

ARTHUR SAINT-LÉON'S *THE LITTLE HUMPBACED HORSE* IN CONTEXT

by

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A THESIS

Presented to the School of Music and Dance
and the Graduate School of the University of Oregon
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Arts

June 2011

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Title: Arthur Saint-Léon's *The Little Humpbacked Horse* in Context

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Degree awarded June 2011

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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Master of Arts

School of Music and Dance

June 2011

Title: Arthur Saint-Léon's *The Little Humpbacked Horse* in Context

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In this study I examine representations of antisemitism, fantasy, and cultural imperialism in the 1864 ballet *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, composed by Cesare Pugni and choreographed by Arthur Saint-Léon. As the creative team adapted the story from verse to ballet, they literally morphed the titular character into new fantastical forms. They also added Jewish, Muslim, and other oriental characters and ended the ballet with a parade of the Russian nations. Drawing on the works of Richard S. Wortman, Julie Kalman, and Roger Bartra, I place these transformations in the context of a larger Russian ambivalence around the shift from a rural and woodland economy to an urban one, the inclusion of Eastern provinces in the rapidly expanding nation, and the emancipation – and inclusion of – internal minorities. I then explain how the music, choreography, and focus of the ballet change as the relevance of these mid-nineteenth century concerns fades.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my appreciation to Professors Marian Smith, Loren Kajikawa, and Anne Dhu McLucas for their help in the preparation of this thesis. I would like extend my most sincere gratitude to my wife, Sara Prentice Manela, for her support and critical editing of this document. I also would like to acknowledge Lisa Arkin for her input on character and folk dance and Professor Halina Goldberg, Indiana University, for access to her unpublished manuscript on Jewish character dance in ballet. Access to manuscripts from the Sergeev Collection at Harvard University were made possible by a University of Oregon Graduate Research Award.

Dedicated in memory of Jeanne Manela (1950-2000) and Robin Manela (1943-2010).

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In late 1864, eight years after the coronation of Tsar Alexander II and a scant month after his government declared that Russia had a mission to civilize its Asian neighbors,¹ the Russian Imperial Ballet produced *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, or *The Tsar-Maiden* at the Mariiniksy theater in Petersburg. The French choreographer and danseur Arthur Saint-Léon penned the libretto and created the choreography; the Italian ballet composer Cesare Pugni wrote the music.² Saint-Léon based his libretto upon the published version of a fairy tale, *Конек-Горбунук* (*Konek Gorbunok*, or *The Little Humpbacked Horse*), an epic poem written in 1834³ in western Siberia by Piotr Pavlovich Ershov,⁴ a folklorist and teacher from Tobol'sk. There has been very little written in English about Pugni and Saint-Leon's ballet, despite it having been in constant production in the Imperial – and then Soviet –

¹ Richard S. Wortman, *Scenarios Of Power: Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy: From Peter the Great to the Abdication of Nicholas II*, New Abridged One Volume Paperback Edition (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006), 195-204.

² Arthur Saint-Léon, "Libretto of *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, or *the Tsar Maiden*," in *A Century of Russian Ballet: Documents and Eyewitness Accounts, 1810-1910*, 238-249 (Alton: Dance Books, 2007).

³ Gary R. Jahn, "Petr Pavlovich Ershov." In C. A. Rydel (Ed.), *Russian Literature in the Age of Pushkin and Gogol: Poetry and Drama*, (Detroit: Gale, 1999), 67-70.

⁴ Pyotr Yershov, *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, trans. Louis Zellikof (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1960).

Ballet⁵ until the composer Schedrin wrote a new ballet on the Ershov tale in 1958; scenes from the Pugni ballet remained in repertory until at least 1989.⁶

The Little Humpbacked Horse was written in a time of political upheaval and a sea change in political narrative of the Imperial Government, a narrative that was widely distributed and essentially mythological in nature.⁷ Indeed, I will argue that the Russian state, through the Imperial Ballet, used this ballet in particular, harnessing its own internal mythic structures in order to further the more general political mythology that Richard Wortman calls a “scenario of power.”⁸ In particular, the ballet is part and parcel of the specific myth that the regime of Alexander II used in ceremony and propaganda, the *scenario* of the Tsar as an autocrat beloved by all of the Russian peoples.⁹ Yet this is not the only mythology present in the ballet, for the central character, Ivan the Fool, is a clear example of the folk icon that was emerging in Russian popular culture during the 1860s.¹⁰ The peasant, in the end, becomes the ruler. These two mythologies, one autocratic and one populist, are therefore superimposed in a rather ambiguous way. Indeed, the ambiguity was

⁵ Maya Plisetskaya danced “the *pas de trois* from Alexander Gorsky’s old *Little Humpbacked Horse*” in 1943 or 1944, her first year at the Bolshoi Theater. Maya Plisetskaya, *I, Maya Plisetskaya*, trans. Antonina W. Bu Maya Plisetskaya, *I, Maya Plisetskaya*, trans. Tim Scholl (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2001), 59.

⁶ Plisetskaya notes that Schedrin, whom she would later marry, was “working with Radunsky on a new *Little Humpbacked Horse*” in 1958. (Ibid., 178.) The finished product would be dedicated to her. (Ibid., 327.)

⁷ By “mythology” I mean a consciously constructed set of objects and associations placed together for a purpose, along the lines of Roland Barthes semiotic approach. In particular, mythology as signification contains ideas of imperative, motivation, and historical contingency. See Roland Barthes, “Myth Today” from *Mythologies*, (Excerpted from Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, Trans. Annette Lavers, Hill and Wang, New York, 1984) <http://www.artsci.wustl.edu/~marton/myth.html> (accessed May 16, 2011).

⁸ Wortman, 1-6.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Cathy A. Frierson, *Peasant Icons: Representations of Rural People in Late Nineteenth Century Russia* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 21-31.

such that some ballet insiders such as Alexandre Benois saw it, in retrospect from the Soviet era, as subversive satire.¹¹

The opening and closing scenes of *The Little Humpbacked Horse* frame the work as nothing less than a “who is out” and “who is in” declaration about nationalities within the Russian empire. The ballet begins in the village market square of ‘Krasnovodsk,’ an actual city on the eastern shore of the Caspian, and part of the Khanate of Khiva, which Russia had repeatedly tried and – as of the 1860s – was still attempting to conquer.¹² In the first scene, Ivan the Fool and a group of Russians mock a Jew who has come to the market to shop.¹³ In the final scene, called “apotheosis,” the Fool is feted as the new ruler (in this version, as a Khan) wedded to the Tsar-Maiden, and an extremely long series of national or character dances follows, a parade of nations that I will argue is reminiscent of the actual coronation of Alexander II.¹⁴

The Little Humpbacked Horse was written and first performed on the cusp of the time frame that Taruskin talks about in depth in his studies, and on the periphery of the

¹¹ Alexandre Benois, *Reminiscences of the Russian Ballet* (London: Putnam, 1941), 56-58. See also Natalie Rouland’s Discussion of Benois in Natalie Rouland, “Echoes of Empire: Russian Self-Representation in Petrushka,” *Havinghurst Center for Russian and Post-Soviet Studies*, Annual International Young Researcher Conference, 2006, <http://www.units.muohio.edu/havinghurstcenter/publications/documents/Rouland.pdf> (accessed January 28, 2010), 9-10.

¹² Henry Lansdell, *Russian Central Asia: Including Kuldja, Bokhara, Khiva and Merv*, Vol. 2 (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1885), 460.

¹³ Saint-Léon, “Libretto of *The Little Humpbacked Horse, or the Tsar Maiden*,” 240.

¹⁴ Saint-Léon, “Libretto of *The Little Humpbacked Horse, or the Tsar Maiden*,” 249. Among all of the libretti in Wiley’s compendium *A Century of Russian Ballet*, Petipa’s contemporary *The Pharaoh’s Daughter* (1862) is the first ballet to have an “apotheosis,” and *The Little Humpbacked Horse* was the first to specify a parade of nations in the apotheosis. See Vernoy de Saint-Georges and Marius Petipa, “Libretto of *The Pharaoh’s Daughter*,” in Wiley, *A Century of Russian Ballet*. After these two ballets, an apotheosis seems customary, as in *La Bayadere*, *The Vestal*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, and *Raymonda*. (All these libretti are translated in Wiley) However, among these, a suite of character dances being specified at the end of the ballet as part of, or preceding, the apotheosis, is not in all of these – only preceding the apotheosis in *The Sleeping Beauty* and *Raymonda*. While not an exhaustive survey, this evidence points to the large suite of character dances being unusual up until the 1860s.

native Russian composers that he discusses.¹⁵ Nevertheless, this intersection of politics and ethnic representation is an example what Richard Taruskin calls the Russian ‘mythos of authenticity.’¹⁶ Taruskin does not give a reason for this need to “define Russia musically,” but it seems clear to me that Wortman’s idea of a consciously created Russian Imperial mythology provides an important background, if not impetus, to this need, at least in the case of official Imperial artistic mouthpieces such as the ballet.

I will argue that the Ballet’s producers (essentially, the Imperial household) and creators were, in a sense, attempting to define who was, and who was not, Russian. Up until this point, while Russian composers such as Glinka certainly existed, a large amount of court music in Russia came from foreign sources such as Pugnani, even when performed by local talent.¹⁷ And so, in a paradoxical arrangement, they employed an Italian composer and a French choreographer to construct this idea of “Russianness,” in a period just before Stasov and his Mighty Five would take this mantle up themselves.¹⁸ *The Little Humpbacked Horse* itself was widely popular, but differed significantly in plot and character from the ballet. It is in these differences that the Imperial message welds itself to popular narratives of “Russianness.”

In addition to adding the Parade of Nations as an Imperial conclusion, the 1864 version of the ballet contains three representations of Otherness not present in the original

¹⁵ Richard Taruskin, *Defining Russia Musically: Historical and Hermeneutical Essays* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), xi-xvi.

¹⁶ Taruskin, *Defining Russia Musically*, xiii.

¹⁷ For instance, in 1843, Rubini and Liszt played in St. Petersburg while the Russian Jewish composer and pianist Anton Rubinstein, on tour in Moscow, played “works by Thalberg, Wieniawski, Handel, Liszt, and Mendelssohn.” Philip S. Taylor, *Anton Rubinstein: A Life in Music* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2007), 15-16.

¹⁸ Taruskin, *Defining Russia Musically*, xv.

folktale or in Ershov's version. The first is the native Russian 'Wild Man,' which overlaps with the character of the titular horse as he transmutes himself from one form to the other, and back again. The second is The Oriental, as represented by the Khan who opposes the essentially Russian Ivan. And the third is the Jew, who appears in three guises – the debased merchant, the attractive and exotic female, and the wise old advisor.

The choice of a Russian ethnic folk tale of this fantastic nature for a ballet subject was unique in its day.¹⁹ Saint-Léon indicates that the title role of the little humpbacked horse and the magic white horse that Ivan the Fool tames at the beginning are both manifestations of a singular hunchbacked "odd human figure;" this man-horse duality appears to tie the ballet into not only Russian folklore but also Western literary traditions that include Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and also the *Roman du Fauvel*. These representations of the savage as they are echoed in nineteenth-century art and literature are the subject of discussion in their respective fields,²⁰ but there has been no discussion in musicology of this 'wild man' as he appears in music drama. I will show that this figure links imagery of paganism, devils, and perhaps even Jews together in a single packaged construct.²¹

As previously mentioned, Saint-Léon also replaced the Tsar in the original story with the "Khan of the Kirghis Kaisaks;"²² Act I Scene 3 can only be described as a harem

¹⁹ Sergei Nikolaevich Khudekov, "The Petersburg Ballet During the Production of The Little Humpbacked Horse (Recollections)," trans. Roland John Wiley, in *A Century of Russian Ballet: Documents and Eyewitness Accounts 1810-1910*, by Roland John Wiley, 250-275 (Alton: Dance Books, 2007).

²⁰ Roger Bartra, *The Artificial Savage: Modern Myths of the Wild Man*, trans. Christopher Follett (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997).

²¹ Ibid., and Frank Felsenstein, *Antisemitic stereotypes: A Paradigm of Others in English Popular Culture 1660-1830* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 27-39.

²² Saint-Léon, "Libretto of *The Little Humpbacked Horse, or the Tsar Maiden*," 243.

fantasy in the Khan's lair. This invites not only a discussion of the exotic and oriental in music, a subject Locke, Bellman and others have written extensively about,²³ but also a discussion of censorship in the arts in Russia under the Tsars. When discussing this exoticism I will use Ralph Locke's "All the Music in Full Context" paradigm as a framework for explication.²⁴ Locke's paradigm is a particularly useful tool created to a large degree in response to Edward Said's *Orientalism*. Locke's paradigm acknowledges that musical representations of the exotic can range from the overt use of exotic-sounding tropes, (e.g. pentatonic scales, parallel fourths, etc.), to common practice techniques that sounds "Western" but nonetheless in context represent the exotic.²⁵ As the Imperial Ballet can be regarded as a mouthpiece of the Imperial government, we can see the use of music and choreography to represent both essential Russianness and essential otherness as both sonic and visual tools of propaganda.

This ballet's third representation of alterity, in addition to representations of the 'wild man' and the oriental, is the depiction of Jews. Arthur Saint-Léon included three depictions of Jews in the libretto, none of which are in the Ershov tale. The first, as previously mentioned, was that of a Jewish merchant being harassed in a market in the opening market scene; the second, a manifestation of the magic horse as a hunchbacked Jew in the Khan's retinue; and the third, during the harem fantasy, an Algerian Jewess is

²³ Ralph P. Locke, *Musical Exoticism* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009). Also see Jonathan Bellman, ed., *The Exotic in Western Music*, (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998).

²⁴ Locke, *Musical Exoticism*, 43-71.

²⁵ Ibid.

magically summoned among representatives of the world's great beauties to parade before the Khan – without an obvious reason.²⁶

As pointed out above, I hypothesize that the parade of nations is possibly reflective of the coronation ceremonies of Alexander II, which took place just eight years before, in 1856.²⁷ I believe that Saint-Léon created the anthropomorphic property of the horse as an expression of pan-European pagan folklore of the so-called wild man, who was a stock character in ballet as early as 1716.²⁸ His very choice of this folktale was indicative of the early stages of a competition for supremacy within Imperial Russia between three political factions – the west of the nation centered in its then capitol Petersburg, its once and future cultural center of Muscovy, and its Asian components.²⁹ Saint-Léon's addition of three common Jewish stereotypes indicates an ambivalence toward a new and purposeful influx of "exotic" Jewish immigrants from the Pale of Permanent Settlement in what had previously been Poland before the Russian annexation;³⁰ as there is strong evidence to suggest that Arthur Saint-Léon was himself at least part Jewish,³¹ I will attempt to posit some plausible reasons for him to have included these caricatures. Furthermore, I will explore how the Jewish characters might have been portrayed on stage and in music.

²⁶ Saint-Léon, "Libretto of *The Little Humpbacked Horse, or the Tsar Maiden*." This is a matter of current academic discourse, as the 2010 convention of the American Musicological Society had its first ever session on "Judaic Studies and Music," and this has become a budding field of research.

²⁷ Nathans, 78.

²⁸ Lambranzi, Book I, Plate 17, is an example of a Satyr, or Pan. Harlequin, who Phyllis Siefker also indicates being an evolution the same figure, is in Plates 29-33. See Phyllis Siefker, *Stanta Claus, Last of the Wild Men : the Origins and Evolution of Saint Nicholas, Spanning 50,000 years* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 1997), 107-116.

²⁹ Figes, xxx-xxxi.

³⁰ Nathans, 23-26. I would submit that being 'part' Jewish is a twentieth century American invention, nevertheless I will use it here.

³¹ Ivor Guest, *Fanny Ceritto*, 55-6.

In Chapter II, I will analyze two of the important differences between the Ershov tale and the Saint-Léon libretto, these being that a) the humpbacked horse appears to be a magical person in the Saint-Léon, whereas it is always a magic horse in the Ershov, and b) that the Tsar in the Ershov has been replaced by the Khirghiz Khan. I will show, using primary source material as well as score selections, what exoticisms were used in *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, and I will draw parallels between the many national dances in the final scene and Tsar Alexander II's autocratic myths of power.

In Chapter III, I will analyze the three Jewish stereotypes introduced in the Saint-Léon libretto: the "Shylock/Fagan" character, the "wise Jew," and the exotic Jewess. I will attempt to answer the question of how the Jews would have been portrayed in dance and music, and specifically ask if there was Jewish "character dance," a set of dance steps that would have been immediately recognizable as representative of a particular idealized nationality (regardless of authenticity).³² I will also discuss the discrepancy between various accounts of Saint-Léon's religion, as he has been claimed as Jewish by some sources.³³ I will hypothesize how his Jewish or half-Jewish identity (both his self-identity and his identification by others) might have been an influence on the plot and choreography of *The Little Humpbacked Horse*.

³² Jurgen Pagels implicitly refers to character dance being a function of nationalism in its nineteenth century context rather than purely about ethnicity *per se*. See Jurgen Pagels, *Character Dance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 1.

Anthony Shay, when discussing national folk dances, explicitly discusses the differences between ethnicity and nation and notes that they are intertwined, but that in the case of folk dance entire nations – regardless of ethnic minorities – are subject to simplification into a representative dance. Anthony Shay, *Choreographic Politics* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2002), 5-7.

³³ Dora Sowden, "Dance, Jewish Contribution to," in *The Blackwell Companion to Jewish Culture from the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, ed. Glenda Abramson, 160-162 (Cambridge and Oxford: Blackwell Reference, 1989).

In Chapter IV, I will trace the history of this ballet beyond the original production, giving highlights from its various transformations, first by Petipa, and then in the Vaganova School as a repertory piece, noting the change from being a story about Ivan the Fool to being focused on the Tsar-Maiden. This historical process is a case study in what Marian Smith criticizes as “the disappearing danseur.”³⁴ Finally, I will give an overview of some of the other musical treatments of *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, including musical theater, film, animation and of course the 1960 resetting of a ballet on the Ershov tale with a score by Schedrin.

The Little Humpbacked Horse, as created by Arthur Saint-Léon and Cesare Pugni, with its century long tradition in the repertory, allows us to examine synchronically the unfolding of an artistic work over time. In this study I have chosen to examine three important aspects of this ballet: 1) Russian national identity in the context of an overarching imperial myth, 2) antisemitism as a proxy for anxiety about emancipation, and 3) the process by which male dancers recede from the stage.

In the United States, we are to have a virtual treasure trove of primary sources in the Sergeev collection at Harvard University. This collection has the full orchestral score as well as programs, synopses, and Stepanov dance notation scores to several productions of *The Little Humpbacked Horse*.³⁵ I have been able to obtain digital copies of the 1904 Gorsky choreography for a large part of the first act for this collection. This material is for the most part large floor-plan blocks with stage directions, and a very select few *pas*

³⁴ Marian Smith, “The Disappearing Danseur,” *Cambridge Opera Journal* 19, no. 1 (2007): 33-58.

³⁵ *Sergeev, Nikolai, 1876-1951. Nikolai Sergeev dance notations and music scores for ballets: Guide. (MS Thr 245),* <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:FHCL.Hough:h001987> (accessed October 8, 2010).

notated in Stepanov notation.³⁶ Roland John Wiley's *A Century of Russian Ballet* contains one of these synopses translated into English.³⁷ Ivor Guest has translated much of Arthur Saint-Léon's correspondence.³⁸ Also of note are memoirs and writings of ballet at the time, particularly those by the balletomane Khudekov³⁹ as well as the choreographer Feodor Lopukhov.⁴⁰ A piano score of *The Little Humpbacked Horse* from 1865 is readily available in facsimile.⁴¹ The full score from the 1904 production was not available for study. We are also quite lucky to have an English language eyewitness account of the coronation of Alexander II by Lt Col. G. A. Maude, the military attaché to the British mission sent to the coronation.⁴²

Literature Review

There is very little extant biographical work on Arthur Saint-Léon or Cesare Pugni, and there is very little reputable English-language work on Ershov, although there is a museum in Ishim in the Tyumen region of Siberia that hosts a website with some signed Russian-language scholarship.⁴³ Ivor Guest has created a mini-biography of Saint-Léon as

³⁶ Ibid., Folders 124-131.

³⁷ Arthur Saint-Léon, "Libretto of *The Little Humpbacked Horse, or The Tzar-Maiden*."

³⁸ Ivor Guest, ed., *Letters from A Ballet-Master: The Correspondence of Arthur Saint-Léon*, ed. Ivor Guest (New York: Dance Horizons, 1981).

³⁹ Khudekov, 250-275; *Cultural Center of PP Ershov*, <http://ershov.ishimkultura.ru/ershov.php> (accessed October 10, 2010).

⁴⁰ Fedor Lopukov, *Writings on Ballet and Music, A Studies In Dance History Book*, ed. Stephanie Jordan, trans. Dorinda Offord (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2002).

⁴¹ Cesare Pugni, *The Little Humpbacked Horse or the Tzar-Maiden*, Piano Score (Moscow and Kiev: A Guthrie, 1865).

⁴² Lt. Col. G. A., R.A. Maude, *Letters From Russia: 1856* (1968).

⁴³ *Cultural Center of PP Ershov*, <http://ershov.ishimkultura.ru/ershov.php> (accessed October 10, 2010).

the introduction to his translation of Saint-Léon's letters.⁴⁴ The bulk of scholarly biographical information about Saint-Léon appears in biographies of his wife Fanny Cerrito,⁴⁵ as well as in one work about the history of great male dancers.⁴⁶ The amount of biographical information on Cesare Pugni is minimal, with music encyclopedia articles being the main sources, including *Grove*⁴⁷ and *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* being the main sources.⁴⁸ Khudekov's recollections of the first production of *The Little Humpbacked Horse* give some biographical information on the original.⁴⁹ To create a biographical understanding of any of the key players, evidence must be pieced together from multiple sources.

Scholarly work on fiction of the time is quite abundant, especially given the amount of scholarship on Ershov's contemporary, Pushkin. An example of this scholarship is William Mills Todd's *Fiction and Literature in the Time of Pushkin*. Todd discusses the proliferation of salons and literary circles during the first half of the nineteenth century and explicates the effects of cultural secularization, urbanization and nationalization on

⁴⁴ Ivor Guest, *Letters of A Ballet Master*.

⁴⁵ Ivor Guest, *Fanny Ceritto*.

⁴⁶ Walter Terry, *Great Male Dancers of the Ballet* (Garden City, New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1978).

⁴⁷ J.G. Prod'homme and Marian Smith, "Saint-Léon, Arthur," *Grove Music Online*, Oxford Music Online (Oxford:Oxford University Press) <http://oxfordmusiconline:80/subscriber/article/grove/music/24323> (February 6, 2010).

⁴⁸ Gunhild Oberzaucher-Schüller, *Pugni, Cesare*, Vol. Personenteil 13, in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Allgemeine Enzyklopädie der Musik begründet von Friedrich Blume*, ed. Ludwig Finscher, 1040 (Kassel, Basel, London, New York, Prague: Bärenreiter Verlag, 2005).

⁴⁹ Khudekov, *Recollections*.

literature using Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*, Lermontov's *A Hero Of Our Time* and Gogol's *Dead Souls*.⁵⁰

Dance history scholarship is abundant, and the work of Anthony Shay and Marian Smith⁵¹ stand out as being important in regard to political and gender roles in ballet and character dance, or “national dance” as Smith and Arkin prefer to call it.⁵² Shay's book *Choreographic Politics* covers the rise of national folk dance in the early twentieth century,⁵³ a process which mirrors the creation and elevation of folk dance into national or character dance by choreographers such as Arthur Saint-Léon in the nineteenth century, as discussed by Winfried Baumann.⁵⁴ Marian Smith and Lisa Arkin have written about this process as well,⁵⁵ furthermore in her historiographical critique of the supposedly “disappearing danseur,” Smith discusses the historical process by which the male dancer was eventually eclipsed by the prima ballerina, and shows that male dancers did not truly disappear.⁵⁶ *The Little Humpbacked Horse* displays both the use of national dance and, over its time in the active repertory, the role of Ivan being slowly eclipsed by that of the Tsar-Maiden.

⁵⁰ William Mills Todd III, *Fiction and Literature in the time of Pushkin: Ideology, Institutions and Narrative* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1986), 1-2. This work goes into the narrative of Eugene Onegin in detail, which may be important for other musicology studies.

⁵¹ Marian Smith, “The Disappearing Danseur,” *Cambridge Opera Journal* 19, no. 1 (2007): 33-58.

⁵² Marian Smith and Lisa C. Arkin, “National Dance in the Romantic Ballet,” in *Rethinking the Sylph: New Perspectives on the Romantic Ballet*, ed. Lynn Garafola, 11-68 (Hanover and London: Wesleyan University Press, 1997).

⁵³ Cf. Shay.

⁵⁴ Winfried Baumann, *Ästhetisches Urteil und russische Tanzkritik: von Puškin bis Saltykov-Ščedrin (Symbolae Slavicae Band 4)*, ed. Wolfgang Gesemann and Helmut Schaller (Frankfurt am Main, Bern, Las Vegas: Peter Lang, 1978), 5.

⁵⁵ Smith and Arkin, “National Dance.”

⁵⁶ Smith, “The Disappearing Danseur.”

Elke Kaschl has written on folk dance in Israel and the history of Jewish folk dance; this work is crucial in determining whether there was a ballet ‘character dance’ that was either elevated to an art form (or caricaturized from) as a particular Jewish dance in the nineteenth century; Kaschl’s work is particularly ethnographic in nature.⁵⁷ Halina Goldberg has been kind enough to share an unpublished manuscript outlining one such dance (and accompanying tune) that was indeed elevated into ballet: the ‘*majufes*.’⁵⁸

Diana Hallman has written on antisemitism in nineteenth-century opera,⁵⁹ a paradigm that would have spilled over into other music drama settings such as ballet. Her examination of Fromental Halévy’s *La Juive*, and the corresponding apparent discord of a Jewish artist interpreting material that is clearly antisemitic is useful in approaching an understanding of Arthur Saint-Léon’s similar approach to the three Jewish characters in *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, as his father Michel was Jewish.

Russian religion and mythology are an important area of study for this project. Orlando Figes’s *Natasha’s Dance: A Cultural History of Russia*⁶⁰ and Andrei Sinyavski’s *Ivan the Fool: Russian Folk Belief. A Cultural History*⁶¹ provide cultural context for the fool-story genre, as well as context for local pagan beliefs as they appear in literature and

⁵⁷ Elke Kaschl, *Dance and Authenticity in Israel and Palestine: Performing the Nation.*, Social, Economic, and Political Studies of the Middle East and Asia, v.89 (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

⁵⁸ Halina Goldberg, "The Jewish Self/The Jewish Other: Performing Identity in the '*Majufes*.'" Unpublished manuscript, used by permission of the author.

⁵⁹ Diana R. Hallman, *Opera, Liberalism, and Antisemitism in Nineteenth-Century France: The Politics of Halévy's La Juive*, Cambridge Studies in Opera, ed. Arthur Groos (New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

⁶⁰ Figes.

⁶¹ Andrei Sinyavsky, *Ivan the Fool: Russian Folk Belief. A Cultural History*, trans. Joanne and Nikolai Formozov Turnbull, Vol. 41 (Moscow: Glas, 2007).

mythology. Roger Bartra's *Wild Men in the Looking Glass*⁶² will give a more pan-European framework in which to discuss the anthropomorphic magic horse.

Simon Dubnow⁶³ and Benjamin Nathans⁶⁴ provide historiographical frameworks for studies of the Russian encounter with the Jewish people, and these have particular bearing on arguments about whether Jewish character dance existed, as well as on elements of the coronation celebration of Tsar Alexander II; indeed it was Nathans' work that first led me to examine the connection between the parade of nations in the ballet and the similar parades during the coronation.

Richard Wortman's excellent compendium and analysis of Russian Imperial ceremonies, *Scenarios of Power*, in which he shows how weddings, funerals and coronations were used as tools for the creation, propagation and modification of mythical structures, has been the inspiration for the overall framework of this thesis. His description of coronation ceremonies in particular is useful with regards to national representation.⁶⁵

⁶² Roger Bartra and Carl Berrisford, *Wild Men in the Looking Glass: The Mythic Origins of European Otherness* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994).

⁶³ Simon W. Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland: From the Earliest Times Until the Present Day (1915)* (Bergenfield, New Jersey: Avotaynu, Inc., 2000).

⁶⁴ Nathans.

⁶⁵ Wortman.

CHAPTER II

THE TRANSFORMED HORSE AND THE KHIRGHIZ KHAN: THE CORONATION OF TSAR ALEXANDER II

The Little Humpbacked Horse is reportedly the most famous nineteenth-century Russian work for children.⁶⁶ An epic poem in the style of Pushkin, it a Russian folktale centered around the folk hero Ivan the Fool reworked into verse form by Pyotr Ershov, an ethnographer of at least amateur caliber who may have collected the story in his native Siberia.⁶⁷ Despite the apparent popularity of Ershov's version of the tale,⁶⁸ the collaborators made many significant changes when constructing the libretto of the ballet as published in Wiley. First, the little humpbacked horse, along with the magic white horse that Ivan the Fool tames at the beginning, are both indicated to be manifestations of a hunchbacked "odd human figure with a humped back and a horse's head."⁶⁹ Second, the Tsar in the original story has been replaced with the "Khan of the Kirghis Kaisaks." Thirdly, there are three depictions of Jews in the libretto, none of which are in the Ershov version.

The reasons for these changes are both practical and political. To understand these character representations, we must delve into a significant amount of historical context. This chapter will seek to give an overview of historical, cultural and personal developments

⁶⁶ Maria Nikolajeva, "Russian Children's Literature Before and After Perestroika," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 20, no. 3 (Fall 1995): 110.

⁶⁷ Jahn, 67-70.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Saint-Léon, "Libretto of *The Little Humpbacked Horse, or the Tsar Maiden*," 241.

that may have influenced Saint-Léon and the composer Cesare Pugni as primary creators⁷⁰ of the work, as well as influencing the audience's reception of it. I will analyze the first two of the aforementioned important differences between the Ershov tale and the Saint-Léon libretto; I will discuss the three added Jews in Chapter III.

William Mills Todd, in *Fiction and Literature in the Time of Pushkin*, explains that in the early nineteenth century, Russia confronted a number of cultural changes “in mere decades ... that western cultures had been addressing more sequentially over several centuries.”⁷¹ These changes included cultural secularization, urbanization, and a shift toward Western ideas of individuality; they resulted in a reexamination literature's nature and place within society as well as of the roles of national language and traditions within literature.⁷² It is important to account for this rapid cultural change and the literary issues it raised in any analysis of Ershov's poem or Saint-Léon's derived ballet. In Ershov's time, the literary professions were beginning to proliferate in Russia, far later than in Western Europe.⁷³ Ershov's *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, a variation on the popular “Ivan the Fool” idiom, negotiated the boundaries between folk tradition and the new burgeoning literary tradition.

⁷⁰ Natalie Rouland reports on page 7 that

“sources vary in their accounts of the origin of the ballet. Khudekov claimed that the balletomane M. Lopukhin suggested the tale, both rich in Russian folklore and familiar to children, while the comic actor Timofei Stukolkin recalled the conceptualization and writing of the libretto as the spontaneous and organic development of an artistic circle that gathered on Saturdays at Saint-Léon's apartment.”

⁷¹ Todd, 2.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid., 1.

Yet, was Russia really Eastern, as opposed to Western? That would have depended upon whom you asked at the time. Orlando Figes, in *Natasha's Dance*, outlines the multiple visions that were current in Russian literary circles: the Christian peasant-oriented, Muscovy-centric, and anti-European "Slavophiles;" the rival progressive, progressive Enlightenment oriented, pro-European "Westernizers;" the socialist peasant-oriented "Populists;" and the utopian, revolutionary, anti-European, Asiatic-centric "Scythians."⁷⁴ Russian folk tales and folk heroes in the literature of the educated classes clearly were a parcel of the Slavophile and Populist mythologies, yet, as we will see, the peasant folk icon was not limited to these factions.⁷⁵

In the 1860s, the popularity of the peasant folk hero was just gaining ground among the literary elite of the Russian Empire. This new affinity was rooted in social encounter; the serfs had been emancipated in 1861, as Frierson notes in an echo of Todd:

The question, "Who is the Russian peasant? was deeply embedded in the larger questions, What is Russia? and What will Russia be," in a period of broad cultural self-definition.⁷⁶

According to Frierson, the emancipation quickly brought a shift in literary thought about the peasant, from an earlier "feminine repository of moral or social ideal to hyperrealistic male brute," indeed a "'fetish' of wildness" took hold.⁷⁷ Ethnographic sketches began to abound. Out of the discourse several new stereotypes emerged, among which was the

⁷⁴ Figes, xxx-xxxi. The author goes on to say:

These myths were more than just 'constructions' of a national identity. They all played a crucial role in shaping the ideas and allegiances of Russia's politics, as well as in developing the notion of self, from the most elevated form of personal and national identity to the most quotidian matters of dress or food, or the type of language one used.

⁷⁵ Frierson, 35.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 7.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 24.

narod, the simple peasant as Other, which Frierson calls a consciously constructed ‘passive, benighted and simple’ flip side of Russian educated society.⁷⁸ As with both the German construct of *Volk* and the French *le peuple*, *narod* signified both alterity and constructed national self-identity at the same time,⁷⁹ “a symbol of national pride through its virtue of cultural integrity in the philosophies of Slavophiles and Westerners alike,”⁸⁰ untouched by Western urban civilization.⁸¹ While Frierson asserts that the *narod*’s popularity was from the mid 1870s through the writings of Dostoevsky,⁸² we can see in the popularity of *The Little Humpbacked Horse* (both Ershov’s version and the ballet) and its hero, Ivan the Fool, an early example of the simple peasant as folk hero. As the ballet continued in repertory in Dostoevsky’s era, this connection would become even more apparent.

Frierson’s quote about the ‘fetish’ of wildness associated with Russia’s encounter with its peasant class is also appropriate in attempting to explicate the transformation of the magic horse into that hairy hunchbacked character, for it is to the Wild Man tradition that we can look to understand the horse and his characterization on stage. Despite the meta-narrative (taught in historical studies and early music classes alike) of post-medieval Europe as a set of monolithically Christian states with uniform belief, pagan beliefs and folkways permeated the fabric of European traditions, well into the twentieth century. These traditions survived not only in a belief that was often overlaid with Christianity, but

⁷⁸ Frierson, 34.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 33.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 35.

⁸¹ Ibid., 34.

⁸² Ibid., 32.

with particular rituals such as spring fertility plays and their related processions, especially Carnival. In the theater, stock characters from these fertility rites morphed into the *Commedia dell'arte* figures by the sixteenth century.⁸³

In Russia, one particular folk play, “Tsar Maximillian,” contains a hunchbacked, sheepskin-coated, phallus-stick-carrying character named Markusha, who is a comic gravedigger in this play. The hunchback, coincidentally, is one of the hallmark characteristics of both the Wild Man imagery in Europe dating back to the Middle Ages, as well as to the old gods associated with the wild men, transformed into comic devils.⁸⁴ Markusha may be derivative of the Russian ritual bear god,⁸⁵ Veles, who,

like the wolf was believed to possess the ability to turn into a man...many pagan gods (including those of the Slavs) had zoomorphic attributes from time immemorial, from the totem ancestor and the protector of the clan or tribe.⁸⁶

These pagan gods have often become entangled with Christianity, syncretized with saints of assonant names – in Veles’s case, St. Vlasy.⁸⁷ With this information, we can begin to infer that in the nineteenth-century context, the humpbacked horse would have been a very powerful character, far more meaningful than an anachronistic, twenty-first century ‘fairytale’ analysis would have us believe. With the old pagan gods transformed into characteristic, recognizable “wild” animals, Ivan the Fool does not simply capture the white horse; he gains the favor of a godhead with whom the audience of the time would have had some level of familiarity – if not directly, then through mummery or transformation into

⁸³ Siefker, 107-116.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 149-151.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Sinyavsky, 102-3.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 103-4.

Christian rite. The anthropomorphic characteristic of the horse in Saint-Léon's libretto, not found in the Ershov poem, is not merely a stage trick for allowing the dancer to remove the horse's head, but rather was a conscious change to evoke a very Russian understanding of the supernatural.

In *Wild Man in the Looking Glass*, Roger Bartra and Carl Berrisford argue that the image of the Wild Man, in both literature and ritual, is connected intimately with those sets of qualities that Europeans have, as a civilization, rejected in favor of an urbanized, Christian life. The primary qualities they discuss are connections to the natural and supernatural worlds. In the Middle Ages, connection to a dying art of wood lore had a significant amount of cultural currency. In the fast-paced urbanizing shift of nineteenth-century Russia, a shift away from village and agricultural tradition might be a reason for the reappearance of the Wild Man imagery in *The Little Humpbacked Horse*.⁸⁸

The horse in Ershov's tale may also be connected to the feast day for the patron saints of horses (St. Flor and St. Lavr, or combined as St. Froly, on August 18), when horses are rested,⁸⁹ just as Ivan rests the white horse for three days at the beginning of the tale. The horse's transformation into a hunchback could also be understood in the context of the Russian household spirit, the *domovoi*, who is a disheveled old man with a grey beard and "covered with soft down – even the palms of his hands and the soles of his feet."

⁸⁸ Roger Bartra and Carl Berrisford, *Wild Men in the Looking Glass: The Mythic Origins of European Otherness* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994).

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 201.

The *domovoi* is connected with the care of horses.⁹⁰ It was not uncommon in Russia for many of these gods and spirits to be commingled in story.⁹¹

Alternatively, it could be argued that the horse is part of a longer lineage of on-stage equines, such as Nick Bottom in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* or Fauvel in *Roman de Fauvel*. However, I do not think that either Fauvel or Bottom help us to understand the horse in *The Little Humpbacked Horse*. The transforming horse in this ballet appears to be much more than either of those characters, and though he certainly enables a fool, he is not a fool nor is he evil.⁹²

Alexandre Benois, writing more than a good half-century after seeing the ballet for the first time recalls the way the horse was portrayed on stage:

As it was impossible to give a ballet part to an animal, the author, Saint-Léon, decided to resort to a compromise. In the first act Ivanushka the Simpleton is given a property foal; in the second picture we see him flying up to the clouds seated on it, back to front; but after that we see only a funny, crooked little man dressed in a strange costume, with a horse's head, who hops incessantly. This strange creature, according to the programme, is the "genie of the hump-backed horse." Children readily believed that the colt they had seen in the last picture could take this shape, that this funny little man was *actually* the same hump-backed horse, which, when so disguised, possessed peculiar magic force. The unlimited power of the hump-backed horse is entirely devoted to the services of Ivanushka. He has but to crack his whip to make the genie appear, hopping round his lord and master and awaiting his will.⁹³

In the third scene of the ballet, Saint-Léon presents us with the very puzzling variation on this "genie," as Benois put it above. The Humpbacked Horse again appears in

⁹⁰ Ibid., 110.

⁹¹ Ibid., 104-106.

⁹² Emma Dillon, *Medieval music-making and the Roman de Fauvel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 15; William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, ed. William Aldis Wright (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1877), 27.

⁹³ Benois, 56-57.

a human disguise, but this time, as a hunchbacked Jew. One possibility is that the Jew either explicitly or implicitly had horns, and that this knowledge on the part of the audience would have added and intensified the Wild Man imagery associated with the polymorphic hunchback figure. In the visual arts, depictions of Jews with one horn can be found (based on the anointment of David with oil through a horn), a depiction that peaked in the ninth through eleventh centuries, or two horns (based on Moses having ‘horns of light’), from the twelfth century on. This literal understanding led to the horned hat that appeared in the ninth century and became a requirement of dress from the thirteenth century on – “by revealing the horn that the Jews skillfully hide, these pointed hats acted as a mark of Cain.”⁹⁴ Furthermore, the horns were symbolic of the devil, and devil and Jew images were frequently (and purposefully) crossed during the Middle Ages.⁹⁵

This is merely a hypothesis, but if the layer of Wild Man mummery is added to the horn imagery coming from the Jewish identification (whether or not horns were included in the costuming), the hunchback “genie” is elevated from wild human (*homo sylvanus*) to Wild Man deity, as horns would have cemented via imagery that this creature is indeed some godhead such as a local variant of the horned Dionysus, Bacchus, or Cerrunos that is killed and rebirthed in the annual Carnival season.⁹⁶ Horns, of course, were (and are)

⁹⁴ From personal experience, I can say that this ‘knowledge’ that Jews have horns persists to the present day. This is perhaps due to the famous statue of Moses by Michelangelo.

Ziva Amishai-Maisels, "Demonization of the "Other" in the Visual Arts," in *Demonizing the Other: Antisemitism, Racism and Xenophobia. Studies in Antisemitism Vol. 4*, Series Editor Dalia Ofer, ed. Robert S. Wistrich, 44-72 (Marston: Harwood Academic, 1999).

⁹⁵ Felsenstein, 26-35.

⁹⁶ Also of note, in a Balkan region wild man ritual play documented in 1910, the usual goat horns are replaced with ‘ass-ears,’ so it is possible that some superimposition between horse and goat imagery was going on regionally in the Nineteenth Century. See Siefker, 55.

associated with the devil in much of European literature, and this association has been frequently linked to representations of Jews.⁹⁷

In addition to its multilayered cultural meanings, the hunchback was a stock character in ballet, and appears in a 1716 dance treatise by Gregorio Lambranzi along with suggested music and steps. (Figure 1) This treatise is unique in that it gives musical examples for many characters, including *Commedia* characters, as well as visual examples of setting and textual instructions for how the dance ought to be performed.⁹⁸

Aside from the horse having the ability to transform into a human, another important character change from the Ershov tale is that from the Tsar to the Khan. The main motivation for a change was one of law, as Anton Rubinstein found out when he tried to write his opera *Dmitry Donsky*:

According to Russian law, it was forbidden to represent any personage of the imperial dynasty on the stage. With the emperor's permission, the law was occasionally relaxed in the case of drama, but in opera it was considered undignified for royal personages to sing: either they were mute or were banned altogether.⁹⁹

Of course, this was a ballet for the Russian Imperial Theater, and setting a tale openly critical of the Tsar would have been unlikely. Indeed, it appears that the tale was censored with "several excisions at the insistence of government censors"¹⁰⁰ until 1856, the year of Alexander II's coronation.¹⁰¹ So, while a change was required, why was the royal

⁹⁷ Felsenstein, 27-39.

⁹⁸ Gregorio Lambranzi, Part 1, 26; Plate 40.

⁹⁹ Taylor, 29.

¹⁰⁰ Jahn, 68.

¹⁰¹ The 1856 Edition of Ershov's tale contains no ellipses or other indications of censorship. Пётр Павлович Ершов, "Конек горбун: русская сказка в трех частях," *Google Books*, 1856, <http://books.google.com/books?id=WgJEAAAAYAAJ> (accessed April 15, 2011).



Figure 1. The Hunchback. Source: Gregorio Lambrazi, *New And Curious School of Theatrical Dancing*, illustrated by Johann Georg Puschner, trans. Derra de Moroda, ed. Cyril W. Beaumont. (Brooklyn: Dance Horizons, 1966), Part 1, Plate 40. Here the dancer is instructed to “dance in a circle after his own manner, and when, to the delight of the audience, he has performed strange, crooked and limping *pas*, the dance comes to an end” (Part I, p.26).

personage changed specifically to the “Khan of the Kirgiz-Kaisaks?” As Natalie Rouland writes:

The ballet sets the action in Krasnovodsk, a fortress on the Caspian Sea from which the Russian imperial armies carried out operations against Khiva and Bukhara in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. And Saint-Léon replaces Ershov's despotic tsar with a Kazakh Kahn. Thus Ershov's criticism of feudalism in the reign of Nicholas I becomes an allegory of imperial expansion that projects tsarist power.¹⁰²

Unfortunately, it appears as if Rouland has not gotten her historical facts correct, as in 1864 there was no fort in Krasnovodsk, according to an account from 1885, as the fort had been abandoned some time earlier. In 1859 a new Russian military campaign began against the Turkmen. The foundation stone for the Krasnovodsk fort would be laid in 1869.¹⁰³ Nevertheless, this period account in fact strengthens her argument for the "allegory of imperial expansion"; for in 1864 the Russian imperial expansion in what is now Turkmenistan was in full swing, and the fort at Krasnovodsk was both a historical loss and a rallying point for a modern replacement. The Khanates were the enemy of the day. I would have to agree with Rouland, who says that the transformation is "imperialist."¹⁰⁴

This change (in retrospect from a century later) was not welcomed among all of the balletomanes; some saw it as pandering both to the Emperor and nationalist sentiment. Lincoln Kirstein, the influential twentieth-century impresario and dance historian, wrote the following in his summary of *The Little Humpbacked Horse*:

Perrot, though greatly gifted, independent, and original, failed as politician and diplomat. Saint-Léon, on the other hand, was an excellent linguist, businessman, and agile courtier. He would be accused of flattering the emperor in this adaptation of Ershov's folk tale, already a children's favorite, particularly for changing a lazy Tsar to a fat oriental Khan (similar to Rimsky-Korsakov's hidden political character, *The Golden*

¹⁰² Rouland, 8.

¹⁰³ Lansdell, 460.

¹⁰⁴ Rouland, 10.

Cockere!), thus suppressing any implied satire. Saint-Léon was superficially instructed in folklore, but he took advantage of growing nationalist feelings.¹⁰⁵

From a musical point of view, Pugni treated the Khan and his retinue with a time-tested set of exoticisms. The Khan's music (Figure 2) is like a children's march, with a strong 2/4 feel, embellished with a chromatic bass that walks downward every eighth note, and a chordal alternation between E major and F# half diminished on the downbeats at the start; this diminished chord passes back through the dominant on the second half of the beat, and then a strong cadence on the upbeat of the second bar. In this case, the ruling Other, with his retinue of wives, is portrayed as a child marching, an infantilized *alla turca*, which Locke says generally symbolizes "the (perceived) violent and unpredictable behaviors of the region's male inhabitants".¹⁰⁶ His wives, on the other hand, are portrayed by upper neighbor acciaccaturas over an E minor texture, in triple meter with a slight emphasis on the third beat. (Figure 3) Pugni used contrasting orientalist techniques, the first of which exoticized by means of a specific Western musical character portrayal, painting a diminutive portrait of the Khan with reference to an invented exotic held over from an earlier era. The second technique used more general exoticisms.

¹⁰⁵ Lincoln Kirstein, "Koniok Gorbunok," in *Four Centuries of Ballet: Fifty Masterworks*, 166-7 (New York: Dover, 1984). These assertions have no references, and are therefore suspect.

¹⁰⁶ Locke, 62. I would argue that without access to a full score, the duple meter, regular turn figures, and chromaticism point to what Mary Hunter calls the "secondary category of Janissary effect" that enables pieces such as Mozart's Rondo "*alla turca*" to be recognized as such. Cf. Mary Hunter, "The Alla Turca Style in the Late Eighteenth Century: Race and Gender in the Symphony and the Seraglio," in *The Exotic in Western Music*, ed. Jonathan Bellman, (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998), 45.



Figure 2. Music for the Khan. Source: Pugni, 23, mm. 1-16.



Figure 3. Music for the Khan's wives. Source: Pugni, 23, mm.17-24.

The staging for the 1904 production is no less exotic than the music. The scene is set with the following notes in a block diagram:

Kazar Khan...Wife is lying down. Another Wife lying down. 3
wives around table and a negro with fruit. A wife kneeling and [illegible]
from R. to L.¹⁰⁷

We are thus presented with our musically immature Khan surrounded by his sexually available wives and an African, probably depicted by a white dancer in blackface, as an attendant.

The dance of the nations of the Russian Empire at the very end of the ballet is, like the change from Tsar to Khan, a representation of the Russian colonial ideal, and perhaps a starting point in a new tradition of 'colonizing dance.' According to Shay, in the century after *The Little Humpbacked Horse* was created, 'character' or 'national dance' styles of glorified or balleticized folk dance would become a hallmark of the Soviet Union; each

¹⁰⁷ Nicolai Sergeev, *Dance notations and music scores for ballets, 1888-1944 (inclusive), 1902-1931 (bulk), Little Humpbacked Horse (Choreographic Work: Gorski)*, trans. unknown (Cambridge, MA: Houghton Library, Harvard University), MS Thr 245 (126), PDF, 2.

region of the USSR was compelled to create a national dance, regardless of cultural norms or history.¹⁰⁸

Richard Wortman, who characterizes Russian monarchy as an “elite institution with its own culture, expressed in a symbolic system that persisted over time and adapted to new demands and influences,”¹⁰⁹ gives us a framework for addressing this colonialist perspective. In this institution, the term ‘empire’ had several connotations:

First, empire signified imperial dominion or supreme power unencumbered by other authority. Second, it implied imperial expansion, extensive conquests, encompassing non-Russian lands. Third, it referred to the Christian empire, the heritage of the Byzantine emperor as defender or orthodoxy.¹¹⁰

Wortman calls the particular mythology each emperor’s regime created a “scenario of power.” These myths, up until the assassination of Alexander II, “elevated the tsar and his servitors” and “placed them in heroic narratives that presented them as makers of history.” The Russian people, on the other hand, appeared in a state of “historylessness,” a term he borrows from Marshall Sahlins. “When the people appeared at ceremonies, they provided a human backdrop that might occasionally join in choruses of acclaim.”¹¹¹

Alexander II succeeded to the Tsardom upon his father’s death in 1855 and had his coronation ceremony in August of 1856. Beginning with his accession, his regime created a new version of the now age-old “scenario” as Wortman calls it:

The trope of love, likening monarchy to a romance between monarch and people, would show the national character of the empire. It would indicate that the Russian emperor could win popular support without granting the

¹⁰⁸ Shay, *Choreographic Politics*, 61-6. In Uzbek and Tajik communities, the Russians would insist that young women perform, a practice that led to honor killings.

¹⁰⁹ Wortman, 1.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 3.

constitutional reforms instituted in Prussia and Austria. His reign marked a new stage in the presentation and representation of Russian monarchy, when the people became central figures in imperial processions.¹¹²

Indeed, pageantry much like that at the end of *The Little Humpbacked Horse* was a major part of his coronation:

The accounts cited in the Russian press dwelled on the pageant of colorfully dressed representatives of the various Eastern peoples in their native costumes who participated in the procession-Bashkirs, Cherkessy, Tatars, Armenians, Georgians, different varieties of Cossacks. The reporters saw them as a demonstration of the extent and diversity of the empire and the forging of bonds between the Asian peoples and the tsar.¹¹³

Lt. Col. Maude, aide de camp to the British mission to the coronation, also noted this in his first-hand account of the Emperor's entrance parade to Moscow:

First of all came Circassians in chain armour. Georgians, Mongolians and Cossacks of all sorts, looking like a set of ragamuffins with their little shaggy horses, but not to be despised by those who know them.¹¹⁴

The day after the coronation,

A delegation of peasant elders, one from each province, presented Alexander with bread and salt on a silver plate, purchased from funds from the peasant estate. Alexander thanked them for their devotion and zeal, especially during the war. Altogether, he received a total of eighty-one gold and silver plates with bread and salt from the noble, merchant, and peasant estate organizations.¹¹⁵

There was a process by which estates petitioned to be part of this presentation. A group of Jewish merchants in St. Petersburg had sought permission to represent their co-religionists as a delegation at the coronation of Alexander II. They were denied, because the royal chancellory said they were *not* a distinct estate. This was in spite of the fact that

¹¹² Ibid., 191.

¹¹³ Wortman, 197.

¹¹⁴ Maude, Letter X, p.23. Sunday, August 31, 1856.

¹¹⁵ Wortman, 199.

the four Jewish *kahals* (governmental groupings of communities) of Poland had been incorporated as estates by the monarchy.¹¹⁶

It becomes clear at this point that the parade of nations in *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, (Table 1) particularly in its choice of ethnic representations, must be closely related to the coronation of Alexander II, eight years prior. The Imperial Ballet's production, no less than the actual coronation that preceded it, demonstrates "the extent and diversity of the empire and the forging of bonds between the Asian peoples and the Tsar." At the end of the ballet, Ivan, the Russian, has become the ruler, achieving the same purpose as the ongoing imperial expansion. Here we are presented with images of the empire as it actually existed and the empire as it wished to be; Laplanders – some of whom were governed by the Russian empire – dancing along side Wallachians who were not, Russia having just conceded to giving up Wallachia as one of its protectorates as a product of its Crimean War defeat.¹¹⁷ Latvians and Poles with their characteristic mazurka round out the first group, which appears to be representative of the western end of the Russian Empire.

The peoples of the southern portion, primarily Georgia, interestingly enough, were split into three distinct ethnic groups, Mingrel, Persian, and Imereti. This unusual split (Glinka merely had a "Georgian song" in his *A Life for the Tsar*)¹¹⁸ is indicative of a focus on nationality rather than arbitrary state boundaries. Finally we have the core *Rus* nationalities: Russians, Uralians, and Ukrainians (denoted as Malorossiyan or 'small Russians').

¹¹⁶ Nathans, 79.

¹¹⁷ John Shelton Curtiss, *Russia's Crimean War* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1979), 530.

¹¹⁸ Richard Taruskin, "Entoiling the Falconet" in Taruskin, 156.

Table 1. Parade of the Russian Nations

Nation	Page in Pugni Piano Score	Representation on Millenium Monument
Laplanders and Walachians	101	North: Peter the Great (for Lapland)
Latvians	104	West: Ninin and Pozharskii
Poles	106	West: Ninin and Pozharskii
Mingrels	108	Southwest: Donskoi
Persians	109	Southwest: Donskoi
Imereti	111	Southwest: Donskoi
Russian	113	North: Peter the Great
Uralians	114	East: Ivan III
Small Russians (Ukrainians)	116	South: Riurik, Vladimir

Source: Pugni, 101-116; Wortman, 215.

Yet each of the initial dances is framed by the Russian theme which appears at the end of the Laplander and Wallachian movements, and at the beginning of the Polish movement. Perhaps this theme is indicative of Ivan being paraded around on stage. Either way, this framing claims these nationalities as Russian whether they are in reality or not, a musical-political ploy of ownership.

However, the very makeup of the dances is not only related to Alexander II's idea of Russian nationality through a reflection of his Coronation of 1856, it is also related the reinforcement of that mythology through his celebration of the Russian millennium in 1862 with the unveiling of the Millennium Monument at Novgorod, which was the centerpiece on the stage. (Figure 4) As Alexandre Benois wrote:

The ballet used to end with an apotheosis of Russia. For some unknown reason the background consisted of a reproduction of the Thousand Year Jubilee Monument at Nijni-Novgorod. An enormous procession of all the



Figure 4. The Millenium Monument at Novgorod, the set piece for the parade of Russian nations. Source: Library of Congress, LOT 13254, no 23 [P&P] <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2001699626/> (accessed May 23, 2011).

different nations inhabiting the Russian empire filed past to make obeisance to the fool who had become their ruler.¹¹⁹

While Benois, writing many decades after the fact, could not remember the purpose, it is clear that the statue is symbolic on a multitude of levels, which would not have been lost on the ballet's original audience. First, the monument is the premier symbol of the central Scenario of Power of divinely sanctioned heroic autocracy mentioned in Wortman.¹²⁰ As Radzinsky and Buiz wrote in *Alexander II, The Last Great Tsar*:

The first year after the emancipation of the serfs was the celebration of the most important jubilee in the nineteenth century – Russia's millennium.

¹¹⁹ Benois, 57-58.

¹²⁰ Wortman, 2.

The tsar and his family went to Novgorod. It was there a thousand years earlier that the Varangian princes founded the Russian state. Weary of internecine warfare, the Slavs sent messengers to the militant Varangian princes with an amazing invitation: "Our land is rich and abundant, but we have no order. Come rule over us."¹²¹

Thus the connection to Alexander II's autocracy in the ballet is crystal clear. The only thing left unclear is whether it was seen by the audience as a paean to the Tsar or as a subversive ploy. The set piece has one other framing function: The crosses, both the giant one atop it and the one held aloft by Vladimir while a kneeling subject breaks a pagan idol, bring us back out of the pagan fairy tale and into modern, Christian Russia.

These deviations from the Ershov tale reveal mythical and political processes in the ballet. The change of the magic horse into a human/horse morphing character shows that the ballet was not just a fairy tale, but had serious pagan implications. The character of Ivan the Fool as hero of the ballet appears to be an appearance of the *narod* peasant icon; the peasant, however, becomes the ruler in a coronation fete that not only mirrors the coronation of Alexander II but also serves to prop up its mythology of the Tsar as beloved by all of the Russian people. The character of the Khan and the setting at Krasnovodsk add to that political program, as the Empire was in the process of attempting to conquer that very territory in the year that the ballet was penned. This setting in turn subverts the peasant icon and uses him to justify imperial expansion: A Khan is no match for even the most foolish of Russians.

¹²¹ Radzinsky and Buis, 148; Wortman, 189-191.

CHAPTER III

JEWISH STOCK (CHARACTERS) FROM THE CAULDRON OF NINETEENTH CENTURY MUSIC DRAMA

In his libretto for *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, Saint-Léon calls for scenes involving three common Jewish stereotypes which are not present in the original folktale: the corrupt merchant, the exotic beauty, and the wise man. I will argue that the sudden appearance of Jewish characters in *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, and the ways in which the characters changed between 1864 and 1912, together suggest that late nineteenth-century Russia experienced societal conflicts similar to those in France earlier in the century,¹²² in which a rising mercantile Jewish class became the signifier for fears around emancipating and incorporating internal Others into the national identity.

First, it is important to remember the international nature of the collaborative team that brought *The Little Humpbacked Horse* to the stage. Saint-Léon from Paris, Pagni from Italy, and other expatriate artists brought with them their own absorbed representations of Jews in the theaters of Russia, Italy, France, and elsewhere.¹²³

The Jew was apparently a stock character in nineteenth-century popular literature of the westernmost areas of Russia – Ukraine and White Russia – along with the Cossack and the Ukrainian Hetman. But in the early to mid nineteenth century, these stereotypes were

¹²² Kalman, 15-16.

¹²³ For a complete list of musicians and dancers present at the early conceptual sessions and readings see T.A. Stukolkin, "Recollections of T.A. Stukolkin, Artist of the Imperial Theaters," in *A Century of Russian Ballet: Documents and Eyewitness Accounts, 1810-1910*, trans. Roland John Wiley, 108-134 (Alton: Dance Books, 2007), 130.

not yet ubiquitous in Great Russian literature.¹²⁴ From the Russian point of view, one could see the addition of the Jews in Saint-Léon's ballet libretto as a symptom of Russian colonial expansion.

Indeed, a large population of Jews (nearly half a million) had been added to the Russian Empire in the century preceding the ballet, due to the annexation of large parts of Poland, with their own Jewish populations, between 1772 and 1795.¹²⁵ However, aside from the frequent use of "The Jew" as a stock character, there is little extant English-language description of the role these characters played in either furthering the plots plot or advancing the meta-narratives of western Russian stories. It seems likely that their presence paralleled the increasing resentful portrayal of Jews in Russian art as they moved from the Pale into the capital, such as poet Nikolai Nekrasov's "Ballet," which laments that all the pretty young girls in the box seats are now being bribed with the riches of "the gray-haired Jew, whose filthy hand causes these bosoms to quiver with gold."¹²⁶ In these depictions, Jews steal both the wealth and the women, which the native sees as belonging rightfully to himself.

To the west of Ukraine, throughout France, Italy, and the rest of Europe, Jews at this time appear largely as similar caricatures, most notably as the usurious merchant and his exotic daughter. The earliest examples still in the popular imagination are of course William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* and Christopher Marlowe's *The Jew of*

¹²⁴ Lisa Warner, "The Russian Folk Play 'Tsar Maximillian': An Examination of Some Possible Origins and Sources," *Folklore* 82, no. 3 (Autumn 1971): 190.

¹²⁵ Nathans, 24-5. I have been unable to locate more in depth descriptions of the Ukrainian and White Russian stock Jewish character. The Cossacks and Ukrainian Hetman were associated with Ukraine and therefore indicative of the incorporation of acquired peoples into Russian stories.

¹²⁶ Nathans, 129.

Malta. Diana Hallman focuses on a salient nineteenth-century French example of such stereotyped characters in Fromental Halévy and Eugène Scribe's opera *La Juive*, noting their use as signifiers of French wariness about both this new group of citizens, and the rapidly changing basis of the French economy.¹²⁷

The Jewish merchant stereotype also appeared in Italianate ballet, although rather subtly shaded. In his treatise on ballet, Gregorio Lambranzi instructs stock merchant characters (literally, “Kauffman,” a common Jewish last name which also serves as the generic term for merchant), to dance according to the same steps as the (Venetian) gondolier, in the key of d minor, thus indicating both by dance and music that the merchant is equated with Shakespeare's Shylock.¹²⁸ (Figure 5)

For a modern reader, however, the opening scene of *The Little Humpbacked Horse* might evoke a more recent take on such representations: the ‘running of the Jew’ scene in *Borat*.¹²⁹

Little by little other merchants come in and wake up the sleepers, including the three brothers. A Jew then appears to buy up the best of the goods on display; but the Russians respond rather coldly to his zeal and mock him in every way they can. The simpleton joins the people and also chaffs the Jew.¹³⁰

¹²⁷ Hallman, 210.

¹²⁸ Lambranzi, Part 2, 1.

¹²⁹ *Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benifit Glorious Nation of Kazakstan*, directed by Larry Charles, 2006.

¹³⁰ Arthur Saint-Léon, “Libretto of *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, or *The Tsar-Maiden*,” 240.



Figure 5. The Kaufmann. Source: Lambranzi, Part 2, Plate 3. The merchant is instructed to dance like a gondolier, and has a d minor melody.

This is a typical use of the Shylock character. Indeed, the hero of the story joins in the antisemitic behavior. This can be interpreted in one of two ways: first, as a parody of antisemitism. That is, because Ivan is a fool, this behavior is foolish. However, given the popularity and sympathy with which Ivan is viewed, the reception would most likely have been exactly the opposite.¹³¹ In fact, we know that Saint-Léon and the other creators

¹³¹ Not unlike conservative viewers of the comedy show *The Colbert Report* who do not understand that it is a parody. See: Heather L. LaMarre, Kristen D. Landreville and Michael A. Beam, "The Irony of Satire: Political Ideology and the Motivation to See What You Want to See in the Colbert Report," *International Journal of Press Politics* 14, no. 2 (2009): 212-231.

intended some parody, as the final scene of the ballet, in which all the nations of the empire “make obeisance to the fool.”¹³² Alexander Benois says that,

It is surprising how much flagrant free-thinking was passed by the theatrical censors, and actually on the stage of the imperial theater! Probably the keepers of orthodox views never imagined that one could find anything seditious in the triumph of a simpleton.¹³³

But is this ballet a parody of antisemitism in addition to a possible parody of the Tsar?

Benois, in a footnote, writes:

Koniok Gorbunok contained several other incidents of historical interest. At one village fair in the first scene there appeared a long-haired peddler named in the programme as the Jew. To the great delight of the young audience – in those days predominantly “Aryan” – all sorts of pranks were played on him, which ended with his traditional long black overcoat being torn to shreds.¹³⁴

Clearly, the early performances (between 1878-1883) that Benois reports on were rampant with antisemitism.¹³⁵ We also know that the Jew remained in the choreography in the 1912 Gorsky production. Square 4 of the first page of the choreography manuscript indicates a Jew, and the translator indicates “unpleasant word for one.” So certainly in 1912 it was not taken in the sense of a parody by the new choreographer.¹³⁶

The Jew remains on stage through squares 5 and 6 and runs away in the first square of the next page.¹³⁷ According to the translator, this should line up somewhere in the middle of the introduction on page 1 of the piano score.¹³⁸ This presents an analytical

¹³² Benois, 58. Also Quoted in Rouland, 9-10.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid., footnote 1.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 49.

¹³⁶ Sergeev, Ms Thr 245 (125), PDF, 1-2, 8-9.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.; Pagni, 1.

dilemma both in terms of aligning the choreographic blocks with the score, and in determining whether there was any orientalism involved in the music. It appears that the introduction, at least, a fanfare-march in E flat major with only brief forays into related keys, seems to have little to do with musically painting its libretto content. The introduction of the fool, his brother, his father, any merchants, and the Jew all take place in a mere 34 bars of fairly stately fanfare music.¹³⁹

The second instance of a Jew in *The Little Humpbacked Horse* occurs when the three brothers (Ivan, Gavril and Danilo) enter the hall of the Khan arguing over who owns the two normal horses that are the litter-mates of the titular magic horse, as the Saint-Léon libretto states:

The Foreigners are led in; they are Pyotr's three sons, already familiar to us, each of whom is asserting his right to the horses Gavril and Danilo found in their father's stable. The Khan questions the brothers, who get confused and cannot answer. But the little horse, transformed into an old humpbacked Jew, makes his way into the Khan's palace and walks up to Ivanushka...

[the horse/Jew then magically produces a 'detailed account' of Ivan's rightful ownership on a piece of paper, and the Khan buys the horses from Ivan]

...But the little horse still in the guise of the hunchbacked Jew, approaches the Khan again. 'Condescend,' he says, 'to permit your slave to say a word...I know my horses very well...Had they killed these two young men, it would have served them right. I sold them to Ivan only because I knew that he alone could manage them and because it would be best to entrust the horses to him.'¹⁴⁰

[Ivan then gets taken on as the Khan's stable master.]

¹³⁹ I interpret the notes from Sergeev, Ms Thr 245 (125) to indicate that the Jew is introduced, and chased off, during the music that is the introduction (the first page) of the published Pugni piano reduction. Without further access to the archives, I can not confirm that this interpretation is correct, and the Jewish merchant may to the contrary be depicted somewhere within the "Russian Bazaar" scene, pages 2-6 of the Pugni reduction. This is impossible to confirm without further access to the Sergeev archives to create a further reconstruction of the choreography as it aligns with the music.

¹⁴⁰ Arthur Saint-Léon, "Libretto of *The Little Humpbacked Horse, or The Tsar-Maiden*," 243.

After the scene with the Khan, the Jew/horse gives Ivan a magic whip, which Ivan may use to summon the horse and perform various magical transformations. Ivan asks the horse (still in his Jewish guise) to make some frescoes of Persian women appear to come alive and dance.¹⁴¹ The Jew/horse complies.

This presents us with a very complex set of overlapping images. The humpbacked horse here is the Wise Jew, who intervenes as an outside influence to lead others to the correct solution. As I have already demonstrated in Chapter 1, the humpbacked horse's ability to transform into a human would have been recognizable as a part of the European mummary tradition of the 'wild man,' and hence would have been symbolic of Otherness regardless of what kind of person the horse transformed into. Why not some other kind of stereotypically bearded, wise, hunchback, like an Orthodox Christian priest, for instance?

The stock character of the Wise Jew was a fairly new invention, dated to the premiere of the play *Nathan der Weise* in 1779. Diana Hallman points out that:

Although Nathan, like Shylock is a wealthy moneylender, his wisdom, honesty, and humaneness make him a more idealized character type than the Christian-hating, vengeful Shylock.¹⁴²

This figure is generally thought to be based on Moses Mendelssohn, father of Felix Mendelssohn, who was one of the founding fathers, and therefore symbolic, of the *haskalah*, the Jewish Enlightenment.¹⁴³ The play itself was written by an influential German Christian, Gotthold Lessing, as a plea for religious tolerance. Unfortunately, it is unlikely that the general audience of *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, nearly a century later,

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 244.

¹⁴² Hallman, 210.

¹⁴³ Uzi Shavit, "Haskalah," in *The Blackwell Companion to Jewish Culture: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, ed. Glenda Abramson, 308-312 (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, Inc., 1989).

would be aware of the significance of the figure other than the stereotype of wisdom. However, it is entirely possible that the ballet's cosmopolitan writers were.

According to the translator of the 1912 manuscript, the horse has been changed in this production from being a Jew, to being disguised specifically as a merchant.¹⁴⁴ This of course takes us back out of the "Wise Jew" stereotype and into the "Shylock" figure. From a musical point of view, he seems to be clearly indicated in both productions more as a musical painting of a horse than anything else. He clip-clops along, with acciaccaturas in the bass and grace note turns in the soprano, in an E-flat major bounce, followed by a *lento* section of individual beats that are certainly a musical accompaniment to the indicated mime.¹⁴⁵ (Figure 6)

This scene, beginning and ending in tableaux, is followed by one in which the Khan has had a dream of a beautiful woman, and the Khan commands Ivan to bring that woman to him. This time the horse appears to Ivan without anyone else present, and the libretto does not state in what guise he appears. The Khan enters, and Ivan uses the whip to again produce images of women, this time

a bronze-skinned Indian of South America, an Algerian Jewess, a daughter of Asian India with a lotus blossom in her hands, a black Egyptian, a white faced daughter of the Swiss Alps, and so forth...¹⁴⁶

until the Tsar-Maiden finally appears.

Here we have a virtual tour of the objectified Oriental feminine. The smattering of multiple colonial ethnicities is reminiscent of a ballet phenomenon in which a small symbolic cast of dancers reflect the totality of female creation, both in terms of geography

¹⁴⁴ Sergeev, MS Thr 245 (127). 3, 38.

¹⁴⁵ Pagni, 26.

¹⁴⁶ Arthur Saint-Leon, "Libretto of *The Little Humpbacked Horse, or the Tsar-Maiden*," 245.

Andante

Lento

Allegro

Andante

Figure 6. Music for the Humpbacked Horse Disguised as a Jew. Source: Pugni, 26.

and spirituality by reflecting the *Volk* temperament of particular regions.¹⁴⁷ In this case, these women all represent the idea that:

...those picturesque and poetic dances of the Southern climates, in which the heart indulges without reserve in its emotions, and the various movements are dictated by a glowing imagination.¹⁴⁸

The Jewess among these is a stereotype that Edgar Rosenberg calls “*la belle juive*,” modeled on Jessica from the Merchant of Venice. She is a “woman of extraordinary beauty” and “blends innocence with eroticism.”¹⁴⁹ We do not know how she would have been costumed, but we could certainly look to Rachel from Halévy’s *La Juive* as an example. Rachel’s costume in the first act is a “tight-bodied dress somewhat reminiscent of a Swiss folk outfit...” with a turban and scarves, and the fabric is “blue and white, atop pale yellow fabric trimmed in black.”¹⁵⁰ While the turbans were already two hundred years out of date,¹⁵¹ they were part and parcel of the Oriental woman on the Romantic stage.¹⁵² The most we can say about the stereotype in this context (after all, she merely makes an appearance and doesn’t follow any plot), is that while she is certainly made into an Oriental object, at least this is a ‘positive’ portrayal of a Jewish woman, especially since she doesn’t follow the plot of having her Jewish identity removed voluntarily as happened with

¹⁴⁷ Smith and Arkin, 36.

¹⁴⁸ Carlo Blasis, *Notes Upon Dancing* (London: M. Delaporte, 1847), 143 quoted in Smith and Arkin.

¹⁴⁹ Hallman, 216-7.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 218-20.

¹⁵¹ Amishai-Maisels, 51. She indicates that seventeenth century modern Jewish dress in Belorussia included *tzitiit* and turbans, and in the eighteenth, black clothes and brimmed hats that have remained the Hasidic uniform into the modern era. There is no mention of whether Jewish women actually wore turbans, only men.

¹⁵² Hallman, 220-1. Hallman notes that this is discussed in Professor Smith’s Ph.D. dissertation in footnote 29.

Jessica's marriage in *The Merchant of Venice*, or forcibly as when Rachel is boiled alive in an *auto-da-fé* at the end of *La Juive*.¹⁵³

In the 1904 choreography by Petipa, no mention is made of her (or any of the other women). She is most likely part of the “panorama” scene labeled as such in the choreography, which merely indicates several x's positioned on stage without any indicated movement.¹⁵⁴ This panorama is also labeled in the 1895 piano score.¹⁵⁵ This passage serves to display all of the beautiful “other” women of the world simultaneously, with a lilting c-sharp minor melody enhanced with trills and chromatic runs, a pretty (if purposefully not exciting) representation of the exotic feminine. (Figure 7) This creates a contrast with the moment when the Tsar-Maiden makes her appearance with a soaring upper register cello solo in b minor with a conspicuously lowered second scale degree.¹⁵⁶

As discussed in Chapter 1, the elites' depiction of Russia conflates the peasant/true Russian with the exotic. The Tsar-Maiden's musical style is thus clearly indicative of something exotic and essentially Russian, although its chromaticism is between the first and second scale degrees rather than between the fifth and sixth scale degrees that would later be standardized by the Kuchkists in what Marina Frolova-Walker calls the “Kuchka Pattern,”¹⁵⁷ and what Taruskin refers to as *nega*.¹⁵⁸ (Figure 8) This use of modality, combined with the cello as a solo instrument, acts as a means of Russian self-exoticism and

¹⁵³ Hallman, 205.

¹⁵⁴ Sergeev, MS Thr 245 (127), 56,58.

¹⁵⁵ Pagni, 39-40.

¹⁵⁶ Pagni, 41-2.

¹⁵⁷ Marina Frolova-Walker, *Russian Music and Nationalism: From Glinka to Stalin* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), 149.

¹⁵⁸ Richard Taruskin, “Entoiling the Falconet,” 152-185.

stands in stark contrast to the more generic exoticisms of the Khan, his wives and the panorama of women. If we can say that there is any moment in *The Little Humpbacked Horse* in which Pugni attempts to “define Russia musically,” it is this introductory solo accompaniment to the Tsar-Maiden’s first entrance.

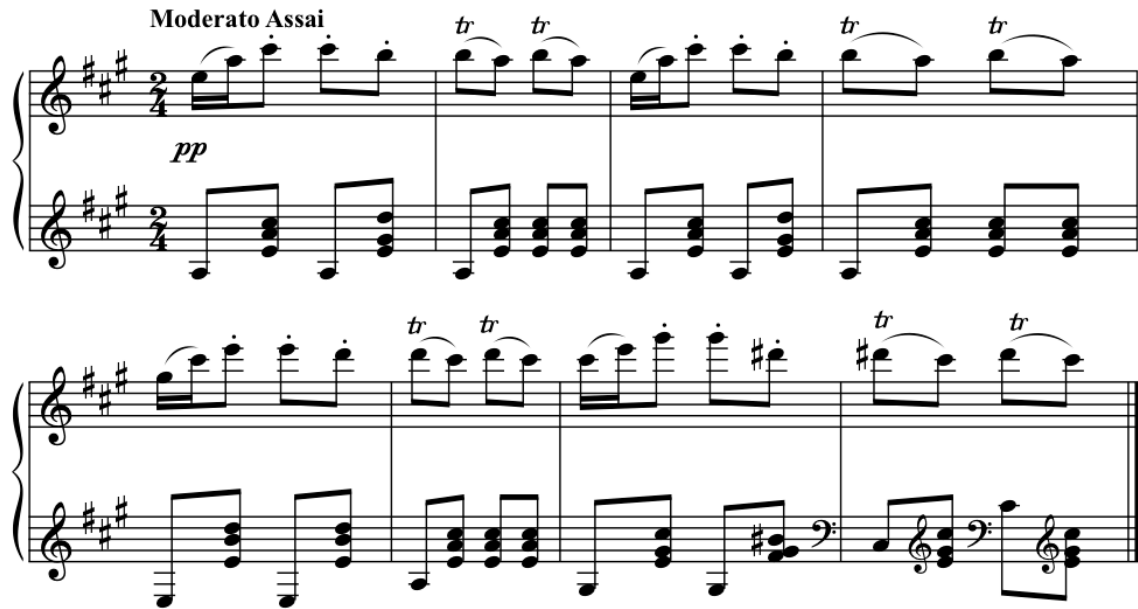


Figure 7. Music for the panorama of women, including the Jewess. Source: Pugni, 39.

Thus far I have argued that each of the three scenes involving imagery of Jews corresponds to one of the three frequent stock caricatures of Jews in nineteenth-century popular culture. Those caricatures arose in Europe in response to fears about the incorporation of Jews and internal Others into the national narrative, along with a rapidly changing economic and social structure. It is no surprise, then, to see these stock characters imported into Russia as it opened the Pale of Settlement and began an eastward expansion that would change the definition of Russia itself.



Figure 8. Music for Tsar-Maiden. Source: Pugni, 41

Two important questions remain. The first is how these characters would have been depicted in dance. The 1904/1912 Sergeev manuscripts contain no steps corresponding to the Jewish characters, only stage directions. This begs the question of whether Jewish

character dance that existed in the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth century would have been used here.

First, we must determine whether there was a particularly ‘Jewish’ folk dance in the era, since part of the formula of character-dance creation was to take a folk dance and make it suitable for the stage. Indeed, Lincoln Kirstein says that it was none other than Arthur Saint-Léon who taught Petipa the method of “transforming folk dance into theater.”¹⁵⁹ Today, we are familiar in our own era with Jerome Robbins’s choreography to *Fiddler on the Roof*, with its characteristic motion of reaching upwards to the heavens on the first beat. Robbins did not get his dance from a ballet source. Rather, his team (his assistant Richard Altman, and Altman’s assistant Tommy Abbott) was inspired by two elements. First, Robbins took Altman, Abbot and other cast members to Jewish weddings, where they witnessed ecstatic improvisatory dancing. They found a second inspiration in “paintings of Marc Chagall’s figures cartwheeling through vivid skies.”¹⁶⁰ Therefore, trying to trace a dance lineage from *Fiddler* to *The Little Humpbacked Horse* is anachronistic.

Indeed, there is very little evidence that there was truly such a thing as Jewish folk dance prior to the founding of the state of Israel. During the first wave of emigration at the end of the nineteenth century (known as the first Aliyah) to Palestine, it is likely (although the scholarship appears spotty) that Jewish landowners “probably danced ballroom dances as danced by the bourgeois of Western Europe.”¹⁶¹ Current scholarship considers that folk dance became important beginning with the second wave of immigration (or the second

¹⁵⁹ Lincoln Kirstein, 166-7.

¹⁶⁰ Deborah Jowitt, *Jerome Robbins: His Life, His Theater, His Dance* (New York, London, Toronto, Sydney: Simon & Schuster, 2004), 352-353.

¹⁶¹ Kaschl, 42.

Aliyah), which started in 1904, a good forty years beyond our time span.¹⁶² Elke Kaschl documents the invention of Israeli dance *Debkah* out of the Palestinian Arab *Dabkeh*, in the early years of the state of Israel, as an example of the actual process of Jewish national dance creation.¹⁶³

In the nineteenth century, it is most likely that we will find evidence of Jews dancing their own variants of local folk dances. Indeed, the Hora, identified as ‘the Jewish national dance’ by a Jewish girl in Nuernberg, Germany in 1933,¹⁶⁴ was generally identified as a dance of Romanian origin in the late nineteenth century.¹⁶⁵ Other such Jewish takes on non-Jewish dances include the Kozak, based on Cossack dance, and the Sher, based on the quadrille.¹⁶⁶ This is not so much a symptom of a lack of Jewish ingenuity in the realm of folk dance, but rather an indication of just how integrated Jews really were with their non-Jewish neighbors.

The need for a national dance was a by-product not of ethnicity, but rather of nationalism. Anthony Shay, in *Choreographic Politics*, attempts to disentangle these terms that are often also wrapped up in the idea of the nation state. He says that the concept of ethnicity is the older of the two (despite the fact that the term first appears in the English language in the 1950s) and that it refers, according to Manning Nash, to the “consciousness

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 36.

¹⁶⁴ Stephanie Orfali, *A Jewish Girl in the Weimar Republic* (Berkeley: Ronin, 1987), 211.

¹⁶⁵ Gaston and Joseph Grego Vuillier, *History of Dancing from the Earliest Ages to Our Times*, Reprint from 1898 edition (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger, 2004), 220.

¹⁶⁶ Helen Winkler, *Dance Descriptions*, <http://www.yiddishdance.com/assorted.html> (accessed March 8, 2010).

of belonging to a group with whom one's humanity is inextricably intertwined."¹⁶⁷

Nationalism, on the other hand, is far newer, according to Paul Gilbert, and, "not so much a system of beliefs as a set of practices through which national loyalty is cultivated and nations sustained."¹⁶⁸ Thus, Shay argues that folk dance is a product of ethnicity, but the process of putting folk dance in the theater is a practice of nationalism.¹⁶⁹ If we can assume a similarity between the elevation of folk dance to the stage that Shay describes and the balleticization of folk dance from which national dance comes, then we can understand that nineteenth-century character dance – Jewish, Russian or otherwise – is intimately connected to nationalism.

There is certainly evidence that there was Jewish national or character dance on the ballet stage elsewhere. T.A. Stukolkin recalls doing Jewish dances with Alexandre Picheau at divertissements in 1856 and 1859 in Russia (most likely in the Alexandrinsky Theater in St. Petersburg).¹⁷⁰ While Stukolkin does not mention what dance he performed, it is possible that the dance was the *majufes*. Historian Bret Werb writes that the term *majufes*, a tune and dance of Jewish origin, had three uses. First, the song and dance was a means by which Polish landlords would ridicule or humiliate their Jewish subjects either by forcing them to perform it, or through performances by "Zydeks" – people who professionally performed caricatures of Jews. Second, the *majufes* was the "national dance," parody or otherwise, which while remaining elusive may at least be associated with two distinct

¹⁶⁷ Manning Nash, *Cauldron of Ethnicity in the Modern World*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1989, 115. Quoted in Shay, 5.

¹⁶⁸ Paul Gilbert, *Philosophy of Nationalism*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1998, 6. Quoted in Shay, 6.

¹⁶⁹ Shay, 6-12.

¹⁷⁰ Stukolkin, 126-128.

melodies.” Third, it was a catchall term for any similar music or art of Jews or others with the connotation of “Jewish or semisemitic character.”¹⁷¹ Halina Goldberg remarks that the *majufes* dance may be inferred from artwork:

The nature of the dance can be inferred from images sometimes provided on title pages, again focusing on the familiar attributes of the Jewish body in dance. Here, the dancers’ bodies are shown as twisted and unbalanced, most noticeably in the figure on the left. This figure’s gesture – arms bent lateral to his body, with palms of his hands turned upward – is conspicuously effeminate, and stands in strong contrast to gestures that define masculinity in the emblematic Polish dances, for instance clenched fists resting on the male dancer’s waist in a *mazur*.¹⁷²

The attitude and mocking nature of Jewish national dance, if it was indeed the *majufes* or something like it, explains, with all of the Jews in the ballet, why there is no Jewish dance in the parade of national dances that is a very large chunk of the second half of the ballet. (See Table 1.) The proud performance of nationalities that make up the larger Russian whole had no place for such an ambivalent, ambiguous dance, or people.

In addition, it is possible that this list of nations and its lack of Jews is related not only to a lack of a Jewish national dance and to antisemitism in general, but also to the Imperial coronation discussed in Chapter II. In 1856, a group of Jewish merchants in St. Petersburg had sought permission to represent their co-religionists as a delegation at the coronation of Alexander II. Benjamin Nathans writes that this was rejected by the royal chancellory because Jews were not a distinct estate.

By contrast, representatives of other national minorities were invited to attend, and the colorful native costumes of Bashkirs, Cherkassy, Tatars,

¹⁷¹ Bret Werb, “Majufes: A Vestige of Jewish Traditional Song in Polish Popular Entertainments,” *Polish Music Journal*, Vol. 6 No. 1 (Summer 2003), http://www.usc.edu/dept/polish_music/PMJ/issue/6.1.03/Werb.html (accessed April 14, 2011).

¹⁷² Goldberg, 6-7.

Armenians, Georgians, and others helped put on display the staggering breadth and diversity of the Russian Empire.¹⁷³

If the parade of nations was indeed a symbolic reflection of the coronation of Alexander II, then there would have been no place for Jews in the parade of nations at the end of the ballet.

The choreography recorded in 1912 is clearly antisemitic. However, we have no written record of the original Saint-Léon choreography. The question of Saint-Léon's motivation for an antisemitic libretto remains an open one. How would Arthur Saint-Léon, who was of Jewish descent, have related to this articulation of ethnicity?

There is currently no completely exhaustive scholarly biography of Arthur Saint-Léon. Extant short biographies include *Grove Music Online*,¹⁷⁴ and the *Oxford Dictionary of Dance*.¹⁷⁵ The largest English language biography is the introduction to a translated collection of a number of his letters.¹⁷⁶ Indeed, most biographical material about Saint-Léon appears to be scattered through a number of subjects, from the role of male dancers in the nineteenth century,¹⁷⁷ various dictionary or encyclopedia articles about Jewish “contributions to” dance,¹⁷⁸ and biographies of Fannie Ceritto.¹⁷⁹ Ivor Guest makes no

¹⁷³ Nathans, 79.

¹⁷⁴ Prod'homme and Smith.

¹⁷⁵ Debra Craine and Judith Mackrell, “Saint-Léon, Arthur,” *Oxford Dictionary of Dance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), <http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t74.e2053> (accessed February 7, 2010).

¹⁷⁶ Guest, *Letters*, 7-35.

¹⁷⁷ Terry, 22-6.

¹⁷⁸ Sowden, The post-modernist in me wants to deconstruct the term “contribution” in the title. It almost implies that Jews must give themselves to dance (through conversion) rather than participate. It also implies a particular evolutionary narrative. Also see Dvora Lapson, *Dance*, Vol. 3, in *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia: In Ten Volumes: An authoritative and Popular Presentation of Jews and Judaism Since the Earliest Times*, ed. Isaac Landman, 455-463 (New York: The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, Inc., 1939).

mention of Saint-Léon's personal beliefs, though he does provide evidence of a childhood baptism into the Reformed Church of Paris,¹⁸⁰ and posits that his father, Léon Michel (a.k.a. Michel Saint-Léon), and his mother, Adele Joséphine, who were Jewish and Catholic respectively, had come up with "an original solution to a common problem."¹⁸¹ This is the last scholarly information we have about his religious position until his marriage to Fanny Ceritto, for which he converted to Catholicism.

The young Charles Victor Arthur Michel would go on to take the stage name of Arthur Saint-Léon. Walter Terry says that he "renounced his Jewish faith,"¹⁸² for the wedding, though he gives no indication where this information comes from. Sowden, Craine and Mackrell also claim him as Jewish prior to his marriage. Again, these authors do not cite their sources. The most we can conclude is that his father was a Jew and he might have identified as Jewish, although he wouldn't have been recognized as such by traditional Jews, or might have felt completely secular. The *haskalah*, the Jewish enlightenment, made (from the Jewish point of view) such mixed marriages as Michel and Adele's something common, as opposed to something *verboten*, as it had been a century earlier. This internal permissiveness mirrored the national civil legislation that made such marriages possible in the wake of the French Revolution.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁹ Guest, *Ceritto*.

¹⁸⁰ Guest, *Letters*, 8-9.

¹⁸¹ Guest, *Ceritto*, 55-6.

¹⁸² Terry, 25.

¹⁸³ Raphael Patai and Jennifer Patai, *The Myth of the Jewish Race*, Revised Edition (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1989), 114.

Whether Arthur was a secular or protestant ‘half-Jew’¹⁸⁴ or perhaps a reform Jew, while requiring further research, adds a particularly interesting nuance to the analysis of the antisemitism in *The Little Humpbacked Horse*.¹⁸⁵ While we do not know what Saint-Léon’s motivation was for signing his name to *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, we can surmise that it might have been similar to Fromental Halévy’s motivation for working on the earlier operas *La Juive* and *Le Juif Errant*.

Diana Hallman writes that, “like many liberal French Jews of his time he was both drawn to and repulsed by traditional Judaic practices,” and that this conflicted identity drove him to “eagerly” treat the Jewish elements of the opera.¹⁸⁶ While we cannot know for sure in Saint-Léon’s case, we can surmise a similar tendency. Halévy and Saint-Léon actually worked together on another production – Saint-Léon choreographed the divertissements in *Le Juif Errant*,¹⁸⁷ and their association, however weak, lends at least some circumstantial evidence to this hypothesis.

One also wonders if the balletomane Sergei Khudekov knew of Saint-Léon’s background. I suspect not. Khudekov, who fondly remembered Saint-Léon’s ballet, wrote the following:

¹⁸⁴ I believe that the concept of having ‘half’ of an ethnicity is a twentieth century American concept, but this requires further research. This term conflates religion and ethnicity in problematic ways. Orthodox Jews might argue that there is no such thing as half-Jewish; you either are, or you are not, based on matrilineal descent.

¹⁸⁵ How Arthur Saint-Léon actually felt about the content is likely unknowable. We can however investigate whether, though his name was signed to the libretto, other hands and forces might have been involved, such as Timofei Stukolkin or the balletomane M. Lopukhin. See Rouland, 7.

¹⁸⁶ Hallman, 20.

¹⁸⁷ Beatrice Prioron-Pinelli, *Le Juif Errant: Paroles d'E. Scribe et d'H.V. de Saint Georges Musique de F. Halévy: Un grand opéra français au début du Second Empire*, Vol. II: Annexes (Weinsberg: Musik-Edition Lucie Galland, 2005). His contract is reproduced on p.102-3, and a payment list is reproduced on p.147.

Nor was the all-powerful music critic of the French and Italian companies, Mavriki Rappoport, known as ‘Moses’ behind his back, *satisfied* with *Humpbacked Horse*. He dignified himself with the title of music critic and thought much of himself, whereas in fact he understood precisely nothing about art, for his own involvement as an artist was practically nil.¹⁸⁸

I see no reason for the term “Moses” here other than as an antisemitic slur, equating any Jew with Moses. Taking the stage name “Saint-Léon” was a brilliant way for both Michel and Arthur to evade antisemitism such as that which Khudekov reports to some degree, and helped him to achieve his high level of fame.¹⁸⁹ Just to put his level of fame in perspective, he and Fanny Cerrito had what amounted to the action figure representations of the day: porcelain figurines. One such figure exists in the Princeton Delarue Collection.¹⁹⁰

The question of motivation still remains. Why include Jews at all when they were not part of the story written by Ershov, and not really part of the plot? For this, I turn to Julie Kalman’s analysis in *Rethinking Antisemitism in Nineteenth Century France*: “People in early nineteenth-century France did construct the Jew as a way to think through the vertiginous changes taking place around them.”¹⁹¹ Kalman goes on to say,

We can understand expressions of ambivalence towards Jews as attempts to deny or define that which threatens to break through the borders of a tidy world. In turn, the way in which this alterity is defined offers insights into what was to constitute inclusion and what was seen to pose the greatest threat to that system.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁸ Khudekov, 270.

¹⁸⁹ Because it did not sound Jewish.

¹⁹⁰ Figurine of Fanny Cerrito and Arthur Saint-Léon. Delarue Collection, Princeton University. Box 14, Item 235. Porcelain figure, mount for a clock. Vieux Paris, Nineteenth Century. http://libweb5.princeton.edu/visual_materials/delarue/Porcelains/230.jpg (Accessed April 12, 2011).

¹⁹¹ Julie Kalman, *Rethinking Antisemitism in Nineteenth Century France* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 6.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 9.

For early nineteenth-century France, the imago of the Jew was used as a means by which to frame the debate on emancipation, by casting the Jews as an extreme case of the consequences, because of their status as a “separate nation within a nation.”¹⁹³

I believe it is possible to extend Kalman’s framework to Russia in the 1860s. For instance, the persistence of the Shylock stereotype was very much a symptom of the series of laws restricting Russian and European Jewry up through the end of the nineteenth century and even into the twentieth century. While Jews had been granted emancipation (that is, some level of citizenship rights, including property and electoral rights) in France and the United States in 1791, and across much of Europe by the 1850s, Russian emancipation of its Jewish population would not come until the revolutions of 1917.¹⁹⁴ Russia, unlike the rest of Europe, had retained its governance structure based on feudal estates. Indeed, Russia did not even emancipate its serf class until the reforms of 1861 for privately owned serfs and 1866 for state-owned serfs.¹⁹⁵ Jews in Russia were primarily allowed to live in a restricted zone called the Pale of Settlement, and Jews were self-governed for the most part by means of the feudal social estate or guild system that Russia was cobbling together just as Europe was abandoning it.¹⁹⁶ As Benjamin Nathans writes:

By the 1850s, Jewish emancipation in Europe was an unmistakable point on the horizon of the tsarist regime as well as of Russia’s Jews. Russia’s relative backwardness, however, together with the profound social and sectarian divisions within Russian Jewry, dramatically transformed the reception of the European example. The result was a selective integration

¹⁹³ Ibid., 15.

¹⁹⁴ Nathans, 372. In America Jewish emancipation was implicit in the First Amendment of the Constitution, ratified by the states in 1791. *Our Documents - Bill of Rights (1791)*, <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=13> (accessed April 12, 2011).

¹⁹⁵ Bruce W. Lincoln, *The Great Reforms: Autocracy, Bureaucracy, and the Politics of Change in Imperial Russia* (Dekalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1990), xv, 87-90.

¹⁹⁶ Nathans, 23-6.

designed to disperse certain “useful” groups of Jews into Russia’s hierarchy of social estates and out of the Pale into the rest of the Empire.
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The category of ‘useful’ came to include guild merchants (1859) graduates of Russian institutions of higher education (1861-79), soldiers (1867-74), and artisans (1865).¹⁹⁸ Thus the heart of Imperial Russia was suddenly flooded with a new population, just in the years that *The Little Humpbacked Horse* was being produced, a bourgeois class of Jews, many of whom were licensed to sell and collect taxes on liquor; these merchants became known as “tax farmers.”¹⁹⁹

One other major historical development of note must be mentioned, internal to the Jewish community: the *Haskalah*, which means enlightenment, which began in the 1760s. This was a general revolt against Orthodoxy, an embrace of enlightened philosophy, and it brought about the Reform movement within Judaism. This movement was responsible for the “partial openness to European culture”²⁰⁰ that was leading to the internal divisiveness that Benjamin Nathans was writing about. It was the movement that allowed Michel and Arthur Saint-Léon to live the stage life and marry non-Jews. Internal to the Jewish community, the Russian *Haskalah* in the nineteenth century became “personified by a Jew perched on a liquor barrel, sausage in hand.”²⁰¹ External to the Jewish community, it would have been a similar image, tinged with whatever understandings or misunderstandings the

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 26.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 60-66. Between 1844 and 1856 Jewish graduates were not allowed to enter state service unless they converted. Date ranges indicate that full residence rights throughout the empire were not allowed until the final date.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 40.

²⁰⁰ Shavit.

²⁰¹ Nathans, 42.

Gentile might have about what Jewish tradition thought of this, as well as the now age-old stereotype of the usurious, lecherous merchant.

There is one more parallel between *La Juive* and *The Little Humpbacked Horse* which deserves discussion. In both works, two characters wind up immersed in cauldrons of boiling water. In *La Juive*, the main characters Eléazar and Rachel are killed in an *auto-da-fé* in this manner. Many aspects of *La Juive* seem set up to become a comedy, indeed a farce, with hidden identities, a stolen infant raised by an enemy, and secret affairs. But as a commentary on both the pervasiveness of antisemitic stereotypes and their consequences, as well as an artistic collaboration that had to meet the approval of censors, the interfaith adoptions and adultery must end as tragedy in the death of the main Jewish characters. Both Eléazar and Rachel choose to be boiled alive rather than convert. The ending is doubly tragic as it is revealed only after her death that Rachel was in reality not Eléazar's Jewish daughter at all, but the stolen daughter of his (Christian) enemy.²⁰²

In *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, two of the main characters also end the plot in a pot of boiling water, but while the false hero (the Eastern Khan) perishes, the truly Russian one, Ivan the Fool, emerges as "the handsomest of young men," and proven worthy to take the hand of the ethereal Tsar-Maiden.²⁰³ Has Ivan emerged baptized, or have the advantages given him by the magical wild powers of the little humpbacked horse been so incorporated into his essence that he can withstand even the most grueling of crucibles? In light of the cross-decorated set piece in the final scene discussed in Chapter II, it appears that Ivan has been baptized through the assistance of the horse.

²⁰² Hallman, 204-9.

²⁰³ Saint-Léon "Libretto of *The Little Humpbacked Horse, or the Tsar-Maiden*", 249.

With the prevalence of antisemitism in Europe and Russia during the significantly long lifespan of this ballet, it is no surprise that antisemitism would appear in this work. However, the antisemitism appears to be extramusical, not depicted in any overt way in the Pagni score. Unlike *La Juive*, in which the music of the Passover service “reflects an awareness of traditional Jewish practice,”²⁰⁴ *The Little Humpbacked Horse* contains no musical references to Jews at all. All such commentary is placed firmly in the realm of the libretto, the choreography (at least those twentieth century records which we have access to), and most likely in the realm of costuming.²⁰⁵ As discussed above, it is likely that the choreography included some form of Jewish character dance, such as the *majufes*. Pagni and his music seem to be the outliers here. In fact, that the score had anything at all to do with the plot or characters was revolutionary at this point. Pagni was one of several composers bridging the transition from ballet as dance plus unrelated music to musically illustrated choreography.²⁰⁶

The creative team of *The Little Humpbacked Horse* used the Jew as a framing example to show that the Other is to be excluded unless both subservient and economically

²⁰⁴ Hallman, 177.

²⁰⁵ This discrepancy may indicate that the Jewish roles were added after the music was written.

²⁰⁶ Lopukhov, 133. Stephanie Jordan’s editorial note, #26 says:

The implication here is that ballet composers adapted to the needs of ballet masters in the era of “dance to the accompaniment of music,” a process that engendered an improved rapport between music and dance. Lopukhov clarifies later that the inexperienced Tchaikovsky would not have known how to do this; thus, his ballets suffer in their rapport between music and dance (p. 210)

Gunhild Oberzaucher-Schüller indicates that Pagni and Perrot instigated a revolution with a “new practice, from a single composer’s original score, developed in close collaboration with the choreographer.” Gunhild Oberzaucher-Schüller, *Pagni, Cesare*, Vol. Personenteil 13, in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Allgemeine Enzyklopädie der Musik begründet von Friedrich Blume*, ed. Ludwig Finscher, 1040 (Kassel, Basel, London, New York, Prague: Bärenreiter Verlag, 2005), Translation by Aaron Manela. This revolution would have predated his work with Saint-Léon, as Saint-Léon took over Perrot’s job upon Perrot’s departure. Wiley, *A Century of Russian Ballet*, 217.

necessary or sexually exploitable. They extended this principle to the Khan and his retinue, ultimately showing that no Other can become a true Russian – baptized Orthodox and pure. The Other can be incorporated as necessary only to the extent that he can be made submissive. If the male Other does not recognize his inferior role as helper (as does the horse/Jew who performs at the crack of Ivan's whip), he will be destroyed; the female Other may only survive by virtue of being sexually exploited. The first thing the audience sees is a reflection of their own fears, chasing away the Other; the last thing they see is a parade of acceptable Others fettering their new Russian overlord. This message of Russian exceptionalism only intensified as the ballet aged and the issues of peasant emancipation, the reason for the original framing, disappeared into history.

CHAPTER IV

THE CASE OF THE LITTLE HUMPBACED HORSE AND THE DISAPPEARING DANSEUR

In *Reminiscences of the Russian Ballet*, Alexandre Benois remembers seeing *The Little Humpbacked Horse* as a boy at least four times between 1878 and 1883.²⁰⁷ Benois remembers that Ivanushka was usually played by Stukolkin, and that the old Khan was played by Kshesinsky. Benois gives no mention of who played any other role, and the Tsar-Maiden (or any other female role, for that matter) is clearly a secondary part of his recollection.²⁰⁸ Vera Krasovskaya, by contrast, in her biography of Agrippa Vaganova, mentions only the roles of the Tsar-Maiden and the Nereid Queen, both in relation to the subject of her biography and of other ballet stars.²⁰⁹ Something was significantly different in the perception of the ballet between Benois' memories of the late nineteenth century and reports of Vaganova from the teen years of the twentieth century. Of course, the difference in perspective between these authors is a function of changing gender sensibilities and agendas between 1941 for Benois and 1989 for Krasovskaya. Furthermore they each appear to be paying attention to roles played by their respective genders.

Not only were the discussions of gender roles reversed, but also the reminiscences of audience reception. Contrast Benois' account:

²⁰⁷ Benois, 49.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 56-58.

²⁰⁹ Vera Krasovskaya, *Vaganova: a Dance Journey From Petersburg to Leningrad*, trans. Vera Siegel (Gainesville & Talahassee: University Press of Florida, 2005), 72-74, 89-90, 137-138. Originally published in 1989.

The Hump-Backed Horse was at that period our only national ballet. Produced for the first time in 1864, it won the public's sympathies straight away and is popular to this day, whereas other ballet of a national character, such as *Baba Yaga*, *The Goldfish*, and *L'Oiseau de Feu*, never had any real success. It is not very easy to explain its great popularity. It may be partly due to Pugni's music, with its effective waltz *At The Fountain* and the gay march of *The Peoples of Russia*; partly to the successful scenery and general production. Adults appreciated the enormous variety of both classical and character dancing and the excellent cast, but it was the younger generation that particularly favoured and, probably, still favours *Koniok Gorbunok*, because it offers, during the three whole hours it takes to perform, an endless variety of entertaining incidents.²¹⁰

with what Krasovskaya writes:

The ballet was based on a famous fairy tale by Pyotr Ershov and had been produced by Arthur Saint-Léon in 1864. Its premiere caused outrage in the progressive circles of Russian society, because it turned this poetic and brilliantly humorous fairy tale into a parody. In spite of this, the ballet remained in repertoire.²¹¹

Benois is writing in the Soviet era, recalling events from his childhood, in the Russian Empire. Krasovskaya is writing from a (nearly) post-Soviet feminist perspective, looking at the reconstituted political implications of criticizing a Khan instead of a sitting Tsar, as in the folktale. Krasovskaya is a historian concerned by setting up the proletarian fool as a hero.²¹²

Lincoln Kirstein, working in the 1970s, makes a point about the politics of danseurs vs. prima ballerinas:

A French-speaking Petersburg public considered itself cosmopolitan, in contrast with provincial Moscow, but even at the Petersburg court there was a new sense of Russia's indigenous culture. However, balletomanes'

²¹⁰ Benois, 56.

²¹¹ Krasovskaya, 73.

²¹² Krasovskaya published her book in 1989, the year that the Berlin wall came down, but the Soviet Union itself did not dissolve until 1991. Nevertheless her attitude appears at first to be at the very least anti-communist.

demands that the legend be treated by a native choreographer and composer carried no weight. Saint-Léon ignored his critics, insisting that not only would the ballerina dance *sur pointe* but that she was the heroine of the piece as well, although many Russians felt that Ivanushka Douratchok “little Ivan [John], the simple soul,” a traditional folk hero, was the focus for the fable.²¹³

Of course, Kirstein is working from an oral tradition that takes Saint-Leon’s final position on the Tsar-Maiden role as fundamental, rather than as a function of ticket sales.

In *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, were the male roles or the female roles more important? What is the function of actual historical changes to the ballet, and what is the function of any agendas that historians might have had in recording its history, in regards to the importance of these roles?

A chronology of *The Little Humpbacked Horse* serves as an excellent case study in what Marian Smith calls “the disappearing danseur.”²¹⁴ Smith argues that while on the one hand men were receding from the stage due to a multiplicity of factors, on the other hand a critical backlash against the male dancers’ very existence was in turn erasing those few men who were left from history. This backlash started in the early nineteenth century and reached its heyday in the twentieth. According to Smith, some of the reasons for fading male presence on the dance stage included the political, especially in France:

... if the male dancing body and its carefully wrought gestures and movements had once been signs of political potency, for some they were now too reminiscent of the old aristocracy.²¹⁵

Another reason was certainly sexual, as Smith paraphrases Ramsay Bart:

As the Opéra became famous for the pleasurable viewing of females by males – the exploits of the Jockey Club are well known in this regard – the

²¹³ Kirstein, 166-167.

²¹⁴ Smith, 33-58.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 36.

very presence of males on stage may have caused heterosexual male viewers, a significant constituency of the Opéra, to wonder anxiously if enjoying the spectacle meant enjoying men.²¹⁶

As Smith summarizes:

The danseur's supposed sexuality and class seemed wrong and made his detractors extremely uncomfortable, particularly when he danced in the *noble* style.²¹⁷

A final possible issue Smith brings up is the travesty dancer; as women begin to take on more and more male roles, the male who played those roles would be unnecessary.²¹⁸

Several of these processes appear to have happened at the Russian Imperial Ballet, although several decades out from the French changes of the 1830s and 1840s discussed in Smith's article.²¹⁹ As in their political reforms, Russia's cultural changes were behind those of Europe. Clearly, the class issue would not have held as much sway in Imperial Russia, where the ballet and its trappings were still part and parcel of the Romanov dynasty. The sexuality issue, however, seems quite appropriate to our discussion.

In the 1860s, balletomane fever gripped St. Petersburg. Khudekov reported that there were two kinds of balletomanes. The first kind sought affairs with the young ladies:

Most of the balletomanes, of course, were drawn from the *jeunesse dorée*, with that youthful passion, that fever which does not admit the slightest philosophical reasoning...²²⁰

There were many such people. In the Bolshoy Theater time and again one had occasion to eavesdrop as young men, with characteristic fire and flippancy, discussed the legs of dancers, so-and-so's pleasing build, the

²¹⁶ Ramsay Burt, *The Male Dancer: Bodies, Spectacle, Sexualities* (London: Routledge 1995), 24–8. Paraphrased in Smith, 36.

²¹⁷ Smith, 37.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 38.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.* This discrepancy is of note, and a point for further study.

²²⁰ Khudekov, 253.

points of their trotting horses, and scoundrel creditors tired of waiting for their money.²²¹

On the other hand, there was the serious theatergoer:

He went to the ballet not to make amorous advances, no! He simply liked this world and loved choreography, receiving aesthetic pleasure from it, and admiring a smartly and elegantly performed classical variation. He freely admitted this.²²²

While neither of the positions outright smacks of homophobia, Bart's hypotheses are just as applicable here, based on the hyper-heterosexual tone of the accounts.

Arthur Saint-Léon's letters, as translated by Ivor Guest, back up a nuanced and evolving idea of the importance of the female dancers. In a letter from Moscow relating the November 1865 Moscow and Petersburg productions of the ballet (called *Koniok Gorbunok* in Russian), he wrote:

My *Koniok* has grossed nearly 300,000 fr. and that without the ballerina. The one who dances it in Petersburg makes me sick, but she is protected by the minister, damn it!²²³

This letter indicates that Saint-Léon apparently did not see the Tsar-Maiden as a *prima ballerina* role, he did not consider such a dancer necessary for the success of the ballet.

Furthermore, the Petersburg ballerina disappears by July 1866:

Now she [Adèle Grantzow] is in Moscow, and *Koniok* – given in Petersburg without a ballerina – enjoys the choreographic honours in both capitals.²²⁴

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Ibid., 258.

²²³ Arthur Saint-Léon, Letter to Emile Perrin, Moscow, 18 Nov. 1865 (Julian Calendar), in Ivor Guest, ed., *Letters from A Ballet-Master: The Correspondence of Arthur Saint-Léon*, ed. Ivor Guest (New York: Dance Horizons, 1981), 66.

²²⁴ Saint-Léon, Letter to Emille Perin, Petersburg, 1 July 1866 (Julian Calendar), Ibid., 69.

It is not clear whether Grantzow is in *The Little Humpbacked Horse* at this time or not, but it seems possible that she was not in it, as he argues for her to not be in the Moscow production in October of that year, as there were more pressing ballets for which her skills might be used:

Koniok, which is awaited in Moscow like the Messiah, can do without a good dancer, particularly at this time – it remains to be seen if they will see reason.²²⁵

Based on these letters, it would appear that Arthur Saint-Léon's conception of *The Little Humpbacked Horse* did not originally include the role of the Tsar-Maiden as a focal point.

However, as Grantzow took on the role of Tsar-Maiden in the epically large second run in Moscow, Saint-Léon's tone began to change:

The ballet is well staged, and Moscow certainly possesses the finest corps de ballet in the world. In 11 days I have set on the stage 4 *crowd* scenes of *Koniok* – it is incredible, I assure you, and it goes briskly. But also what a corps de ballet! How intelligent it is, and what style! Grantzow will be very good in it. This morning, seeing Grantzow dancing the famous elegiac mazurka and Minkus playing the solo, I thought of you and our *Source* in Paris.²²⁶

Thus, the great monetary success of this production began to sway him, he appeared to swoon over Mlle. Grantzow:

The premiere of *Koniok* took place yesterday. A great success. Grantzow received 11,700 fr. for her share, so the takings totaled 23,400 fr. Nothing was lacking in this colossal ballet which I staged in 18 days!!!! I shall at least end up with the habit of making ballets.²²⁷

²²⁵ Arthur Saint-Léon, Letter to Charles Nutter, Tsarkoe Selo, 18 October 1866 (Julian Calendar), Ibid., 84-5.

²²⁶ Arthur Saint-Léon, Letter to Charles Nutter, Moscow, 25th November 1866 (Julian Calendar), Ibid., 95-6.

²²⁷ Arthur Saint-Léon, Letter to Charles Nutter, Moscow, 1 December 1866 (Julian Calendar), Ibid., 97.

By the time this run would close, Saint-Léon has quite possibly added *The Little Humpbacked Horse* (*Koniok Gorbunok*) to the list of great prima-ballerina ballets as a star vehicle:

Yesterday 26/2 R.St at 4.12 p.m. the curtain fell at the end of the 9th scene of the 64th performance of *Koniok Gorbunok*!...Grantzow leaves tomorrow. The railway carriage which will be her home until she gets to Prussia will be decorated with flowers, and at the frontier she will find a monster bouquet from the Petersburg public. Just imagine that in the six weeks after recovering from her ailment she has had a success that has surpassed everything since Elssler. At her benefit there was a storm of flowers, a gift of 4,000 fr. from the public, and a “very good” from H.M. Never have I seen or heard such enthusiasm. She is reengaged for three months in the season for two years at 36,000 fr, and *Météora*, *Fiammetta* and *Koniok* have been a series of triumphs for her. Full houses at every performance. Lebedeva has handed in her resignation and no longer wants to dance.²²⁸

Saint-Léon now appears to have realized that in the very least, the monetary success of the show had more to do with the ballerina than the danseur.

Looking back through the lens of 30 years time, our other eyewitness in English language accounts, Sergei Khudekov has a different point of view on the original production: “*The Little Humpbacked Horse* was produced for [Marfa] Muravieva.” He complained that there’s nothing for the Tsar-Maiden to do, and that “Ivan’s whip has more to do than the ballerina.”²²⁹ Khudekov is implying that the entire part was designed around Muravieva, but poorly. In point of fact, the first performance was “for her benefit,” meaning Muravieva, dancing the ostensibly bit part of the Tsar-Maiden, took home a large share of the proceeds. However, shortly after that initial production she

²²⁸ Arthur Saint-Léon, Letter to Charles Nutter, Moscow, 28th February 1867 (Julian Calendar), Ibid., 103.

²²⁹ Khudekov, 269, 271.

retired in order to marry²³⁰ and the Tsar-Maiden was danced by various members of the general ensemble.²³¹

In Khudekov's 1896 essay, in which he wrote with overwhelming enthusiasm over the 1864 performances of Muravieva and the other women of the ballet for most of the article, he complained that she is not put to good use: "Muravieva danced, so to speak, *idling away her time!*"²³² One begins to question whether his protests, quoted earlier, about the young men who only care about the women and not about the arts, could also be reflected back upon himself, as he continues in the article to discuss her dancing in overflowing detail.²³³

Khudekov did give a brief matter-of-fact summary of the men in the ballet, noting that Stukolkin broke his leg and the part of Ivan was played by Troitsky, and he asserted that Troitsky played the role until the end of his career, and that Mr. Geltser would play Ivanushka in Moscow. He also notes that Lev Ivanov and Alexei Bogdanov played Danilo and Gavril, Pyotr was played by Golts, and the Khan was played by Kshesinsky.²³⁴ While he does at least give us this summary, it is clear that through the lens of the 1890s, he saw the ballet as primarily a vehicle for watching ballerinas, prima and otherwise.

The dancer Stukolkin's recollections from 1894 – around the same time as Khudekov was writing – clarify a few facts. First, he wrote that he was supposed to play Ivanushka, but that his leg broke and Troitsky played it instead for a whole twenty years,

²³⁰ Guest, "Introduction" to *Letters From A Ballet Master*, 28.

²³¹ Arthur Saint-Léon, Letter to Emile Perrin, Moscow, 18 Nov. 1865 in Guest, *Letters*, 69.

²³² *Ibid.*, 270.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 272.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 273.

until Troitsky's retirement, as Khudekov had alluded. (Tradition gave a sort of ownership of a role to whoever played it in its premiere, until that person's retirement.) Second, he wrote that Bogdanov played Danilo, and that Volkov played Gavriilo. In addition, he says that Picheau played the horse and mentioned that his failed premiere would have been Muravieva's "benefit" performance, substantiating Khudekov's claim. His brief description focused on the creation of the ballet, and a sense of the first dancers in the ensemble, most of whom, in his account, were men.²³⁵

By looking at these recollections of the early years of the ballet, we can see two things. First, that by the 1890s the balletomane culture was almost completely focused on the female dancers. Second, that even in 1864 to 1866, prima ballerinas were a significant driving force in ballet revenue, quite aside from any artistic merit. The artists Saint-Léon and Stukolkin were invested in using their ballerinas well; with a limited supply, they should be placed in the ballets where they were artistically necessary.²³⁶

In 1868, the choreographer Petipa revived *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, reportedly with Muravieva and Vazem as principal dancers, to great success. It seems that Marfa Muravieva came out of retirement, as she appears in Petipa's *La Péri* in 1872 as well.²³⁷ Somewhere in 1876 the four-year old future ballet star Mathilde Kschessinska, daughter of the already famous Felix Kschessinska who played the Khan,²³⁸

²³⁵ Stukolkin, 130-131.

²³⁶ Saint-Léon's letters imply that there was a shortage of qualified *prima ballerinas*.

²³⁷ Marius Petipa, *Russian Ballet Master: The Memoirs of Marius Petipa*, ed. Lillian Moore, trans. Helen Whittaker (London: Dance Books reprint of A. & C. Black, 1958) 96, 101.

²³⁸ Benois, 56-7.

made her first appearance on stage in *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, where her role was to take a ring out of the mouth of the fish in the underwater scene.²³⁹

This indicates that children had been added to the ballet as early as the 1876 revival. Such was *The Little Humpbacked Horse*'s success under Saint-Léon and then Petipa that in 1889, Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty* was postponed for a year in favor of *The Little Humpbacked Horse*. Petipa again set it in 1895-6, inspiring Khudekov's article cited above.²⁴⁰ In 1900, Pierina Legnani was dancing the Tsar-Maiden,²⁴¹ but in 1901 the now adult Mathilde Kschessinska inherited the role from her.²⁴²

Petipa may have been the first to make changes to the ballet, adding or expanding the role of children for the sake of the Tsar. In an interview with Solomon Volkov, Balanchine said that:

Nicholas II loved the ballet *The Little Humpbacked Horse*. He particularly liked the march at the end of the ballet, a German march. It was put in there especially for him, and all of us children participated in that march. And then we changed and went in pairs, boys and girls, to see the emperor.²⁴³

And how wonderful it was to be under imperial patronage, as the whole ballet was. We didn't have to look for money from rich merchants or bankers. That's why Petipa could stage Tchaikovsky's ballets so luxuriously. It took enormous amounts of money to do so! And all the

²³⁹ Coryne Hall, *Imperial Dancer: Mathilde Kschessinska and the Romanovs* (Phoenix Mill: Sutton Publishing Ltd., 2005).

²⁴⁰ Khudekov, 250.

²⁴¹ H.S.H The Princess Romanovsky-Krassinsky Matil'da Feliksovna Kschesinskaia, *Dancing in Petersburg: The Memoirs of Kschessinska*, trans. Arnold Haskell (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1951), 254-5.

²⁴² Ibid., 81.

²⁴³ Solomon Volkov, *Balanchine's Tchaikovsky: Conversations with Balanchine on His Life, Ballet, and Music*, trans. Antonina W. Buis (New York and London: Anchor Books (Doubleday), 1992).

Tsar wanted in return was to play the march from *The Little Humpbacked Horse*.²⁴⁴

Thus, the first deviations from the original Pugni score and the accompanying choreography were politically and economically motivated, rather than having to do with the need to give the Tsar-Maiden more stage time. This addition is mentioned as a manuscript entry, possibly for the 1904 Petipa production, noted as “Last Act: Children” in the Sergeev finding aid.²⁴⁵ But the ballet was already expanding under Petipa’s direction; Lev Ivanov possibly choreographed the *czardas* from Liszt’s Hungarian Rhapsody No.2. for this production, adding an extra-Russian group to the Parade of Nations. By 1912 a new prologue had been added, increasing the stage time for children.²⁴⁶

It is with the 1912 Gorsky restaging that the ballerina-driven transformation begins, as Petipa complains:

M. Gorsky staged Perrot’s *Esmerelda*, and Saint-Léon’s *The Little Hunchbacked Horse* [sic], and my ballets *Don Quixote* and *The Daughter of Pharaoh* and had the impertinence to cripple them and lower them in the estimation of the public, by meaningless innovations and changes.²⁴⁷

One such addition was the expansion of the sea kingdom scene with music by Vizentini. At some point a Russian dance was added for Anna Sobeshchanskaya;²⁴⁸ It is unclear whether this was added under Petipa’s direction or Gorsky’s. At any rate, the underwater scenes are vastly expanded to include music for dance variations by Asafiev, Minkus and

²⁴⁴ Volkov, 29.

²⁴⁵ Sergeev Collection Guide.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Petipa, 83.

²⁴⁸ Sergeev Collection Guide.

Drigo, and these appear in the 1998 production based on the Gorsky.²⁴⁹ This greatly expanded scene allows for a significantly increased amount of stage time for the female dancers, possibly pushing the production's length to the three-hour range that Alexandre Benois noted in the 1940s.²⁵⁰

In 1909-1910 Agrippa Vaganova played the queen of the Nereids, which at that point was staged in one small scene, before Gorsky took over the staging.²⁵¹ We know that in the 1912 Gorsky production Tamara Karsavine played the Tsar-Maiden, but that Vaganova would take over that role in 1914.²⁵² Clearly Vaganova was a prima ballerina of the first order; however the expansion of the Nereids scene evolved not in response to her performance, but rather with the introduction of a new choreographer.

Krasovskaya backs up the assertion that Petipa began the insertion of music by composers other than Pugni, and that Ivanov and Gorsky continued this musical addition “while not changing the essence of the production.”²⁵³

The Tsar-Maiden's dances were so generic that any character from another ballet could have performed them. Among those dances were some from the popular *Cosmopolitana*, a fashionable piece from the 1860s. In it the music changed from mazurka to czardas and from landler to polka. The dances submissively responded to this musical kaleidoscope, and, since there were no other goals, they emphasized the dancers' technique.²⁵⁴

²⁴⁹ 6/7 Gala - "The Little Humpbacked Horse" Under-water scene (1/2) , http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IfgAofD_vJs (accessed April 20, 2011)., 7/7 Gala - "The Little Humpbacked Horse" Under-water scene (2/2), <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wliYSmNhZgQ&feature=related> (accessed April 20, 2011).

²⁵⁰ Benois, 56.

²⁵¹ Lynn Garafola, "Introduction: Agrippa Vaganova and Her Times," in Vera Krasovskaya's *Vaganova: a Dance Journey From Petersburg to Leningrad*, trans. Vera Siegel (Gainesville & Tallahassee: University Press of Florida, 2005), xvii.

²⁵² Ibid.; Krasovskaya, Figure 14 between pp.52 and 53.

²⁵³ Krasovskaya, 73.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

Gorsky did not improve the situation when, shortly before Vaganova's debut, he added a Russian dance to Tchaikovsky's music that was performed by the Tsar-Maiden in the divertissement of the last act.²⁵⁵

The purpose of all this interpolated music was to add stage time for the ballerina. At the same time, discussions of the male roles, such as Krasovskaya's, reduce the men to nameless players.²⁵⁶

The Little Humpbacked Horse survived the revolution. Under Soviet rule, the ballet was performed in 1918,²⁵⁷ 1919,²⁵⁸ and 1922-1923 by Lopukhov, who, in reaction to Sergeev's years as *régisseur*, wanted to restore such ballets removing "everything borrowed and alien,"²⁵⁹ and who

reintroduced pantomime scenes and enlivened others, and choreographed missing parts in the style of Petipa that nobody remembered. His policy of the past not only saved the Petipa legacy but also "modernized" it, by letting the weakest ballets die quietly, reducing the once huge casts, and restoring "gems" to pristine condition.²⁶⁰

This caused a great uproar in the press.²⁶¹

At some point in her early career, perhaps in the 1940s, Maya Plisetskaya danced the "*pas de trios* from Alexander Gorsky's *The Little Humpbacked Horse*."²⁶² In March 1958, the composer Schedrin and the choreographer Radunsky collaborated on a new *Little*

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Krasovskaya, 73.

²⁵⁷ Garafola in Krasovskaya, xxii.

²⁵⁸ Krasovskaya, 90.

²⁵⁹ Garafola in Krasovskaya, xxii.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² Plisetskaya, 59.

Humpbacked Horse, which would supplant the Pugni version in the Bolshoi's repertoire.²⁶³

The Pugni/Gorsky version remains in the teaching repertory. It has been revived in Russia in 1988 by the Chelyabinsk State Ballet,²⁶⁴ a 1989 television film,²⁶⁵ and a 1989 production by students of the Vaganova Academy.²⁶⁶ A photograph, reportedly of a 2005 or 2006 production of the "Dance of the Animated Frescoes" by the Universal Ballet Academy (In costumes nearly identical to those in the 1989 Vaganova production) is available on Wikipedia.²⁶⁷ Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo, the all male drag group, has performed the underwater scene from Pugni's ballet. This obvious parody turns the "disappearing danseur" paradigm completely on its head; every role is a reverse-travesty; on their web site even Ivan appears to be a man playing a woman playing a man.²⁶⁸

Thus, *The Little Humpbacked Horse* fits Marian Smith's "disappearing danseur paradigm." Saint-Léon's original focus on the male characters, such that the prima ballerina was dispensable, was replaced by insertions first by Petipa, then Ivanov, and finally by Gorsky, all of who expanded the female roles. At the same time, critics and historians, starting in the 1890's with Khudekov, and culminating in the twentieth century with

²⁶³ Ibid., 178.

²⁶⁴ 6/7 Gala - "The Little Humpbacked Horse" Under-water scene (1/2) , http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lfGAofD_vJs (accessed April 20, 2011).

²⁶⁵ *The Little Humpbacked Horse - Dance of the Animated Frescoes*, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D12P4v6Kw20&feature=related> (accessed April 20, 2011).

²⁶⁶ *The Little Humpbacked Horse - Enchanted Isle of the Tsar Maiden*, <http://www.youtube.com/user/mrlopez2681#p/u/21/I5TUkEG1MR8> (accessed April 20, 2011).

²⁶⁷ *File:Frescoes.JPG*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Frescoes.JPG> (accessed April 20, 2011).

²⁶⁸ *The Underwater Scene from the Humpback Horse*, <http://www.trockadero.org/thehump.html> (accessed April 20, 2011). An argument could be made that without the "disappearing danseur" issue, there would be less to parody, as much of the humor is in dragging travesty roles – that is, if there were no women playing men, there would be no men playing women playing men. Of course, the drag ballet is also aimed at a parody of straight sexuality, particularly in a country and era where men who dance are not seen as straight to begin with, even though the roles they play on stage might be straight.

Krasovskaya, begin little by little to remove the male dancers from the historical discussion.

But, if the whole point of *The Little Humpbacked Horse* as ballet was to cement the Imperial narrative, how were the main (male) characters allowed to fade into the background in favor of children's marches and ballerinas' solos?

Firstly, the issues of emancipation had faded. Although Russia continued to abuse peasant labor as cheap and effective, there were no more state-owned serfs.²⁶⁹ The free peasants fit into an economic structure in which their labor was coerced through wages, rather than force. By 1912, Russian elites no longer needed to use Jews or anyone else as a framework in cultural discourse about emancipation; the antisemitism was the only part of that message that remained salient.²⁷⁰

By the turn of the century, the discourse around a multi-ethnic Russia had changed as well. The "sense of Russian distinctiveness had become an ideal of Russian political life."²⁷¹ The entire character of the Parade of Nations, once a proud display of all Russia's different resources, would have changed into a mockery of them. "The Germans, the Poles, the Finns, the Jews, and the Muslims-all are seen as one common problem."²⁷² In the late 1800s, this attitude took the political form of "Russification," promoting Russian Orthodoxy over Catholicism, prohibiting the use of non-Russian languages such as Polish and Lithuanian while at the same time revising history. This history portrayed the

²⁶⁹ Lincoln, 87-90. Nothing sums up the use of humankind cheap labor like Ilya Rapin's painting "Barge Haulers on the Volga" Joseph Frank, *Dostoevsky: The Mantle of the Prophe, 1871-1881* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), 111.

²⁷⁰ Wortman, 284.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² Ibid.

subjugated lands as historically and ethnically Russian, degenerated to undesirable linguistic and religious practices.²⁷³

Within twenty years of the ballet's debut, the imagined setting of Krasnovodsk was a reality. In 1869, Russia had erected a fort in Krasnovodsk, and by 1873, the Khanate of Khiva was a Russian protectorate. The Empire dealt with any anxiety over incorporating eastern provinces by subjugating them with overwhelming force.²⁷⁴

With the discourse surrounding all of the additions to the fairy tale having disappeared (save for antisemitism, which remained in full swing into the twentieth century), those additions devolved into a carnival. It follows that choreographers such as Gorsky would expand any nonsensical aspects in kind, while also responding to a changed ballet aesthetic. By the Soviet era, the reasons for the Tsar being changed to a Khan were long gone; the corresponding settings and harem fantasy were unnecessary and may have seemed nonsensical even in the context of a fairy tale. A parade of nations in front of a monument to the Imperial mythology likewise would have been nonsensical under communist rule. Thus, the next step in the evolution of the tale seems logical: start over from scratch in order to return to a purer version of the folk tale, as Schedrin and his collaborators eventually did.

Arthur Saint-Léon's letters, along with Petipa's memoirs, allow us a rare glimpse into the evolution of *The Little Humpbacked Horse*. The ballet, as originally conceived, revolved around Ivan the Fool. It was a male-centric ballet; the Tsar-Maiden was the *bogatyr* to be wooed and won, and not necessarily danced by a prima ballerina; she was the

²⁷³ Darius Staliūnas, *Making Russians: Meaning and Practice of Russification in Lithuania and Belarus After 1863* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), 64, 133, 190, 233.

²⁷⁴ Lansdell, 460.

object rather than the subject. However, as Saint-Léon himself began to reap the economic results of having a prima ballerina in the Tsar-Maiden role, the focus began to change. This economic element is a major factor in the focal shift from male roles to female roles in performances of the ballet. Furthermore, the passage of time erased the knowledge of why dramatic choices such as the Krasnovodsk setting were made in the first place. By the Soviet era, *The Little Humpbacked Horse* was reduced from an allegory of Imperial manifest destiny to a hedonist harem fantasy.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Arthur Saint-Léon, Cesare Pugni, and the rest of the creative team that wrote *The Little Humpbacked Horse* in 1864 were working in a very particular context that is reflected in the ballet itself. Alexander II was crowned emperor in 1856, having just lost the Crimean War. His regime created a variation on what Richard Wortman calls the Russian “scenario of power,” in which the autocrat, who is given authority by divine right, is beloved of all the Russian nations.²⁷⁵ The autocrat expressed this new state mythology in four important ways. First, his regime staged a pageant-parade of many of the diverse Russian nations, who presented him with bread and salt.²⁷⁶ Second, Alexander II began the process of emancipating the serfs,²⁷⁷ who were symbolically represented in much of public discourse by the mythic simple peasant, the *narod*,²⁷⁸ who would be loyal directly to him, rather than their former masters. Third, he tried to suppress the constitutional movement among the nobility, which would have created a competing basis of political and moral authority.²⁷⁹ Fourth, his regime erected a massive monument to the central mythology and history of Russian Tsardom, as well as Orthodox Christendom, the “Millennium Monument” at Novgorod.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁵ Wortman, 189-191.

²⁷⁶ Ibid., 197,199.

²⁷⁷ Lincoln, 87-90.

²⁷⁸ Frierson, 7.

²⁷⁹ Wortman, 211.

²⁸⁰ Ibid., 213-215.

These concrete events expressing the “scenario of power” were expressed on stage in the *Little Humpbacked Horse*. The pageant of his coronation was reflected in the parade of nations around a reproduction of the millennium monument. The Crimean war was reflected both in the setting at Krasnovodsk,²⁸¹ with the changing of the Tsar figure from the folktale into a Khan, and the inclusion of the Wallachians (of the Danube valley), whom Russia desired as a protectorate, but lost.²⁸² The titular horse appears as a figure of meaningful pagan belief and story of the Russian *narod*, and the hero Ivan, the figurehead of the *narod*, who becomes the ruler. The monument ties all of these issues together and frames the work as the success of the imperial autocracy and Orthodox religion. It equates Ivan with the mythic Tsars of old while at the same time realigning the mythology surrounding the Tsars with a truly Russian Tsar beloved by the Russian people, rather than Wortman’s original “scenario of power”, in which the Tsars are outside conquerors.²⁸³

From a musical perspective, the Khan and his wives are portrayed with standard exoticisms – *alla turca* for the man and frequent grace notes over a minor texture for the women. These exoticisms stand in sharp contrast to the music used to represent the Tsar-Maiden, a modal melody with a lowered second degree, and perhaps the only place in the ballet where Pugni “defines Russia musically,” as Richard Taruskin puts it.

When Russia annexed Poland between 1772 and 1795, it gained for itself a sizeable Jewish population.²⁸⁴ The Jews were forced to live a swath of land known as the Pale of

²⁸¹ Lansdell, 460.

²⁸² Curtiss, 530.

²⁸³ Edvard Radzinsky and Antonina Buis, *Alexander II: The Last Great Tsar* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006), 148.

²⁸⁴ Nathans, 24-5.

Settlement, which today is in the Eastern part of Poland, Lithuania, the Western part of Latvia, Belarus, and Ukraine.²⁸⁵ Those allowed out of the Pale lived under a selective integration program that by 1864 allowed in “useful” people such as merchants and academics.²⁸⁶ This in turn reinforced stereotypes of the Jew as a usurious, lecherous merchant. Within the Jewish communities, the enlightenment or *haskalah* was dividing the community into multiple denominations, including the Reform movement, which allowed both for intermarriage and mixed dancing between the sexes. But to Russians, the Jews were a single, homogenous (and usually male) Other.

The Little Humpbacked Horse contains three Jewish figures: The usurious merchant, the exotic Jewess, and the wise Jew. These figures are not found in the poem by Ershov, which Saint-Léon used as the basis for his ballet. While these figures are clearly portrayed as Jews on stage according to the staging directions in the Sergeev collection, there does not appear to be any orientalism, as there was with the Khan, or painting of their Jewishness in the music. We do not know how the Jews would have been portrayed in dance, although motions associated with the *majufes* would be an appropriate guess.²⁸⁷ Why Saint-Léon, whose father was a Jew, would sign his name to an antisemitic libretto remains an open question. But if making scapegoats of Jews was a method used in the public mind as a means of focusing anxieties about emancipation in nineteenth-century France,²⁸⁸ it is possible to extend that idea to Russia. In that case, the presence of the Jews, in the context of all the imagery of the other accepted Russian nations, is symbolic of a

²⁸⁵ Nathans, 30.

²⁸⁶ Ibid., 60-66.

²⁸⁷ Goldberg, 6-7.

²⁸⁸ Kalman, 6.

discourse around “who is in” and “who is out” among the Russian peoples. A parallel between the endings of Fromental Halévy’s *La Juive* and *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, in which two of the main characters wind up in giant cauldrons of boiling water, exemplifies this discourse of inclusion and exclusion.²⁸⁹ Like the Jews in *La Juive*, the Khan does not survive his immersion; on the other hand, the Russian peasant Ivanushka comes out baptized as the most Russian of Russians.

With the assassination of Alexander II, Alexander III began a series of retrenchments along with a wave of pogroms.²⁹⁰ These retrenchments included a repudiation of his father’s “scenario of power,” both in terms of the Tsar as beloved by all the Russian peoples and the myth of European origin of the ruling family, replacing it with a myth of a divine-right Tsar exercising his power “vigorously” (*bodro*). He delegitimized the judicial institutions and reversed his father’s campaign of reforms.²⁹¹ Finally, Alexander III’s process of Russification envisioned many of the Slavic nations as having been at some point in the past both ethnically Russian and Orthodox, having degenerated into other nationalities and religions.²⁹²

These oppressive tactics left little room for open dissent; it is possible that either the producers of this era intended *The Little Humpbacked Horse* to be parody, or that audiences saw it as parody. The very concept of the fool being cast into the role of Khan was in and of itself laughable, as everyone knew that the Khan was merely a stand-in for the Tsar of

²⁸⁹ Hallman, 204-9; Saint-Léon, “Libretto of *The Little Humpbacked Horse, or the Tsar-Maiden*”, 249.

²⁹⁰ Wortman, 284.

²⁹¹ Ibid., 264.

²⁹² Staliūnas, 64, 133, 190, 233.

the original story.²⁹³ Some, such as Lincoln Kirstein, would continue to see it as pro-Tsar.²⁹⁴ Because of ongoing reception changes such as these, those particular pieces of the ballet written specifically with that milieu in mind began to lose relevance. With the final dissolution of the Russian Empire, the presence of those same elements opened up the ballet to expansion with the addition of more music and dance, until it lost all political relevance. Ultimately, *The Little Humpbacked Horse* was replaced in the main professional performance repertory by a new ballet on the same subject by Schedrin. Through the letters of Arthur Saint-Léon, the memoirs of Marius Petipa, and various biographical accounts, we can trace this shift in focus. Sections from this ballet remain in the repertory to this day, and its century and a half presence is astounding.

This thesis expands current musicological and ballet scholarship in several ways. In the case of *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, I use Wortman's *Scenarios of Power* to derive a concrete reason behind the Russian self-exoticism that Taruskin describes. I draw on Anthony Shay's *Choreographic Politics*, connecting his thesis, that the elevation or construction of folk dance in Soviet Russia was driven by an imperialist political agenda with nineteenth-century ideas of nationality, to the similar construction of character dance in the ballet of the nineteenth-century Russian Imperial Ballet. I bring Julie Kalman's theory in *Rethinking Antisemitism in Nineteenth-Century France*, that the use of the Jew

²⁹³ Benois 57-8; Krasovskaia, 73. Another example of parody of Alexander III is the famed monument to him by Trubetskoy which resulted in the following "ditty" (presumably a song)

"On the square stands a commode.
On the commode, a behemoth,
On the behemoth, an idiot."

Solomon Volkov, *St. Petersburg, A Cultural History*, trans. Antonina W. Bouis (New York: Free Press Paperbacks, 1997), 216.

²⁹⁴ Kirstein, 166-7.

was a framework with which to assess the implications of social changes such as emancipation, both out of France and into a musicological discussion. Finally, I add an economic impetus to the aesthetic changes and historiographical agendas that Marian Smith critiques in “*The Disappearing Danseur.*”

There is still a great deal of further scholarship on *The Little Humpbacked Horse* and its creative team to be performed. The use of Russian language sources would shed further light on the aspects I have already studied. A close reading of Pagni’s orchestration in the full score as well as an in-depth study of the Sergeev choreography would expand our understanding of the ballet, in terms of dance, pantomime, and exoticism. Finally, biographies of both Cesare Pagni and Arthur Saint-Léon are projects deserving attention.

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