

Exploring russian folk dance



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Contents

Russian people think that the Russian dance is a celebration of their lives. Russian folk dance and folk music discloses the feeling and an expression of spirituality. The visit to Russia is becoming an experience of this new land.

Russia is known as an attractive destination due to the scary size along with an interesting history of Europe. It is considered as an ultimate tourist destination and the country is one third part of European countries with the diverse musical background. Russian dances are full of individual and huge performers (Chitranshi, 2009). Russian dances are the human activities which constitutes all properties about human. Thus Russian dance exists at this land along with their terminology, sayings, proverbs and conversations. In Russia, classical ballet is a ruler. There is no training for the modern dances and also there is no performance space along with some modern schools. Russian folk dance was common among the peasants, commoners and the lower class people living outside the city (earlier than the rule of Peter). The higher class people did not dance but they were getting pleasure from the enjoyable performances of dancing trainers.

The major differentiation among social classes within the culture of Russian dance took place as a historical event. That attack had broken the people's way to live life and it also it changed the progress of Russian dances by stumbling its logical sequences. Russian classical ballet dance is very popular dance all around the world and it remained very popular since the nineteenth century (Chitranshi, 2009).

The researcher here aims to understand the concept of Russian folk dance and the reason for conversion of this into Russian Ballet dance. While the objective of this study is to analyse the concept of folk dance in Russia and various types of Russian dances which are famous in the country.

In order to attain aims and objectives of the research, researcher has designed below stated research questions:-

What are the various forms of folk dance in Russia?

What is the history attached with Russian folk dance?

How did Russian folk dance transformed to Ballet dance?

How the dance, as source of entertainment had converted into professional dance?

Who are the famous people linked to Russian folk and Ballet dance?

The actual ballet dance did not invent in Russia but the country has contributed very much for its development and currently Russian ballet has gained popularity all over the world. Various ballet dance performers along with the ballet companies have raised out of Russia and ballet theatres are attracting people in larger number. Ballet came into Russia during 1700s and in 1734, first ballet school was introduced (Albrñ-ght & Danñ-Đµl 2004). After few years, an imperial school of St. Petersburg found first Ballet Company in Russia. It was first dominated by Italian and Russian dances as well as choreographers. In 1800s Russia's Ballet dance incorporated some ideas from folk dancing. The higher class people did not increase and

promote the art by supporting some companies. The French choreographer named as Marius Petipa and he was renowned for inventing ballet of Tchaikovsky. Russian ballet took place and observed in new era in the 20th century. It has been identified in previous studies that Michel Fokine (choreographer), Vaslav Nijinsky (dancer), Sergey Diaghilev and Alexandre Benois (designer) set up the ballet company in Russia. At that point of time, superb dancer Anna Pavlova was taking the place. At present Russian ballet is known throughout the world and attracting lots of visitors. There is several ballet companies are operated in Russia such as Kremlin Ballet, Perm ballet and Imperial Russian ballet academy. The well known cities have established their own ballet orchestras and theatres and that are focused by number of supporters. The role of Russian ballet to the classical dances cannot be undervalued. It has been known from past many decades and considered as the indicator of the classical dance. It leads other type of dances. Young girls are becoming ballerinas and their dreams have been powered by the famous Russian dancers. Thus Russian ballet dance has captivated large number of audiences all around the globe.

This choreographer is renowned as the male dancer of all times and he has also called the god of dance (Parker and Derek, 1988). After the long time of female dominance in the field of ballet, he overtook the ballet dancers of those times such as Pavlova, Karsavina and Kschussn-ska established superiority in the within the male dance stage in twentieth century. His career in the ballet dance field has ended from past ten years due to his mental disease. But legendary of Nijinsky will continue until the appearance of such type personality who will overtake the ballet generation. Pole

became the hero of an imperial Maryinsky theatre just after completing his studies from St. Petersburg school at the age of 18 years. He was the inspiration for the ballets in the western side. Then Fokine invented ballets for Nijinsky and other people like Ravel, Debussy and Stravinsky prepared music for him (AlbrÑ-ght, DanÑ-Đµl 2004).

At the time of First World War, Nijinsky as a Russian citizen was interned in Hungary. Diaghilev got success in getting him out of the country for the purpose to visit North American tour in 1916 and then he choreographed his main part in Till Eulenspiegel. Indicators of dementia praecox became clear for the members of the company and then became sacred of other dancers (Anthony, 2002). The first ballet of Nijinsky named as " L'AprÃ"s-mÑ-dÑ-d'un FaunĐµâ€? has become a milestone within the history of ballet Russes of Diaghilev. That ballet was marked near to the period in which Fokine was the biggest dancer. Thus the dancer Nijinsky emerged as a choreographer and his thoughts stimulated the doubts raised by Diaghilev and it ran contradictory to the classical folk dances of Russia. The production of first ballet was totally based some choreographic scores and they were recorded by Nijinsky in his dance entry system. It remained for many years and he became unavailable due to his mental illness for reproducing the work.

Michel Fokine got training from the Imperial school in St. Petersburg and then he joined Ballet Russes of Diaghilev in 1909. Then he went to United States in the year 1923 where he performed for the American Ballet theatre and Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. Fokine considered some artificial as well as random traditions along with the methods and techniques for expressive and natural choreographic styles. This style is known as the recurrent topic in the <https://assignbuster.com/exploring-russian-folk-dance/>

field of ballet dance. His new ideas and thoughts led the success of the Diaghilev Company. He choreographed so many ballets and Chopiniana that led Balanchine for trying the ballets which became his brand name. The classical ballet dance or folk dance has become unlimited since the days of Fokine and the people thinks that his choreography is old fashioned. So his ballets remained unproductive and suffered from deformation. He was surprised and shocked that it would happen in his career (Michel Fokine, 2011).

Marius Petipa was the leading dancer and the choreographer along with the ballet of St. Petersburg in the year 1962. At that time he invented multi-acted ballet for the imperial theatre of Tsar. That ballet gave directions to other ballets and it was considered as classical ballet. In 1869, Petipa took the position of the master of ballet to the Tsar's imperial theatre. Then he created so many single and multi act ballets for the presentation on the Russian stages. Then he created and developed Don Quixote type for the ballet in Moscow. He choreographed large number of dances along with numerous types of ballets.

The present days consider importance of Russian ballet at quite a notable rate. Bolshoi and Maryinsky are among the most renowned companies and training schools for teaching of ballet. These are well known all across the world for their remarkable practices. It is appreciable to note that the tradition of Russia is into existence even in present era. The firmness among dancers and choreographers along with the support by audience has resulting in attainment of this position. However, the past of virile nature represents the main factor for survival of this dance. The ballet of Russia was <https://assignbuster.com/exploring-russian-folk-dance/>

imported from France though; it admirably attained its own position in the culture and dance. The dancers and choreographers of Russia considered themselves as equivalent to that of Western countries. However, Alexander Pushkin was the main cause for writing style by Russia.

The involvement of this man had resulted in portrayal of characters and story telling by utilizing themes of Russia that fits with the stage and survived for more than two centuries for Russian ballet. Western Europe was the main contributor to Russian ballet dance since the nineteenth century. However, the end of nineteenth century has resulted in formation of Russian ballet dance that differentiates itself from all over the world and become a leader in the arena. Didelot, the person well known as “ Russian Ballet’s father” (Steinberg, 1980), in the year 1816 along with explored Pushkin also termed as talent at local level, Russia started making strides for development of its unique form of ballet dance.

There was overlap between the Didelot and Pushkin’s era at St Petersburg for Imperial ballet. In comparison to the ballet dance of Western European countries, ballet dance of Russia lied far behind in the field of art. Talented Didelot along with Pushkin had resulted in foundation of unique dance of Russian ballet. In spite of the reason that these two individuals were not able to see the domination of Russian ballet, but they deserved appreciation for their efforts. The main characteristics for Russian ballet include as follows (Nickles & Kalman, 2008):-

There is an opposition existing between gender and nationality. Here nationality means the Western European and Russian region.

Story's location for Russians

Music composition of Russians

Attitude against nation to reflect work of individuals.

Unique dancing steps supported by choreography illustrating special characteristics for Russian dancing.

On unfolding the ballet dance of Russia, the efforts by Pushkin in his development is influenced. The composition of music and theatrical efforts had been quite unique in Russia due to the talent of Pushkin. On combining these aspects, there raised development in new arenas. The effect of Pushkin to develop Russian opera finally resulted in improvement of Russian ballet. The ballet is usually dependent on music for most of the countries. However, as per Slominsky (1947) stated that there exists strong relationship between these characteristics. The experiments by Pushkin along with the fresh rhythm had resulted in creation of challenging situation among composers. As per Gerald Abraham, the Russians in this century enjoyed favourable time due to better lyrics in spite of pseudo classicism related to Derzhavin that are related to love poems resulting in new song in Russian for Pushkin (Abraham, 1985).

However, this was inspiring to note for the dancers and choreographers. The influence by Pushkin allowed in recognizing ballet of Russian for recognition of unique genera and not the import of talent belonging to different countries. The influence of Pushkin had helped in influencing the Russian ballet dance to be recognized all over the world with own image. The

influence of Pushkin and Didelot had resulted in enhancing history of Russia to provide a strong background for artistic power. The involvement of Soviet along with arts had resulted in better improved arts.

The companies created in Russia, by imperial decree had gained favour from government to result in better learning experience. This had resulted in giving an opportunity along with the challenge. The support by two companies had further resulted in higher value of material found and helps in improvement of opportunities for research, but shall be well defined to ensure that there is no conflicting situation.

The Soviet Union concerns for the study of folk dance as an important arena in addition to drama art and music. However, there was lack of recording that would have helped the dancers to develop their skills (Blacking & Kealiinohomoku, 1979). Prior to the revolution, there was no focus laid on folk dance. An individual needs to be aware of choreography, philology in addition to musical folklore (Blacking & Kealiinohomoku, 1979). Lack of recording system resulted in not availability of recording for choreography. The history of folk dancing in Soviet has been into existence from the 1920s to 1930s (Blacking & Kealiinohomoku, 1979).

The composers from Ukraine had been involved in this arena and the country was among those who started this concept of folk dance earliest among Soviet Union. The efforts by cultural groups have resulted in good collection of wide range of roles from all across (Bukland, 2007). After the formulation of Russia, the country was left with two choices: outward choice to follow western tradition, and inward trend to follow their culture and tradition

(Schultz, 2000). That had raised the urge to have a thorough plan in such a manner that there exists a good balance between the two.

The ballet present at St. Petersburg had been considered as Bolshoi too. The development of Maryinsky theatre at St. Petersburg in 1860s followed by the imperial ballet that performed at new theatre in the year 1889, and the company was named as Maryinsky Ballet Company. Thereafter, the name of ballet at St. Petersburg was changed due to the assassination by Sergei Kirov in the year 1934. Thereafter, Soviet Politburo was favoured for replacement of Josef Stalin. There was the opposition for Kirov, by left opposition party (Treadgold, 1995). Renamed ballet institutions had been compounded due to imperial city for Soviets.

The ideology from patrons had acted against Russian ballet, and that raised the concept of training of dancers for demonstrating the Bolshoi Theatre and Maryinsky. The seats were restricted for higher official authorities. The subject however had to face censorship resulting in ballet dance as being quite conservative (Dees, 2004). That acted against the introduction of this form of dance as a professional business. Individuals willing to carry on the operation for their profession had to face this as the major barrier against growth of industry and individuals attached with it. However, there still persisted the importance for all the ballet training centres. Moscow Company was among the famous training centres for the name of step child in the end of 19th century.

Talented pool of people gathered at Petersburg however due focus was laid on Maryinsky Theatre. This was the main cause of Petersburg Company

leading quite ahead of Bolshoi Company and resulted in its brand value in European context (Bailey & Ivanova, 1999). Regulating institutions too became an uneven situation. The Bolshoi Ballet was not as tough to be carried on as compared to Maryinsky Ballet. Therefore, the latter had to make available all the resources along with the support provided by imperial court. Therefore, Bolshoi court enjoyed freedom of art. That was too tough to find out when the ballet dance in Russian context came to be known all around the world. The native dancers had to be well renowned at that instance to bring awareness among the genera.

The dancer named as Theophile Gautier at St. Petersburg, belonging to Imperial school had stated that the institution of dance results into remarkable group of soloists, incepting the corps for ballet which was same as for movement speed, precision, and unity. That was the moment of joy for the group to disband the right moment for reforming in quite a unique manner. The movement of those feet in perfect manner with proper match among the group, without any confusing stage were the causes of this success. The laughter and chattering were never there. The pantomime for dumb with no action, had the frame as per Lifar (1954), and his studies. That was the unique form of Russian ballet dance for executing during the mid of 19th century. Additionally, the starting of 1844 was the time when ballet dancers of Russia got trained at their place to start formation in West Europe for applauds.

Though the dancers were applauded both at national and international level, non Russian choreographers belonging to different locations had formed the dancing groups. Number of dance historians at those times stated that the <https://assignbuster.com/exploring-russian-folk-dance/>

ballets of Russia are not too different than those of French ballets for the Northern wind (Lifar, 1954). Additionally, the researcher had pointed that the dancers of Russia get training and learning from outside sources. The choreography training in Russia too was not of good standard. Therefore, the training and development was though noted in the country for Russian folk dance followed by the ballet dance, there still lacks the trainers. In case there would have been good number of trainers in the country, there can be improvement in ballet dancers of Russia.

The Russian dancers were one or the other way linked to non native place (Lifar, 1954). The learning from those locations results into convergence among Russians including Pushkin, various choreographers and composers for establishment of Russian ballet. There raises the importance to make an effort to improve the chronological sequence for ballets in Russia. There need to be a strong link between the choreographer, composer and writer. For this purpose, ballet dancers had to be compared with that of western counterparts to compare and contrast relationship between the two. Charles Didelot was among the most famous choreographers in his times and was in link with Pushkin. However, previous ballet dancers too had worked to explore the poems of Pushkin to develop ballet dance.

Isadora Duncan dance is known as revolutionary person of modern type of dances who made the first Russian show or presentation in the year 1905 in St. Petersburg at the Marinsky theatre. That was the time making event that had changed the grand Russian ballet tradition. Serge Diaghileff was the founder of the ballet Russe and he told about Isadora that she have given the permanent shock to classical Russian ballet dance and she had pointed <https://assignbuster.com/exploring-russian-folk-dance/>

the ways which were followed by them (Netti et al., 1991). Then Isadora returned to Russia for six times in her life time and found inspiration of the Russian workers. It has been revealed in the researches that after several years, the people will make the professional as well as personal journey in the country to bring the gift of American Duncan dance to the Russian people or dancers and also they will find that what would be remained within the art of Isadora in modern St. Petersburg. CEC international partners which is a Russian company and it sponsors for an artistic exchange between Eastern and Central Europe.

Isadora established a training school in Moscow by getting invitation from the commissioner of people who made efforts for bringing art in front of the people. An ideology of Soviet anti-capitalistic requested to disappointment of Duncan with the millionaires in America who failed to fund the schools in Germany, France and Greece (Lomax, 1959). There was little stability within the training for current dancers outside the world of ballet of the Bolshoi and Kirov. From past so many decades, after the communism, an imitation of modern dance has been seen. It was the work of Martha and Graham and her European contemporaries along with the training in Jazz.

The dance of Isadora Duncan has brought together another dancers named as Michelle Vazquez Kickasola (Ivette Sotomayer and Cuban American) are elevated in Miami where the Cuban community acts as anti communist party. There were bothered about the choreography of red tunic dances to the red army songs and that may be disgusting for the people who have reformed themselves in the Russian countries in twenty first century (Hilton, Alison, 1995). It has been viewed that so many people have learned the

dance as well music being as the main part for their history. Number of old people from independent states like Uzbekistan and Georgia has lamented the lives of people economically and politically under the communism.

Ludwig Minkus was one of the biggest musical composers in the mysteries. He was having powerful posts in the imperial ballet theatres in Russia in the nineteenth century. He was known as an antecedent of Tchaikovsky but he was delicate being as a musician. Despite the obscurity, Minkus can never be forgotten. In early 1990s, the imperfection by Natalia Makarova and Rudolf Nureyev, the name of Minkus began to go outside again. Then Richard prepared the ballet recordings that presented some dumpy passages from the Minkus work and thus it provided surprising and wonderful things. From past so many decades, the words came to know about the music of Minkus and it was the traditional part in Soviet Union. That was linked with the legendary of ballet master, named as Marius Petipa. These works such as La Bayadere and Don Quixote were the two choreographers who carried by some valid protection from eighteenth century to the present day (Corona, 1991). They were presented first time to the people all over the world.

To ignore the expression of regret, the ballet was proved as successful. That success was consolidated and now it has been carried out by many companies from the federation of Russia. Thus it has resulted into the transformation of old ballets to new type of ballet. The success of these ballets with other types of ballets has laid within the power of score for bringing the emotions of the people and dance of life. Thus Minkus neither published nor revised but played several arrangements that have become

very popular in all over the world. It needs a new life for the people who had given up the hopes of their lives.

The musical power and authority of ballet has become surprising for the people. These ballet stories has the real power and human demand in which the choreography attracts the esteem of Balletomanes, attracts music in its regularity, the beauty of the music keeps the attention of many people and it engages everyone's heart. Don Quixote is a comedy and known as one of the most touching novels in the world and it is about the beauty among the ordinary things. La Bayadere is a tragedy that keeps an eye on the sorrows of people in case of love with full of passion, unfaithfulness, separation and death. It talks about the two things together shows a satisfying symmetry. The ability of the musician responds to the effectiveness of both the sides such as dark and light of the human being touches the main demand of the drama. The life of Minkus and the compositions of ballets and the works are poorly diagnosed and documented, thus the proper and right investigation is needed for them to explore the historical and critical material. The studies provided the help of George Verdak of Indianapolis and it made the copies of this material from the collected ballet scores. It continued by his inheritor before her death. Some major contributions gave by a professor who made scores of La Bayadere.

The rich success of his work of Don Quixote have taken a part as a major step in the career of Minkus and his first appointment at the imperial Russian theatre in St. Petersburg in the year 1872 as the first court composer of ballet (Degh, Linda, 1965). The death of other choreographer named as Pugni led Minkus to take his place. He became responsible for musical

devices as well as library in the Bolshoi theatre. Then he was told to compose music for ballet dance for the opera Mlada. It was commissioned by the director of imperial theatre. Then the projects was ended, Minkus revised prolonged his materials after some years for the development of ballet. That was followed by ballet one after another and Minkus appeared at the Maryinsky and Bolshoi theatre and it was all the choreography of Petipa. The researches have revealed that between the year 1869 and 1886, Petipa generated only 4-8 ballets without composing any music by Minkus and that was the important partnership of these two artists.

The chapter here explores research methodology used to complete this dissertation. Researcher explores the type of study undertaken at this instance and the approach used for analysing results. The researcher also explores the type of data used in the research and the approach used for the dissertation. The researcher has also explored aims and objectives of the research followed by research questions to achieve these.

The researcher here aims to understand the concept of Russian folk dance and the reason for conversion of this into Russian Ballet dance. While the objective of this study is to analyse the concept of folk dance in Russia and various types of Russian dances which are famous in the country.

In order to attain aims and objectives of the research, researcher has designed below stated research questions:-

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For this research, researcher has used interpretative approach for research. Therefore, the interpretations acted as the main source for data analysis. In addition to this, the descriptive nature of approach was used for research purpose. Researcher has made an effort to collect secondary data from various sources to have a clear thought process for the subject under study. The folk dance in Russia, right from its history to present times is analysed. Various famous personalities were also covered in the research to understand the philosophical approach in the country. Although it is preferred by researchers such as Richards & Hall (2000) to collect both primary and secondary data while carrying on the research process, secondary data was chosen hereon by the researcher due to complexity attached with primary data collection approach. Collection of primary data would have added too much to the complexity of this project.

First of all, researcher had a clear understanding of the research topic to understand all the concepts related with Russian folk dance. This helped in designing clear aims and objectives of the research. Thereafter, secondary data was analysed further to formulate the dissertation sections and integrate them well to ensure the logical flow of discussion. Then researcher had made an effort to attain the aims and objectives of research by

answering research questions. This helped in final conclusion to demonstrate the findings.

The researcher has made use of case study as research strategy by designing of complete research process. This helped in clearly defining research problems that relate with the subject under study. The use of case study helped in gaining solution for the research. This had helped in acting as main cause for decision making stage to attain the aims and objectives of research. Theories related to folk and ballet dance of Russia were discussed to have a sound understanding of the subject under study. Therefore, case study was taken as a favourable approach for determining the research and evaluating it thoroughly (Robert, 2003). This approach helps in analysing results based on the theoretical framework prepared for the research.

Case study is used widely as per researchers such as Robert (2003) to analyse the outcomes due to high reliability and consistency associated with the concept. These help in exploratory study of the subject topic using numerous case studies for using the replication process to analyse based on the theory collected (Yin, 1994). The conceptual methods have been explored well through the use of case study method to analyse the results (Yin, 1994).

Through case study method, theoretical background of folk dance in Russia would be created to know about the existence of this traditional approach, which had resulted in Ballet dance introduction and the conversion of dance into professional dance. Therefore, case study seems to be the reliable tool

for getting results within short span of time. This would also help the researcher to get rid of any sort of biasness due to different beliefs.

For this research purpose, researcher has taken secondary data as the choice. Number of books, and magazines were referred along with journals and various internet sources. These would help in formulation of strong base to carry out research process. The results would be obtained thoroughly through this strategy to attain outcomes.