

Peculiarities of the Russian ballet in the end of the XIX th century - beginning of the XX th century

Peculiaridades del ballet ruso a finales del siglo XIX - principios del siglo XX

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infotatianap@mail.ru**ABSTRACT**

The topic of Russian ballet poetics in the short plays plastic of the late XIX till first third of the XX centuries is relevant because of the rise of the ballet theater. There is an interest in it from people of art who wanted to remember the dance in all genres and types of artistic creation. Turning to this less well-known side of the research, we have to say, that the ballet topic in art is sometimes affected by theater researchers, illustrating their story with works of art and placing them in publications along with photographs. Engravings, paintings and sculptures are one of the truly invaluable sources for studying the history of ballet for them. Nevertheless, it is not by chance that most of these works are kept in the collections of the country's historical and theatrical museums. Ballet iconography is one of the most important branches of theater science, the science dealing with graphic material that reflects certain aspects of dance performance.

Keywords: plastic forms, figurative dance aesthetics, porcelain, decorativeness, images of ballet, integration.

RESUMEN

El tema de la poética del ballet ruso en los cortos de plástico de finales del siglo XIX hasta el primer tercio del siglo XX es relevante debido al surgimiento del teatro de ballet. Hay un interés por parte de personas de arte que querían recordar la danza en todos los géneros y tipos de creación artística. En cuanto a este lado menos conocido de la investigación, tenemos que decir que el tema del ballet en el arte a veces se ve afectado por los investigadores teatrales, ilustrando su historia con obras de arte y colocándolas en publicaciones junto con fotografías. Grabados, pinturas y esculturas son una de las fuentes verdaderamente invaluable para estudiar la historia del ballet para ellos. Sin embargo, no es casualidad que la mayoría de estas obras se mantengan en las colecciones de los museos históricos y teatrales del país. La iconografía del ballet es una de las ramas más importantes de la ciencia teatral, la ciencia que se ocupa del material gráfico que refleja ciertos aspectos del espectáculo de danza.

Palabras clave: formas plásticas, estética de danza figurativa, porcelana, decoraciones, imágenes de ballet, integración.

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INTRODUCTION

Activization of the art interaction process is one of the essential aspects of Russian artistic life at the beginning of the 20th century. Leading both to the enrichment of each individual area of artistic creativity, and to the emergence of new aesthetic phenomena. The article is an experience of a problem-based approach to the analysis of complex artistic phenomena associated with the ballet theater of the early 20th century since the formation of a new art and dance aesthetics (Valukin, 2010; Vasilyeva, 2014; Vishnyakova, 1998). Due to this, many aspects of stage design, seeming at first glance rather local, acquire an important general theoretical and practical significance (Vorobieva, 2013; Krasovskaya & Karsavina, 1971; Kudryavtseva, 2003). Interesting stage reincarnation and transformation is a special state of artistic otherness of the image included in the system of poetic convention (Mark, 1983; Ovchinnikov, 1987; Petrov, 1982).

At the beginning of the 20th century, classical foundations were breaking up in Russian ballet schools. In the future, these reforms will determine the leading place of Russian ballet in world art (Agarkova et al, 1993; Khmel'nitsky, 2011).

DISCUSSIONS

These changes would have been impossible without two talented reformers: Alexander Alekseevich Gorsky and Mikhail Mikhailovich Fokin.

They both converged in their desire for changes, in criticism of classical ballet, made qualitative changes in pantomime, dance and ballet choreography. But with all this, the activities of the two choreographers had significant differences: each of them chose an independent path and tried to follow it.

The reforms within the framework of the academic tradition began with a revision of the scenario drama. The old ballets did not have the integrity that could convey the content and the main idea of the performance.

Gorsky A.A. created a strict screenwriting drama with orderly semantic action.

Its main task was the exact transfer:

- Features of the era,
- Folk style
- National color.

The new dramaturgy shifted the accents in the ballet performance. It became impossible to convey all the features of the epochs and nations embodied on the stage without the participation of the visual arts.

Painting began to play a special role in the ballet performance, giving new meanings to music and dance. The painting inspired the creative imagination of the master, prompted new ways of script and direction development.

Gorsky's reforms left the Russian ballet a magnificent stage setting, striking in its taste, grace, originality and fidelity.

The severity and accuracy of the script, the spectacular design of the staging led to a re-arrangement of scores in a ballet performance.

Corps-de-Ballet by the rules of Drama

Painting defined the staged dances as well. A new role began to play a corps-de-ballet. In "Don Quixote", the corps-de-ballet lost its usual regularity and orderliness for the first time, turning from a symmetrical action into a triumph of asymmetry. Each dancer performed his unique dance, which created a chaotic crowd movement. And it is this crowd that rules on the stage, determining the development of the plot, intrigue and the fate of the main characters.

However, following the path of colossal reforms, Gorsky did not reject the values of the old ballet school. The basis of his corps-de-ballet was nevertheless a classical dance, notwithstanding an unconventional treatment.

Gap between dance and pantomime. Divertissement

Only pantomime could fully convey the whole drama of the action in his opinion. The pantomime in the performance reached a new, dominant level, while the dance served only as an accomplice. But such an eclecticism of action led to a semantic gap between dance and pantomime. As a result of the break in dance and pantomime, in "Giselle" the romantic component of the plot, the general poetics of the action, were disturbed. The dance of the play was aimed at elevation, smoothness, and the pantomime brought dissonance into it with sharp pictures of groups and transitions, which, by the way, created a completely new drama of the play.

The experiences of Gorsky with divertissement were successful. In the "Golden Fish", "The Humpbacked Horse" edition, the choreographer gave special meaning to the actions of individual episodes and tried to express the content of the music in this new form of ballet.

Gorsky was the first to turn to a new form of ballet - Mimedrama. Mimedrama could convey the characteristics of the national and historical epoch; reflect the logical nature of the actions and actions of the characters. Mimedrama is "The daughter of Gudula" - one of the most famous performances of Gorsky and an example of his original work.

The forms of virtuosic dance in mimedrama could even be supplanted by pantomime. The ballet "Daughter of Gudula" was replete with genre and folk scenes that demanded believability and realism. It was necessary to show the inner world of the characters, their psychological characteristics, which was also beyond the power of the classical dance. Only pantomime dialogues and monologues could handle this.

So Russian ballet of the 20th century was:

- Reflect the feelings and experiences of the characters,
- Emphasize the tragedy of the situation and the deep psychologism of the production.

Another finding of the choreographer-reformer was the “storyboard mise en scene”. This was demanded by the image of the masses, which often became the main character of the performance, concentrating on the details of the historical era and the environment.

Small forms of ballet performances and dramatization of symphonies

In small ballet performances, A.A. Gorsky introduced the concept of a new choreography.

In contrast to multi-stage performances, their basis was symphonic music, which left an imprint on the composition of the ballet itself. Usually ballet music was divided into numbers. Symphonic music is continuous.

So in the Russian ballet there was a real plastic action, where it was impossible to determine where the pantomime was, and where was the dance. The boundaries were so fluid where the plastic of the actors was natural and alive.

In addition, the symphony has a large form, which means it was possible to do without an abundance of individual dances.

Later in the production of the Fifth Symphony of Glazunov, the master was the first in world culture to headline ballet by typing the word “symphony” in the title, than he took the most important step towards program ballet action. The ballet performance and the symphonic program played equally important roles on the stage.

The history of Russian ballet owes much to Gorsky.

His main achievements are:

- Creating a harmonious, coherently ballet action,
- Development of a unique dance drama of the play,
- New ballet direction,
- High psychology of action,
- Attention to the smallest details and characters of the characters.

A.A. Gorsky succeeded in overcoming many conventions of classical ballet: the lack of a harmonious plot, the canonical structure of a dance, and the neglect of pantomime.

Fokin considered the Russian ballet of the century hopelessly outdated, naive, and classical dances - ridiculous and unnatural. A great influence on his reforms had the work of Isadora Duncan, whom the master admired. The basis of the dance, he believed it was the naturalness of movements, live poses. The choreographer removed the classical movements of his arms and legs from his actors, forcing them to move around the stage as they would have done in life.

With his reforms, M. Fokin forced a free dance out of the shadows and equated him with academic rights.

Like Gorsky, he saw the source of changes in the pictorial design of the play. The ballets of Fokin were precisely stylized under a certain epoch. He did not just put the picturesque on first place in the ballet - he gave her the main source of inspiration.

Above all, the choreographer appreciated antiquity. The scenery of his performances and chitons, in which actors often danced, had a great influence on the fashion of that time.

When creating ballet, he was given the role of background music, which could awaken creative imagination, convey the mood of the performance.

Pantomime psychology

The pantomime of Fokin's ballet was clearly aligned with the character of the actors. Mimicry traced the rejection of the traditions of the old ballet school. Plastic has become complex, refined, but at the same time preserved the naturalness and freedom. Each actor had his role in the motley picture of the action. But there was no chaos: the gestures and movements of the heroes were clearly worked out and looked quite symmetrical. Fokin managed to bridge the gap between pantomime and dance; pantomime organically flowed into a dance action and vice versa.

The sequence of dances and mimic movements became one.

Repertoire lines and opera dances

The Fokin repertoire clearly traced two lines:

- Line of plastic drama,
- Line stylization under the era of theatrical past.

Each character of the play received its own plastic role. Thanks to the second line, the ballet-master created the style of romantic choreography. It doesn't matter where the action took place - in any historical interpretation the dance embodied the elusive ideals and unsteady dreams of a particular era.

He created a new aesthetics of ballet scenes in opera productions. In his ballets, symphonic music, underlined by the nature of plastics, acquired a new sound. The choreographer honed the techniques of classical dance, filling them with new living meaning. The smoothness of symphonic music emphasized the slimness and beauty of what is happening on the stage. M. Fokin is considered the founder of modern romantic ballet because of the reform.

The choreographer experimented with classical dance and based on populist characteristics. Dance was still the main means of expression of ballet. He took as a basis elements of folk dances and, combining them with classical ones, received a new vision of action, where the canons of the classics were combined with the natural freedom of movement and the expression of the author's intention.

The significance of M. Fokin's reforms

Choreographer Fokin made a genuine breakthrough in dance drama. Thanks to his reforms:

- Dance found the necessary consistency and consistency,
- Ballet act itself has become more verified and reliable,
- New stage design allowed to convey the style of past eras,
- Performance of symphonic works changed the role of music in ballet action, making it a full-fledged actor,
- Pantomime acquired in the ballet the function of disclosing the psychological image of the protagonist,
- Choreography reflected the place and role of the character in the author's world,
- Dance has become an authentic means for the image of national color.

It is also necessary to note, that the images of porcelain plastic of small forms and ballet. They helped to master the peculiar relationship in which lays the secret of the synthesis of these arts, and allowed to do this with the greatest subtlety and emotional conviction.

Ballet figurines created by masters of the Petersburg Porcelain Factory: N.Y. Danko, S.M. Sudbinin, D.I. Ivanov, O.A. Glebova-Sudeikina, A.Y. Bruschetti-Mitrokhinoy, live in space, expressively plastic, sound like a nocturne, therefore attractive and interesting. They possess valuable qualities peculiar to ballet - intimacy. An artist who works in porcelain on the image of dance can reduce the distance between the original and the perceiver to the limit. Such interaction with one-on-one, similar to what happens when one perceives a live ballet image on stage. And although the same communication happens with the ballet theme embodied in easel sculpture, but for artists working in small porcelain plastic, the ability of a ballet statue to be a sociable companion became not a feature, but the main principle on the basis of which the content of the image is revealed.

Porcelain plastic, approaching in the "large" works to the cabinet size and in small versions to elegant miniatures, is more diverse in typological and thematic respects compared with the easel and monumental sculpture of its time. In the form of a "statue" or "bust", it is present in the interior as an independent artistic object. In addition, plastic images from porcelain are often used to decorate household objects for various purposes: dishes, watches, lighting fixtures and vases, writing utensils, realizing their decorative possibilities more directly than easel forms. A special priority area of application is "sirloin instruments." All kinds of knobs for reeds, figured cutting, dressing-cases and snuff boxes belong to the category of porcelain "bagatelle" - the indispensable accessories of the secular life of the second half of the XVIII century.

Thus, the porcelain "doll", being a kind of plastic art, organically lives in a diverse subject-clothing context of the epoch, which leads to the conclusion about its "borderline" position between easel sculpture and decorative and applied crafts. This special place in the hierarchy of spatial arts of the 18th century predetermines the presence of figurative and stylistic parallels of porcelain plastics with other types of "notable arts" and "craftsmanship": bronze, engraving, painting, and theatrical stage-scene.

Porcelain sculpture is experiencing a genuine triumph thanks to the first in the history of the figures of the participants of the "Dyagilev seasons" created by S.N. Sudbinin commissioned by the Imperial Porcelain Factory. By right, the whole world spoke about them, and the porcelain plastic again demonstrated its ability to "feel" and react responsively to the historical and cultural needs of the time. The author cites the archive documents of the plant and unpublished personal papers of S.N. Sudbinin regarding the history of their creation, paying particular attention to technological aspects (figure of T. Karsavina).

The previously unknown bronze sculptures of famous ballet actors made by Sudbinin according to porcelain originals are introduced into the scientific revolution. The author cites the Parisian letters of Sudbinin and the archives of the Sevres Porcelain Manufactory, thereby reconstructing the history of the creation of previously unknown sculptural portraits of A. Pavlova and L. Sobinov, made in Sevres, and conducting a stylistic analysis of these works. (Tatuev, & et al, 2018).

"Russian Seasons" became a sort of culmination in the exchange of cultures between Russia and Europe and a kind of "bridge" into the future for Russian art. Such names as Pavlova, Karsavina and many other participants and witnesses of "Dyagilev Seasons" symbolize the flourishing of Russian art at the beginning of the 20th century. Their work became the embodiment of moral and philosophical ideas of the renaissance of Russian culture. The images of the Great Russian actors captured in porcelain by S. Sudbinin perpetuated one of the brightest pages of Russian history.

Sudbinin was the first in Russia to reflect the art of the theater of the XX century in porcelain works. In the spring of 1913, he received an order from the Imperial Porcelain Factory to create models of artists of the Imperial Theaters F. Shalyapin, L. Sobinov, and the ballerinas of the Imperial Ballet A. Pavlova and T. Karsavina.

The Staging of reality was one of the characteristic phenomena of the time. However, the sculptor did not just give her a hobby, she ideally corresponded to the artist's attitude, his sincere love for the theater. The images created by the master go beyond the limits of the theatrical scene and exist in the context of the cultural space of their time. In the world of ballet and opera performances, Sudbinin was able to bring in a sense of contemporary perception of life, and in the images of Great Russian actors - to convey more complex life concepts.

According to the memoirs of M. Fokin, the idea of creating an artistic image in Russian ballet was only in its infancy; at the beginning of the 20th century they were just beginning to think about the need for a synthesis of arts in dance, where everything would be subordinate to one goal - the unity of the artistic image, the unity of the whole performance. Pavlova's dance served as graphic evidence that ballet can and should be viewed as a special kind of art in the highest sense of the word.

Probably, from the works ordered to him, Sudbinin first turned to Pavlova's work, the strength and charm of which lay not in this or that technical trick, not in the final pirouette, but in her ability to create a complete artistic image. Sudbinin performed the models of Pavlova's figurines in the ballet parties *Swan*, *Bacchanalia* and *Giselle*. Only the last of them was carried out in china. For the sculpture of Pavlova Sudbinin chose the image of *Giselle* from the scene of divination in the first act of this ballet. According to the performer, her artistic concept was to "...show a whole range of experiences, transitions from one feeling to another."

Pavlova's triumphal performance presented a new life to the image of the main character, "*Giselle*," which, in her interpretation, became the most important link in the dramatic art of ballet. The tendency to fix with the help of sounds the most subtle nuances of the movements of the soul became the main principle in Pavlova dance. Willis Pavlova contrasted the world with a harmonious world torn apart by passions. This moment in her game was conveyed by Sudbinin, who understood exactly where the dancer's highest skill was expressed: two or three abrupt hand gestures with a livid face — everything is said without words, with dumb expression concealing hopeless doom. Perhaps the sculptor can be reproached by the external wasting of the figure, which rests without "rushing" forward. But this moment, masterfully captured in china, conquered authenticity in the expression of feelings of love and despair. (Irani, & Rezaei, 2018)

At the same time, Sudbinin performed two sculptural portraits of Anna Pavlova in the choreographic composition "*The Swan*" and in the ballet "*Bacchanalia*". Creating portraits of Pavlova in the role of the *Swan*, Sudbinin originally approached the interpretation of the image of the dancer. He does not "build" a form, as in sculpture, but rather "treats" it as a kind of strange substance, in the unsteady, colorful haze of which the unforgettable profile of Pavlova in the "areola" of swan feathers is guessed. This is a kind of half-real and half-fairy-tale. In another portrait, Paul the sculptor gently processes the form, that there is a feeling of fusion of the sculpture with the environment, "dissolving" the silhouette in the surrounding space. The image of the *White Swan* arises from a misty haze, acquiring a special attraction because of its understatement.

In the image embodied by Pavlova in Mikhail Fokin's *Bacchanalia* ballet, Sudbinin conveyed the spirit of free rhythmoplasty, which the ballerina took from Isadora Duncan's art, making it an organic part of her dance. The variety and complexity of the rhythmic themes, combined with intense black and white contrasts, create in this composition an unusually acute sense of movement that lasts over time. In this statuette, Sudbinin conveyed Pavlova's "*Soul Movement*", which strongly objected to a dance that was not motivated by feeling, stating: "Why are you wasting your time trying to stand for half an hour on one leg? Until you feel, you will not be an artist!"

In the portraits of Pavlova, the sculptor's temperament, his fortitude, masculinity and admiration for the genius of the greatest Russian ballerina of the 20th century are felt sculptural portraits of Pavlova could not but remain unnoticed by art critics of Paris. Having received the best reviews, Sudbinin signed a contract with the Sevres Porcelain Manufactory, for their performance in biscuit, thus becoming almost the only Russian sculptor, whose works were produced in the famous French enterprise. Renewed every five years contracts for the execution of portraits of Pavlova lasted until the beginning of the 1940s, and the models for their molding are still kept in the archives of the Sevres manufactory.

According to archival documents, Sudbinin personally followed the process of execution of his work, especially at the initial stage of cooperation, and was present during firing. The figure of Pavlova the swan was estimated at 300 francs. In "*the Bacchanalia*" it cost 100 francs. He received 25% of the sale of each figurine, which were sold in the museum shop, and also were sent to sales offices in Europe, including in England, by prior order.

In the image embodied by Pavlova in Mikhail Fokin's "*Bacchanalia* ballet", Sudbinin conveyed the spirit of free rhythmoplasty, which the ballerina took from Isadora Duncan's art, making it an organic part of her dance. Pavlova loved to perform in the genre of choreographic recitation to music, combining classical dance with free plastic, thereby introducing some specificity and pantomime to the ballet art. Enriching the work with special dynamics, the sculptor gave the viewer the opportunity to "hear" the music of I. Glazunov, under which the ballerina moves.

The variety and complexity of the rhythmic themes, combined with intense black and white contrasts, create in this composition an unusually acute sense of movement that lasts over time. Fun excitement reigned in the dance, takes a truly Bacchic character. The impetuous impulse, the ballerina's selfless circling are filled with some kind of nervous

ecstasies; expression activity is enhanced by live facial expressions, as if addressed directly to the viewer.

The study of porcelain plastics in the context of the ballet images study has expanded the boundaries of a comprehensive view of the thematic quest for small-scale sculpture bordering on arts and crafts. The creative synthesis of sculpture and ballet was given a new impetus at the turn of the century. Porcelain and earthenware factories existed in many regions of Russia and Europe. They set the fashion for artistic style searches. Ballet themes have become a harmonious expression of modernity and symbolism of the Silver Age, formed as a complex synthetic style, even more likely a fusion of various styles with a principled openness to the cultural heritage of all times and peoples. The proposed method for studying porcelain plastics, which includes related types of art, can be considered as a significant addition to the approach to the study of small-scale sculpture monuments that are common in art history.

The study of the images of ballet in porcelain plastic with the main information about the subjects, allowed seeing and understanding the topic as a form of thinking, an inexhaustible source of inspiration, to get an idea of the trends of its development in the art culture of the late XIX till first third of XX centuries.

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