesses the knife attack, which the Captain survives, and takes opium to forget the horror of what she has witnessed. Next, Sir Hips plans to poison the Captain, but Tao-Hoa spills the poisoned

tea. In the final scene, the Soviet ship leaves at the same time as armed coolies begin a revolt. During the chaos, Shan-Fu fatally shoots Tao-Hoa.

The libretto of *The Red Poppy* allowed for a tremendous amount of varied *divertissement*. The sailors from different countries danced very athletic variations; the Chinese tea dancers performed "exotic" Oriental dances; and the "decadent" Europeans and Americans performed the Charleston and other popular social and vaudeville dances. Tao-Hoa's use of opium also allows for the inclusion of fantastic *divertissement* as she hallucinates about goldfish growing to human size.

Many of the experimental works of the 1920s were performed only a few times. The success of *The Red Poppy* can be attributed to its incorporation of classical ballet conventions with a modern theme (Souritz 1990, 231-254).

Experimentation continued in the early 1930s. From 1930-31, St. Petersburg (Leningrad) audiences saw three new ballets "that aroused opposition by their 'misguided' modernism" (Schwarz 1983, 74). The first was *Footbolisty* (The Football Players) with choreography by Igor Moiseyev (b. 1906) and L.A. Lashchilin and music by Victor Oransky. They were represented by fragments of revolutionary songs, while the ignoble characters danced to jazz music. Ironically, the jazz music proved more popular to the audiences. The score and choreography for *Footbolisty* are now both totally forgotten but "More significant were the failures of two other ballets, both with music by Shostakovich –*Zolotoi Vek* (*The Golden Age*) and *Bolt*, for they revealed the official hostility towards artistic experimentation" (Schwarz 1983, 74). *The Golden Age* was produced as the result of a libretto contest in 1929 won by cinema producer A. V. Ivanovsky and was set at an industrial exhibit (that also included athletic events) in a capitalist city. Choreographed by Vassily Vainonen (1901-1964), it included many elements considered to be a positive representation of Soviet propaganda; Fascist athletes behaving badly; a noble Negro saving a girl; corrupt capitalist referees; and, Soviet athletes befriending the Negro, as well as other pro-Soviet themes. The ballet was condemned by Soviet critics and audiences alike.

Bolt, referred to as "the first industrial ballet" in the Soviet Union was presented in 1931 with choreography by Lopukhov. Its theme revolved around a male character, the drunkard Lenka Tulba, who after being fired from his job, sabotaged a mill by placing a

bolt in it. As part of the ballet, dancers praised Soviet industrialization by imitating the movement of spinning machines, but also mocked industrialization with a dance by blacksmiths suggesting the old ways were preferable. The choreographer was also accused of denigrating the Soviet cavalry with the inclusion of dance in which a group of horsemen made galloping movements on stools (Swift 1968, 85-91) *Bolt* cost Lopukhov his position with the Maryinsky (Kirov) Ballet and redirected the path of Russian ballet. The music (by Shostakovich) was condemned as vulgar and commonplace. An outraged commentator claimed that:

> *Bolt* is not simply a failure of one theatrical appearance…It is a failure witnessing the depravity of that method which continues to rule in ballet theatre and which graphically points out that its path, up to the present, lies hopelessly far from the general path of Soviet theatre. It seems…that *Bolt*—is a last warning (Swift 1968, 90).

This comment proved prophetic because Russian ballet was soon tied more closely to Soviet dictates and predilections.[9]

The period of experimentation came to an abrupt end on April 23, 1932, with the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party's decree on the Reconstruction of Literary and Artistic organizations. The decree dissolved all former organizations in the arts and organized all artists into central artists' unions. Shortly thereafter, the Academy of the Arts was revived as the only route toward a professional career in the arts. The Academy espoused Socialist Realism as the only true art form. Finally, at the All-Union Conference of Soviet Writers in August, 1934, Socialist Realism became the only acceptable style for all the arts throughout the U.S.S.R. (Wallach 1991, 75).

According to Soviet writer and teacher Andrey Sinyavsky, Socialist Realism called for "A true, historically concrete representation of reality in its revolutionary development. Further it ought to contribute to the ideological transformation and education of workers in the spirit of Socialism" (Weber 1992, 425). Certainly, as Wallach notes, the definition provided for Socialist Realism was so vague and contradictory that it virtually required self-censorship by the artist (Wallach 1991, 76). The artist, unsure as to what was actually acceptable had to second-guess the censors while simultaneously examining their consciences. This uncertainty led to inconsistencies in artists' works as they tried to find an acceptable vein in which to produce their art. Consequently, Russian

ballet under the Soviets developed in an erratic pattern until the combination of Pushkin's thematic material and a resurgence of artistic talent combined to produce acclaimed ballets.

Many foreign observers thought that the new policy was a sign that Marxism in the Soviet Union was being replaced by Russian nationalism since it emphasized the Russification of the subject matter and the glorification of the U.S.S.R. at the expense of Marxist theory.[10] This was not necessarily the case, but the tenets of Socialist Realism were so poorly defined that no one could easily interpret them. Stalin used Socialist Realism the same way he used Marxism; in whatever way he needed to in order to justify his actions:

> The selective use of Russian nationalistic themes was permitted and even demanded, but they had to be themes which served the ends of Stalin and the Soviet state at the moment: defense of the fatherland, ruthlessness against domestic enemies, and the benefits of Moscow's rules for the borderlands. Party policy in literature (as well as history and other branches of writing) used such themes to justify Stalin's cruelties and stimulate "Soviet patriotism" by ostensibly expatiating on the heroic deeds of Ivan the Terrible, Peter the Great, and other early practitioners of social transformation by force (Treadgold 1995, 267).

Socialist Realism cannot be equated with Russian nationalism because some foreign writers were considered acceptable to read (Shakespeare, Dickens, Twain, for example), while many native Russian writers were banned (from time to time) including Fedor Dostoevsky (1821-1881).[11] The works of Pushkin remained on the acceptable list throughout the Soviet era and helped to establish what has been called a "cult of literature" in the Soviet Union (Hosking 2004, 553).

To adhere to the dictates of Socialist Realism and appeal to audiences, Soviet choreographers during the 1930's chose themes of noble passion, heroic deeds and romantic love. The next successful ballet and stepping stone for the development of Russian ballet was *The Flames of Paris* based on the French Revolution. Produced in 1933, it was the first experience in the Soviet Union with ballet dramaturgy and incorporated music, song and dance into one production. *The Flames of Paris* with music by Boris Asafiev (1884-1949) and choreography by Vainonen dealt with history, but provided the art with an action and interesting characters. Asafiev's music was a montage

of orchestrated French Revolution songs and other French pieces which worked well with Vainonen's character style of choreography. Asafiev's music for the ballet was "compiled rather than composed. He used the music of the period—not only popular songs and dances of the Revolution, but also music by composers like Gossec, Gretry, and Mehul. The court of Louis XVI was depicted by using the music of Lully and Gluck" (Schwarz 1983, 150). It is ironic that a Soviet composer turned to imperial compositions for one of the first mildly successful ballets under the new Soviet regime.

With the *Flames of Paris* a new development in the Soviet Ballet began; the need for male heroes as well as female. Female heroines dominated nineteenth-century and early twentieth century ballet. The titles alone provided a sense of the pervasiveness of the female in ballet; *La Sylphide*, *Giselle*, *Coppelia*, *The Sleeping Beauty*.[12] Since the Soviet Union, at least in its propaganda, declared that men and women were equal, the same political view would be expressed in the arts. New heroes with new agendas and attributes were needed, which in turn began to change the nature and presentation of dance in the Soviet Union:

> New heroes called for new ways of acting and new ways of dancing. Powerful leaps and sweeping breadth of movement, associated in the future with the style of Soviet choreography, were introduced by the choreographers in order to give their heroes visual semblance of the loftiness of spirit. A new type of ballerina was born, an expressive dancer, absorbing virtuosity technique for the purpose of complete freedom of stage performance. The very nature of dancing, whether male or female, became more energetic, sparkling, full of an optimistic attitude to life (Roslavleva 1966, 226).

Unlike *The Red* Poppy, *The Flames of Paris* looked to the past for subject matter. It concerns the 1792 French Revolution and incorporates scenes such as the peasant storming of Versailles and revolutionaries dancing in Parisian squares. The ballet includes numerous roles for both males and females, but the most prominent character is "Mirelle", an actress (Bellew 1956, 39-42). Again, the libretto provided opportunities for *divertissement*, but to a lesser degree than in *The Red Poppy*; a ball at Versailles was interrupted by revolutionaries and lively dances were performed by Parisians in the streets. Much of the time, though, the *corps de ballet* merely watched the action (Lifar 1954, 302).

Although *The Red Poppy* and *The Flames of Paris* met with comparative success and remained in the Russian ballet repertoire for many years, neither can be considered unique Russian ballets as defined throughout this work. In both ballets, the main character remained female and non-Russian (Tao-Hoa, Chinese; and Mirelle, French) and the location portrayed was not in Russia but in either China or France. Although the composers for both ballets were Russian, they incorporated foreign themes and songs into their compositions. However, Russian nationalistic attitudes were reflected in both works. In the case of *The Red Poppy*, Soviet attitudes toward the corrupt West and its policy of capitalistic imperialism were clearly expressed by the connection between the Russian captain and the Chinese girl against the immoral activities of the English harbor master. In *The Flames of Paris* the choreographer illustrated that the masses were triumphant over the despotic aristocracy, another popular Soviet theme of the time. Also, both ballets included special dance techniques and choreography that illustrate unique aspects of Russian dance. Specifically, these ballets were noted for the extreme athletic elements that were incorporated. The sailors in *The Red Poppy* and the revolutionaries in *The Flames of Paris* performed huge leaps and acrobatic tricks, thus initiating the change from Russian ballet as soft and effete to strong and vigorous. Russian music, national attitudes and choreographic characteristics were being incorporated into new works. However, missing were the strong Russian character, story, and location. Finding suitable stories had become increasingly difficult under the Soviet regime, which hampered the development of Russia's unique ballet characteristics.

Two periods of experimentation illustrated the importance of finding a balance between suitable ideological content, music, and choreography that would yield a positive critical and audience response. Russian ballet endeavored to reflect the times and change the nature of ballet to fit its new standards and propagandist needs. V. I. Golubov noted the first experimental period ended with a hybrid ballet that was "realistic therefore it is worthy of praise: and so we had honest and clean little spectacles which were all timely and topical but you could smell bureaucracy and mothballs miles away" (Morley 1945, 17). Soviet ballet leaders discovered during this first experimental period of the 1920s that most citizens found the new experimental ballets to be inaccessible. They clearly demonstrated that they did not want propaganda in their ballets. Instead they

wanted easily understood story-lines and librettos danced superbly. Through ticket sales they voted to keep the old classics such as *Swan Lake* alive. According to A. Zvorykin, the second experimental period of the early 1930s aimed at "Improving the material bases of culture so as to make it possible to satisfy the basic cultural requirements of the population, fostering national artistic creation" (McMahon 1985, 59). As Stalin continued to consolidate his power and the concept of "national artistic creation" became more narrowly defined, the era of experimentation was over. Choreographers could not afford to experiment and fail because the ramifications were too costly. They were faced with finding "safe" subjects that also provided an opportunity for meaningful artistic expression.

With the new decrees fostered in the early 1930s which emphasized the importance of classical Russian literature as an essential part of the national heritage, artists began to look to Russian literature for inspiration. Choreographers endeavored to find satisfactory heroes suitable to survive Soviet censorship and proletarian criticism, while simultaneously fulfilling the dictates of Socialist Realism (Roslavleva 1966, 226). They combed Russian literary classics for suitable material and discovered that Pushkin's subject matter, realistic style and problems with tsarist censors made him a favorite author of the Soviet government. Therefore Soviet choreographers freely and confidently created works based on Pushkin. This pleased the Soviet leaders who strove to convey the idea of a cultural continuum with Pushkin, Lermontov, and other great literary artists from Russia's past (Swift 1968, 99).

One work must be included in this discussion that, although not uniquely Russian, is particularly significant. It is ironic that one of the most respected and praised works to emerge during the Soviet era was not based on a Russian theme, or set in a Russian location. The 1939/40 collaboration between Lavrovsky and Prokofiev resulted in the Russian/Soviet masterpiece, *Romeo and Juliet*. The Maryinsky (Kirov) dancers feared that the ballet would fail because the music was difficult to understand and dance[13], and because it did not include any *divertissement*. The opposite proved true and *Romeo and Juliet* immediately was a popular and critical success. A writer for *Soviet Art* proclaimed that, "The success of *Romeo and Juliet*, a production of rare beauty, content and interest, is not just an ordinary success for Leningrad ballet, it is a success for all of Soviet

choreography, and a testament to its colossal creative and ideological growth (Robinson 1987, 373).

Given the history of most new ballets in the Soviet Union, the success of *Romeo and Juliet* was almost a miracle. Perhaps the fact that the ballet was based on a non-Russian source set in the Middle Ages protected it from criticism. More likely, its success can be contributed to the collaborative genius of Shakespeare, Prokofiev and Lavrovsky. The Lavrovsky/Prokofiev *Romeo and Juliet* was significant for a number of reasons: 1) it was the first Shakespeare play to appear as a ballet in the Soviet Union; 2) it was the first multi-act ballet in the Soviet Union that was not interrupted by *divertissement* and variations for its stars; 3) it was the first Russian/Soviet ballet to be presented in the West (where it also was critically and popularly acclaimed); and, 4) it became the first full-length Russian/Soviet ballet to be filmed in its entirety (Leyda 1956, 31). The 1954 film version, which won a Video Review VIRA Award in 1986 for its exceptional quality, showed the West that the Russian/Soviet ballet was different from its Western counterparts. Two characteristics set it apart and were particularly notable in this film production: 1) the need for very strong actors and actresses; and, 2) the sheer physical strength required to execute the difficult lifts (where the female dancer is lifted overhead by the male) in the choreography and enact the fight scenes. Westerners, who were unaccustomed to seeing so many strong male dancers, were surprised by the athleticism required by the choreography.

It is obvious that *Romeo and Juliet* did not meet the qualifications as a unique Russian ballet as defined in this paper. The ballet was based on a foreign author's tale in a foreign city with foreign characters and no peculiarly Russian nationalistic attitudes are reflected in work. *Romeo and Juliet* was composed and choreographed by Russians and in two important areas it did further the development of uniquely Russian ballet characteristics. Specifically, the ballet has both strong male and female roles. In fact there are more roles for men in *Romeo and Juliet* than for women. The choreography is unique because it does not have separated solos for the ballerina, nor does it contain *divertissement*. Its choreography is also unique because it requires great athletic ability of the men who must fence convincingly and be capable of executing very difficult lifts.

Finally, it calls for conveying a story without the use of conventional mime. The dancers must perform simultaneously as ballet technicians and excellent actors.

Despite the success of *Romeo and Juliet*, choreographers were urged to find Russian sources for their ballets. They were advised to follow the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism, which means they should be mindful of the principle of *narodnost*. The word *narod* means “nation” or “folk” in Russian, and was used after the Revolution by artists to draw attention to Russia’s cultural heritage. However, in the early days of the Revolution *narodnost* was not so important. Soviet writers and artists could produce works “in accordance with the internationally-minded principles of Karl Marx, who wanted a worldwide rule by the proletariat and the abolition of national boundaries, thus precluding nationalism” (Swift 1968, 3). This partially explained why choreographers were comfortable producing non-Russian works in the early years including *The Red Poppy* and *The Flames of Paris*. In contrast, while Stalin was consolidating his power and facing growing German strength, historians, writers and artists were charged with exalting the national past. Furthermore the Stalinist slogan called for works that were “socialist in content and national in form” (Swift 1968, 4). Choreographers felt compelled to look to Russian heroes and writers for acceptable content while simultaneously hoping for inspiration. As the constraints on artists continued to intensify, the importance of finding suitable material increased.

In the following years numerous ballets appeared based on Russian literary works, in particular those of Pushkin.[14] During the first half of the twentieth century over fifteen new ballets were created based on Pushkin themes, although not all of the ballets were produced for the Maryinsky (Kirov) and Bolshoi Ballets (Roslavleva 1966, 264).These included another version of *The Prisoner of the Caucasus* (1938), *Mistress into Maid* (1946), *Tale of a Priest and His Workman Balda* (1924; 1940), *The Stone Guest*, *The Stationmaster*, *Tale of the Dead Tsarevna and the Family of Bogatyrs*, *Gypsies* (1937), *Cleopatra* (1926), *The Bronze Horseman* (1949), *The Queen of Spades*, and most importantly, *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* (1934) (Roslavleva 1966, 98). However, most of these ballets met with little success because either the critics or the populace did not appreciate them and few remain in Russian ballet repertoire today. Those ballets with an

enduring legacy, which helped to shape the future of Russian ballet will be discussed for the purpose of this paper.

Ballet is often difficult to research because of its mercurial nature. No universally adopted notation system exists that allows for preserving a written copy of the production. Ballets can be videotaped today, but the perspective of the stage is lost. In essence, once a ballet has left the stage, that specific performance is gone forever. Further complications arise when trying to research this elusive art in a country isolated by geography and ideology. The Soviet Union was too secretive to share the development of its arts with many. Furthermore, the hardship of travel to this area discouraged the casual visitor.

The Pushkin-based works that will be examined were all produced during the Soviet era, which complicates the research process, because videotaping early works was impossible and writers were silent. This is not to imply that no scholarly research exists concerning dance in the Soviet Union. Several valuable resources are available. However, there are three general drawbacks associated with these sources: 1) they are often "survey" works and superficially cover large amounts of material and an expansive time period; 2) they are largely written by non-Russians with limited access to primary source materials; and, 3) they are mostly older, dated works that pre-date the fall of the Soviet Union. Furthermore, when a work is produced by a Soviet citizen, it is often an anthology of favorable articles by dancers or critics making the work so obviously biased as to be discredited as a reliable source. In other words, while dance criticism was an emerging field in the West, it was almost unheard of in the Soviet Union. Lifar explains that for almost the first thirty years of ballet under the Soviets very little was written concerning the art because:

> …in Soviet Russia every new tendency is judged by contemporary political standards. There is an enormous difference here; social demands have always existed everywhere, but they have nothing to do with political dictates which are fatal to art. The Soviet ideology is extremely fickle, and thus criterions are continually changing; one night a ballet will be a great success, the next day it suddenly becomes an 'intolerable choreographic false note.' Under these circumstances there are two alternatives: either the ballet critic must risk being deported, or else find himself flatly contradicting his own words. And so most critics take the only safe and possible way out, they keep silent.

> This is not so in Western Europe, but here it is impossible to write a history of Soviet ballet because of the lack of sufficient material. In fact Soviet ballet and art are guilty of such narrow isolationism that it is almost impossible for us to know what goes on behind the Iron Curtain. If sometimes a chance work should appear (usually in English), it is so openly 'inspired', so prejudiced, that little reliance can be placed in it. Soviet historians prefer to depict things as they ought to be, to their way of thinking, and not as they really are.
>
> Thus it is almost impossible for us to paint a picture of Soviet ballet, and still more to study the trends of its development (Lifar 1954, 287).

The purpose of emphasizing this point is that sometimes ballets appear and quickly disappear without explanation. So little is written about some works it is often impossible to determine what caused their failure or success. This makes the ballets that did meet with success and are discussed during Soviet tenure particularly important, and many of them are based on works by Pushkin. Pushkin becomes the link between the triumphs of ballet under the tsars and the creation of a viable and healthy ballet under the Soviets.

Traditionally, part of a choreographer's work is to push to find new modes of expression. Under the Soviets, choreographers could only push the envelope so far. However, choreographers, by experimenting with Pushkin themes, no matter how unsuccessful the result, furthered the development of Russian ballet. Pushkin's descriptive text, large volume of work and varied story-lines or themes provided many opportunities for creating a successful work. The best "fit" occurred with Pushkin's *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* (1934). Although this ballet was one of the first to be successfully produced under the Soviets based on a work by Pushkin, it will be discussed last because it remains a vital part of Russian ballet repertoire today.

One of the first Soviet ballets produced using a Pushkin work was *The Tale of the Priest and His Workman Balda* (1924). Because of its anti-clerical theme Pushkin's poem was subject to severe tsarist censorship and published posthumously (1882).[15] The story ridicules a Russian Orthodox priest who hires a seemingly simple peasant, Balda ("Blockhead"). Balda works hard for very little, but after his work is completed he is allowed to give the priest three "blows", or punches. Balda hits the priest and sends him to his heavenly reward. The Soviet leadership liked the ballet because it

illustrated the people's retribution against exploitation and because it furthered Lenin's attempts to separate the populace from the Orthodox Church and other organized religions (Swift 1968, 147). Very little is written about the original work and the choreographer remains unknown. Although a new version was presented by the Leningrad Little Opera (*Maly*)[16] in 1940 with choreography by Vladimir Varkovitsky and music by Mikhail Chulaki, again, very little written evidence is available concerning the work. Regardless, the ballet most likely appealed to Soviet censors but found little popular support with audiences and eventually disappeared from Soviet repertoires. Two other ballets based on Pushkin themes premiered during the late 1930s and 1940s, both with choreography by Rostislav Zakharov (b.1907). In 1938 he created a new version of *The Prisoner of the Caucasus* and choreographed *Mistress into Maid* (1946). Both works were composed by Asafiev and were short-lived. Pushkin continued to inspire Zakharov. Of his twenty-eight ballets, seven are based on subjects provided by Pushkin, including the extremely successful *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* (1934), which will be discussed later in this chapter (Roslavleva 1966, 231).

Although not the first Pushkin-based Socialist Realism ballet, one ballet in particular, *The Bronze Horseman*, allowed Russian/Soviet choreographers to experiment with a new and unusual theme for ballet. The poem deals with establishing the city of St. Petersburg for Peter the Great. Due to its marshy location, building the city cost many human lives and great hardship. The Soviet description of the ballet noted that it personified the tsarist state, which exploited the masses (Swift 1966, 146).

The Bronze Horseman was first produced in 1949 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Pushkin's birth and was performed at both the Maryinsky (Kirov) and Bolshoi theatres.[17] According to Moscow dance critic Juri Slonimsky, the ballet, although popular with the censors, was not equal to the poem (Slonimsky 1956, 68). In fact, the composer, Reinhold Gliere, when approached about writing the music reportedly stated that "The Pushkin plot interests me greatly, but excuse me for my frankness, I can't imagine how a ballet can be made out of the poem *The Bronze Horseman*" (Nepomnyashchy 2000, 61). Gliere was no stranger to successful ballet music, having composed *The Red Poppy*, nor was he unfamiliar with working with Pushkin themes; in 1926 he wrote the music for *Cleopatra* based on Pushkin's *Egyptian Nights*. However,

the subject matter of the poem did seem daunting to both the composer and choreographer and the ballet became more of a love story between the two main characters, Eugene and Parasha, than a faithful representation of the poem (Slonimsky 1956, 68).

Both the Maryinsky (Kirov) and Bolshoi Ballets produced versions of *The Bronze Horseman* in 1949. A brief description of the Bolshoi version appears here because the Maryinsky (Kirov) ballet eventually adopted it after discarding its own version. *The Bronze Horseman* was a ballet in four acts, six scenes, and a prologue of three scenes. As the number of acts and scenes suggests, it was a massive ballet. The prologue concerned Peter's founding of the city of St. Petersburg as the new capital. The three scenes of the prologue show him selecting the site, launching ships from the new port and holding a ball at the summer palace. Then in act one the action jumps to 1824 and the gay city life that Pushkin enjoyed. Eugene arrives in Senate Square looking for his love, Parasha. She is late and does not arrive to meet him until almost midnight. In act two, Eugene visits Parasha at her home on the island of Vassilevsky. Heavy clouds gather and Eugene leaves for home before the Neva bridges are raised. During act three a great storm arrives with torrential rains. Eugene returns to Senate Square where people are gathered to watch the rising river. Many flee in terror, but Eugene decides to canoe to Vassilevsky to save Parasha. He discovers that her house is destroyed and that she is dead and returns to the square. Mad with grief, Eugene circles the bronze statue of Peter the Great, The Bronze Horseman. He blames the tsar for having the audacity to carve a city out of a marsh. As his madness increases, Eugene believes he hears Peter pursuing him on horseback. Eugene dies but the city continues to thrive, illustrating the tsar's interest in preserving and strengthening the state at the expense of the common citizen (Bellew 1956, 73-81).

Pushkin completed the poem in 1833, but it was not published until after his death in 1837, and then with considerable censorship. The poem was based on an account of a real flood that occurred in 1824 and was paradoxical because it simultaneously praised Peter for his daring leadership and accomplishments, but also condemned him for the loss of life associated with building his new capital (Arndt 1984, 423).

The libretto, created by P. F. Abolimov, deviated from the original poem in several instances, particularly in the prologue. Abolimov expanded the prologue to

include fragments of ideas from other Pushkin works including *The Blackamoor of Peter the Great* and *A Little House in Kolomna* which allowed for a "full-blown panorama of the Petrine period" (Nepomnyashchy 2000, 64). There were differences between the Maryinsky (Kirov) and Bolshoi versions, particularly concerning the treatment of the prologue. The prologue in the Maryinsky (Kirov) version was much shorter than that of the Bolshoi version, which seems ironic given the fact that the Maryinsky (Kirov) ballet was located in Peter's city. The Maryinsky (Kirov) version opened very simply with the depiction of a monument to Pushkin on a "thematic" curtain[18] followed by a simple scene on stage concerning the meeting of Eugene and Parasha. In the Maryinsky (Kirov) version the couple took dominance, while in the Bolshoi version, the state and state spectacle prevailed. The ballets ended differently, too. The Kirov version concluded with Eugene's death followed by an epilogue in which Gliere's "Hymn to a Great City" was played while the audience viewed the curtain with the picture of Pushkin's statue. The Bolshoi version's final scene returned to Senate Square, which was dominated by a symbol of imperialism and the power of state, the Bronze Horseman.

Catherine Nepomnyashchy asserts that this difference in staging resulted from the different experiences of each city. During the World War II, the people of Leningrad (St. Petersburg) endured terrible deprivations caused by the German siege. Millions died of starvation, but the city never surrendered to the Germans. The city became a symbol of Soviet durability, but also of individual heroism. Moscow, which is located much further east, also experienced shortages, but certainly not to the degree of Leningrad. The citizens of Leningrad hoped that, having survived their horrific ordeal, they would be allowed some extra privileges or relaxed censorship. The opposite proved true. In August 1946 the Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party attacked two Leningrad journals and began the Leningrad purges and campaign against "cosmopolitanism". Stalin, ever paranoid but made more so by Hitler's deceit, could not allow the leaders of Leningrad to become political threats. He purged the competition and reminded Leningrad that it was the second city in the Soviet Union (Nepomnyashdhy 2000, 67-69).

The differing versions of *The Bronze Horseman* reflected the varied attitudes of the cities. The Leningrad version focused on the individual and personal suffering, while

the Bolshoi version glorified the state as an institution, supreme over individuals. This made *The Bronze Horseman* ballet particularly important at the time even though it is non-existent today. The two opposing versions reflected the positions of the cities involved and proved a powerful reminder of who had control of the state. *The Bronze Horseman* was used to promote the anniversary of a Russian/Soviet hero (Pushkin) while simultaneously reasserting Moscow and Stalin as supreme:

> So why was the sesquicentennial of Pushkin's birth, which coincided with Stalin's campaign against "Cosmopolitanism" and the Leningrad purges designed to reduce the city and the memories of its sufferings to second rank, celebrated with a ballet ostensibly dedicated to Petersburg, a ballet for which Gliere won the State Prize in 1950? Perhaps it is not too whimsical to suggest that the fate of the concluding music to the ballet, "The Hymn to a Great City," suggests a further answer. Adopted as the unofficial anthem of Leningrad, the music was played *ad nauseam* in public parks and played in the Leningrad train station on the arrival of the Red Arrow express from Moscow. I would suggest, then, that the ballet, like its concluding hymn, rendered the trials and heroism in the war and perhaps even the risky cultural "foreignness" of Leningrad banal, adapting and thereby reabsorbing them into an ordered and therefore acceptable national narrative which left the center, Moscow and Stalin (synonymous with the state), safely in place with Leningrad, like Muradeli's Georgia, relegated to the periphery (Nepommnyashchy 2000, 69).

Although *The Bronze Horseman* is of little import today, it is significant for several reasons. First, the choice of a Pushkin-based theme reasserted that Pushkin's influence should not be overlooked or discounted. Indeed "Pushkin becomes a touchstone for the emblematic peculiarities of Soviet culture, most notably the throwing together of those strange bedfellows mass and "elite" art and the dogged primacy of the literary text in the visual and musical media" (Neppmnyashchy 2000, 61). In other words, Pushkin's talents continued to link Russian written word with Russian performing arts. Secondly, the fact that a ballet whether, knowingly or unknowingly, was used as a political tool emphasizes the important role ballet played in the propaganda and psyche of the Soviet Union. This brings us to a significant point: despite the hardships of the German siege, the Maryinsky (Kirov) Ballet was in a position to stage new works almost immediately after the war.

During the early part of World War II ballet performances continued in Moscow until the majority of the company was moved to Kuibyshev. Iris Morley, an English reporter, noted that while stationed in Moscow for ten months, she had the opportunity to

see the Bolshoi Ballet three times. The Maryinsky (Kirov) Ballet dancers were evacuated to the Urals for the greater part of the siege[19], but returned quickly at the end of it (Morley 1945, 8-20). The removal of the ballet from Leningrad might have signaled a convenient time to dismantle such a former imperial institution, but the opposite proved true. Morley noted that in the winter of 1944, although the siege was over, Leningrad was not rejoicing. Leningrad was free but "…looking at the faces of the people in the street we chiefly saw the cost and what it would mean getting back to health, what the journey itself would mean" (Morley 1945, 12).

Morley and other foreign correspondents completed tours of the battlefields and other historical parts of Leningrad before touring the greatly damaged Maryinsky (Kirov) Theatre. Whereas other parts of the city were quiet and somber, the area surrounding the theatre was alive with people and workers. Red Army men were laying bricks, girls were laughing, and the auditorium was full of scaffolding. The army had lent the theatre two hundred men and declared its reconstruction a priority. The theatre was scheduled to open May 1st, approximately three months later, and apparently was an important, tangible manifestation that Leningrad had survived and would return to its former glory. Having witnessed this Morley questioned how:

> …if this were an English city the desperate desire of the people for some public recommencement of life would manifest itself and I come to the conclusion most likely in a football match or at least some kind of sport. In Russia the collective belief in life, civilization, art—call it what you like—takes the form of dance. That in essence is why the Kirov theatre is in Leningrad and not in London (Morley 1945, 13).

Morley recognized that Russian/Soviet ballet was different from its counterpart in England; it was a more integral part of Russian/Soviet culture. Not only had Russian/Soviet ballet proven itself to be worthy of existence in post-revolutionary Russia and post-war Soviet Union, it was being recognized as special by non-Russians.

Immediately following the war, and prior to the premiere of *The Bronze Horseman*, several new ballets were produced, but mostly in the naturalistic style and with war themes, with one notable exception: *Cinderella*, with choreography by Zakharov and music by Prokofiev which appeared in November, 1945, at the Bolshoi (Bellew 1956, 155). In the case of the former works, very little is known about them

which makes it difficult to determine what characteristics included in the works would have furthered the development of Russian ballet. In the case of the latter work, *Cinderella*, a great deal is known because it remains in the repertoire of both ballet institutions. In the original version, female dancers performed in heeled shoes, not *pointe* shoes. That convention has changed, but the story remains the same familiar fairy tale. *Cinderella* does not incorporate many of the aspects as defined in this paper to identify a unique Russian ballet. The main character is female, as opposed to male; the location is not in Russia[20]; no particular nationalistic attitudes are reflected in the work; and, the choreography essentially follows the classical model. The music, however, was composed by a Russian. Prokofiev, remembering the difficulty the dancers had understanding and appreciating the music for *Romeo and Juliet*, conscientiously chose to follow a classical model to make it more accessible to dancers. It features beautiful lyrical motifs for Cinderella, the Prince and the Fairy Godmother and has been used by choreographers worldwide, although the choreography has not been exported with it (Maes 2002, 328-329).

It seems odd that non-Russian themed ballets such as *Romeo and Juliet* and *Cinderella* remained in the repertoires of Russian/Soviet ballet companies while other works choreographed specifically because of their very Russianness were removed. Apparently some important feature or ingredient was missing, such as interesting choreography or enduring theme that made them short-lived.

With two different versions of *The Bronze Horseman* presented and one, the Bolshoi, being adopted as definitive, it is intriguing that the ballet is not part of the Maryinsky (Kirov) or Bolshoi repertoires today. By most accounts, if nothing else, the stage effects were brilliant. Zakharov used a simple device to create the flood; a large tarpaulin covered the stage with people moving under it to create waves. Lighting was important to the scene, but the choreography also was carefully arranged and well rehearsed so that furniture, logs, boats, etc. are carried away by the "flood waters" (Nepomnyashchy 2000, 66).

However, what appeared to be lacking was a strong choreographic style and opportunities for brilliant dancing:

> Judging by photographs and criticisms, it is essentially a fantasy, with mime and *décor* playing a leading role at the expense of the dancing. The scene where the water reaches the Horseman's statue …may be beautiful and majestic, but it seems unlikely that the flotsam and the roofs are capable of dancing. And the last tableau, where the 'Pioneers' place a crown on the Horseman's head (Peter the Great) cannot be very balletic either (Lifar 1954, 305).

Therefore, although Pushkin's subject matter was considered acceptable for new ballets, it was no guarantee for a success.

So little is written, at least in English, about *The Priest and His Workman Balda*, *The Prisoner of the Caucasus* and *Mistress into Maid* that it is difficult to ascertain which aspects of these works caused them to fail and what, if any, characteristics might have furthered the development of a uniquely Russian ballet. Suffice it to say, however, that they were experimental works that allowed for introduction of new subject material. No longer were supernatural creatures represented on stage, or foreign locations featured. In the case of these works, and that of *The Bronze Horseman*, the subject matter now consisted of mortal human beings and their experiences. However, more of the identifiable Russian characteristics were beginning to appear in these ballets. With the exception of *Mistress into Maid* the main roles were becoming evenly divided among males and females and were for Russian characters. Even in the case of *Mistress into Maid*, the lead male role was significant. Briefly, Liza, the mistress, disguises herself as a maid in order to meet a young nobleman, Alexey, of whom her father does not approve because the families have quarreled. Liza, using the name Akulina, meets Alexey and they fall in love. After a riding accident in which Liza's father is saved by Alexey's father and the families are reconciled, Alexey is invited to Liza's house for dinner. She disguises herself as an old woman to attend the dinner and her father, who dotes on her, finds Liza's charade amusing. Alexey is told he must marry the elderly Liza. He arrives at the house to find Liza undisguised and the lovers are reunited (Yarmolinsky 1936, 530-555).

The *narodnost* required to comply with Socialist Realism was evident in these works. The action in all four ballets occurs in Russia and the ballets are choreographed and composed by Russians. Since the ballets deal with Russian citizens, Russian nationalistic attitudes were reflected in the works, but to varying degrees. *Mistress into*

Maid was basically a simple love story of mistaken identities, but an extreme reading through the lens of Socialist Realism might suggest an argument that the aristocracy was fickle and easily deceived. The libretto of *The Prisoner of the Caucasus* has been discussed previously (in Chapter Four), but with its main character deserting from his army regiment and his un-heroic treatment of the Circassian girl (resulting in her death), it could be argued that he was an anti-Soviet hero because he placed his personal freedom above all else. The popularity of *The Priest and His Workman Balda* with the Soviets centered upon its ridicule of the church. However, this may not reflect a "Russian" nationalistic attitude as much as a "Soviet" one. The poem was always controversial; praised by some for its sense of humor and daring, and condemned by others for its disparagement of religion and an historical institution. Under the tsars it was withheld from publication (although it had been widely read by Pushkin's friends), while it was promoted by Soviet leaders. What the average citizen thought about the poem is unclear, but if the general population was offended by it, this sentiment might account for some of its unpopularity as a ballet. The nationalistic attitudes of *The Bronze Horseman* have been discussed previously, but are worth repeating in this context. The Maryinsky (Kirov) version reflected the horrors of Leningrad's war experience and emphasized the power of the individual. The Bolshoi version glorified the state and reiterated the need for strong leadership, thus establishing a direct link between Peter and Stalin. The latter version prevailed, poignantly illustrating the power of the state over the individual in Soviet Russia.

To reiterate, these works are based on Russian stories by a Russian writer in Russian locations with Russian characters. The very Russianness of the stories provided an opportunity to express Russian nationalistic attitudes, whether pro-individual or pro-state. Furthermore, the ballets were composed, choreographed and danced by Russians. However, although the importance of the male role was present, what were missing include the strong choreographic structures and pronounced dancing style that have become identified with Russian ballet. Based on what is known about these ballets, they lack the following uniquely Russian choreographic characteristics as previously defined: 1) the use of elaborate floor patterns, or *khovorod*; 2) an opportunity for the lead dancers

to utilize the expressive use of the arms or *port de bras*; 3) extremely athletic male dancing; and, 4) spectacular lifts.

To conjecture, the ballets may have failed because, although the subject matter, composers, choreographers and dancers were acceptable, they were so stripped of actual dance that they were no longer the best representations of Russian ballet. Also, in the case of *The Bronze Horseman*, the change in political climate may have hastened its removal from the repertoire. If the ballet was associated with Stalin, after his death and Nikita Khrushchev's (1894-1971) 1956 "secret speech,"[21] it may have been one of the many pro-Stalin entities (city names, etc.) that disappeared.[22]

But a Pushkin-related ballet masterpiece was created much earlier than *The Bronze Horseman* and is still part of the Maryinsky (Kirov) and Bolshoi Ballet repertoires today. *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* (1934) premiered two years after Socialist Realism was officially adopted as the acceptable standard for the Soviet arts in 1932, but avoided many of the pitfalls associated with producing a ballet under the new guidelines. This may have occurred because the dictates of Socialist Realism were so new and difficult to interpret and, therefore, equally difficult to conscientiously incorporate into a work, that the collaborators ignored them. The enduring success of the ballet was also enhanced by the artistic maturity and talents of the collaborators who had survived the experimentation of the 1920s and achieved a definitive advance in Russian/Soviet ballet. The ballet first appeared in Leningrad in 1934 with music by Asafiev, libretto by I. S. Volkhov and choreography by Zakharov and was produced in Moscow by the Bolshoi Ballet in 1936 (Bellew 1956, 27). The collaborators were all respected veterans in their related fields and Pushkin's genius, although posthumously, further strengthened the collaborative effort.

Pushkin completed *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* in 1823 and it was published the following year. The inspiration for the poem came from Pushkin's "southern exile" where he spent most of his time in Bessarabia and Odessa. He was influenced by the "Islamic spell" cast by the newly Russian southern territories including the Caucasus, the Crimea, and Cossack borderlands with Turkey and wrote the most "oriental" of his verses there.[23] While in Bessarabia he visited the ruined palace of the Crimean Khans at the site of their ancient capital *Bahcesaray*, which in Turkish means "garden palace". All that

was left of the once-famous garden and fountain was a cast-iron pipe emitting a faint trickle of water (Arndt 1984, 247).

Bakhchisarai is located twenty miles northwest of Yalta in the Crimea and has become a tourist attraction thanks to Pushkin. The original palace was built in 1518 and burned by Russian soldiers in 1735, but the man who inspired Pushkin was Kirim Giray Khan, who led Tatar raids during the 1760s. The Khan's wife was poisoned and he ordered the construction of the Fountain of Tears in her honor in 1764. Catherine the Great had the palace rebuilt in 1787, but it had fallen into disrepair by the time Pushkin visited it in 1820. Alexander I restored the palace yet again.

The palace was occupied and controlled by many different groups over the centuries. In the eighteenth-century when Russia was at war with the Turks, General Aleksandr Suvorov, commander of the Russian forces, used the palace as his military headquarters thus "…the Bakhchisarai palace became a symbol for Russian nationalism as well as an object of Crimean Tatar identity" (Rupen 1999). During World War II it was occupied by Germans until 1944 and Stalin declared that "…the Tatars had helped the German occupiers. The Crimean Tatars became one of the so-called punished peoples, non-Russian minority ethnic groups exiled to Central Asia" (Rupen 1999). Pushkin's influence saved the palace from destruction. Once the Crimean Tatars were deported the Soviets, true to form, began giving cities new Russian names. Bakhchisarai became Puszkinsk and the Soviets discussed plans to destroy the palace. The Moscow authorities recognized that they could not rename the now famous Fountain of Bakhchisarai and abandoned their scheme to deny the Tatars an historic site. To further complicate the area's identity, in 1954 Khrushchev transferred the area from the Russian Republic to the Ukraine. The Soviet Union saw them as Russian nationals, while the Tatars preferred a separate identity. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, Tatars returning to the area have expressed their interest in being independent (Rupen 1999).

Despite the dismal condition of the ruined palace and garden in 1820, Pushkin used his imagination to create a hauntingly beautiful poem evocative of the "Eastern" poems of the English romantics but without creating clichéd characters:

> Rhetorical queries re-launch the plot at intervals, and an epilogue of author's reminiscing in present time sustains the general note of wistful lyricism and the power of highly musical, wonderful mellifluous verse.

> This last quality, and the absence of any hero, other than all-assuaging time, separate the poem from Byron's stereotypic figures and his slap-dash poetics (Arndt 1984, 247).

Thus the collaborators were able to capitalize on Pushkin's carefully-drawn characters without being restricted by their specific characteristics. The three main characters from the poem consist of Khan Girey, Maria (an aristocratic Polish maiden kidnapped for the Khan's harem) and Zarema, who serves as the harem's "queen" and was kidnapped earlier from an unknown location.

The collaborators also were able to utilize Pushkin's beautiful visual descriptions of the Khan's palace and gardens as an unlikely backdrop for such intense human sadness. Pushkin provided counterpoint between the beauty of the location and the misery of its three main inhabitants. He described the beauty of the night in the following passage:

> How rich the night of Orient sky
> How lush the shaded splendor of it!
> How genially its hours flow by
> For the disciples of the Prophet!
> Sweet languors from their arbors well,
> In their enchanted lodgement dwell,
> Their harem, safe in stout defenses,
> Where by the magic of the moon
> All throbs in a mysterious swoon,
> Voluptuous rapture of the senses! (Arndt 1984, 259)

The three protagonists are oblivious to the enchantment of their environment. Khan Girey,[24] who was victorious in battle, and with an entire harem at his disposal, cannot be roused from his melancholy:

> No—he has tired of armored fame,
> That formidable arm is tame;
> The lure of stratagems has faded.
> Should rank defilement have invaded
> His harem on betrayal's spoor,
> A child of charms enchanted have traded
> Her ardent heart to a giaour? (Arndt 1984, 252)

His followers are concerned and unsure of how to treat the master:

> What sorrows marks the Ruler's bearing?
> The hookah wafts its fumes no more;

The Eunuch, not a tremor daring,
Awaits his signal at the door.
The pensive potentate has risen,
The portals gape. In silence grim
He enters the secluded prison
Of wives but lately dear to him. (Arndt 1984, 254)

Similar passages occur throughout the poem, moving backward and forward in time, thus providing a clear picture of the khan's power over men, but his lack of power over his own feelings toward women.

Zarema had been the chosen wife until the arrival of the new captive, Maria. The two women are opposites: Zarema is dark and spirited, while Maria is pale and timid. Their desires also are opposites. Zarema desperately wants the attentions of the khan and Maria, equally desperately, does not. The khan is smitten by the pale, beautiful new arrival, Maria, and spurns his former lover. Thus Pushkin establishes a heart-breaking love triangle between the khan, Zarema and Maria against a backdrop of natural beauty. Zarema, as despondent as the khan, laments the loss of Girey:

They sing . . . Zarema, though, is far,
The Harem's queen, love's brightest star!—
Alas, all pale and overwrought,
She does not hear her praise. Distraught,
A palm by tempest bent and spread,
She sadly hangs her lovely head.
No thing can hearten her or spur:
Girey has ceased from loving her.

Betrayed! . . . But how can one believe you
Excelled in charms? By whom conceive you
Outshone? Around your lily brow is laid
A double coil of raven braid;
Your wonder-working eyes seem able
To blind the day, make night more sable;
Who sounds with fuller voice than you
The transports of enflamed desire? (Arndt 1984, 255)

Conversely, Maria wants nothing to do with Girey or with the other women. Girey, overcome by Maria's grief and weeping, as well as her beauty, does not force her to join the harem. This confirms Zarema's belief that he no longer loves her. He has made special allowances for the new fair maiden:

> This Khan's serial is now confining,
> O grievous thought! the young princess,
> Mute bondage has Maria pining
> In tears of utter hopelessness.
> Girey indulges her distress:
> Her laments, sobs, despairing pleas
> Disturb the Potentate's brief slumber,
> And he has waived for her a number
> Of the Seraglio's stern decrees. (Arndt 1984, 257)

Zarema leaves the harem at night, oblivious to the beautiful moon-lit scene, and goes to Maria's chamber. She beseeches Maria to spurn Girey and explains that she also was kidnapped from a Christian home, but had come to love Girey as her husband. Maria is unable to reassure Zarema that she has no interest in the Khan and turns away from her. Zarema stabs Maria in the back, and she dies of the wound. Girey witnesses the attack and has Zarema "cast to the waters' silent swirl. The very night the Princess died," (Arndt 1984, 264). Khan Girey resumes his raiding and battles, but with a heavy heart. He returns to the palace and erects a marble fountain in Maria's honor. The poem ends with a visit by the narrator who questions whether the "shades" of Maria and Zarema haunt the area.

Pushkin's poem contains several conventions of Romanticism. It is set in an "exotic" location with abundant local color. He incorporates nature and the possibility of the supernatural in the work. He also includes sunlight and moonlight scenes. However, the ballet does not follow the conventions of Romantic ballet.

The ballet differs from the poem because it adds elements that are needed to transform a relatively short poem into a full, evening-length ballet. The ballet consists of one prologue and four acts and is set in the eighteenth-century. It opens with a scene simply showing a marble fountain in a golden alcove with a motionless figure in golden robes and a spiked helmet kneeling before it. The opening picture of the prologue fades to act one which takes place in the garden of an eighteenth century Polish mansion. Before the actual dancing begins, a shrouded creature is chased into the woods by Polish guards, which foreshadows coming events. Maria appears searching for the young man she loves. He is given the name Vatslav, although he does not exist in Pushkin's poem. Maria and Vatslav are dressed in white which symbolizes the innocence of their love "And when

Ulanova dances Maria the limpid arabesques, the rhythmical pauses in the lifts, become those dreams and half-realised raptures which are part of falling in love the first time (Morley 1945, 40).[25] Maria's father and guests arrive and they lead a *polonaise*[26] followed by a *kracovienne*.[27] Maria dances to Vatslav's harp playing and then the two perform a *pas de deux* at the conclusion of which the guests join in a *mazurka*.[28] The party is quickly dispelled by the sound of an approaching army on horseback and a mortally wounded guard enters to warn of an impending attack by a Tatar horde. The Poles are quickly overrun by the Tatars and the castle begins to burn. Vatslav tries to save Maria, but Girey stops him, killing him with a concealed dagger. Maria, who has hidden her face in a scarf, is stopped by Girey. He tears the scarf away and is dazzled by her beauty.

Act two takes place in Bakhchisarai, the capital of the Crimean Tatars. The ladies of the harem are impatiently awaiting the return of the khan. The warriors return, bearing Maria on a litter. Girey enters and Zarema dances for him, but he is indifferent to her. Maria enters playing the harp and immediately becomes a curiosity. Zarema and the other ladies continue to dance for the khan, but he only notices Maria. Act three occurs in Maria's bedchamber. Girey comes to woo her but realizes that she cannot return his love because he killed her lover. He sees how terrified and sad she is and leaves her alone with only one attendant, an old woman. Zarema enters and begs Maria to return the khan to her. The old woman summons the khan and he arrives in time to see Zarema threaten to stab Maria. Girey tries to stop her, but she eludes him, stabbing Maria in the back. Girey threatens to stab Zarema, and she, realizing she has lost her love forever, does not protect herself but steps forward to take the blow. He decides not to kill her, but has the guards take her away. The action of act four takes place in the fountain court. Girey's generals return from a fresh campaign with more prizes and captives for the harem, but they do not interest him. Zarema is brought before him and he orders his men to throw her from the steep precipice. His men perform fierce warrior dances to entertain and distract their leader, but nothing can assuage his grief. His only comfort comes from the "fountain of tears" that he has erected in memory of Maria (Balanchine and Mason 1954, 249-251).

The poem, in addition to not including Vatslav, also does not mention dancing. However it does not seem outside the realm of possibility that dancing took place.

Therefore, with the exception of the classical *pas de deux* in act one the ballet does not lose its plausibility with the inclusion of dance. Mary Swift noted that the realism of the ballet, as opposed to the Romanticism of the poem, helped it remain in Russian/Soviet ballet repertoires because, "Its lush, oriental settings were heavily realistic, and, as if to justify the existence of the production, a program issued at a revival of the ballet in 1951 assured the spectator that 'it assisted the formation of realism on the Soviet ballet scene'" (Swift 1968, 98).

Another difference between the ballet and the poem concerned Zarema's death. In the poem she was killed "The very night the Princess died" (Arndt 1984, 264). In the ballet she was brought before Girey in Act IV, a daylight scene, who ordered his men to throw her over the precipice. This change in story-line allowed for another act to be included in the ballet which in turn presented the opportunity for a series of *divertissement*.

The ballet was more realistic than the poem, which is generally considered a Romantic work. Although sunlight and moonlight scenes were included, supernatural beings did not appear in the moonlight. The characters remained un-transformed for the duration of the ballet. Also, the costumes were very realistic. The harem ladies wore harem pants, while the Tatars wore conventional Tatar clothes and the Polish nobles wore costumes "while superficially in the fashion Versailles are given a certain native wildness by aigrettes, high boots, furred tunics and sabers" (Morley 1945, 40). Maria did wear a white costume throughout the ballet, but it was not a conventional tutu and resembled more of a gown that would have been appropriate for a social gathering of the time (mid-eighteenth century). Two aspects of the costuming were not realistic though: the use of *pointe* shoes for both Maria and the harem ladies; and, Vatslav's classical white tights and traditional male ballet bodice or tunic. Both the *pointe* shoes for women and the white tights and bodice for men are part of ballet conventions. Eliminating the *pointe* shoe, in particular, would greatly affect the technical aspects of the choreography. The simple ballet tights and bodice for the male allow the maximum amount of freedom of movement and the color white symbolizes the heroic and noble nature of the character. Other realistic aspects were incorporated into the ballet such as Maria's Polish harp (or lyre) and the inclusion of native Polish dances. These realistic touches, absence of the

moonlight scenes with supernatural beings, lack of betrayal by the male lead, and the presence of an attainable, but unattained, woman, distance the ballet from the conventions of Romantic ballet. To qualify, Girey does betray Zarema, by losing interest in her in favor of Maria, and does betray Maria by killing Vatslav, but this betrayal is different than the betrayal found in Romantic ballet. In the case of the two great Romantic ballets, *La Sylphide* and *Giselle*, the male lead pledges himself to one woman while seeking the affections of another. In *La Sylphide*, James is engaged to Effie, but pursues the sylph, ultimately causing her death. Albrecht is engaged to a noble woman in *Giselle*, but wins the affection of the peasant girl, Giselle, who dies upon learning of his deceit and becomes a supernatural wili. In the case of *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*, Girey has not promised himself to any woman. His betrayal of Zarema is implied because, prior to Maria's arrival, she was the favored wife. As a member of a harem, Zarema is technically one of Girey's many women, or wives, and not necessarily entitled to any special status or treatment. Despite this, Zarema feels betrayed, but blames Maria instead of Girey. Maria has been betrayed by a series of events caused by Girey, but not by him personally. Even their deaths are not caused directly by Girey. Girey does not kill them, but Zarema's actions doom both women. Therefore, the betrayer in *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* is both male and female. This is an abrupt departure from the conventions of Romantic ballet, where the woman is portrayed as an innocent victim and represented in an ethereal and other-worldly manner.

The female lead differed in *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* from other ballet conventions as well. Both Zarema and Maria were attainable. Zarema was desperate to be with Girey, and Maria, although repulsed by his attentions, was equally attainable. Maria was a captive with no means of escape and Girey had in fact imprisoned her, but had not won her affection. In this respect she was unattainable, but Girey believed in time that he would win her heart, thus making her attainable (Balanchine and Mason 1954, 251). It is these particular details that make the ballet more realistic than romantic and equate Zakharov's *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* with the works of Didelot.

While Didelot was known for his "flying" scenes in the early 1800s, Zakharov became known in the 1930s and 40s for his "disaster" scenes on stage, including the flood in *The Bronze Horseman.* One of the most spectacular scenes in *The Fountain of*

Bakhchisarai that helped to establish it as a theatrical masterpiece was the burning of the Polish manor. It was incredibly realistic, and when writing of a Bolshoi Ballet performance Morley noted:

> …I spent the morning going over a battlefield outside Vitebsk where a few hours before some thousands of Germans had been slaughtered by the Red Army in their drive through White Russia. In the afternoon I flew back to Moscow and in the evening went to this ballet as Ulanova was dancing. Perhaps I had gone in search of escapism, but when the Tartars put the Polish mansion to the sack, all the unspeakable scenes which I had seen earlier in the day and which had had a curious waxwork unreality now came alive and seemed to live their last agonies before my eyes, as if this were the reality and the other the play (Morley 1945, 40).

Having had the opportunity to view this ballet in St. Petersburg in 1985, I can attest to the fact that the fire scene was phenomenal. The entire stage appeared to be in flames and the audience could, in fact, feel the heat. As the fire intensified, the manor began to disintegrate. By the end of the scene, what was once a beautiful manor and garden had been reduced to rubble. To this date not even the phenomenal stage effects of Broadway musicals, such as *The Phantom of the Opera*, have impressed me as much. In the earlier part of the twentieth-century, this type of theatrical feat must have dazzled the audience.

Special effects aside, the ballet had many positive components that helped to assure its success. As previously mentioned, the ballet was fortunate to have a talented set of collaborators at work. Asafiev, who earlier had composed *The Flames of Paris*, decided to abandon his principle of collecting "authentic" material and instead wrote an original score without incorporating popular songs or tunes into the work as he had done with *The Flames of Paris*, although he did incorporate Alexander Gurilyov's *To the Fountain of Bakhchisarai* for the beginning and end of the battle, and used one of John Field's popular pieces as the leitmotiv for Maria (Doeser 1997, 224). One critic noted that Asafiev had created "an 'original' score—which, unfortunately, lacks any originality" (Schwarz 1983, 150-151).

Despite this observation, Asafiev was very thorough and researched various musical materials before composing. Since *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* was a Pushkin work, Asafiev chose to work with an early nineteenth-century idiom. This resulted in a waltz being included in the harem scene, which stretched the credibility of the

production, but audiences did not seem to mind. Another observer thought Asafiev's music was the perfect accompaniment for *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* noting, "Here he stylizes the music of the period so successfully as to make us think that the tunes to Pushkin's moving tale about the beautiful Maria held captive by the Khan were composed by a contemporary of the great poet" (Slonimsky 1947, 29).

Asafiev created ten ballet scores from 1935-1941 and adjusted his compositions to match the given topic. He studied historical details, national color and popular customs. He collaborated closely with the choreographer, librettist and stage director, which made the ballet a tight unity between the various elements presented on stage. Asafiev's work may lack originality, but it served as a catalyst for other composers to create original works (Slonimsky 1947, 151).

The costuming, staging, music and subject matter all contributed to the successful creation of a uniquely Russian ballet, *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*. The choreography, and subsequent fine dancing, also ensured the ballet of recognition as an enduring masterpiece. Zakharov trained at the Leningrad ballet school and danced briefly before concentrating on choreography. He studied all aspects of theatre and was influenced by Stanislavsky. Before beginning work in the studio, Zakharov met with the principal dancers and discussed the emotion and psychology of the roles, which was a revolutionary approach. He also spent numerous hours in museums researching the "essence of the imagery" (Doeser 1977, 224). He chose Galina Ulanova (1910-1998) and Olga Jordan to perform the role of Maria. Ulanova, in particular, was the embodiment of Maria and was noted for her distinct personal style and special characterization. She was a tomboy in her youth and trained for the ballet reluctantly. The role of Maria was the turning point in her career and she embraced the art of dance, finally feeling comfortable with her choice of career.

Maria was considered the main character by the choreographer, but that was not necessarily the way the audience interpreted it. Some audience members believed that Girey was the central figure and that it was his tragedy unfolding, not the women's. Girey represented a man "whose flashing career has been suddenly brought to an inconceivable halt by his passion for Maria and her absolute rejection of him" (Morley 1945, 41). This observation shifted the focus from the ballerina to that of the male dancer, increasing the

importance of his role and gender on stage. Dancers who portrayed Girey had to be at once virile and commanding, as well as tender and melancholy. Furthermore, the fact that there are two female protagonists splits the importance of the principal female role, further strengthening the prominence of the male.

Zhakarov demanded a tremendous amount of artistry and technical ability from both his male and female dancers. In act one Maria must be youthful and virginal, but also capable of executing a *pas de deux* with the athletic lifts associated with Russian/Soviet ballet. Vatslav was the youthful suitor until forced to fight with the powerful khan. Girey, having won the battle, turned to Maria, and instead lost his heart. As he removed her veil, she arched away from him in a carefully choreographed moment that clearly revealed to the audience his infatuation and her repulsion (Morley 1945, 41). To some critics this was the high point of the ballet; the mansion had turned to ashes and both principals were undone by the other. What followed, though, was the convention of *divertissement* in acts two and four, while in act three the action returned to the principals and their emotions.

In act one Maria's homeland and circumstances were established. The inclusion of a Western manor home, Polish costuming and dances, and a young innocent couple provided a contrast from the sensual setting of act two and allowed the choreographer to logically include an additional choreographic style. In act two the action was transferred to the khan's harem in Bakhchisarai where his women, led by Zarema, were awaiting his return from battle. They performed pleasing, but non-demonstrative dances, indicating their security and lack of anxiety. Girey returned with his men bearing Maria on a litter. He paid homage to the newcomer and allowed her to be left alone, which indicated to the other women the level of his devotion to her. Maria's special treatment was not lost on Zarema and she performed a dance:

> …which is entirely on points, is a masterpiece expressing all the love and agony which she dare not wholly reveal. With its suggestion of fear and self-control which finally breaks when she sees Girai is about to leave her she forces us to accept her as a personality, a living woman and not merely as the *deux ex machina* who is to move the plot forward (Morley 1945, 42).

In other words, Zarema reacted to her situation realistically and indicated that she was not willing to play the role of the discarded woman or victim.

Act three took place in Maria's bedroom, which featured an intimate environment including a stone arch, stone column and alcove bed. Maria played her harp for comfort, but was not comforted. Girey arrived intent on rape, if necessary, but her extreme aversion to him made him realize that there would be no joy in the conquest. Zakharov choreographed several technically difficult lifts for Maria and Girey that emphasized their respective plights while simultaneously employing a Russian/Soviet ballet convention:

> In *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*, for example, Zakharov has introduced a series of "lifts" for the Khan Girei and Maria which for pure plastic beauty and meaning are unsurpassed anywhere in the world today. With a slight emphasis, their inventiveness and intricacies could be revealed to gain acclaim from the audience which, in Moscow as much as elsewhere, is ever-ready to applaud the spectacular (Bellew 1956, 9).

Furthermore, the lifts were so carefully intertwined in the choreography that they did not draw attention away from the story-line:

> In the choreography of R. Zakharov…L. M. Lavrovsky…V. M. Chaoukiani…and V. Vainonen, there is much sensitivity and imagination and although it is often obscured almost completely by scenery, costume and other story-telling devices, not one of them has sought compensation by utilizing excessive turns or other acrobatic tricks.
>
> Indeed their choreography has a quality of understatement which could well be noted by some Western choreographers (Bellew 1956, 9)

Since *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* was one of the earliest Russian/Soviet ballets, Zakharov was pioneer in the use of athletic lifts and careful placement of them so as to not disrupt the narrative.

Girey, discouraged by Maria's rejection, left her unharmed in the chamber. Zarema, who escaped the harem by stealth, arrived and, finding Girey's discarded mantle near the bed, was driven mad by jealousy. Girey, summoned by Maria's and her attendant's cries, returned and tried to stop Zarema's murderous advances, but to no avail. Zarema plunged the knife into Maria's back and Maria's reaction reflected Zakharov's unique choreography:

> Not dancing, one would say, because the movements are for the most part slow, meditative, only occasionally breaking into broken sequences of recognizable classicism. In this form they are plastic, more like the movements of acting, yet it cannot be described as mime if by mime we mean conveying a drama through gestures; in essence this is not a drama at all but a poem and the liquid movements of the classic dance are made to reflect the rhythms and images of poetry (Morley 1945, 42).

In addition, Slonimsky noted that Zakharov's strong point:

> …is the development of realistic characters…His *mises-en-scene* are austere and fresh. And his third act is still one of the best bits of direction. He succeeded in presenting the dialogue between Maria and Zarema as a tense duet—a thing choreographers have long dreamed of attaining (Slonimsky 1947, 34).

It was in this act that a new technique of expression through dance was created; Lavrovsky would learn from Zakharov and develop it further in his *Romeo and Juliet*.

The action in act four took place in the khan's fortress. His captain, Nuralli, endeavored to distract him with a series of Tatar dances (utilizing the ballet convention of *divertissement*). Girey remained unmoved, even when Zarema appeared before him and he sentenced her to death. Girey's men danced brilliantly and enthusiastically, but the scene was dominated by Girey's unhappiness. The fortress became dark and the fountain appeared illuminated. The ballet ended atypically for a Soviet one, with no happy ending (Morley 1945, 42-43).

The unique characteristics of Russian/Soviet ballet came together and fostered a special entity with *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*. Pushkin's seemingly romantic verse transposed well into realism because no fantastic elements[29] were included in the text although many conventions of Romanticism were present. The ballet seemed to appear as interpreting a romantic poem, but in a new guise:

> The ballet reflects the poet's thought that love and violence are incompatible, that true love is all-conquering. Pushkin showed the ballet theatre the way to interpret lofty thoughts. He was the first to teach dancers how to master new ideas and poetical resources.
>
> The romantic form of expression, so peculiar of Pushkin's earlier works, accords well with the poetical nature of the art of dancing (Slonimsky 1947, 56).

With this observation, romanticism and realism converged to create a new "ism" for Russian/Soviet ballet. Zakharov was able to capitalize on both the most simplistic and the most complex aspects of the poem. In acts one and three, he used Pushkin's pristine narrative to emphasize the poignant relationships between Girey, Maria and Zarema. However, Zakharov also masterfully incorporated the implied "crowd" scenes to add texture and choreographic depth to the work. For example, in act one he included dances for the Polish nobility, although the dances were not specifically mentioned in Pushkin's text. In act two, the ladies of the harem performed numerous dances to simulate the passage of time and entertain the audience before the arrival of the khan. When the khan arrived with Maria the story returned to the plights of the individuals, as evidenced by Zarema's dance to regain the khan's affection.

The first three acts contained choreographic innovations. In act one the conventional inclusion of native dances transformed into a choreographed battle thus allowing Zakharov to utilize his talents for staging realistic "disaster" scenes. Act two featured the women of the harem, in their realistic harem attire, performing sensual dances that did not resemble the virginal and chaste *corps de ballet* work of *La Sylphide* and *Giselle*. Also in this act, Maria rejected the male suitor, which also was unusual (the sylph enticed James; Giselle protected Albrecht from the wilis; Odette agreed to marry Siegfried; Tao-Hoa wanted to leave with the Captain, etc.). Her rejection of Girey provided an opportunity for Zakharov to develop a new type of female character and through it a new choreographic style. During act three, Zakharov was able to return to the intimate staging required to portray the stories of three individuals, instead of moving large groups of dancers in the *corps de ballet*. Stripped of the backdrop of shifting dancers, the choreographer was obliged to relate a complicated story but chose not to use pantomime. He choreographed steps (including spectacular lifts), placed the performers carefully on stage, and coached their acting skills to produce the desired effect. Maria died simply, without histrionics or death throes. She leaned against the wall, felt her back for the knife, and slowly slid to the floor. She did not cry out against Zarema or for help. She accepted her death and, without pantomime, informed the audience that she welcomed it.

Act four was exceptional because it was dominated by the male dancers. Upon the deaths of Maria and Zarema, the days of the harem and light diversions were over:

> The Harem, utterly neglected,
> Knows not the favor of his stay;
> Within, their womanhood rejected,
> Beneath the Eunuch's frigid sway
> The fretful wives grow old. Their orders
> Long since excluded the Georgian girl: (Arndt 1984, 264)

Therefore, for the fourth act of the ballet, Zakharov had a choice: 1) follow the typical conventions for ballet and include a supernatural scene where Maria and Zarema return as shades to haunt Girey; or 2) break new ground by remaining true to Pushkin's text and permitting the men to carry the story-line. Zakharov chose the latter and produced significant choreography for the final act.

In act four, Girey's followers continued their pillaging of other areas and returned with booty, including women. Girey remained unmoved, so his men danced[30] to try to raise his spirits. Zakharov choreographed extremely athletic and rhythmically complicated dances, employing the *khovorod* and creating complicated floor patterns for the men. Previously, in conventional Romantic or classical ballet, the use of *khovorod* had been for the female *corps de ballet*. With his athletic as opposed to lyrical choreographic style, and by utilizing the men as the *corps de ballet*, he had created a ballet uniquely Russian/Soviet. Because of the lack of male dancers in the West, men are rarely used as a large group for an extended period of time. They normally function as *demi-soloists*, dancing in groups of six or less, or as partners for the women. Generally, a Western ballet company will employ one male dancer for every two or three female dancers and the choreography reflects this inequality. Therefore, when one refers to a *corps de ballet* in the West, it usually means the female dancers only, although male dancers may be listed in programs as part of the *corps*.[31] Zakharov had a luxury that he used to great advantage; a large group of well trained male dancers that could be utilized as a male *corps de ballet* and carry an entire act. The importance of the male dancer makes Russian ballet and *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* unique.

Critics of the ballet claimed that act four was unnecessary. They asserted that the action of the ballet ended with the deaths of Maria and Zarema and that the inclusion of

the fourth act made the ballet too long[32] and digressed too significantly from Pushkin's text (Morley 1945, 41). However, many patrons, including myself, found the choreographic invention and athletic execution of the material in act four worth watching.

The Fountain of Bakhchisarai was the first uniquely Russian ballet as defined by the criteria of this paper. Pushkin's excellent writing and beautiful telling of the story presented Zakharov with an extraordinary theme for a ballet. As important, the theme was acceptable to the new masters of Russian art that were desperately trying to superimpose a nearly impossible aesthetic on artists, Socialist Realism. Pushkin, as an exemplary writer for Soviet dictates, was a safe choice of author and as "the sun of Russian poetry, in the official Soviet view had to become one with the sun of socialism" (Brintlinger 2000, 169). Fortunately for Zakharov, he was also an exceptional writer who could not only tell a story well, but fill it with visual images that were so necessary to effectively transferring the tale to stage. Pushkin's innate musicality also aided the composer, Asafiev, with his task of merging text with music and ultimately aiding the choreography.

Specifically *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* meets the criteria for a uniquely Russian ballet. Pushkin's writing and theme assisted its creation which can now be examined for specific Russian characteristics including: 1) main character gender (male as opposed to female) and nationality (Eastern as opposed to Western European); 2) the Russian location of the story; 3) Russian musical composition; 4) Russian nationalistic attitudes reflected in the work; and 5) special dance techniques and choreography that illustrate unique aspects of Russian dance.

Certainly in *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* there are two very important female lead characters, and thus roles, and the story is impossible without Maria and Zarema. However, it is the character Girey that both begins and ends the action of the poem and ballet. In the case of the poem, Pushkin states in the opening lines:

> With brooding eyes sat Khan Girey
> Blue smoke his amber mouthpiece shrouded;
> About their fearsome ruler crowdes
> The court in sedulous array. (Arndt 1984, 251)

The ballet opens similarly with a lone male figure kneeling before the fountain.

However, the endings are different. In the poem the narrator/visitor/Pushkin laments, in a monologue, the loss of the women and refers to Girey's grief while questioning if the area is haunted. In the ballet, Girey is surrounded by his male followers who endeavor to cheer their master. In both cases, though, the action is over long before the narrator's observations or the Tatar dances. Girey is the main character in the ballet because: he kills Maria's lover; he brings Maria and Zarema together; he arouses Zarema's jealousy toward Maria by his treatment of the newcomer; he fails to protect Maria; and, he sentences Zarema to death. Despite his power over these individuals, he is unable to find contentment and happiness; he is powerless against Maria's aversion and Zarema's passion. Because Girey is the catalyst for the story he, although male (which is unusual for romantic or classical ballet), serves as the main protagonist in the ballet.

Girey also is not a Western national, but an individual from the East with a longstanding connection with Russia. The Tatars[33] were defeated in 1480, and although they continued their raids, they never again challenged the sovereignty of the state (Hosking 2004, 88). They were pushed to the outskirts of the newly formed Russia. However, Tatars had roamed the land for centuries and as part of the fabric of the countryside, contributed to the cultural development of the Russian people. Girey's forefathers inhabited the same areas as the people of Rus and Muscovy, but were separated from them by faith (Muslim verses Christian), language and culture. The Tatars were a separate ethnic and cultural group, but at both the setting of the tale and its writing, the Crimean Tatars were under Russian dominance.

Pushkin writes of events in the past but carefully inserts himself into the narrator's observations, probably basing his comments on his own visit. From his verse we know that *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* relates an old tale, but is being re-examined by a narrator of Pushkin's time. Pushkin visits the deserted palace, which means that Bakhchisarai is part of Russia during the visitor/narrator/Pushkin time otherwise Pushkin would be forbidden to make the visit since he must endure internal exile and is never allowed to leave the borders of Russia.[34]

The setting of the ballet is Russia, but again must be qualified. The area is newly annexed by the Russians and incorporated into the state, but is the home of many other nationalities and cultural groups. Pushkin discovers this on his exploratory trips in the

area, but recognizes their ethnicity as just part of Russia's diverse heritage. For him Russia is a combination of races and cultures. This is not surprising because Pushkin's cultural heritage is not exclusively Russian, but also African. He at once eschews and embraces his African heritage, but never forgets it. Similar to the characters of his poem, he wants to embrace his Russianness without abandoning his other identities. Regardless, the area is within Russia's borders and under the tsar's control, and as historical events unfold, comes under the control of the Soviets. Certainly for the purpose of Socialist Realism, the ballet is comfortably situated within the Soviet sphere and is suitable for Russian/Soviet identification purposes.

Also, in terms of nationalistic content, *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* probably served Stalin's purpose, or it would not have been allowed to remain in both ballets' repertoires. Using the alleged complicity of the Crimean Tatars with the Germans during World War II as an excuse to persecute the Tatars, Stalin would condone any social comment that put the Tatars in an unfavorable light. The ballet had been acclaimed since 1934 and Stalin may not have been inclined to censor it because of Pushkin and its popularity. However, if Stalin viewed the ballet as an anti-Tatar statement, its future existence was secure. Taken on its surface, the ballet presented the Tatars as raping and murderous people, who were unable to control their violent tendencies and act rationally. This interpretation presented the Tatar people as primitive and therefore in need of Russian domination. Certainly nationalistic attitudes were present in the ballet or could be projected onto its interpretation.

The music for *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* was composed by a Russian, Boris Asafiev, who researched music of the ballet's time period, but adapted it for his own compositional purposes. Although the music is Russian by nature and Russian by composer, it is not well-known. Unlike the music from Tchaikovsky's ballets, which are used universally and often, and Prokofiev's well-known music for *Cinderella* and *Romeo and Juliet*, Asafiev's music and his name are virtually unknown in the West. Part of the reason is because Asafiev's music is not memorable, nor particularly revolutionary. Asafiev was more of an academic than a composer. He established Soviet musicology in 1921 and was chosen to lead the music division of the Russian Institute of Art History in Leningrad. He led many study groups in 1922 and published numerous articles on

Russian/Soviet music (Maes 2002, 244-245). His greatest talents may have been in other areas than composition

The fourth criteria concerns Russian nationalistic opinions. Prevailing Russian attitudes of the time required that the fringe territories of the nation be, whether by force or acquiescence, controlled by the tsarist state. The wild territories of the Bakhchisarai area could be incubators for sedition, which meant that the tsar's power was needed to discourage revolutionary actions from inside the state. The tsar's presence, through his army, was also needed to protect the area from outside domination. The border area of Bakhchisarai was important because it was almost too far West for the tsar to crush any revolutionary ideas, but too far East and, therefore too close to Russia not to protect it from Russia's Western enemies.

Pushkin's poem reflects the national psychology of his era, which simultaneously embraced the naturalism and individualism of Romanticism, while espousing a new found nationalism as a result of Napoleon's thwarted invasion. Pushkin, through his visit and later writing, further incorporated the Tatar territories into the psychology of Russia. The people may have seemed "exotic" to ordinary Russians, but the land was necessary to protect the homeland.

The Fountain of Bakhchisarai was written at a time when imperial Russia was flexing its muscle following the defeat of Napoleon and recognition that Russia's borderlands had to be protected. Russia justified its control of the "south" because it could assert that it was in the best interest of the principalities involved who wanted stabilization and the cessation of aggression, which simultaneously would secure Russia's Western borderlands. Pushkin painted a romantic and realistic picture of the territories that most Russian citizens were unable to visit. They were happy to incorporate these territories into Russia because of their "exotic" nature and because this area protected their nationalistic interests by serving as a buffer from Western and southern aggressors.

The attitudes of the nation were also reflected by the Russian army's willingness to annex and incorporate other citizens and nations into Russia proper. Russia defeated Napoleon and was anxious to establish itself as an equal to the imperialistic aspirations of its sister countries. Also, the Soviet Union was even more imperialistic than Russia.

Stalin did not hesitate to annex territory he needed to protect Soviet interests. The Soviet sphere of influence after World War II stretched as far West as Berlin and Czechoslovakia.

Certainly the special dance attributes of *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* made the piece unique and, because of the other components, uniquely Russian. Zakharov employed several devices that made the work distinctive choreographically: 1) he used realistic staging and costuming; 2) he masterfully displayed the burning of the manor house and Girey and Maria's subsequent meeting; 3) he juxtaposed the refined dancing of the Poles in act one with the seductive and fiery dances of act two, most notably Zarema's solo; 3) in act three he simplified the action, focusing only on the three main protagonists and through his choreographic innovations of plasticity, innovative lifts and acting, broadened Russian/Soviet ballet's scope; and 4) in act four he broke with classical ballet convention and chose to choreograph an act focusing on the male dancers, serving as soloists as well as traditional *corps de ballet* instead of creating unrealistic roles for the female dancers.

What makes *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* even more important as a Russian/Soviet ballet is that it is part of the standard repertoire today for the Maryinsky (Kirov) and Bolshoi Ballets.[35] In addition, several Russian regional ballet companies currently include it in their repertoires. It can also be found in the repertoires of many of the companies located in former Soviet satellite states. It has not, however, been included in the repertoires of any Western ballet companies. Several factors contribute to this exclusion. First, Western companies have continued to create full-length ballets, with the majority of them based on Shakespeare or fairy tales. However, new Western ballets are generally short in length and neo-classical. Balanchine has served as the master choreographer for this trend and most new choreographers have followed his lead. Secondly, the staging of the first scene with its realistic fire would make it an expensive undertaking for most companies. The money to produce ballets with stage effects of such magnitude is difficult to find in the West (and has become difficult to find in Russia, as well).[36] Finally, although more men are choosing ballet as a career, men are still in short supply in the West. Ballet in Russia and the Soviet Union was considered an honorable and desirable vocation. Western attitudes still equate male dancing with effeminacy.

Given the current state of male training in the West, act four would be difficult to cast and stage. This trend, however, is changing and as ballet companies expand their repertoires, *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* might become a Western classic, too. Regardless, the ballet is a classic in Russia and surrounding nations and resulted from a culmination of exclusively Russian characteristics.

This does not mean that the work is unknown in the West. The Maryinsky (Kirov) Ballet included it in its repertoire when it performed in London in 1995 and 1997, and it premiered in North America in New York in 1999. The difference between American ballets and *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* was noted immediately. One reviewer noted:

> It is hard to believe that Rotislav Zakharv's *Fountain of Bakchisaray*, premiered in 1934 in St. Petersburg/Petrograd, is only now being seen in North America. It is equally hard to believe that this ballet – considered one of the earliest and best examples of the Soviet genre "dram-ballet" – was the same year that George Balanchine produced the abstract *Serenade* …they are as different as night and day (Szoradi 1999).

This comment confirms that, at least with the example of *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*, Russian/Soviet ballet is unique. Also, the mere fact that *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* remains in Russian repertoire is remarkable because, despite the fact that many Soviet ballets were created, very few were kept in the new Russian ballet repertoire.

By the time the ballet premiered in the West, however, the Soviet Union had collapsed. The Kirov ballet was again Russian, although it did not return to the name Maryinsky for marketing purposes.[37]

The Kirov ballet dazzled New York audiences, both in terms of technique and choreography, and *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* was extremely well-received. Uliana Lopatkina as Zarema "drove the Met audience crazy with her incredible kick-the-head leaps and soaring *jetes* in the Act II Harem Scene" while the men had a similar effect in Act IV when they performed their Tatar dances "driving the Met audience to a frenzy of 'bravos'" (Szoradi 1999).[38] The female *corps de ballet* was noted for its undulating group dances in act two and both the male and female *corps* were praised for their performances of the Eastern European dances in act one. Sixty-five years after its premiere in St. Petersburg/Leningrad, *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* was enthusiastically greeted by a

sophisticated audience used to much different fare. It is a singularly and uniquely Russian classic and recognized as such.

Although the path to developing a unique Russian ballet began with the solid base established by the imperial government in the late 1700s, Pushkin's influence should not be overlooked. Less than sixty years after the creation of the Maryinsky (Kirov) and Bolshoi Ballets, works based on Pushkin were being created. Even more significant is the fact that, one hundred and eighty five years later, works are still being presented in Russia based on Pushkin's themes, the most recent of which is the 2002 production of *The Queen of Spades*. However, Pushkin and Zakharov's *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* became the masterpiece that, at least for the moment, best represents Russia's unique ballet.

Pushkin's continuing influence, both within and outside of Russia, will be examined in the next chapter. The specific works to be considered include *The Queen of Spades* and *Eugene Onegin*.

Notes for Chapter Five

[1] The same sets and costumes were often reused for different ballets regardless of their subject matter (Demidov 1977, 7).

[2] After the thwarted revolution in 1905, the imperial authorities closed down the dramatic art school attached to the Bolshoi in Moscow (Reyna 1965, 199).

[3] Prior to the Revolution, the tsar's family was more closely associated with St. Petersburg and the Maryinsky Ballet than the Bolshoi Ballet in Moscow. This made the Maryinsky Ballet the more important of the two institutions.

[4] Gorsky's works included *Don Quixote*, *Notre-Dame de Paris*, *Salammbo*, *L'Amour va vite*, and a new *Swan Lake* in 1911 (Reyna 1965, 199).

[5] Boris Pasternak (1890-1960) and Anna Akhmatova (1888-1966) are the only two notable poets of the "Silver Age" who survived to publish in the post-Stalin period (Treadgold 1995, 181).

[6] Although the city of Leningrad reverted to its previous name, St. Petersburg, after the fall of the Soviet Union, the ballet in St. Petersburg remains the Kirov Ballet.

[7] Workers loved attending the performances but had to be told not to smoke or eat while in the theatre (Swift 1968, 33).

[8] Prokofiev was his most famous student.

[9] Ironically, *Bolt* has been "rehabilitated" and has just been included in the Bolshoi Ballet's current repertoire for this season.

[10] For example, some tsars were vilified and others praised depending on how the Soviet leaders needed to use their legacies to justify certain acts. Marxist theory would declare that all autocratic rule would be despotic (Treadgold 1995, 266).

[11] Dostoevsky was sentenced to death by Alexander II for his writings and revolutionary ideas. At the last minute his life was spared. He became a devoted monarchist and religious man. These attributes would make him unacceptable as a role model for the Soviets.

[12] Other popular ballet titles included *Esmeralda*, *Raymonda*, and *Nikyia*.

[13] Galina Ulanova, who danced Juliet at the Bolshoi Ballet premiere, was reported as quipping at the reception following the performance "Never as a tale of greater woe, Than Prokofiev's music to Romeo" (Schwarz 1983, 153).

[14] In addition to Pushkin's works, one work based on a novel by Nicholas Gogol (1809-1852) with choreography by Lopukhov and music by Vassili Solovyov-Sedoi, became a

relatively successful ballet, *Taras Bulba*. Although little written material is available concerning this work, it first appeared in Soviet repertoire in 1940 but is not currently performed (Slonimsky 1947, 32). In 1941 Zakharov produced another version (Roslavleva 1966, 232), while in 1952 another version with music by Gliere was completed and staged commemorating the centennial of Gogol's death (Nepomnyashchy 2000, 69). The 1940 Lopukhov version is noted for being "over-crammed with Ukrainian dances" (Lifar 1954, 304).

[15] The original tale was written in 1831 and the unexpurgated text was first published in 1882 (Yarmolinsky 1936, 321).

[16] The Maly Opera was founded in the 1930s by Lopukhov after he was forced to leave the Maryinsky (Kirov) Ballet. He created a version of *The Prisoner in the Caucasus* around 1935 which was regarded as superior to the 1938 Zakharov version for the Bolshoi Ballet (Doeser 1977, 238).

[17] It premiered at the Kirov on March 14, 1949, followed by performances with the Bolshoi Ballet on June 29, 1949.

[18] This thematic curtain might have been a special act curtain, (also commonly called the "main rag") which is the curtain that is usually in place at the beginning and end of a production and in between acts, or a scrim created for the production or the picture on the curtain might have been projected. From the text it is difficult to determine which device was used.

[19] In 1943 a new ballet, *The Red Veil*, with choreography by Lavrovski was presented in Leningrad. It was strongly attacked for its naturalistic excesses and weak choreography (Lifar 1954, 305).

[20] Cinderella's nationality is not determined in the Russian/Soviet versions. However, the Prince travels to foreign lands, including Andalusia and an unspecified eastern nation, searching for Cinderella (Bellew 1956, 155-161).

[21] Khrushchev delivered his "secret speech" on the night of February 24, 1956 in which he itemized Stalin's crimes. This began the process of de-Stalinization in the Soviet Union (Treadgold 1995, 368).

[22]The XXII Party Congress in 1961 continued the policies of de-Stalinization: Stalin's body was removed from the mausoleum in Red Square; Stalinsk was renamed Donetsk; Stalinabad was renamed Diushambe; and, Stalingrad, Volgograd (Treadgold 1995, 382).

[23]The term "southern" is misleading here. It would be considered east from Europe, but is south of St. Petersburg. This area was called the southern front and warfare continued until General A. P. Ermolov took over the Caucasus. After the defeat of Napoleon, many soldiers congregated there on their way home from the West and it became a hotbed for Decembrists. Native populations were threatened including those of the Circassians and the Turks. Russia's political domination of these areas made the area Russian, but still

"exotic" because the native population was not Russian. Pushkin repeatedly uses the theme of the Western/Oriental love affair in his "southern" works (Greenleaf 1994, 108-109).

[24] Various spellings exist, including Girai.

[25] Galina Ulanova is one of the most celebrated Russian ballerinas. She created the roles of Maria in *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* and Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet* and was highly praised for her performance in the film version of *Romeo and Juliet*

[26] A *polonaise* is a festive, processional, couple dance of Polish origin performed with a moderate tempo (Randel 2003, 668).

[27] Also called *cracovienne* or *Krakowiak*, the *kracovienne* is a Polish dance from the region of Krakow with a rapid duple meter and syncopations. It was popular in the nineteenth century because of performances by Fanny Essler and music by Chopin (Randel 2003, 448).

[28] There are numerous types of *mazurka*, but regardless of their nature many of them originated in the province of Mazovia near Warsaw (Randel 2003, 495).

[29] Pushkin does use the terms "shade" and "spectral" when the narrator/visitor visits the fountain and questions if the ghosts of Maria and Zarema haunt the area, but they are the only references to the supernatural contained in the poem (Arndt 1984, 265).

[30] Pushkin does not refer to dance in the poem.

[31] Like female dancers, male dancers are hired to be either members of the *corps de ballet*, soloists or principals. However, because of the smaller number of male dancers hired, they often have the opportunity to dance in smaller group numbers or perform duets or solos. Their *corps de ballet* experience is different than that of the female dancer. At a February 27, 2005, performance of New York City Ballet in New York, I observed that the number of women on stage in three out of four ballets (one piece was a *pas de deux*) outnumbered the men by at least two to one. The ballets included Jerome Robbins' *Fanfare*, Peter Martin's *Chichester Psalms* and Balanchine's *Stars and Stripes*. Particularly in the latter two pieces, the choreography made it obvious that the men had to partner two women each. When the men performed together as a group, the smaller group size made them seem more like individual dancers than *corps de ballet* members. The training is different as well. Female dancers are trained at an early age to dance as a group, with no one dancer standing out. Female c*orps de ballet* choreography requires the dancers to all look and move the same, as if there were only one dancer on stage and numerous copies.

[32] The ballet may seem too long because the intermissions at Russian theatres are unusually lengthy. They are twenty-five minutes instead of the usual fifteen (Morley 1945, 41). Patrons walk the floors of the very large anterooms together in a circular

pattern between acts. The path is often reversed from clockwise to counter-clockwise half-way through the interval.

[33] Also referred to as The Golden Horde or Mongols (Hosking 2004, 88)

[34] Pushkin, like many Russian/Soviet citizens was exiled to remote parts of Russia, but was not allowed to leave the country. They were at once exiled and imprisoned.

[35] *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* is an important part of Russian ballets repertoire and is well-known by dancers and audiences alike. This is evidenced by the fact that it was performed on the day of Galina Ulanova's funeral on the Maryinsky stage without being previously scheduled (Degen 1992).

[36] Both the Russian and Soviet ballets had access to funding because of imperial support in the first case and state support in the second. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, the ballet companies have been handicapped by cuts in funding and support.

[37]A visit to the Kirov Ballet website reinforces the ballet's identity as both Maryinsky and Kirov. The official site is under the name Kirov, but its home page has the name Kirov in the foreground, while the name Maryinsky is used like a watermark or wallpaper behind it, in effect superimposing the two names. A link concerning the ballet's naming explains that after the breakup of the Soviet Union they kept the name Kirov for marketing purposes because almost no one outside of Russia recognized the ballet as "Maryinsky".

[38] In this movement the dancer throws one leg away and up in the air. It is a jump in which the weight of the body is transferred from one foot to the other. There are small *jete* steps and large, powerful steps called *grand jete* (Balanchine and Mason 1954, 800).