COLD WAR CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND THE MOISEYEV DANCE COMPANY: AMERICAN PERCEPTION OF SOVIET PEOPLES

A dissertation presented

by

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

Submitted In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the field of History in the Graduate School of Social Sciences and Humanities of Northeastern University
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Beginning in April of 1958, as part of the Lacy-Zarubin Agreement, the Moiseyev Dance Company visited the United States with performances in multiple cities including New York, Montreal, Toronto, Detroit, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Cleveland, Washington, Boston and Philadelphia. The Moiseyev fascinated American audiences and Americans drew direct comparisons between themselves and their culture with that of the Soviet Union, as presented on stage by the Moiseyev dancers. The company evoked a multitude of responses, from protest to admiration, fear of cultural inferiority to enthusiasm for the United States to send over its own cultural representatives to demonstrate American cultural excellence. Newspapers and magazines widely discussed how the group influenced political relations, whether writers felt the company demonstrated that cultural performance was a non-political space in which mutual respect between the two superpowers could be achieved or that it was pure propaganda, and possibly even dangerous propaganda at that. This project revisits the role of cultural symbols and cultural diplomacy during the Cold War, using the US tours of the Soviet Union’s Moiseyev Dance Company as a case study. In particular, it examines the Company’s multicultural and Cold War messages as a framework for understanding the impact of cultural politics on American-Soviet relations.
Acknowledgements

“Acknowledgments” does not seem like a strong enough word to truly express just how indebted I am to others in completing this project. “Sincere gratitude” would be more appropriate; without the aid and encouragement of many individuals and institutions this project simply would not have been possible. Northeastern provided a welcoming atmosphere and the History Department is where I found colleagues, friends, advice and help with academic and day-to-day issues that arose throughout the completion of my graduate work. Working with undergraduate students at Northeastern has been a true pleasure and taught me numerous lessons about what the many responsibilities of being an academic entail. Additionally, Northeastern’s University Excellence Fellowship provided the means for me to conduct much of my domestic research and progress through the graduate program.

My research experience benefited enormously from the aid of enthusiastic librarians and archivists over the years. The Library of Congress and Performing Arts Division of the New York Public Library in particular laid the foundation of much of my research and the librarians at both institutions were always interested and essential to the research process. My international research experience, focused largely at the Russian State Archive of Literature and Art, proved an incredibly rich experience in terms of information gathered and the more personal experience of Russian culture and character.

Throughout the past four years, various members of the Northeastern academic community supported me and served as guides and mentors for research and writing ideas related to this project. Of the Northeastern faculty, Jeffrey Burds and Ilham Khuri-Makdisi offered me new perspectives on my dissertation historiographical reading and how best to discuss Soviet-American relations. I am thoroughly indebted to Stacy Fahrenthold and Ross Newton for our
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Throughout my academic career my family has always been there with physical, emotional and spiritual support. My parents have always had faith in my pursuit of a career in academia and I cannot stress enough how they have served as models for me in my professional and personal life. My siblings Kara and Rick have been my “go-to’s” for commiseration and rejuvenation both when they have lived in and outside of Boston and my brother Dean is my reminder of home and the comfort and consolation it affords.
And finally, my husband Sean has been the cornerstone of my confidence and persistence for the past eight years. Little did he know that our first meeting on Northeastern campus in September of 2004 would lead not only to marriage, but to life as a co-editor, personal and academic counselor, and sounding board for everything from the fairness of how I evaluated my students to the best way to tackle a variety of sources in multiple languages. He can assess a situation in almost any context and continually offers sage advice. He has witnessed the more mundane part of writing this dissertation and throughout maintained his and my own sense of humor, stamina and sanity.

I dedicate this dissertation in memory of my grandfather, Dean Jones. He, and all my grandparents, offered me constant encouragement but he also ensured that I maintained a realistic perspective and did not take myself too seriously – these are vital qualities to adopt in academia and in life.
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Preface: Two Messages of the Power of Culture

What is music for us today?

Next to religion, it is the greatest manifestation of human soul and human emotions. And it is the only unifying element in our world today, for even in religion we find no unity of worship and belief…

While the inconceivable possibilities, discovered in the atomic energy, poison the human mind and become a dangerous weapon in power politics, music remains a beacon, and a stronghold of good will, friendship and understanding among the peoples of the world.

On this first anniversary of Victory, we recall the significance of music in the tragic years of war. We recall the immortal works created during the “Battle of Russia,” ranging from the depth of sorrow to exultation and the triumphant flight of the spirit of man…The music of heroic Russia stirred the hearts of American audiences. Today, American music heartens and stirs deep interest in the people of Russia.

Today, we musicians feel that we have a right – more than anyone else – to raise our voice, because we give the inspiration and joy of music to all who want to share in it.

Indeed, music, like a living stream, breaks all barriers between nations and carries its message of beauty and brotherhood of men. We, therefore, believe in the extreme importance and urgency of close cultural and artistic relations between America and Russia. The post-war world cannot exist without the friendship of these two great countries, vast in land, rich in woil [sic], young in spirit. And it needs the help of Art.

For Art is universal and reveals the soul of a people.

Let Art help overcome evil and political intrigue. Let Art help forge peace and unity between Soviet Russia and the United States of America. Together, these two giants among the family of nations will build a world of security and peace.¹

- Sergei Koussevitzky

Our first performance at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York was an experience no member of our dance company is ever likely to forget. It was our first introduction to an American audience, and a more enthusiastic, more exciting one it would be hard to imagine. For us the welcome was doubly gratifying since we had come to dance for American audiences with some misgivings. We really had no idea of what we could expect. We were afraid, for one thing, that Americans would not understand our dancing and perhaps might not take to it. And there was some justification for our feelings because of the lack of any real contact between our two countries over these past years. For ourselves, the lack of contact made it very hard for us to gauge the tastes and interests of Americans, what they would or would not understand of our national art. But we were in for the most happy kind of surprise.

From our first performance to our last, we were met with a cordiality which went far beyond our most hopeful expectations. And as important – for us as dancers even more so – a complete understanding of what we were attempting in our folk art. We felt that understanding in the response of audiences everywhere we danced, in the many newspapers reviews, in innumerable conversations we had with people in many American cities, in the fan mail we received that talked of 'the traditionally beautiful and varied reflections in your dances of the life of the Soviet Union.'

It was an unexpected and happy surprise for us to find how much American audiences had in common with the Soviet people. We found the same warmth, the same openness and expansiveness, the same feeling for humor. It was a constant astonishment to us to see how similar the reactions were.

Our dance City Quadrille evoked the same spontaneous laughter in America as it would in any Soviet city. There was the same kind of understanding applause of the Suite of Old Russian Dances....the same delighted chuckles for our comic Two Boys in a Fight.

There was not the slightest change we had to make in any of our dances so they would be understood and appreciated by American audiences. This natural and thoroughly spontaneous reaction was evidence not only of what our peoples had in common but of how much we could contribute to each other. I felt this in very personal terms.2

- Igor Moiseyev

In completing this dissertation, I have been asked many times why I chose this particular topic; Cold War cultural exchange. It is useful to step back for a moment and reexamine my own motives, much in the same way I endeavor to examine the motives of the two advocates of cultural exchange above, Sergei Koussevitzky and Igor Moiseyev. These excerpts demonstrate how Koussevitzky and Moiseyev privileged the role of culture in political and personal relations during the Cold War; that both of them believed cultural expression and exchange could contribute to the relaxation of tensions between the United States and Soviet Union. Simply taking these statements at face value makes both artists appear naïve; the idea of the two superpowers seeing a dance performance or listening to a music concert and realizing how peace could be achieved is supremely idealistic. Furthermore, to view Koussevitzky’s and Moiseyev’s goals solely in this feel-good manner does not account for the more complex nature of both goals, such as how Koussevitzky additionally wanted to further cultural relations as a way to learn

about persecuted artists in the Soviet Union and how Moiseyev’s dances presented a utopia vision of the Soviet Union which did not reflect the reality of a Soviet Union recovering from the upheavals of WWII or the suffering of specific national groups which Moiseyev’s dances claimed to celebrate.

I, too, can answer the question of why I chose this topic with the naïve-sounding statement of the importance of culture. While I have encountered scholars who dismiss cultural history as mere “fluff,” I do not claim that simply studying culture from a particular time period will show how it is in fact important nor do I claim that it should be privileged as the most particular influence in any historical context. Rather, by studying this topic I would like to show how studying cultural history and cultural factors in conjunction with other historical approaches leads to greater understanding of a time period like the Cold War.
ABBREVIATIONS

NYPL–PAD: New York Public Library Performing Arts Division
JRDD-NYPL: Jerome Robbins Dance Division, New York Public Library
RGALI: Russian State Archive of Literature and Art
TsIK: Central Control Commission of the Party
Tsk RKP (b): Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party [Bolsheviks]
TsK VKP (b): Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party
CHAPTER 1: Fighting the Cold War through Cultural Exchange

We know there are some members of our State Department who feel that the President's Fund for Cultural Exchange is a gesture, nice, but unimportant. They are willing to go along with it, but not very far. We think they are wrong. It is extremely clear that a large part of the American public is enjoying, and being affected by, Russian propaganda currently here in the form of the Moiseyev Dance Company. Conversely, the companies we send abroad also make vivid, important impressions. They should be given every possible assistance, not only financially, but morally, too. If there must be a cold war, we think that the best possible weapons are those of the arts. We want our artists, and specifically our dancers, of whom we are very proud, to represent us abroad, with glory. For we know, first-hand, the pleasure and the enlightenment to be gained from such exchanges.3

In April of 1958, the State Academic Ensemble of Folk Dances of the Peoples of the USSR, more commonly known as the Moiseyev Dance Company, visited the United States. In addition to a nationally broadcast television appearance on the Ed Sullivan Show, the Moiseyev Company performed in multiple cities including New York, Detroit, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Cleveland, Washington, Boston and Philadelphia and reached over forty million people in North America. This tour marked the first official cultural exchange between the US and the Soviet Union during the Cold War as part of the Lacy-Zarubin Agreement.4 Accordingly, Americans, including those who did not see the Moiseyev Company first hand but only heard or read about the performances, attached huge significance to the troupe and the progress of its 1958 tour.

The Moiseyev Company fascinated American audiences and let Americans draw direct comparisons between their culture and that of the Soviet Union. Americans found evidence for these comparisons in the ensemble’s dances and dancers even though these by no means represented a stereotypical folk dance or stereotypical Soviet citizens. The Moiseyev Company

insisted that their dances were authentic representations of national folk dances and that each dance did, in fact, represent the nature and character of a specific nationality. This rhetoric is problematic considering how much the dance itself, its costumes and its performers differed from the original dance, yet the rhetoric employed allowed Americans to view the dances as representing something of everyday life in the Soviet Union. The Soviet dancers represented the first Soviet people most Americans had ever seen and were thus thought to represent the Soviet Union overall. Americans furthermore learned much about the dancers offstage and what they did in their free time, which again was used as a basis of comparison between American and Soviet ways of life.

The company evoked a wide range of responses, including protest, admiration and fear of American cultural inferiority. Newspapers and magazines across the country widely discussed how the group influenced political relations, representing a variety of viewpoints. One critic held that the enthusiastic welcome given by Americans demonstrated that cultural performance constituted a non-political space in which mutual respect between the two superpowers could be achieved. Art could transcend the current Cold War political tensions. Other critics and political commentators, like Dance Magazine editor Lydia Joel, felt that the troupe offered only pure propaganda, and possibly even dangerous propaganda at that. In press coverage and in individuals’ personal reception of the dancers, Americans expressed attitudes toward the Soviet Union but also views of American and Soviet identity, gender, race and ethnicity. Americans looked to the Company and its dancers to provide answers about what Soviet life was like. They

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drew comparisons between “American” and “Soviet” habits and institutions, from shopping and eating to ideas about relationships and life goals.

This project revisits the role of cultural symbols and cultural diplomacy during the Cold War, using the Soviet Union’s Moiseyev Dance Company as a case study, in order to determine the Moiseyev’s role in the Cold War narrative employed by American political figures in the post-WWII era. The American reaction to the Moiseyev Company complicates the Cold War narrative of unremitting conflict between the US and the USSR and establishes that this narrative was more complex, as historians have suggested. More specifically Americans -- even if they held certain beliefs about the incompatibility of American and Soviet ideals -- felt the Moiseyev tours revealed Soviet citizens to be likeable, genuine people who were actually quite similar to Americans in terms of their hopes, dreams and interactions with others. On a personal level, Americans showed how their amended views of the Cold War narrative through their reaction to the Moiseyev which demonstrates the complex nature of American society during the Cold War period.

Recent Cold War scholars discuss the creation of the story of Cold War conflict as having emerged from post-WWII international relations. Some studies of the Cold War have examined how histories of the era were written and how events are remembered by Americans today. For example, in the edited collection *Uncertain Empire: American History and the Idea of the Cold War*, the authors of each chapter question assumptions about the Cold War in terms of analytical approach, themes and periodization. With more historians writing on diverse Cold War topics

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using a variety of methodological approaches, the term “Cold War” itself does not receive proper attention and is often utilized as a neutral term. However, the editors of Uncertain Empire caution that “Cold War” is far from a neutral term; the very use of “the Cold War” rather than “a cold war” implies that the Cold War functioned as a unique, discrete event that needs no real definition.⁹

Anders Stephanson incorporates the element of contingency and questions the continuity of the Cold War. He argues that, “the cold war was from the outset not only a US term but a US project; that it began as a contingently articulated policy that eventually generated a system, static and dynamic at the same time.”¹⁰ The aim of this US project was to rationalize any action that the US government felt it had to take both domestically and internationally. This in large part meant relating the Cold War conflict to the narrative of protecting freedom under threat from the international spread of communism.¹¹ John A. Thompson describes one way in which this narrative took shape: in the axioms that the Soviet Union had the potential to defeat the United States in a global conflict and that “America’s safety was dependent upon the balance of power in Europe (or later Eurasia).”¹² These assumptions allowed fear to flourish and provided justification for American foreign and domestic actions. Though Stephanson’s above approach to the Cold War is a useful one, the present study does not align precisely with his conception of the Cold War as an entirely American project -- one in which a narrative of the fear of communism prevailed and inspired Americans to view the Soviet Union in an entirely negative

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⁹ Ibid., pp. 5-6.
¹¹ Ibid., p. 34.
light. Popular American reception of the Moiseyev Dance Company demonstrated how cultural diplomacy complicated this perspective.

The Cold War narrative, though certainly critiqued at the time, depended on specific conceptions of American and Soviet identity. Propaganda in the US portrayed the Soviet regime as suppressing individual freedom and expression. Part of the way in which the Soviet regime accomplished this was by creating its own reality in which Soviet people lived. Douglas Field points to a “rhetoric of containment” that gave American policymakers room to maneuver in terms of foreign and domestic actions to combat the spread of communism and prevent further Soviet repression. Indeed, “containment increasingly became a defining narrative for the Cold War era,” which grew in influence as nations like China and Korea became communist. This part of the Cold War narrative allowed for domestic hearings to identify communists by the House Un-American Activities Committee and the Senate Subcommittee chaired by Senator Joseph McCarthy. McCarthyism sought to define a single American identity that was strongly anti-communist. As leaders like McCarthy tried to label what was American and what was not, the atmosphere became “characterized by anxiety over boundaries,” including race, sexuality, politics and culture.

During the Company’s tour, Americans described it using terms such as “explosive,” “sputniks” (and other descriptions noting the Soviet advance in the space race), “steel-sinewed youths,” “peaceful coexistence,” “sad Russian eyes,” and descriptions of the

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15 Ibid., pp. 3-7.
16 Walter Terry, New York Herald Tribune, 20 April 1958, Moiseyev Scrapbooks, NYPL – PAD.
19 Jacqueline Maskey, “Review: Moiseyev Dance Company Metropolitan Opera House May 18-29,” Dance
women as not very feminine in appearance. Such stereotypes and rhetoric formed the basis of the American Cold War perception of Soviet people as somber, focused on industrial output and the space and arms race, and as holding a worldview that was the antithesis of the American worldview. However, in this case, the tour’s results did not conform to the narrative’s divisive, anti-communist goal. Rather, this case study demonstrates that Americans viewed the Soviet dancers as people who were similar in many ways to their American counterparts. Far from furthering the distance between American and Soviet people by viewing differences up close during the Moiseyev’s visit, the tour instead engendered empathy toward the peoples of the Soviet Union and a relaxation of tensions during this part of the Cold War. The reaction to the Moiseyev did not increase fears of the spread of a communist contagion, nor did it further the rhetoric that Soviets and Americans could not live peacefully together. Instead, it marked an acceptance of other peoples and political and social values.

The appeal of the Moiseyev can be traced to its own origins and how the company reflected American notions of multicultural identity. The impetus behind the group was to depict a positive picture of a unified Soviet Union through the use of stylized folk dances from multiple cultures living within Soviet borders. With smiling faces, colorful costumes and folk dances representing the different cultures of the USSR, the Moiseyev danced its way across the Soviet Union and across the world. Including dances from the Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and other territories, as well as those from Soviet bloc countries like Poland and Hungary, the group’s repertoire and skill of execution presented its audience with an image of

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precisely executed, coordinated dances in a variety of steps, colors and rhythms. This image could be interpreted as representing a correspondingly unified esprit among the different peoples living under direct and indirect Soviet control.

Igor Moiseyev, the founder, choreographer and artistic director of the troupe, explained that “The Soviet Union is a multi-national country, extremely rich in folklore...The folk art of the many ethnic groups of the Soviet Union is our richest source; it unfolds before us the most diverse aspects of people, who differ so greatly in their character, temperament, customs, cultural development, methods of expression.” Moiseyev hoped to share the folk dances of these different peoples (albeit in a synthesized or condensed version) to demonstrate how peoples in the Soviet Union lived and expressed themselves, but always in an affirmative way that did not criticize the Soviet regime and often contradicted the reality of life in the Soviet Union.

The Moiseyev Dance Company promoted a multicultural vision of the Soviet Union and projected this view both domestically and abroad. While it was not formed specifically to “target” the United States, the Moiseyev’s selection by the Soviets as the first group of cultural representatives sent to the United States was carefully planned. The major figures negotiating the cultural exchange (including Sol Hurok, the Russian-born impresario largely responsible for the Moiseyev’s visit) recognized the potential appeal of the Moiseyev for American audiences. Indeed, this case study demonstrates that the selection of the Moiseyev -- because of its folk dance and multicultural foci -- allowed it to escape merely reinforcing the Cold War stereotypes. Traditional American values, exemplified at the time by President Truman’s Address on Foreign Economic Policy at Baylor University, claimed to prize freedom over all else as a stark contrast to Soviet repression. Truman claimed that Americans loved peace but “there is one thing that

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Americans value even more than peace. It is freedom. Freedom of worship – freedom of speech – freedom of enterprise.”  

The first two freedoms were historically linked to freedom, of “individual enterprise.” In order to achieve freedom, a government like that of the United States’ was necessary, in contrast to the centralized government of the USSR: “Freedom has flourished where power has been dispersed. It has languished where power has been too highly centralized. So our devotion to freedom of enterprise, in the United States, has deeper roots than a desire to protect the profits of ownership. It is part and parcel of what we call American.”  

Yet the Moiseyev Company, through its multitude of dances showing diverse people living together and enjoying freedom of expression, presented the American ideal of freedom on stage originating from America’s Cold War enemy.

The 1958 tour of the Moiseyev Dance Company in the United States functions as a window into the American mind and as a gauge of Soviet and American Cold War relations. After the signing of the Lacy-Zarubin Agreement (1958) and the beginning of more friendly relations between the Soviet Union and United States, this initiation of cultural exchanges marks a moment in which culture is privileged as one arena in which the United States and Soviet Union could engage and compete. The Moiseyev expressed both a national and multi-ethnic identity which the American audience noted and compared with its own corresponding identity.

For scholars and teachers of the Cold War, it can be problematic to impart fully the fears, tensions and doubts experienced during this conflict, which lasted decades, but did not involve direct violent warfare between the Soviet Union and United States. In a recent Cold War history,

26 Ibid., p. 150.
27 A cultural exchange agreement signed between the United States and the Soviet Union calling for exchange in the “Cultural, Technical and Education Fields” which began the government sponsored exchanges that would characterize the remainder of American-Soviet Cold War relations. For the full text of the Agreement, see Appendix A.
John Lewis Gaddis explained that major Cold War figures are viewed by younger generations in a manner similar to historical figures from previous centuries: “For them it’s [the Cold War] history: not all that different from the Peloponnesian War.”

Gaddis points to a need to reintegrate contingency and complexity back to the Cold War since “For this first post-Cold War generation…the Cold War is at once distant and dangerous. What could anyone ever have had to fear, they wonder, from a state that turned out to be as weak, as bumbling, and as temporary as the Soviet Union?”

Gaddis calls for historians and educators to present a view of the Cold War demonstrating the conflict’s contingency and nuances. This project examines the themes of race and ethnicity, gender and identity as expressed by Americans of the late 1950s in order to better understand the experience of Americans in the Cold War and to add contingency to that experience. At the same time, I argue that the Moiseyev dancers and the way Americans were able to relate to people from the Soviet Union represents how on the personal level, Americans demonstrated the malleability of the Cold War narrative and how it could not be used in an absolute manner by politicians. Seeing Soviet citizens and being able to identify with them reflects a more nuanced view of the Cold War conflict and America’s enemy in it.

**Earlier Cold War Cultural Exchange**

While the State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble of the USSR was the first representation many Americans saw or heard about as part of Cold War cultural exchange, earlier such efforts preceded its famous American tour in 1958. These initiatives were usually on a smaller scale and utilized individuals rather than such a large single group. Indeed, the US government expressed a desire for formal exchange with the Soviet Union prior to the 1958 Lacy-Zarubin

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29 Ibid., p. x.
30 On its 1958 tour, the Moiseyev included over one hundred performers.
agreement, even suggesting an exchange program with the Soviet Union during WWII and again proposing an exchange of artists, exhibitions and students in October 1945, that would have included an American tour of the Red Army Chorus. Neither proposal was welcomed by the Soviet government. However, after Stalin’s death in 1953, the Soviet regime’s view of cultural exchange shifted. When the American musical *Porgy and Bess* toured Europe in 1955, it received an invitation to perform in Moscow and Leningrad, and this was followed by a tour of the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1956. On its part, the Soviet government sent pianist Emil Gilels and then violinist David Oistrakh to the United States.\(^{31}\)

In addition to cultural performance exchange, more general exchange of ideas occurred after the death of Stalin. For instance, Soviet agricultural officials came to the United States and toured the Midwest in order to learn about American agriculture and American officials did vice-versa.\(^{32}\) While these earlier exchange initiatives met acceptance if not enthusiasm, the Lacy-Zarubin Agreement cemented a new view of how the Soviet Union and United States would interact during the Cold War and identified exchange as a way to further Soviet-American relations. The agreement itself called for an exchange of 500 people, but by 1959, “as many as 1700 individuals have already participated in the program and negotiations for its extension for an additional two years [were] to be opened…..”\(^{33}\) Once initiated, intergovernmental exchange took off and became a regular part of Cold War relations for the duration of the Soviet Union’s existence. Indeed how well exchanges went and how willing the two governments were to carry out a particular instance of exchange “served as a barometer of U.S.-Soviet relations.”\(^{34}\) Thus

\(^{33}\) Ibid.
exchange flourished when relations between the two superpowers were good, while during the
tense moments, such as the Vietnam War and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, exchange
correspondingly suffered.35

Background

Because of the fear of world destruction brought on by the nuclear age and arms race, the
Cold War involved a different kind of warfare. Rather than outright conflict between the two
superpowers, the US and Soviet Union fought through proxy wars like those in Korea and
Vietnam. In the wake of decolonization of European empires the two nations competed for
influence in newly formed nations in Asia and Africa in order to encourage the new governments
to favor communism or democracy. In terms of direct confrontation between the Soviet Union
and United States, cultural exchange programs and international competitions served as an arena
in which to determine a victor. Demonstrating cultural superiority was one way in which to
“fight,” and, to this end, the United States and Soviet Union sent “ballerinas, violinists, poets,
actors, playwrights, painters, composers, comedians, and chess players into battle.”36
Accordingly, competitions like the Olympics came to have greater political significance and
were described and analyzed in the press as “battles” in political terms. There were few ways in
which the United States and Soviet Union could directly confront each other and sports
competition and cultural performance became marked as Cold War battlegrounds where direct
comparisons could be made between the two superpowers.

As the United States emerged as a superpower following World War II, government
officials believed that America had to present itself to the world in a way it had not before; that

35 Ibid.
36 David Caute, The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for cultural Supremacy during the Cold War, New York, NY:
“America needed a permanent apparatus to explain itself to the postwar world.” President Truman, as part of recognizing this need, enacted the United States' first peacetime propaganda initiative in 1945. The goal of Truman's formation of the Interim International Information Services (IIIS) was “to see to it that other people receive a full and fair picture of American life and the aims and policies of the United States government.” Though the United States traditionally shunned peacetime propaganda, with increasing tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union, this perception changed. Now the United States had to show the world what it meant to be American. Part of this initiative involved agencies such as the successor to the IIIS, the United States Information Agency (USIA). But such an initiative also meant defining the American character and describing the American way of life.

These propagandistic and cultural endeavors continued and were enhanced under the Eisenhower administration. Beginning in the mid-1950s, Eisenhower initiated state-sponsored tours using the President’s Emergency Fund for the Arts. This fund, created in August of 1954, authorized the State Department to choose artists and send them to places selected for the “‘maximum psychological impact.’” In practice this meant direct funding and setting the travel itineraries for the artists with the USIA properly advertising and publicizing cultural initiatives to influence the “‘minds and hearts of men.’” The Eisenhower administration believed that exchange would create an understanding of the United States and influence attitudes of peoples living abroad.

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39 Ibid., p. 22.
40 Cull, p. 22.
41 Belmonte, pp. 10-11.
43 Ibid., 39.
A need to define “American”

The USIA exchange programs and other forms of Third World cultural intervention needed an American identity to construct a Cold War narrative. In this narrative, the United States and capitalistic democracy functioned as the models other countries should emulate, or at least support when America took action against communism. The United States had to define what it meant to be American and what best represented this “American-ness” in order to compete with the Soviet Union and to justify political moves and interventions. As Richard Fried points out in his study of pageantry during the Cold War, “As a young nation lacking ruined abbeys or royal houses, we [Americans] have strained to create history out of whatever comes to hand.”

One way in which to fashion American tradition and history was to create cultural pageants and holidays. Such celebrations were based upon general ideas that, for the most part, the U.S. government and much of the population agreed upon or at least acknowledged. These ideas included American exceptionalism, liberty, democracy, free enterprise, a free press and flow of information, and the American political system as a model for other countries. For instance, in Milwaukee in December of 1951, a Freedom Week was established. The week started on December 7th in honor of Pearl Harbor and ended on the 17th, the anniversary of the adoption of the Bill of Rights. Each day of Freedom Week had a theme, such as Education or Freedom of Worship, and the themes were celebrated through puppet shows and writing.

45 Cull, p. 4.
contests. Thus the need to define “American” led to American-themed parades, festivals and other events, including international tours and more.

As mentioned above, recent scholars have discussed comparative culture as an important aspect of the Cold War experience, presenting a complex picture of the Cold War and its cultural expressions and implications. Though the international audience was often receptive to the cultural productions and images that the United States disseminated, the question remains whether this cultural Cold War had any significant impact on the way the Cold War played out. Yale Richmond argues that cultural exchanges between the Soviet Union and the West led to the fall of the Soviet Union and end of the Cold War. The exchanges influenced the peoples living in the Soviet Union to positively view the West and Western values. Following Richmond’s work, this project endeavors to demonstrate that cultural exchange, may indeed have had an impact on political relations between the Soviet Union and United States. This project, though, takes the other side of the story as its focus. Works that address the ability of culture to influence Cold War relations usually examine the impact of American cultural products and representatives on the Soviet Union, Eastern European bloc countries and across the globe. Such works make a case for how American cultural dissemination created a desire for American or Western cultural products and even aided the eventual fall of the Soviet Union. Here I shift the focus to examine the effect of Soviet culture on the American mind during the Cold War to demonstrate that Soviet culture, in the form of the Moiseyev Dance Company, also helped Americans form a positive view of Soviet peoples.

Jazz Diplomacy as Approach

46 Fried., p. 27.
47 Yale Richmond, Cultural Exchange & The Cold War: Raising The Iron Curtain, p. xiv.
48 Caute, p. 1. You need to list more than one work since you refer to works in the plural
Scholarship on the export of American jazz to Europe and the Soviet Union offers insight into possible approaches to examining the Moiseyev Dance Company as a form of cultural diplomacy. One such example is Willis Conover’s jazz programming on the Voice of America radio network. Voice of America featured news, political debates and cultural expression including a regular Jazz Hour hosted by Conover. As one New York Times critic noted, “In the long struggle between the forces of Communism and democracy, Mr. Conover ... proved more effective than a fleet of B-29's. No wonder. Six nights a week he would take the A Train straight into the Communist heartland.”

Indeed, many scholars see jazz as both an effective and increasingly important tool in this conflict. As he greeted listeners with the “A Train” at the start of each program, Conover became a participant in the Cold War. Lisa Davenport points out, “American jazz as an instrument of global diplomacy dramatically transformed superpower relations in the Cold War era as jazz reshaped the American image worldwide.”

Jazz proved capable of easing tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union even during notable crises, such as racial integration in Little Rock, Arkansas (1957) and the Cuban Missile Crisis (1962). Jazz diplomacy, Davenport argues, was a unique tool of warfare. This is in part due to the many paradoxes of its usage, including the fact that choosing jazz to represent American culture and democracy meant using black Americans as the representatives of America, despite the discrimination and racism they experienced at home.

In fact the US government very consciously selected jazz musicians and groups to tour internationally in order to combat the image of a racist America and particularly to solicit friendly relations with newly established...
countries in Asia and Africa formed after the fall of Western European empires. In the context of the Cold War, the domestic Civil Rights movement and the international focus on the US after WWII, Penny Von Eschen similarly argues that the “prominence of African American jazz artists was critical to the music’s potential as a Cold War weapon.”

Jazz, for all its apparent usefulness in combatting a racist image of America, required a certain amount of nuance and understanding in its presentations. State Department officials tried to gloss over the “colonial and ante bellum slavery” origins of jazz. Additionally, officials deemed modern jazz less accessible and accordingly the jazz presented overseas and over the radio waves was a more “accessible” jazz such as Dixieland or Swing rather than the more recent trends in experimental jazz. Jazz also proved troublesome in its association with drug use and other forms of illicit behavior. With all these factors combined, the State Department felt it necessary to wrap “jazz in patriotic colors and select[ing] musicians who were presumed to bring positive personal and cultural qualities to their tours.” Thus jazz was painted as an American phenomenon, and jazz artists such as David Brubeck claimed jazz was “the most authentic example of American culture...our single native art form.” In this way, jazz became part of the Cold War narrative.

The USIA attempted to give jazz as much exposure as possible. State Department and diplomatic officials handed out tickets to performances abroad, sent records to radio broadcasters to play, and published stories about jazz in local newspapers across the globe. The aim of such promotions was to influence students and intellectuals; and hence, concerts often used schools

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53 Ibid., p. 3.
54 Davenport, p. 47.
55 Ibid., p. 47.
56 Ibid., p. 50.
and universities as their performance venues. In this way, “US officials clearly saw Western music as an instrument for disaffiliating [non-American] youth from traditional cultural norms.”

Davenport argues that this was a very simple view of how cultural exchange could work: the United States would send its positive image in the form of jazz musicians, and elites, upon receiving this positive image and approving of it, would then allow this view to trickle down to the people. Jazz had to be accessible in its style, American and democratic in its origins, and free of illicit associations so that it could fit within the Cold War narrative. With this in place, jazz could be seen as a worthy representative of the American ideals of freedom and democracy in order to contrast with communism and Soviet repression.

In order to fully gauge the influence of jazz diplomacy on international and domestic politics, scholars studying jazz diplomacy utilize multiple disciplines in their work, particularly using both diplomatic and cultural history approaches. David M. Carletta explains that studying jazz in this way shows the connections between these disciplines but also allows the scholar to “reconceptualize the study of America's past within a global context by examining the influence of international developments on the nation's political, social, cultural, economic, and intellectual life.”

Jazz itself represented an intersection of conceptions of American national identity, political ideologies, and race. Black jazz musicians came to be used not just because of the popularity and alleged universal accessibility of jazz, but also to try to combat the image of a racist America (which the Soviet Union tried to highlight with news of racial incidents or civil rights protests). The Soviet Union hoped to garner support for communism by portraying the

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57 Ibid., pp 51-52. 
58 Ibid., p. 55. 
United States as an unworthy model of liberty and hypocritical in its treatment of black American citizens. Davenport convincingly argues that studying the intersection of the issues of race and culture during the Cold War is essential to understanding that era and that the U.S. government used jazz to try to combat this very visible contradiction in the American image of liberty and ever present domestic racism. Davenport points out that the U.S. government was very conscious of how the international audience viewed American racism, such as the international controversy created in 1955 when a 14-year-old black boy named Emmett Till was murdered for flirting for a white woman.  

Indeed, Thomas Borstelmann argues that the Cold War should not be studied without careful consideration of the role of race in American foreign and domestic policy. Rather than focusing only on diplomatic history with regard to American-Soviet interactions, he provides evidence describing the ways in which American views of race, the civil rights movement, and racist acts (like the example above) affected and even directly influenced America’s approach to the Cold War: “The essential strategy of American Cold Warriors was to try to manage and control the efforts of racial reformers at home and abroad, thereby minimizing provocation to the forces of white supremacy and colonialism while encouraging gradual change. They hoped to contain racial polarization and build the largest possible multiracial, anti-Communist coalition under American leadership.” Borstelmann indicates that race and racial issues were a regular part of Cold War policy and American conceptions of race should be given greater emphasis in Cold War scholarship. The racist and civil rights events covered in the international press for

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60 Ibid., p. 34.
62 Ibid., p. 6.
all the world to see did not fit into the Cold War narrative the US espoused -- and jazz diplomacy offered an opportunity to smooth over the narrative.

This project uses the interdisciplinary approach of the scholars discussed above as a way to paint a fuller picture of the Cold War experience. Accordingly, it takes into account diplomatic and political history in conjunction with cultural history to understand the significance of cultural exchangers such as the Moiseyev tours. Just as American jazz represented the intersection of American national identity, international and domestic policies, and racial difference, the Moiseyev Dance Company represented the intersection Soviet identities --the various nationalities of the Soviet Union, their political ideologies, and ethnicities. While on the surface the tours of the company are a cultural and entertainment phenomenon, an analytical lens conscious of this intersection can yield larger conclusions beyond the spontaneous reactions of the American audience. As a form of cultural diplomacy, the Moiseyev Dance Company hoped to represent the races and nations living within its borders in a harmonious fashion. Yet the success and rhetoric of the Moiseyev needs to viewed with care. As with America’s use of jazz, the Soviet regime’s use of the Moiseyev was a carefully calculated decision and formed part of a larger propagandistic goal: to convince the world that under the Soviet regime, different peoples were treated with acceptance and the regime even encouraged nationalism and national cultural expression. This goal did not reflect the way the Soviet regime persecuted different national groups and how Russian national identity took precedence. As Von Eschen demonstrates in her examination of jazz diplomacy, though the US government used jazz and jazz artists as “symbols of the triumph of American democracy,” the reality contradicted this rhetoric and black Americans continued to experience prejudice and persecution.63 In a similar way, the Moiseyev claimed to represent how tolerant the Soviet regime as of the different

63 Von Eschen, pp. 4 and 250.
cultures and nationalities living in the Soviet Union and how the regime celebrated cultural and national differences. However, as with American jazz tours, the Moiseyev’s message was pure propaganda and did not reflect the reality of how the Soviet regime treated different nationalities. Additionally, though US officials labeled jazz as a specifically “American” cultural product, in reality jazz was international in its origin and reflected the movement and interaction of peoples and ideas. 64

Fear of Cultural Inferiority

As America sought to define itself, it had to deal with the problem of its origins. The influence of Europe on the United States’ beginnings and the continued European influence were unmistakable. The United States could not avoid comparison with Europe and often appeared as a less refined product of Europe.65 Some feared that cultural inferiority on the part of the United States could be manipulated by the Soviet Union and used as negative propaganda. Indeed, after 1945, U.S. interviewers spoke with refugees from Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary about their views of the United States. Even though the interviewed refugees were doing their utmost to be allowed to enter the United States, most of them declared that the U.S. “had a type of pseudo culture at best, in which cultural values could be measured only by quantitative criteria and that the total lack of history had reduced aesthetic judgment to the acknowledging beauty in cars and pin-ups.”66 The interviewees furthermore felt that Americans and their culture were

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64 Ibid., p. 250.
66 Ibid., p.29.
very materialistic, with one interviewee, a Hungarian philosopher, remarking that Americans were simply more primitive than Europeans.\textsuperscript{67}

Officials in the US worried about Soviet cultural propaganda. When comparing American and Soviet propaganda, they felt the US lagged behind. The Soviets made matters worse by issuing negative propaganda, insinuating “that the United States is a nation of materialists…that we have no culture, and for this reason cannot be trusted with political leadership.”\textsuperscript{68} Given these sentiments, it is not surprising that, during the Cold War, the United States struggled to define itself and find (or create) an American identity that would put it on equal footing with Europe.

\textit{The Moiseyev in Historical Scholarship}

Recent scholarship has expanded the notion of Cold War to include culture as a battleground upon which the United States and the Soviet Union competed, each attempting to present a credible image to the world. Within this body of scholarship, the influence of the Moiseyev Dance Company on American and international perceptions of the Soviet Union is discussed, though usually in the form of a chapter or part of a chapter in a larger volume exploring the use of culture by the superpowers. For instance, in \textit{Dance for Export: Cultural Diplomacy and the Cold War}, Naima Prevots offers a perspective on the American side of the use of dance in the Cold War.\textsuperscript{69} In addressing the Moiseyev Dance Company and its impact, particularly on its first tour to the United States in 1958, she argues that the company proved able to win over even those critics and Americans who were not enthusiastic about this step toward

\textsuperscript{67} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{68} Graham Carr, p. 43.
greater cultural exchange. Authors such as Prevots discuss the positive reception of the group among American audiences and point to how these audiences celebrated the company’s dancers. However, Prevots does not address the impact of the multicultural message on American perceptions. While many Americans certainly came to see the Moiseyev dancers, the question remains whether they left with a differentiated view of the Soviet peoples as a result of the performance.

Anthony Shay sheds light on the importance of groups like the Moiseyev Company in *Choreographic Politics: State Folk Dance Companies, Representation and Power*. Shay notes that “cultural representations [like those of the Moiseyev Dance Company] are in fact multilayered political and ethnographic statements designed to form positive images of their respective nation-states.” Indeed, for Americans in 1958, the tour offered a chance to see for the first time what people from the Soviet Union actually looked like. The American perception of people living in the Soviet Union prior to the tour was not a particularly nuanced one; Americans did not necessarily understand that all people living in the Soviet Union were not Russians, or that they did not fit the negative stereotype of Communists as put forth by American media, the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), and Senator Joseph McCarthy. Like Prevots, Shay examines the Moiseyev’s positive reception in the United States but does not delve into whether the initial and subsequent tours successfully communicated the multicultural message behind the company. In discussing the founding and longevity of the group, he claims that “Folk dance, with its accompanying music, singing, and wearing of colorful costumes, must have seemed like a relatively safe outlet for pent-up nationalistic feelings and pride; Soviet

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72 Ibid., p. 59.
authorities felt impelled to provide some kind of expression to non-Russian groups.” However, the impetus behind the founding of the group and its ability to survive so long is more complex and needs to be viewed in conjunction with the evolving nationalities policy of the Soviet regime. Both Vladimir Lenin and (early on in his regime) Joseph Stalin endeavored to develop the cultures and languages of different nationalities in the Soviet Union and to ensure these diverse people were properly represented in local government, and the founding of the Moiseyev helped the Soviet government achieve this.

Multiculturalism as Lens

Studying Soviet treatment of the various peoples who lived within its territories is at times problematic: the Soviet Union grappled with moving away from a tsarist imperialistic image despite inheriting the Russian empire’s lands. Lenin spoke out against imperialistic oppression prior to gaining power in the 1917 Revolution and saw empire as one of the evils of capitalism. Once in power, the new regime had to decide how to incorporate these negative views of imperialism into its own rule over Russia’s vast territories. How the Soviet Union viewed the peoples living within its boundaries can be traced through its changing nationalities policy. Terry Martin delves into the complexity of the Soviet Union’s nationalities policy, tracing its evolution throughout the early Soviet period and how it changed over time, in The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939. Lenin strongly supported nationalistic trends that defied empires like that of the Russian tsar. Once in power, Lenin and (for a time) Stalin promoted this nationalities policy and nationalisms in the former empire, in order to avoid charges that the USSR was an imperialist power.  

73 Ibid., p. 62.
74 Terry Martin, The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939, New
When this support of nationalism was put into practice, it translated into the policy of *korenizatsiia*, or indigenization, to help communities define themselves as nations and develop a nationalistic identity, even when nationalism was weaker or may not have existed prior to *korenizatsiia*. The policy furthermore favored native elites for local government positions, standardized notation and alphabets of languages, and encouraged national arts and culture. By highlighting the different nationalities living within the Soviet Union, the Bolsheviks would avoid appearing just as repressive as the former Russian Empire, even though the Bolsheviks still desired to maintain control over a variety of different peoples.

However, Martin’s *Affirmative Action Empire* and other recent works, such as Jeffrey Burds’s article “The Soviet War against ‘Fifth Columnists’: The Case of Chechnya, 1942-4,” note a shift in policy in the 1930s. Rather than identifying enemies of the state based on social class, as was done previously, the Soviet regime began to target enemies based on ethnic and national backgrounds, with ensuing purges. Stalin moved toward emphasizing the Russian national identity as superior. Corresponding shifts in the politics and arts of Soviet territories reflected this change. Martin and Burds emphasize how these alterations in nationalities policy affected Soviet society and identity. This scholarship needs to be taken into account when studying Soviet cultural exchange, particularly how it affected the choice of artists who would go on to represent the Soviet peoples.

My research aims to take this recently developed approach to Stalin’s nationalities policy and use it to delve deeper into the purpose behind the Moiseyev Dance Company, in order to determine if its multicultural message successfully reached and influenced American audiences. The Moiseyev Company reflected the policy of *korenizatsiia* at its inception, yet survived the...
shift away from this policy and endured even beyond the fall of the Soviet Union. Accordingly, examination of the Moiseyev, its original goals, and how these changed over time adds to understanding of the shift in nationalities policy. I note the exceptions to the shift in policy and how this influenced American perceptions of the troupe and of the Soviet Union generally. It may be that the company’s popularity and successful communication of the image of a multicultural Soviet Union was what enabled the Moiseyev to survive changes in policy and resulting purges.

With the changing Soviet nationalities policy in mind, this project in turn uses the concept of multiculturalism as a lens to understand American perception of the Moiseyev. In *Multicultural Odysseys*, Will Kymlicka traces the development of liberal multiculturalism to the end of the Second World War. He defines the concept of multiculturalism as an international, political phenomenon that emphasizes a need to “accommodate” diversity. His view of multiculturalism goes beyond the basic provision of rights to a more thorough “support for ethnocultural minorities to maintain and express their distinct identities and practices.” Kymlicka furthermore identifies how multiculturalism is a risk, especially when it is enacted as a state policy. If a state promotes multiculturalism and the equal validity of different cultures, it could encourage groups to solidify and even rebel. Thus the Moiseyev Dance Company and the image of the nationalities of the USSR it presented also involved a certain amount of risk on the part of the Soviet Union, especially as the nationalities policy evolved over time.

In “Multiculturalism and Political Ontology,” Paul Patton explores the issues nations face in trying to institute a multicultural policy and how laws should be created to reflect the different

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77 Ibid., 16.
78 Ibid., p. 20
cultures living within a nation’s borders. Cultures, Patton argues, are not discrete entities but are syncretic, interwoven bodies of knowing, believing and acting. A given culture does not exist in a vacuum but is influenced by, and reflective of the surrounding cultures with which it comes in contact. Accordingly, multi-national entities or empires, such as the Soviet Union, need to be viewed as “conglomerates of differences.”

In supporting the different nationalities living within its borders, the Soviet regime also endeavored to define and classify these cultures and, as evidenced by the different steps, moods and costumes of the dancers in the Moiseyev; this often entailed stereotyping or condensing a culture’s characteristics. Following Patton’s more nuanced view of multiculturalism, although the Moiseyev touted a multicultural message, the reality of the dances’ origins and authenticity, as well as the reality of how different nationalities came to be persecuted (rather than celebrated) need to be kept in mind. The Moiseyev presented dances on stage derived from nations’ cultures, and presented these cultures as easily definable and easily represented in a dance creation unique to that nation. This approach oversimplified the nature of cultures and cultural interactions in the twentieth century.

**Concern with Ethnicity and Race During the Cold War**

Using a term like “multiculturalism” in this context may seem anachronistic; the Moiseyev did not describe itself in these terms. However, the goal of awareness and appreciation of other cultures that the company espoused affected American perception of the group. While Americans were not discussing Cold War politics or domestic demographics and cultures in terms of multiculturalism, both ethnicity and race were widely discussed as part of

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social standing, political beliefs and the changing notion of American identity during the Cold War.

David Riesman’s *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character* is a well-known examination of society and particularly of American society. For the most part, Riesman concerns himself with a new phenomenon in social character, that of the “other-directed” person. However, he begins by prefacing his study with the fact that it focuses on the diverse nature of social character:

> It is a book about the nature of the processes that produce the differences in character of Americans, Frenchmen, Pueblo Indians, and so on; of northern Americans and southern Americans; of middle-class Americans and lower-class Americans. Furthermore, it is a book about the way in which certain social character types, once they are formed at the knee of society, are then deployed in the work, play, politics, and child-rearing activities of adult life. 80

Immediately Riesman notes how he will be comparing peoples of different ethnicities to learn more about social character overall. It is by comparing these different cultures and social activities that he will trace the changes in social character over time and especially the emergence of the “other-directed” type. Nathan Glazer, co-author of *The Lonely Crowd*, also includes race and ethnicity as major factors in how Americans identify and express themselves. Indeed Glazer studied the social and ethnic backgrounds of those who joined the Communist Party. His work demonstrates the American interest and concern regarding the type of person who was attracted to communism and what factors contributed to this attraction. He followed up this research with an argument against the idea of the US as a “melting pot” for different ethnicities and races. Glazer argued that views of ethnicity and race influenced American politics and society in a major way, contributing to how “America” and “Americans” should be identified.

The Moiseyev reached many Americans through press coverage, advertisements, and the personal experience of seeing the company perform. Their tour was highly publicized and was widely discussed before, during and afterward. Keeping in mind that reception theory can have its difficulties, this project gauges reaction to the Moiseyev Company based on several factors. First of all, critical reception is taken into account. Several types of critics, including theater, dance, music critics -- even radio DJs -- attended Moiseyev performances and published their evaluations in local and national newspapers. Their reactions to the Moiseyev’s performances and the terms they used to describe the dancers are highlighted, revealing how intellectuals and prominent members of the American arts community perceived the Moiseyev, both politically and artistically. Reception is also gauged through attendees’ interest or lack of interest as determined by reports of individuals’ reactions to the Moiseyev, anecdotes, and ticket sales. Finally, reception is gauged by looking at the US government's reports on the success of the Moiseyev tour, by examining Igor Moiseyev’s accounts of the tour, and by analyzing reports to assess whether the tours were successful in disseminating a positive image of the Soviet Union.

The sources for this project engage primarily with the American perspective and, accordingly, most of the sources used are from domestic archives (the New York Public Library Performing Arts Division, National and Records Administration and Library of Congress being the most heavily used). However, this project aims to explore the political goals of the Soviet government as well as the goals of Igor Moiseyev in this program of exchange and the Moiseyev's tour of the United States in 1958. To explore this side of the story, domestic archives of Soviet sources along with Russian archives (primarily the Russian State Archive of Literature and Art, RGALI) are used as well. While this project addresses the goals behind cultural exchange from both sides, it should be emphasized again that the American perspective receives
greater attention. The aim of this project is to explore American perception of the Soviet Union during the Cold War. American cultural missions to the Soviet Union and perception on the part of the peoples of the Soviet Union, while part of the overall story of Cold War cultural exchange, are outside the purview of what follows.

Chapter Two describes the origins of the State Academic Ensemble of Folk Dance and its formation after a festival of folk arts in 1936 in the Soviet Union. The initial goals for the ensemble, both on the part of the government and on the part of Igor Moiseyev, are important to consider, particularly as the overall Soviet policy regarding nationalities changed in the late 1930s into the 1940s. These goals would change as time went on and the company became more popular; soon the Moiseyev would be a tool of cultural diplomacy not just within the Soviet Union, but also outside its borders. The initial purpose of the group and the new goals it acquired as part of international cultural exchanges influenced how the group presented itself when visiting the United States and how Americans would perceive it.

Chapter Three addresses the process of opening cultural exchanges between the Soviet Union and the United States, and examines why the Moiseyev became the first group to visit the United States. It highlights the expectations on the part of the American government and American people for cultural exchange generally and what they hoped to experience as a result of the tour. The main part of this chapter discusses American reception to the first tour in 1958 and how enthusiastically the American audience received the Moiseyev. It also analyzes the kinds of terms used to describe the group, especially as the political atmosphere of the Cold War often pervaded how Americans evaluated the Moiseyev and its impact.

The more nuanced aspects of American perception are the basis of Chapter Four in which I categorize the kinds of reception on the part of the American audience in the 1958, 1965 and
1970 tours. While by and large American reception was positive, here it is useful to break down the reception to highlight why Americans loved the Moiseyev.

Chapter Five applies the lenses of gender and ethnicity/race to American reactions and how these reactions are tied up with the politics of the Cold War and with American fears of cultural inferiority. Americans held certain preconceived notions of gender and gender roles in the Soviet Union, usually emphasizing the Soviet ideal of gender equality. Many Americans were surprised to find that the Moiseyev dances displayed traditional gender roles and heteronormative relationships. Even in observing the dancers off stage, Americans concluded that Soviet men and women had similar goals and desires in life, despite the fact that they lived under a communist regime. In the context of American fears and anxiety about emasculation and women leaving traditional gender roles, Americans found the Moiseyev’s depiction of gender comforting, which contributed to the troupe’s success. Similarly, the Moiseyev’s multicultural message and alleged appreciation for people of all backgrounds provided reassurance in the context of the Civil Rights struggle and the racial violence that accompanied it in 1950s America. The Moiseyev presented an idealized vision of all peoples living harmoniously together, which Americans, as part of the Cold War narrative, supposedly supported. Accordingly, Americans were extremely receptive to this simplified vision of freedom and cooperation among people as it seemed more attractive than the reality of America’s contemporary racial issues.

Chapter Six serves as a case study comparison. The American-Soviet Music Society, which existed from 1946 into the early 1950s, was a domestic group of American and Russian émigré artists who hoped to create friendly relations between the Soviet Union and United States and tried to encourage cultural exchange in this earlier period in Cold War history. However, the group ran into political difficulties and would have but a brief existence. This domestic group is
compared to the Moiseyev to assess the significance of positive reaction to the Moiseyev and why it was only in 1958 that Americans were ready for this kind of cultural exchange. Finally, the epilogue included here serves to recount the story of the Moiseyev’s survival after the fall of the Soviet Union until the present day.
CHAPTER 2: The State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble of the USSR

Moiseyev was staying in a village near Kishinev one summer. He went to the village club in the evening and asked the girls he met there to show him some new dances. Laughing, they invited him to join them, to which he readily agreed. Taking off their boots, they did a dance for him which consisted of one single movement; they simply tapped their bare feet, now slowly and wistfully, now fast and merrily, changing the beat and rhythm all the time. Moiseyev repeated it after them. He made up the dance later. A suite, not just a dance. And all the inspiration he had was a single movement – the barefoot aping of some Moldavian peasant girls.\textsuperscript{81}

According to contemporary histories, press coverage and Igor Moiseyev himself, the choreographic process required close observation and study of a nation and its folk dances before creating a dance that would represent that nation. Using this technique, Moiseyev developed the repertoire of the State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble of the USSR. The ensemble claimed it could represent the spirit of the peoples of the Soviet Union through dance. Contemporary histories of the Moiseyev and news articles published both in the Soviet Union and United States claimed that the intrepid choreographer Igor Moiseyev carefully crafted the dances to represent the different peoples fairly and faithfully. Moiseyev traveled throughout the Soviet Union to observe, learn and then distill the dances he saw so that they best represented the spirit of the people (and so that they were entertaining for a variety of audiences). At the same time, the Moiseyev represented a carefully crafted tool of Soviet propaganda that served to “fight” the Cold War culturally by utilizing an idealized positive view of how the Soviet regime treated the different nationalities living within its borders.

The fact that the ensemble represented a fabricated view of nationalities in the Soviet Union can be traced to the process that folk dances underwent to become part of the ensemble’s repertoire. Igor Moiseyev desired to display the spirit of the people, but this did not mean

creating an exact replica of a particular folk or national dance. Instead, after gathering information about the dance and the people it represented, Moiseyev made the executive decisions to tweak and improve the dance for the purposes of the State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble’s performances. Moiseyev began his study of folk dance prior to the group’s formation in 1937, but with the official support of the Soviet regime the repertoire expanded to include a greater number of dances and the company a greater number of dancers.

The Moiseyev’s 1958 US tour complicated the Cold War narrative because it presented (albeit in a highly stylized version) the American Cold War ideal of freedom and respect for the various people in a large, multi-ethnic populace. The Moiseyev utilized a multicultural message that had great appeal to the American audience and enhanced American admiration for the Soviet group. This multicultural message imparted by the Moiseyev originated in the nationalities policy of korenizatsiia under Stalin in the 1930s, which celebrated and encouraged the cultural expression of the many peoples of the Soviet Union. However, once this policy shifted and different ethnic and national groups became targets of Stalinist purges and resettlement, the ensemble survived the shift in nationalities policy (and survived past the eventual fall of the Soviet Union). The ensemble’s survival, especially during the later part of Stalin’s regime and then after his death, was based on Stalin’s own personal admiration for the troupe, the ensemble’s popularity within the Soviet Union, and its usefulness as a diplomatic tool for the newly formed communist governments in the Soviet bloc and (after Stalin’s death) in Western Europe and beyond.

The Moiseyev became a tool of international diplomacy gradually, mirroring Soviet recognition of and admiration for the ensemble, as well as Soviet interest in cultural exchange within the Soviet bloc and throughout the rest of the world. Soon after its formation, the Soviet
government used the ensemble to demonstrate support for the nations and cultures living within its borders, and to this end the ensemble performed not just in Moscow and St. Petersburg but also throughout the Soviet Union. The tours met with huge success, and the group increased in popularity. Indeed, it was a visible presence during WWII, giving wartime performances to improve morale. The goal of representing Soviet nationalities and tolerance in a positive light became international as the ensemble extended its terrain to countries in the Soviet bloc (and incorporating dances in its repertoire to represent these countries). Once more audiences received the ensemble with enthusiasm and delight. Noting this popularity and the positive image the ensemble reinforced, the Soviet government sent the ensemble to the West following Stalin’s death during a relaxation of tension between the Soviet Union and Western. Based on wildly enthusiastic Western European reception and press coverage, the ensemble became an internationally known group with a prestigious reputation. Convinced of the group’s ability to present a positive picture of the USSR, the Soviet government extended the Moiseyev’s tours around the globe and encouraged written and visual coverage of the ensemble.

As the ensemble began to tour Europe in the mid and late 1950s and to the United States in 1958, Soviet histories of the company were written to accompany the dancers. However, these histories simply became part of the Moiseyev’s domestic and international propaganda message. They lauded the Moiseyev’s efforts abroad, and the positive influence the Moiseyev had on peoples living in communist and democratic states. The 1966 Moiseyev’s Dance Company opened with, “We meant to begin with the words: ‘Meet Igor Moiseyev.’ But surely it is not possible that you have not heard about Moiseyev and his folk dance company, for by now, this group of 110 dancers has toured most countries of the world.”82 The book endeavored to “recapture the delight of watching a Moiseyev show” by relating the history and reception of the

82 Ibid., p. 3
Moiseyev and with images of the dances.\textsuperscript{83} In \textit{The Folk Dance Company of the USSR: Igor Moiseyev, Art Director}, written by Mikhail Chudnovsky and published in English in 1959, the author recounts the company’s successful trip to Lebanon and the positive press it received. One Beirut newspaper noted, “The Soviet dancers have not only shown Lebanese audiences the manifold dances of their land, but have made it possible for us as we watched them to transport ourselves to the vast Ukrainian fields and meadows, and to visualize the Soviet partisans in action in the years of the war.”\textsuperscript{84}

During this tour to Lebanon, the Moiseyev achieved its goal of demonstrating the diversity of the Soviet Union and the USSR’s appreciation of the cultures living within its borders. However, the company functioned within and was influenced by its Cold War context. Given the nature of the Cold War, the “action” took place in other arenas, including culture. Demonstrating cultural superiority was one way in which to “fight,” and the Moiseyev Dance Company became part of this cultural warfare. Thus their propagandistic message not only celebrated multiculturalism but also insisted upon the supremacy of the Soviet regime and its peoples as demonstrated through dance. As Chudnovsky continues his retelling of the Lebanon trip in his history of the Company, he accordingly also adds commentary from another newspaper:

“While the Soviet Union has given us the possibility of seeing its friendly art which helps to bring the nationalities closer together...the Americans send us warships. What different aims the two missions pursue is clear.”\textsuperscript{85}

Chudnovsky notes the company’s political impact. Demonstrating how different cultures within the Soviet Union all live peacefully together and produce works of art, like the Moiseyev’s

\textsuperscript{83} Ibid., p. 3.
\textsuperscript{84} As quoted by M. Chudnovsky, \textit{The Folk Dance Company of the USSR: Igor Moiseyev, Art Director}, Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1959, p. 93.
\textsuperscript{85} Ibid.
dances, brings the Lebanese closer to the peoples of the Soviet Union. This contrasts strongly with the alleged message of the Americans, as represented by weaponry and warships. The Soviet Union utilized these kinds of reactions as part of their larger propaganda war with the United States. The meaning of audiences’ positive reception and more pointed political commentary about the company became augmented by the Cold War context and the desire to “win” the cultural war. As demonstrated in the above excerpts, the Soviet contemporary histories of the Moiseyev were another weapon in the Soviet Union’s cultural Cold War arsenal. The histories utilized the Moiseyev’s success as a launching pad to exhibit the Soviet Union’s superior culture and superior tolerance of different nationalities. The regime intended this pointed propagandistic message to contrast with American racism and the allegedly crude and materialistic nature of American culture. Consequently, these histories are used with caution. However, they are rich sources as they are the only contemporary book-length examinations of the Moiseyev and they can be used to contrast the Moiseyev’s rhetoric with the reality of life in the Soviet Union.

The Issue of Nationalism and Nationalities Policy in the Soviet Union

The State Academic Folk Ensemble of the USSR was formed and gained early support in large part because of the contemporary view of nationalities living in the Soviet Union. This view (and the Moiseyev’s goals) changed over time, and it is helpful to touch on the origins of the nationalities policy as this was crucial to the development of the Moiseyev. The Bolsheviks’ view of nationalism grew out of their ideas about the relationship between capitalism and imperialism. Before the 1917 Revolution, Lenin spoke out against the negative aspects of
Western European imperialism and identified this as the highest stage in the development of capitalism. He argued for self-determination and an end to imperialism’s abuses.

However, even at this earlier stage, the tension existed between Bolshevik support for nationalism and the fear of losing centralized. Georgii Piatakov and Nikolai Bukharin argued for a universalist view, claiming that the revolution would make nationalism no longer necessary revolution. Self-determination would, in fact, encourage counterrevolution. Lenin, along with Stalin, continued to advocate for nationalism and self-determination.

Lenin believed that nationalism created a forum for peoples’ complaints against the empire and unified them to fight again imperialistic domination. This was especially important given Russia’s multiple nationalisms, nationalities which Lenin identified as potential tools in the uprising against the Tsarist regime. Encouraging other nationalisms living within the Russian empire also involved criticizing specifically “Russian” nationalism. Lenin saw “Russian” nationalism as chauvinistic and imperialistic; like the bourgeoisie, it too needed to be destroyed. In the years leading up to and immediately following the Bolshevik Revolution, Stalin supported Lenin’s ideas regarding nationalism, and his *Marxism and the National Question* (1913) would be used by the Bolsheviks to develop their initial nationalism policy by the Bolsheviks once they were in power. Stalin explained that “a nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, psychological make-up manifested in a common culture.”

Lenin and Stalin’s early support for nationalism was translated into the policy of *korenizatsiia*, or indigenization. This policy not only encouraged nationalistic expression and

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pride in national identity but aided the development or creation of a “nation” defined through language and culture. *Korenizatsiia* meant promoting local elites to higher local government positions, standardizing notation and alphabets of languages, and aiding cultural production which reflected national identity.\(^{88}\)

The problems with the nationalities policy began to emerge in the late 1920s and early 1930s with purges of some local elites and concern about the loyalty of ethnic groups who lived along the Soviet borders with the West. Ukraine in particular became an area of tension and then change in the nationalities policy. At first the Soviet regime had supported Ukrainian culture and history, especially the use of the Ukrainian language on street signs, stamps, newspapers, and in other public ways. Resistance to collectivization in the late 1920s and the low yield of grain caused the regime to change its stance on Ukraine. In 1932, the Soviet regime promulgated a series of anti-Ukrainization decrees that found that the nationalities policy had not only failed to be correctly implemented in Ukraine but had also created resistance. Traitors had found their way into positions of power and had been able to sabotage grain requisition.\(^{89}\)

This change in nationalities policy is examined by Jeffrey Burds in his “The Soviet War against ‘Fifth Columnists’: The Case of Chechnya, 1942-4.” Burds traces how in the 1930s, rather than targeting class-based enemies such as *kulaks* or the bourgeoisie, the regime viewed an “enemy of the people” to be ethnically-based. The Soviet secret police, the Peoples Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD), usually carried out the actions reflected the change in those targeted by the Soviet regime. Burds notes this change in a series of NKVD Resolutions addressing German espionage and sabotage. In a resolution from July 25, 1937, the regime warned of informers living in the country’s German communities. Another resolution,

\(^{88}\) Martin, p. 19.  
\(^{89}\) Ibid., pp. 88, 300-303.
from August 9, added Polish subjects as possible informers as well. This was further expanded to include other nationalities, such as the Chinese, Greeks and Estonians.  

Stalin’s December 1935 speech addressing the “Friendship of the Peoples” underlined this shift in policy with a new definition of nationalism, which claimed that the various peoples of the USSR now completely trusted each other and shared strong bonds of friendship. Rather than identifying Russian culture and identity with imperialism as they once had, the different peoples of the Soviet Union could now trust and admire all things Russian. Indeed, rather than encouraging the development of culture and identity of different nationalisms, the Russian identity and Russian people would be put first, particularly because of their role in the Revolution. As part of this changed definition and policy – and further influenced by reports of German preparations for aggression -- Stalin stepped up greater persecution of ethnic minorities in late 1940. Burds in particular explains how this affected peoples from borderlands who Stalin’s secret police, the Peoples Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD), worried would turn against the Soviet Union because of religious belief. As a result, 657 Chechen and Ingush nationalist guerrillas were killed, 2762 captured, and 1113 surrendered in the NKVD action of 1940-44.

In order to deal with potential traitors before war was declared with Germany, and after the Red Army regained control over the Ukraine and Caucasus, Stalin promulgated a series of resolutions directing the forced resettlement of certain national groups. This was carried out by Lavrentiy Beria, the head of the NKVD. In a resolution dated September 22, 1941, Stalin

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91 Martin, pp. 432 and 439.
92 Ibid., p. 452.
93 Stalin’s secret police.
94 Burds, pp. 289 and 307.
ordered the resettlement of over 100,000 Germans living in the Ukraine to Kazakhstan. Stalin feared that certain nationalities’ loyalties did not lie with the USSR; these nationalities would take any opportunity to betray the USSR and free themselves from Soviet control. These kinds of fears contrasted strongly with the earlier policy of *korenizatsiia*, which celebrated national and cultural differences rather than viewing these differences as potential dangers.

The targeting of national minorities included those who the Moiseyev depicted on stage. For instance, a similar decree to the 1941 German resettlement stated:

> During the Patriotic War many Crimean Tatars betrayed the Motherland, deserted Red Army units that defended the Crimea, and sided with the enemy, joining volunteer army units formed by the Germans to fight against the Red Army. As members of German punitive detachments during the occupation of the Crimea by German fascist troops, the Crimean Tatars particularly were noted for their savage reprisals against Soviet partisans, and also helped the German invaders to organize the violent roundup of Soviet citizens for German enslavement and the mass extermination of the Soviet people.

Based on these crimes, Stalin ordered the resettlement of all Tatars to Uzbekistan to be carried out by the NKVD. Even as this persecution occurred, the Moiseyev dancers performed the *Dance of the Tatars from Kazan*. With smiling faces, the dancers utilized humor and acrobatics to depict two young women playing a trick on two young men, an image of stark contrast to the reality of the Tatars’ situation.

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97 Ibid., p. 205.
Additionally, in the Crimea, Stalin ordered the resettlement of “German collaborators” among the Bulgarians, Greeks and Armenians living there, totaling 37,000. In July of 1944, Beria reported on the resettlement process, noting that the NKVD had resettled a total of 255,009 people, including Tatars, Bulgarians, Greeks, Armenians, Germans and other foreigners.

Though the view of different nationalities had clearly changed, the Moiseyev continued to dance using different nationalities as inspiration; the Moiseyev did not change its goals or repertoire to reflect contemporary policy. Despite the dramatic shift in the view of nationalities and their role in the Soviet Union, the Moiseyev survived because of its established popularity and recognition across the USSR, especially as it toured during WWII to increase morale.

In *Empire of Nations*, Francine Hirsch adds to the understanding of Soviet nationalities policy by pointing out how ethnography was used in the formulation and implementation of nationalities policy. Ethnographers (at first often carryovers from the tsarist regimes) and other statisticians provided maps, censuses, and inventories of the population to the new Soviet regime which now had to rule over a vast territory. The ethnographers helped not just to count the population but to formulate ethnic and national categories and to “help the regime predict which clans and tribes would eventually come together and form new nationalities...Ethnographers, along with local elites, then worked with the Soviet government to create national territories and official national languages and cultures for these groups.”

The involvement of ethnographers bolstered the goal of state-sponsored evolutionism to accelerate the development of the various peoples. Thus for Hirsch, the turn in nationalities policy was not a “retreat” from an “affirmative action” policy but rather a further acceleration of the evolutionism policy. Ethnographers knew that the 1937 census “was expected to show that the revolution had facilitated the ethnohistorical evolution of the population.” Accordingly, the Census Bureau lumped previously separate categories together, such as the Mingrelians, Svans and Laz into the Georgians “on the basis of their ethnohistorical ties.”

In the post-Stalin period, the emphasis on the “guided” development of different peoples to catch up with Russia diminished. Stalin claimed that the peoples who made up the Soviet Union could pass through historical phases in an accelerated manner aided by the state. But Khrushchev saw the changes as more gradual and put the end date at 1980. Khrushchev's

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102 Ibid., p. 8.
103 Ibid., p. 9.
104 Ibid., p. 276.
105 Ibid., p. 282.
attempts to move away from Stalin allowed ethnographers in the new 1959 Census to declare that the previous census's list of nationalities did not correctly represent all the nationalities within the Soviet Union. Thus, the 1959 census allowed ethnographers to put nationalities back on the list. However, ethnographers still felt the need to show the progress of the goal of socialist universalism, and thus in 1970 and 1979, there were fewer nationalities on the list, but this was achieved by not including “foreign” nationalities like Italians and French. Brezhnev in turn saw no end in sight for the achievement of universalism, but believed that “the Soviet Union would remain at its current stage of 'developed socialism' for quite some time.” Post-Stalinist leaders did not see the state-sponsored acceleration of nationalism leading to internationalism as a goal for their particular time period but rather as a more general future goal.106 Under Gorbachev's glasnost, the forced deportation of populations like the Crimean Tatars could be discussed in public. Gorbachev chose not to continue earlier rhetoric about the goal of socialist universalism and instead focused on providing national rights to the different peoples of the Soviet Union. Thus the 1989 census actually increased the number of recognized nationalities.107

The Implementation of the Nationalities Policy in Cultural Expression

The cultural policy enacted in the 1920s mirrored that of the nationalities policy outlined above. With regard to music as one area of a nation’s culture, the policy consisted mainly of “the idea that each nation had its own music that would be systematically collected, studied and used as a basis for composition,” and that the music of different nations should be celebrated and disseminated as part of this policy. Paralleling the general nationalities policy, Moscow believed

106 Ibid., pp. 319-22.
107 Ibid., p. 323.
that promoting national music idioms was a stepping stone toward an eventual all-encompassing musical institution promoting a universal view of music in which there would be no distinction between nationalities. In Armenia, this cultural policy meant institutionalizing folk orchestras and selecting the best known Armenian folk instrumentalists to be a part of these orchestras. This often involved combining folk instruments that previously had not been played together and bringing together many more instruments than was typical in traditional folk ensembles. Finally, a conductor became a part of folk orchestras, which was a completely new addition. This change in the composition of folk ensembles and the institutionalization of folk orchestras in turn led to an emphasis on musicians learning notation and writing music down so that by the 1950s, all members of folk orchestras could read musical notation.

Michael Rouland similarly looks at the way this cultural policy played out in Kazakh music, but links the way the Soviet regime carried out the policy with its larger goal of modernizing Kazakhstan. Kazakh music – culturally preeminent because a print culture formed in Kazakhstan only in the late nineteenth century -- was a way to spread the idea of a Kazakh nation. Thus as Kazakhstan became an autonomous republic in 1920, its government also set up a Commission for the Collection of Kazakh Songs. Alexander Zataevich, a Russian composer, was asked to collect and classify folk songs, which in turn were published as *A Thousand Songs of the Kazakh People* (1925). However, at the same time Zataevich “corrected” some of the music he put into the collection in order to make it understandable according to standard Western musical notation. Thus, as in Armenia, folk music became “national” music in part by

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standardization. Furthermore, in 1936 the central government invited non-Russian peoples to make presentations of their culture at the Bolshoi Theatre. For its performance in May 1936, Kazakhstan brought three hundred “actors, dancers, musicians, poets and writers” to Moscow. Artists gave poetry readings; they also sang folk songs and appeared in two recently composed Kazakh operas. Such performances were intended as educational and also to show how much “progress” nations and peoples had achieved under Soviet influence. However, neither Rouland nor Nercessian move beyond the period of korenizatsiia to explore the shift away from a policy of celebration of different nations and nationalities. Both conclude that early Soviet policy abetted the formation of a sense of nationhood and probably influenced later nationalist movements, but neither chooses to focus on the negative policy toward these peoples that emerged in the later 1930s and 1940s.

The 1936 All-Union Folk Festival

As part of the korenizatsiia, the Soviet regime encouraged cultural expression by the different nationalities in the Soviet Union. The November 1936 All-Union Folk Festival in Moscow represented one way in which the policy played out. Pravda published information about the upcoming festival, including the purposes behind it. The Union Committee for the Arts organized the festival, and Pravda noted that “The upcoming festival should show you the richness and variety of folk dances in the Union,” and identify folk dances that should be examined more closely. Identifying folk dances would serve to help Soviet ballet; Pravda claimed that Soviet ballet had not achieved the same development and success as other fields of Soviet Art and folk dance was a potential source for aiding Soviet ballet’s development. Folk

110 Ibid., p. 186.
111 Ibid., pp. 190-2.
dance represented the Soviet Union’s diversity and utilized modern themes which better represented the Soviet way of life. The festival received positive feedback from the Soviet press as the dancers fascinated “the viewer [with] exceptional charm [and]…special melodious movements.” The festival included dances from Armenia, Kazakhstan and the Crimean Tatars (among others), and each dance demonstrated the traits of its corresponding nationality. For instance, the Kazakh dance showed the “amazing complex of extraordinary culture, rich people's fantasy, fine art [and] humor.” The press noted that it was impossible to list and discuss all of the amazing dances on display in the festival but that the festival certainly suggested the way to enhance Soviet ballet as it currently stood. The folk dance should be used as a “lesson,” and subsequent development of Soviet ballet should use the folk dance as its inspiration. Later articles and histories tied the festival directly to the creation of the State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble of the USSR.

The origin story of the Moiseyev Dance Company became both simplified and mythologized as the Moiseyev became better known in the Soviet Union and internationally. All versions of the story agreed on a few major factors leading to the group’s formation. Firstly, the group formed after the 1936 All Soviet Union Folk Festival in Moscow featuring folk dances from a variety of Soviet peoples. Moiseyev himself, with the encouragement of the Festival Government Committee, served as choreographer for the festival. The festival appeared to educate the Soviet public but also Igor Moiseyev himself: “During this festival Moiseyev was able to see a diversity of folk dances, varying from nationality to nationality, in all their dazzling

113 Ibid.
115 Caption of image Pravda, 1936, p. 6.
116 Krieger, p. 4.
117 Ibid.
brilliance of colour and costume. And it made him feel all the more convinced that he must henceforth concentrate on folk dancing.”

Moiseyev allegedly came up with the idea of the State Academic Ensemble of Folk Dances of the USSR during this festival and he chose the first members of the ensemble from the performers there. Though newspaper articles usually lauded the festival’s achievement of an impressive display of diverse folk dances, in his memoirs published in 1996, Moiseyev noted many difficulties with its execution: “We had to teach the basics of folk dance performers, including movements that are not known to classical ballet, [and] the ability to transform into a national style…Each style - Slavic, Oriental, Caucasian - has different coordination systems, traditions, rhythms. Dance is a language. If you want to be understood in France, it is necessary to learn French.” In utilizing these memoirs, it should be noted that, given their publication after the fall of the Soviet Union, Moiseyev’s recollections should be carefully evaluated since they might not entirely reflect his thoughts and actions at the time. Publishing them after the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War may mean they reflect a desire to distance Moiseyev’s active participation in the Soviet regime’s propaganda and cultural initiatives. Accordingly, while the memoirs are used throughout this dissertation, Moiseyev’s claims with regard to how he viewed the Soviet regime and, in particular, Stalin’s patronage, are viewed with careful scrutiny.

**Igor Moiseyev – An Idealized Version of His Life and Work**

Moiseyev’s own personal story and how he moved from classical ballet to folk dance formed a major part of the ensemble’s origin story. Accordingly it is worth including his

119 Ibid.
120 Ibid., p. 16.
121 Igor Moiseyev, IA vponmmnimaui… (I Recall), Moscow: Agreement, 1996, p. 177.
biography, as well as the depiction of his role in the development of Soviet folk dance. Igor Alexandrovich Moiseyev was born in 1906 in Kiev. His father was a lawyer and his mother a costume designer. Igor spent part of his childhood in Paris, where his mother’s brother worked as an architect. In Paris, Igor was exposed to ballet from a young age. Contemporary Soviet histories note the early visibility of Igor Moiseyev’s talent. For instance, Mikhail Chudnovsky’s history of the ensemble, Dancing to Fame, noted that Igor had a friend who was considered a good dancer in Paris but simply “By imitating her Igor soon mastered her ‘technique’ and performed on the points with great effect.”

As histories of the established ensemble reflected back on the origins of the troupe, they claimed that Igor’s talent was undeniable and that he himself could easily learn the classical ballet form celebrated in French culture. This early, allegedly self-evident talent would form the basis of the folk dance ensemble and its mythology.

After returning to the Ukraine for a year when he was seven, Igor’s family moved to Moscow where he attended school. Igor was a good student and enjoyed drawing, poetry and sports. However, “his natural gifts made him realize that dancing was his true calling.” He began to study at the studio of Vera Mosolova and was eventually admitted to the Bolshoi Theatre school. Moiseyev showed not just natural gifts but also a willingness to work hard and a desire to know as much about dance as possible. He hungrily absorbed any material he could find about the “art of the dance,” going beyond what dancers traditionally studied as part of their education.

As a result of this independent study, “Moiseyev became deeply interested in that vast but little known field of choreography – the folk dance, whose great resources have hardly been

123 Ibid.,
tapped by the professional dancer.”

Moiseyev did not pursue this interest right after graduating from the Bolshoi school, but continued to work in the realm of classical ballet, dancing solo roles at the prestigious Bolshoi Ballet. Igor desired to expand his talents beyond performance and began to choreograph his own dances. It was through early works, such as *The Three Fat Men* and *The Football Player*, that contemporary histories pointed to “signs of a search for new means of expression.” After the ensemble became so well known and became a tool of cultural diplomacy, Soviet histories claimed that Igor Moiseyev was not satisfied with pre-revolutionary ballet forms and felt the need for an art form that would better express emotions and contemporary life.

Moiseyev began to use his summers to travel to different regions of the Soviet Union, including the Ukraine, Belorussia, Tajikistan, the banks of the Volga and throughout the Urals. Moiseyev did whatever it took to reach the “remotest villages,” including riding horseback or walking, in order to learn about folk dance and the lives of Soviet peoples. During his visits he would observe the “character, ways of living and customs of the people, and above all to learn as much as possible of the various dance heritages of the nationalities inhabiting his vast homeland.” He felt that in order to learn a nation or culture’s dance, more was necessary than knowing the steps, melodies and rhythms. Early on Moiseyev identified national character and way of life as vitally important to understanding cultural expressions such as folk dance. This enhanced his knowledge of folk dance but, more importantly, served as inspiration for his choreographic endeavors. As Moiseyev put it, “‘Folk art showed me my vocation.”

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125 Ibid., p. 15.
127 Chudnovsky, p. 15.
128 Sheremetyevskaya, pp. 30-31.
describing the origins of the State Academic Folk Ensemble of the U.S.S.R. himself, Moiseyev played into the mythologized version of events that contemporary Soviet histories espoused.

In his memoirs, Moiseyev recalled a visit to a village in Belarus. He noticed young girls walking along, singing about potatoes and asking for good weather for the potato crop. The Belarusian name for potato, “bulb,” along with the rhythm of the polka formed the crux of the song, which also served as the inspiration for Moiseyev’s own version, later performed by the State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble of the USSR. He claimed that he drew on the authentic source; Byelorussians themselves recognized the Moiseyev version of the dance as reflecting the long history of the “bulb” dance in their culture and validated his use of and changes to the original dance. This, according to Moiseyev “is the highest form of recognition.”

Moiseyev explained his choice of folk dance in his memoirs, noting that folk dance expressed the “national soul” and was an “inexhaustible treasury of many priceless gems.” He particularly stressed the emotional expressiveness of folk dance, in contrast to the “rational” nature of classical ballet. Classical ballet was the dance of fantasy, otherworldly, while folk dance belonged to the “earth.”

Formation of the Ensemble

Soviet histories of the ensemble varied in detailing how the idea of the ensemble, inspired by the 1936 festival, led to the creation of the State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble of the USSR. Most simply noted that the festival inspired Igor Moiseyev, who in turn discussed the possibility of the ensemble with the Soviet government, received permission, and continued apace with its formation. Such histories depicted the formation of the ensemble as a linear

129 Moiseyev, I Recall, p. 181.
130 Ibid., p. 172.
131 Ibid.
progression from original idea, which, coupled with official support, led logically to the ensemble’s creation: “It could not have been otherwise, for as soon as the company was formed it received generous grants from the state, and practically unlimited freedom to experiment, seek and create.” ¹³² With the 1936 festival behind him, when Moiseyev suggested the creation of the folk ensemble, the government readily agreed. The Soviet regime appointed Moiseyev the artistic director of the State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble of the USSR. ¹³³ Moiseyev allegedly assembled a group of dancers and began quickly choreographing the dances. Though at first the group lacked a proper performance space, “Hard conditions could not scare them off, however, for they believed in their leader who drew them on with the dream of creating an entirely new form of dance art – the scenic folk dance.” ¹³⁴

However, the actual circumstances and formation of the company were much more complicated. There were those who doubted and “prophesied complete failure for Igor Moiseyev.” ¹³⁵ These critics thought Moiseyev was foolish for leaving the celebrated Bolshoi Ballet in order to pursue the less prestigious folk dance. But the “courageous” Igor Moiseyev carried on, and his faith in the future of folk dance was such that he remained resolute in pursuing the creation of the ensemble. Accordingly, he held the first meeting of the new company on February 10, 1937 in a house on Leontyevsky Street in Moscow. Forty-five interested people attended, with Igor Moiseyev at age thirty being the eldest. ¹³⁶

This group worked for six months to prepare its first program. ¹³⁷ The State Academic Folk Ensemble of the USSR performed for the first time with thirty-five dancers in October of

¹³² Ilupina, p. 10.
¹³³ Chudnovsky, p. 17 and Ilupina, p. 4.
¹³⁴ Sheremetyevskaya, pp. 29-30.
¹³⁵ Chudnovsky, p. 17.
¹³⁶ Ibid., pp. 17-18.
¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 18.
1937, but the performance revealed the group’s the lack of training at this early stage in its development. Indeed, “until then they had been operating machine tools, working in offices and on farms.” Additionally, the ensemble was only able to prepare the minimum number of dances to fill a program. The open air performance at the Green Theatre in Moscow included Ukrainian, Byelorussian and Georgian Dances. Despite the difficulty in putting together the program, the company reportedly “swept the audience off its feet. Here was something new. Here was talent in the interpretation of the folk dance.” Judging by this first performance, histories of the Moiseyev claimed that the Moscow audience immediately recognized Igor Mosieyev’s endeavors: “He revealed to the amazed spectators a new world of thoughts, emotions and moods they never suspected existed in it.” Though the ensemble needed to build up its repertoire and human faces, contemporary histories noted the great success in dealing with this problem. The ensemble soon had 143 people and a diverse dance repertoire to draw on.

A More Complex View of the Ensemble’s Formation

Contemporary historians created a linear history of the ensemble, from the initial idea for the group in the 1936 festival to the creation and first performance of the company in 1937, to a superbly trained ensemble with a wealth of dances in its repertoire and domestic and international renown. Indeed, such historians claimed that within a year-and-a-half of its founding, the ensemble was a “well-knit group” with a comprehensive repertoire and high-level performances.

138 Ilupina, p. 4.
139 Chudnovsky, p. 19.
140 Ibid.
141 Ibid.
142 Ibid., pp. 19-20.
143 Ibid., p. 76.
A letter Moiseyev co-wrote on July 30, 1938, around the year-and-a-half marker, offers some insight into the reality of the group’s formation and early years. In it Moiseyev recounts the execution of the All-Union Festival of Folk Dance in 1936 and its results, which endeavored to create exposure for folk dance. Interestingly, the letter notes that “because the festival was badly organized… it did not create a strong following.” \(^{144}\) Sadly the festival did not document its performances: no systematic attempt was made to record the music, note the choreography, or photograph the costumes. The festival furthermore did not fully represent the numerous dances and peoples of the Soviet Union. For instance, Moiseyev pointed out there were no dances from Tajikistan at the festival. And, with regard to Russian folk dance, the festival actually “distorted the impression about Russian dance.” \(^{145}\)

Moiseyev noted that the Soviet Union should be more conscious of the value of studying folk dance, since at that time, “there’s a blossoming of national arts…” and of “national artistic creativity.” In places like Kirgizstan and Turkmenistan, Moiseyev pointed to the new creative impetus which the Soviet regime currently did not recognize. He accordingly called for a new All-Union National Dance Festival to be organized for 1939 that would actually study, record and organize the dances on display. \(^{146}\) A properly organized festival such as the one Moiseyev had in mind would accomplish certain results. \(^{147}\) These results included: “the study and recording of dance forms and themes and subject,” the “fertilization of professional choreography of folk material,” identification of dancers from amateur groups who would be suitable for further development, the recording of folk music, instruments and costumes, and the

\(^{144}\) Letter dated 30 July 1938, RGALI, f. 3162 op 2 d 8, 5, p. 1.
\(^{145}\) Ibid.
\(^{146}\) Ibid.
\(^{147}\) Ibid., RGALI, f. 3162 op 2 d 8, 6, p. 2.
“stimulation of further growth and blossoming of Soviet choreography by means of mutual exchange” of folk dance.¹⁴⁸

The State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble of the USSR, while it became enormously successful, did not experience an easy transition from idea to established institution. It took dogged persistence and pleading for official and popular recognition of the value of the folk dance cause. Though before, during and after the 1936 festival (especially in light of the korenizatsiia policy) folk dance garnered some interest, this interest was yet to develop into a consistent meeting of the minds between the Soviet government and Igor Moiseyev.

*Igor Moiseyev’s Goals and Approach to Folk Material*

Contemporary Soviet histories treated Moiseyev’s approach to the original folk source material and how he changed it in a similar manner to the origin story of the ensemble. These histories simplified the process and justified the revisions Moiseyev made to the original material while still claiming the dances were “authentic” and truly represented how the Soviet regime treated nationalities living in their borders and these nationalities’ ways of life. Writing about Moiseyev’s artistic approach in this manner aided the Soviet regime’s ability to use the ensemble as propaganda and a diplomatic tool. Accordingly, at the time the State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble of the USSR was founded (and later when recalling his original approach to the ensemble’s formation and repertoire), Moiseyev insisted on interweaving authentic folk material with his own creative changes, molding the original folk dances:

Folk dance needs to be carefully examined. We are not collectors of dance and [we] do not prick them like a butterfly on a pin. Based on international experience, we strive to empower the dance, enriching it with the director's fancy [and] dance technique, through which he expresses himself more clearly. In short, we come to

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., RGALI, f. 3162 op 2 d 8, 6-7, pp. 2-3.
the folk dance as material for creation, not concealing his [the choreographer’s] authorship in each folk dance.  

The final dance creation reflected national character and the inspiration of the original dance but with unashamed changes by the choreographer. Moiseyev conceived of this approach and refined it as he worked on the 1936 festival and the State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble of the USSR. After the 1936 festival, Moiseyev recalled in his memoirs how the festival demonstrated “an enormous wealth of folklore” but that the folk dances were disorganized and haphazardly recorded (if at all). The question was, how to approach this source material and “How to protect a unique national character [in the dance] and at the same time make a living art of dance, not [simply] transfer [the dance] as museum exhibits?”

Moiseyev asserted that, through his study of folk dance, he learned to identify which aspects of the dance were most important. In order to accomplish this, he examined not just the dance steps themselves, but the themes, style, way of life and history of the national group. Moiseyev stated his goal for the ensemble:

“to create classic patterns of the folk dance, and while casting off all the artificial and alien elements, to achieve a high degree of artistry in the performance of folk dances, to develop a number of old dances, and to influence the further shaping of the folk dance.”

Subsequently, the ensemble worked to popularize folk dance so that more people in the Soviet Union would learn about it and appreciate it, and so that the Moiseyev could learn of dances from all over the Soviet Union and from cities and small villages. The ensemble desired to revitalize folk dance and also use older, undiscovered folk dances as inspiration for the

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149 Moiseyev, I Recall…, p. 172.
150 Ibid., p. 176.
151 Ibid., p. 177.
152 Chudnovsky, pp. 18-19.
153 Ibid., p. 19.
construction of new ones.\textsuperscript{154} The ensemble privileged itself as being the proper entity to “discover” these older dances rather than the folk dance’s own people.

In addition to paying greater attention to the study of folk dance, Moiseyev pointed to the need for a new form to be created. He wanted to mold Soviet ballet using folk material as the basis. Moiseyev acknowledged the use of folk dance in ballet prior to his own ensemble’s creation, but felt that the previous approaches to folk material were quite different from his own, because they involved simple imitation or too much change.\textsuperscript{155} As part of justifying Moiseyev’s own approach to and use of folk material, he and contemporary historians had to discredit other choreographers who had used folk dance. Thus, Moiseyev and contemporary historians claimed that after 1917, though there \textit{was} an increased interest in using folk material, scholars and artists continued to follow the wrong approach of the past when using folklore in dance. Historian V.N. Vsevolozhsky-Gerngross of the Ethnographic Department in the Russian Museum attempted to collect folk dances and songs in Leningrad between 1929-1933. However, Vsevolozhsky-Gerngross insisted on “keeping to the originals as closely as possible,” and employed non professional dancers to perform his findings. This approach disappointed Moiseyev, who felt it did not allow for creativity in ballet choreography and that, while it had to the potential to produce excellent dancers of folk dance, this would not truly represent the “very nature and essence of the folk dance.”\textsuperscript{156} Audiences would not be as enthusiastic about this more academic -- or reconstructionist -- approach to folk dance. If Moiseyev or other Soviet artists wanted to increase interest in Soviet dance, they needed to fashion more accessible dances with wider appeal.

\textsuperscript{154} Ibid., p. 19.  
\textsuperscript{155} Ibid., p. 18.  
\textsuperscript{156} Sheremetyevskaya, p. 31.
In discussing his creative process, Moiseyev used multiple examples to show how his method improved upon past attempts that used folk material. For instance, he noted that for the Moldavian dance *Zhok* he went to Moldavia and studied the people -- their characteristics, their way of life and their dances. The Moiseyev version of *Arkan*, a Gustul folk dance, achieves the goals outlined above: “since it conveys the national atmosphere, the characters and freedom-loving spirit of the mountaineers.”157 And most importantly, beyond demonstrating the success of this process, the real marker of accomplishment was the audience’s reaction. When Byelorussians viewed a performance of *Bulba*, they immediately knew the dance it referred to and recognized it as a Belarusian folk dance, even though it had been transformed by Moiseyev’s creative process.158

Moiseyev continued to speak of the authenticity of his folk dance creations even while supporting the changes he made to the folk dances. An artist who studied the national character of a people and its dance “can and must apply his talent, his creative imagination to accelerate that complex process [of choreographing the dance].”159 The artist’s creativity “enriched” the dance. Moiseyev did not label himself (nor was he labeled by others in the Soviet Union) as an ethnographer; he did not think his folk dances should be exact copies of the original dance. The new dance creation needed “living qualities, the expressiveness and the character of an art created by the people and by life.”160 Simply copying the dance, or even inserting folk dance material into classical ballet to try to create something worthwhile, would not achieve the goal of constructing a Soviet cultural product that represented the different nationalities of the Soviet

157 Sheremetyevskaya, p. 48.
158 Ibid.
159 Sheremetyevskaya, p. 32.
Union. Instead, the folk material foundation needed to take into account the context of the dance and the people who originated it; from there, the choreographer used his imagination to improve the dance and best represent the national character. Moiseyev fully acknowledged that he changed folk dances, but insisted that his changes improved them; “the final result was a choreographic work of art that, without losing its folk character was immeasurably richer, more romantic and uplifted, than the original as it is danced in everyday life.”

Just as folk dances reflected national character, so too should the costumes. Again, costume designers did not strive simply to reproduce the form of dress. Once this left “its natural surroundings” for the stage, it had to “be altered, in some cases added to, in others simplified.” Costumes also had to take into account the practical needs of the dancers. For example, designers frequently chose lighter fabrics, rather than the original heavy fabrics of the authentic national costume, to facilitate dancers’ movements. In order to ensure visibility of the costumes’ characteristics, lighting, staging and the audience’s perspective were taken into account. This often meant the use of embroidery rather than the original use of appliqués. Changes were made to ensure theatricality. The skirts of the “Russian Quadrille,” for instance, “were made wider with gathered basques and numerous flounces to give the girls the appearance of flowers.”

In its performances, the Moiseyev seldom used scenery, but when it did, it was usually a simple backdrop. Accordingly, the costumes had to provide the “decorative background.” The result was “so rich in the ethnographic features stressing the character of the dance that absence of décor is in no way a handicap.” All together, the dance movements, music and costumes worked together to present a proper image of the national group on stage. To accomplish this,

161 Ibid.
162 Ilupina, p. 4.
163 Ibid., p. 69.
164 Ibid., p. 70.
165 Ibid., p. 69.
the choreographer, composer and costume designer worked closely together in the creation of individual dances and programs.

Moiseyev’s creative process was not without its critics. In his memoirs, published six decades after the first All-Union Festival of Folk Dance, Moiseyev still felt the need to defend his process against one particular ballet critic, Viktor Eving. Moiseyev quoted his response directly: "One of the most popular dances of the inherent qualities is its vitality, cheerful enthusiasm and humor. Denying these qualities in a Russian dance is tantamount to denying them the character of the Russian people." Moiseyev pointed out that Eving accused the Moiseyev dances of caricature, particularly because of the use of humor. However Moiseyev claimed that this once more represented the character and way of life on display. Moiseyev in turn accused Eving of taking far too narrow a view of folk dance. He defended his position as arbiter of Soviet folk dance.

For the most part, Soviet critics embraced Moiseyev’s approach and acknowledged that the ensemble’s dances represented “‘artistic invention’” rather than ethnographic studies or fantasies. Indeed, the fact that every part of the ensemble’s repertoire “bears the hallmark of Moiseyev’s creative genius” did not mean a lack of respect toward the original folk dances or a lack of authenticity in Moiseyev’s own creations. This lack of criticism for Moiseyev’s approach no doubt reflected official policy and the Soviet regime’s support of the Moiseyev Dance Company. When speaking about the company, Moiseyev and Soviet critics utilized vocabulary reflecting korenizatsiia or directly quoting the policy. For instance, the flourishing of

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166 Moiseyev, I Recall, p. 178.
167 Ibid.
168 Ibid., pp. 178-179. (Моисеев, Игорь. Я вспоминаю... Москва: Согласие, 1996, p. 179.)
169 Chudnovsky, pp. 40 & 50.
national dance was a “result of the Lenin-Stalin national policy based on the equality of the peoples making up the Soviet Union, on their close fellowship and collaboration in economic and cultural life,” asserted the critic Vladimir Potapov. Natalia Sheremetyevskaya, a former Moiseyev dancer and chronicler of the company’s history, emphasized how effectively the Moiseyev embraced the Soviet Union’s many nations: “At a concert of the Folk Dance Ensemble of the USSR you sort of travel throughout this multinational country, covering thousands of kilometers from Bashkiria to Moldavia, meeting various national cultures.”  Moiseyev noted the way the nationalities policy and its support of folk dance led to the dissemination of dance among peoples (such as Kazakhs, Kirghiz, and Buryats) who allegedly had not included dance among their cultural expression prior to Soviet rule. It was entirely “Thanks to the Stalinist friendship of the Soviet peoples this change was possible.” These kinds of statements omitted the real history of ballet in many cities prior to the establishment of official Soviet theaters in the late 1920s and 1930s. Instead, these statements reflect the Soviet regime’s desire to demonstrate the benefits of the nationalities policy and how it was advancing and enlightening the different national groups living in the Soviet Union. Moiseyev embraced the nationalities policy and used it to suit his needs and to aid his troupe’s success, even if this meant ignoring a nation’s cultural heritage. Garnering official support and ensuring the Moiseyev’s survival took priority.

Contemporary Views of Folk Dance

171 Sheremetyevskaya, p. 11.
173 Ibid., p. 135.
Igor Moiseyev depicted his creative process and his approach to folk material as innovative and that it brought achievement in folk dance to the next level in order to best represent Soviet culture and society. However, this did not account for international interest in folk dance and, in some instances, a previously established view of folk dance and how it could be used. In order to demonstrate international interest in folk dance development at this time, it is useful to examine in brief works published in two Western states the Moiseyev later toured as part of cultural diplomacy during the Moiseyev’s formation and early establishment (the mid-1930s to the late 1940s). In July of 1935, London hosted the International Folk Dance Festival with representative folk dance performers from across Europe and including the Soviet Union. Violet Alford and Rodney Gallop compared the dances on display during the festival in *The Traditional Dance* (1935) and noted the staying power and ubiquity of folk dance across the continent.\(^{174}\) They noted that the “spectacular” Russian folk dances originally did not contain the high level of virtuosic steps and leaps that Russian folk tradition became associated with but rather, had been changed. The dances changed as the audiences for the dance changed and folk dance was used in Russian ballets. Alford and Gallop noted the earlier use of folk dance in Russian ballet which Moiseyev and Soviet historians chose to gloss over as well as the way in which Russian choreographers and artists changed folk dances to suite the needs of the audience and commercial success.\(^{175}\)

American publications about folk dance created at the same time as the Moiseyev established itself often emphasized the accessibility of folk dances and how anyone could learn how to perform a folk dance. In *Folk Dances for All* (1947), Michael Herman advised his readers that folk dances should be considered a community phenomenon because of how they

\(^{175}\) Ibid., pp. 32-33.
were being performed all over the United States in communal contexts, like clubs, schools and parks. People of all different backgrounds, “Young and old, rich and poor, people of every walk of life, every religion, and every nationality are represented at the usual community folk dance gathering.”

Herman encouraged amateur, recreational folk dancing which he claimed was pervasive in the United States at that time. He argued that at first folk dances were primarily performed in the United States by émigrés representing specific ethnic groups or simply observed at folk festivals, but that interest in folk dancing had increased over recent years. For example, the Folk Festival Council of New York endeavored to increase the presence of folk dance in from 1930 to 1940 and the New York World’s Fair and Golden Gate Expositions in California (1940) invited attendees to try folk dances. These actions led to the formation of numerous folk dance clubs across the country. New York City had 10,000 registered folk dancers by 1945 and northern California reported 5,000 registered dancers, not to mention the numerous folk dancers living between the two coasts.

According to Herman, Americans learned that they could perform the dances of different ethnic or national groups; “one didn’t have to be Swedish to enjoy doing the Hambo, or Russian to enjoy the Troika.” Indeed, “lay people” represented the majority of folk dancing activities rather than national groups. Herman shared the view put forth by Moiseyev; that by performing another national group’s folk dance, one celebrated the “cultural heritage” of that group. Performing the folk dance served as way of “painlessly educating” people about the national group or country and encouraged friendly relations: “Folk dancing is a recognized instrument for breaking down prejudices and for creating in their place a spirit of good will towards all men.”

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177 Ibid., pp. vii-viii.
178 Ibid., viii.
179 Ibid., viii.
Herman encouraged active participation of “lay people” in folk dance; not simply as observers of highly trained professional groups like the Moiseyev. Herman was not even encouraging just amateur folk dance groups but instead, communal folk dancing for its recreational and educational purposes.

Another text addressing how to learn folk dance, *The Teaching of Folk Dance* (1948), defined folk dance as “the traditional dances of a given country which have evolved naturally and spontaneously in conjunction with the everyday activities and experiences of the peoples who developed them.” Folk dance had multiple benefits; for health and fitness, as a recreational activity and as a way to teach cultural values.

*The Teaching of Folk Dance* encouraged the study of folk dance in a similar way to Moiseyev’s approach. Study of the folk dances of many countries will facilitate a comparison of movement patterns and will provide clues to differences in temperament and to points of view on the part of the peoples of these countries’ subtle differences among groups in the performance of the same step patterns and traditional dance forms may be observed.” Part of learning a folk dance invariably involved learning about the history of the dance itself and the people who created it. Like Moiseyev noted, folk dance needed to be studied in conjunction with folk music and authentic folk costumes. Folk dances reflected the geography of a nation and historical events, both of which influenced a national group’s character and were expressed through dance. Thus, by learning folk dance, one also learned to appreciate other national groups and an ability to relate to other peoples and understand them: “Without doubt, when folk dance is properly taught, the result is a joyful participation in – rather than a slightly amused and

181 Ibid., pp. 25-6.
183 Ibid., pp. 26-7.
condescending tolerance of – the folk dances and customs of fellow citizens of the world.”\textsuperscript{184} Moiseyev’s ideas about the value of folk dance and how to approach folk dance material were not, as he and Soviet historians claimed, unique. Additionally, his use of folk dance, which he intended as a way to represent Soviet identity and culture, was also not an original idea.

\textit{Official Input and Stalin’s Nationalities Policy}

The Moiseyev’s success in attaining official recognition and surviving the shift in nationalities policy was due in large part to Stalin’s personal interest in the group. In his memoirs, Moiseyev described interactions with the NKVD in which he himself feared the worst; that he was to be arrested and possibly sent to the gulag or executed. This never happened, and although Moiseyev occasionally mentioned in passing the arrest of a colleague, he himself continued to work with the Soviet regime unscathed. Moiseyev’s interactions with the NKVD and other government officials revealed the Soviet regime’s increasing interest in Moiseyev and his work. This interest enabled him to found the ensemble and survive changes in policy over the decades.

In 1937, as Moiseyev worked to create the ensemble, he also organized athletic parades in Red Square. In one of these parades, Moiseyev used performers from Belarus, and the performance went so well that the group received an award. Moiseyev himself, though, did not receive an award. Instead, he was summoned to Lubyanka, the NKVD headquarters. Moiseyev noted “I did not expect to come back.” It turned out the NKVD wanted to present him with the award. However, Moiseyev learned he had the recently arrested President of the Committee for Physical Culture of Belarus, Kuznetsov, to thank for it. After being questioned regarding his possible connection with Kuznetsov, Moiseyev was let go. He rejoiced being let off so easily,
and noted that afterward, he “vowed” never to get involved with parades again. However, “fate decreed otherwise.”\textsuperscript{185}

Before the next public parade, Komosol secretary Alexander Kosarev called Moiseyev to ask him to participate once more. Kosarev assuaged Moiseyev’s concerns by explaining that Stalin had enjoyed the Belarusian group’s performance so much that he had asked who directed it. Learning this was Moiseyev, he declared: “‘Let him do it.’” Moiseyev had to agree, despite his earlier vow, “How could I argue with Stalin?”\textsuperscript{186} Moiseyev put together the [routine] “If Tomorrow, War,” utilizing gymnasts with shields forming human pyramids, displays of representatives for the various military branches, racing motorcycles, and space battle scenes. While the Soviet regime labeled Kosarev an enemy of the people and arrested him, Moiseyev was able to escape the purges occurring around him.\textsuperscript{187}

This does not mean, however, that he did not experience his own moments of doubt about his fate, especially as he became more successful. Moiseyev still experienced the atmosphere of fear the purges engendered. As part of his parade organization duties, Moiseyev wanted to support artists and accordingly carefully selected the performers to appear in the parades. In Kislovodsk, where he had gone to see a young ensemble, Moiseyev received a telegram from the new Chairman of the Committee on the Arts, Mikhail Borisovich Khrapchenko (the previous chairman had been arrested), summoning him immediately to Moscow. Moiseyev ignored the summons, sending back a telegram saying he was busy. But upon receiving a second official telegram repeating the summons, Moiseyev got on a train to Moscow.

When the train arrived in Moscow, two KGB officers asked for Moiseyev. The passengers hid, and the soldiers with whom Moiseyev had just been playing whist feigned

\textsuperscript{185} Moiseyev, I Recall, pp. 35-6.
\textsuperscript{186} Ibid., pp. 36-7.
\textsuperscript{187} Ibid. P. 37.
ignorance of him. The KGB officers took his bags and escorted Moiseyev off the train. Moiseyev assumed he was being arrested. Surprisingly, the KGB officers offered to take Moiseyev home before taking him to his official destination. The officers did not ask his address; they knew it already. When Mrs. Moiseyev opened the door and saw the KGB officers, she paled and Moiseyev recalled trying to reassure her, “But how can you have peace of mind at the sight of security officers in your apartment in 1937?” The KGB officers called headquarters and, after Moiseyev spoke with a “friendly voice” on the other end of the line, was allowed to spend the night before heading to prison (though he spent the night awake and pondering his fate).\textsuperscript{188} The next day, Mr. Milstein of the Transportation Department explained that he had used Khrapchenko’s name to get Moiseyev back to Moscow as quickly as possible. After the arrest of NKVD head Nikolai Yezhov, his replacement Lavrentiy Beria had rejected a planned performance for a parade the following month, and Milstein rushed to get Moiseyev to Moscow to help with the last-minute change in plans.

Moiseyev argued he could not prepare something in so little time and felt a performance would surely be a failure. Milstein did his best to be persuasive: “Dear Comrade Moiseyev, if you need one hundred assistants, you will have one hundred assistants. If you ask a hundred thousand dollars, you receive them. But to deny our organization ...”\textsuperscript{189} Moiseyev agreed to think it over for the night, but decided he would not do it. Upon arriving at the Lubyanka prison the following day, however, he entered Milstein’s office to find it full of people. Milstein announced "Comrades, I present to you the chief parade society." Each of the men in the crowded room, which included chief of border troops, KGB department heads, and heads of labor communes, came up to Moiseyev and told him how many athletes they could provide for

\textsuperscript{188} Ibid., pp. 38-9.
\textsuperscript{189} Ibid., 41.
the parade. Moiseyev recognized there was no escape. Milstein ordered everyone present to cooperate with Moiseyev; otherwise they would face “the laws of our secret police discipline.”

Given the time crunch, Moiseyev arranged only two rehearsals and utilized Milstein’s car and personal secretary to deal with the preparations. The government clearly wanted the performance to come off and come off well; Moiseyev recalled that if he needed anything, it “happened as if by magic.” Milstein’s secretary would trail behind Moiseyev throughout his day, write down everything he said, and act upon his instructions. When Moiseyev noted they needed two thousand pairs of athletic shoes, ten minutes later Milstein’s secretary told him they were ordered and would soon arrive. Moiseyev met with Beria, who wanted an update on the preparations. Moiseyev noted the “sharp glance of his eyes hidden behind his glasses with square lenses, and an evil, dark, very tired sallow face. The performance, while it had moments of difficulty, proved a success. Official support for Moiseyev’s parade work aided his folk dance initiative and the creation of his ensemble.

As for the success of the folk ensemble itself, in his memoirs Moiseyev linked it directly to Stalin’s influence. “We quickly gained recognition and for fifty-eight years did not know failure.” In 1938, the ensemble received an invitation to perform at the Kremlin in light of its successful early performances and the fact that it had become a “favorite” of Stalin. At a banquet after a concert, Moiseyev recalled that he suddenly felt a hand on his shoulder and turned to find Stalin beside him. “Well, how are you?” asked Stalin. Moiseyev felt a jolt of excitement from this sudden interest on the part of Uncle Joe. Moiseyev told Stalin he was

190 Ibid.
191 Ibid., pp. 42-43 & 45.
192 Ibid., p. 45.
193 Ibid., pp. 45-6.
disheartened, because the ensemble did not have a proper place to rehearse (they used a stairwell). The following day, First Secretary of the Leningrad Regional Party Committee Aleksandr Shcherbakov met with Moiseyev, showed him a map of Moscow, and asked him to choose the ensemble’s future headquarters. Eventually, the ensemble found a home at Tchaikovsky Concert Hall.\(^{194}\)

This favor notwithstanding, in his later memoirs Moiseyev claimed he felt the need to be cautious in his dealings with Stalin. He avoided Stalin’s inner circle or kept his distance from the leader. Moiseyev noted: “Stalin did not like people who were smarter than him, and to be smarter than him was not too difficult.”\(^{195}\) Accordingly, he cautiously accepted Stalin’s favor (when he offered it) but did not try to take further advantage of it.

Though the ensemble flourished under Stalin’s patronage, Moiseyev criticized the leader, writing in his memoirs: “I am convinced that Stalin distorted the nature of the Russian people, [making them] dwell forever in mistrust and fear. [Stalin] developed methods of herd mentality [and] general panic.”\(^{196}\) Moiseyev furthermore noted that on tours in the eastern part of the Soviet Union and Siberia, he saw first-hand some of the camps of the gulag and even performed at some.\(^{197}\) Certainly Moiseyev did not openly express criticism of Stalin during the latter’s lifetime; he allowed Stalin’s personal interest to advance the ensemble’s goals. It is difficult, given that Moiseyev published his memoirs after the fall of the Soviet Union and long after Stalin’s death, how much these anti-Stalinist sentiments reflect Moiseyev’s feelings while Stalin still lived. Certainly Moiseyev had to make compromises, even if he did not like Stalin or feel that Stalin was doing the right thing for the Soviet people. Moiseyev acknowledged Stalin’s

\(^{194}\) Ibid., pp. 47-8.
\(^{195}\) Ibid., p. 48.
\(^{196}\) Ibid.
\(^{197}\) Ibid., p. 50.
favoritism and used this to develop his ensemble. This meant cooperating with Stalin’s vision of Soviet culture and the Soviet regime’s use of the ensemble as propaganda that did not reflect the reality of how the Soviet regime treated nationalities, with persecution and with placing the Russian ethnicity at the top of the nationalities hierarchy.

Moiseyev and Soviet writers claimed Moiseyev’s work enabled the development of dance in places where folk dance was either little developed or was in danger of being forgotten, such as Belarus and Middle Asia, which reflected Soviet nationalities policy as discussed above. For instance, histories asserted that the folk dances of the Caucasus and Central Asia utilized distinctive steps and roles for female and male dancers because of the region’s pre-revolutionary past, during which women living in these areas experienced a “segregated life and enjoyed few rights.” This reflection of the past also demonstrated the Soviet Union’s positive influence -- now women danced with the men just as they now experienced liberation due to Soviet rule. Discussing Soviet ballet, Yury Slonimsky pointed out that before Soviet rule, the Mongols and Kirghiz “had never danced at all owing to their nomadic way of life and to religious taboos.” Even nationalities with a rich dance history did not always preserve their dances as now, condescendingly, the Moiseyev did for them. Soviet histories claimed that Armenians and Georgians, for example, were banned from professional dancing. The Moiseyev now highlighted and performed the dances of these national groups on a professional level. However, with Soviet rule, folk dance troupes and national ballet spread throughout the USSR and often utilized the Moiseyev as a model. Historians claimed that national dances in the Soviet Union held “a place of special eminence” among national cultures -- but sometimes

199 Chudnovsky, pp. 33-34.
201 Ibid., pp. 152-153.
needed Soviet help. Soviet choreographers worked to study and revive “long-forgotten” national dances and proved able to successfully “reclaim” them from possible extinction. Because of these endeavors, every republic held dance festivals and created their own dance ensembles, sometimes modeled after the Moiseyev.  

According to Moiseyev and the Soviet regime, the 1917 Revolution and Soviet rule developed folk choreography and exposed Soviet peoples to folk dance. The Soviet regime claimed it supported folk dance in a way the past imperial Russian rule had not; it gave folk dance a proper role in Soviet society and recognized folk dance as a worthy artistic expression. In its endeavor to develop Soviet art, folk dance benefited and became a more treasured part of Soviet culture. This emphasis on folk dance made sense since the “younger generation of Soviet citizens, belonging to many nationalities, has a passionate and vivid feeling for life and can love and hate; there is no doubt that it can express its dreams and delights, its love and its friendship through the language of the classical dance.”  

The new generation needed an earthy, realistic, new dance form as cultural expression and folk dance was the suitable choice. 

The Soviet regime’s claim to have discovered and developed the role of folklore in truly emotionally expressive dance completely ignored the very real history of folk or national dance in Russian and European ballet established in the nineteenth century during the romantic period. The nineteenth century romantic period marked an avid interest in nationalism and folk material in philosophy and the arts. Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1893) traced the source of nationalism to the folk of a nation. As part of the romantic movement, he believed that the “collective consciousness of a nation resided in its religion, language, and folk traditions, and

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202 Slonimsky, p. 5.  
203 Ibid., p. 136.  
205 Ibid., p. 18.
that to honor these home-bred forms of cultural expression was far more desirable, more natural, and more fundamentally human than to embrace the mechanical, artificial ideology of the so-called Enlightenment.”

Folklore as nationalism’s source also reflected romanticism’s privileging of emotional expression over reason.

More recent scholars highlight the role of national dance in the nineteenth century. Ballet scholarship addressing the time period often neglects the role of national or character dance and vice versa. Its presence is undeniable; it served as part of a regular performance repertoire and formed major parts of operas and ballets themselves in Europe. Indeed, a soloist ballet dancer would also know and perform national dances regularly as part of the known dance repertoire.

Artists used folk dance as an important part of the overall work, often in the form of ballet-pantomimes when national dance appeared in narrative ballet. National dance established the context and landscape of a ballet and could highlight the characteristics of a narrative ballet’s characters (especially as main characters often represented a certain ethnicity or nationality). On a non-professional level, Europe experienced a “veritable national-dance craze” in the social context in the 1830s and 1840s.

Inherent in the usage of folk material was the question of authenticity. Corresponding to the interest in folk dances was a healthy interest in “authenticity” in the use of folk source material. Writers like Carlo Blasis focused on folk dance and encouraged further study of these dances and discussed how artists could create “authentic” dances. In Dances in General, Ballet

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207 Ibid., pp. 26-27.
208 Ibid., pp. 51-52.
Celebrities, and National Dances (published in Moscow in 1864), explained how national dance should be performed according to the original folk source:

The mechanism by which dances are created is a result of the very essence and nature of the human being. And, thus, the musicians and choreographer must study the vast array of national music and dances and through their work must make visible those mutual relationships that exist between songs and dances.  

However, though study was required to best represent national dances, changes were necessary before the dance could be performed to the entertainment public. Thus, despite an expressed desire to be “authentic,” choreographers of national dance by no means had to simply recreate the original folk dance on stage. Instead, just as Moiseyev justified himself, choreographers needed to distill the essential aspects of a national dance and a national character.

Choreographers of the nineteenth century studied national groups as Blasis described above. For instance, Marius Petipa, in choreographing a dance for the opera Russlan and Ludmilla, communicated with Caucasian soldiers to learn about their folk dances before attempting to choreograph one himself. Moiseyev and Soviet writers’ ideas about national dance and authenticity were not new; Moiseyev did not reinvent dance in the way he claimed but instead drew on the long history of this kind of approach to folk material and its possibilities.

The Search for Soviet Culture

Once the Bolshevik regime was established, artists and officials endeavored to figure out how cultural production should develop to reflect the social and political changes of the 1917 Revolution. In general, the Soviet regime promoted a proletarian culture and attempted to eradicate elements of bourgeoisie cultural expression. This initiative entailed selecting what aspects of folk and popular culture should be used in proletarian arts and which should be

211 Ibid., pp. 31-32.
212 Ibid., pp. 34-35.
rejected. It was perhaps easier to choose what to reject -- the elitist culture of the past and its visible icons – rather than to easily label what exactly proletarian culture looked like.  

Cultural production in the 1920s represented a period of experimentation and one in which modernism and the avant garde flourished.

However, in the 1930s the Soviet cultural policy and Soviet cultural production drastically changed under Stalin. He had a particular interest in the arts and wished to encourage the flourishing of Soviet art, but a Soviet art which reflected his own vision. He took a personal hand in guiding the direction of the arts and through his changes, largely cut off the lively experimentation of the 1920s in which avant garde production thrived. Decisions about culture were made at the highest level of government under Stalin: “In the thirties, when the Politburo divided up stewardship of the various branches of the government, that busy head of state [Stalin] took the area of culture for himself.”

Thus Stalin made major decisions in culture and what direction cultural expression should take but also the more minute, mundane decisions such as who should be the editor of a journal, who should be a journal’s department head and employees’ salaries.

Stalin faced the same issue of how Soviet culture should be defined and what precisely Soviet cultural products should look like. Certainly he too desired to represent a proletarian culture, but he felt the modernist trend of the 1920s did not accomplish this. He furthermore face the fact that the Soviet Union still had a largely peasant population rather than a proletarian

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215 Ibid.
one. As part of the First Five Year Plan (1928-32), the Soviet regime employed the term “cultural revolution,” which entailed a “political confrontation of ‘proletarian’ Communists and the ‘bourgeois’ intelligentsia, in which the Communist sought to overthrow the cultural authorities inherited from the old regime” through the use of class war. The class war would result in the promotion of the proletariat into better work and political positions, but also educational and cultural positions, which would create a new intelligentsia representative of the proletarian class.

However Stalin’s changes in Soviet art reflected the contradictory changes he made in Soviet society. Stalin “reintroduced values of authority, hierarchy, competence, disciplines within the family, the school, the factory and society; when it reestablished uniforms, epaulettes, exams and stripes.” He essentially recreated a bourgeois elite that was dependent upon him for favors and promotion. Stalin encouraged a similar move away from the avant garde and modernist approaches in art in the 1920s and instead adopted a view that art should be more accessible and realist and traditional in nature.

Stalin’s influence in the arts forced artists to create under the strictures of socialist realism with the threat of public censure, arrest, imprisonment or execution if the work created did not conform to the regime’s guidelines. Socialist realist art called on artists to depict the worker and his life teleologically, to create works accessible to the masses and realist in style, and to depict the Soviet regime in a positive manner. Beginning with the Congress of the Union

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218 Ibid., p. 118. It should be noted that there were certainly other motivations behind Stalin’s actions, including consolidating his own power and getting rid of dissent and opposition, as well as decreasing the power of the bureaucracy.
of Soviet Writers in 1934, Stalin, Maxim Gorky, Nikolai Bukharin and Andrei Zhdanov identified socialist realism as the best way for cultural expression to reflect the changes in society wrought by the Revolution. The Congress explained that socialist realism “demands from the artist a truthful, historically concrete depiction of reality in its revolutionary development. At the same time, the truthfulness and historical concreteness of the artistic depiction of reality must coexist with the goal of ideological change and education of the workers in the spirit of socialism.”

Socialist realism furthermore meant ridding Soviet art of western influences and of “formalism,” any art that was complex and difficult for the masses to understand.

Consequently, Soviet artists across disciplines endeavored to incorporate socialist realism into their works based on the Congress’s debates and conclusions. Gorky entreated Soviet artists to look to the people as inspiration for Soviet art and also eschew the modernism popular in the 1920s. He even pointed to the use of religious images created by workers as models, as they “are simply artistic creations, devoid of mysticism; they are essentially realistic and true to reality. They clearly reveal the influence of the daily toil of their creators; in fact this art aims at stimulating their activity.”

The regime furthermore consolidated its ability to influence cultural expression through the establishment of the Committee on Arts Affairs in December of 1935, which centralized cultural organizations by getting rid of established organizations. The regime claimed that the current cultural organizations’ framework had become “too narrow” and that in “these

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220 Volkov, p. 16.
221 Ibid., p. 92.
organizations will transform from being a means of the greatest possible mobilization of [truly] Soviet writers and artists around the tasks of socialist construction into a means for cultivating exclusive circles, for detachment [sometimes] from the political tasks of the modern day and from significant groups of writers and artists who sympathize with socialist construction [and are ready to support it].”\textsuperscript{224} For instance, in the literary field, with the 1935 resolution the regime abolished the Association of Proletarian Writers so that all writers could be united into the one Union of Soviet Writers.\textsuperscript{225} Similar changes and unions were formed in the other cultural areas.

At first, artists may not have realized the repercussions of socialist realism established as the goal of all Soviet art. Socialist realism meant limitations in cultural expression and the potential for persecution based on a creative work. At the same time, the definition of socialist realism and the definition of formalist or unacceptable art were not always entirely clear and often changed. Artists who lived under Stalin’s regime had to tread carefully when creating a work of art and this could entail continually remaking themselves and their artistic works in order to avoid the consequences of eschewing socialist realism.\textsuperscript{226}

The \textit{Industry of Socialism}, the first All Union exhibition, serves as a brief example of the uncertainty and tension present in cultural production this time period. Plans for the exhibition began in 1935, a year after socialist realism became the rule of the day with the Congress of Soviet Writers. Accordingly, the exhibition was an important moment in which socialist realism could be defined and characterized as an example for future Soviet artistic endeavors.\textsuperscript{227} In “Socialist Realism in the Stalinist Terror: The \textit{Industry of Socialism} Art Exhibition, 1935-41,” Susan E. Reid notes the ongoing debate and changes with regard to the execution of a socialist

\textsuperscript{224} Ibid., p. 152.
\textsuperscript{225} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{226} Volokov, p. 86.
realist work: “the contingency of Socialist Realism upon political and artistic power relations at different historical moments. Contest between different artistic factions struggling for dominance within the art world, as well as among the Stalinist bureaucracies that patronized and controlled art, Socialist Realism never achieved a stable, concrete ontology.”

Organized by the commissar for heavy industry Sergo Ordzhonikidze, figuring out what kind of art should be created and displayed proved tricky. He and the artists involved had difficulty in putting together a worthy exhibition of paintings reflecting socialist realism as the definition of the concept proved unclear and as artists and intellectuals suffered persecutions by the Soviet regime in this time period. Hiccups and obstacles along the way lead to an increasing number of delays but the exhibition finally opened in November 1937. However, it did not open to the public until 18 March 1939 because so many of the participating artists were targeted in Stalin’s Great Terror. The socialist realist paintings on display included Vladimir Pchelin’s wall-sized *Stalin at the VIII All-Union Congress of Soviets* and Arkadii Plastov’s *Collective Farm Festival*, featuring peasants gathered around food and looking up at a portrait of a smiling Stalin. In the end, after all the effort, the exhibition lacked popularity and attendance was meager; the exhibition, though it helped establish socialist realism, represented “mediocrity.”

The experience of Dmitri Shostakovich exemplifies the malleable nature of socialist realism and how it impacted Soviet artists. Stalin and the Soviet regime utilized certain vocabulary and phrases to indicate what kind of art conformed to Soviet policy and what did not but how these terms were applied was often confusing and hypocritical. In general, approved socialist realist art was “realistic, traditional, and optimistic, and took its inspiration from folk

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228 Ibid., p. 154.
229 Ibid., pp. 168-172.
art.”231 In contrast, the dreaded “formalism” was any art that could be considered Western, modern and pessimistic.232

In the 1930s, Shostakovich at first enjoyed widespread recognition of his ability to create Soviet art followed by a quick reversal and consequent condemnation. His opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk District*, premiered on 22 January 1934 in Leningrad (and in Moscow two days later) and received positive critical, political and popular reception. In terms of the Soviet regime, the opera appealed officials across the Soviet political spectrum including high officials. Additionally, the fifty performances in Leningrad alone over the following year demonstrated the opera’s excellent popular reception. There was every indication that *Lady Macbeth* could become a standard for Soviet art. Gorky and Bukharin, two of the minds behind socialist realism, loved the opera. They felt “Here was an outstanding work by a young Soviet composer based on the Russian classics…innovative and emotionally captivating, highly esteemed by the elite but accessible to a wide audience, recognized in Moscow and abroad.”233 The opera was a good example of Soviet art and enjoy a similarly positive reception abroad.

At the same time, Shostakovich earned recognition and success for his comic ballet *The Limpid Stream*. In 1935, *Lady Macbeth* was performed at the Bolshoi Theater Annex and, at the same time, the Bolshoi also premiered *The Limpid Stream*. However, when Stalin saw *Lady Macbeth* at the Bolshoi Theater Annex on 26 January 1936, the official view of the opera changed drastically. Two days after Stalin’s attendance, *Pravda* censured the opera in the article “Muddle Instead of Music.” The article asserted that the music of the opera was formalistic and “muddled.”234 Public condemnation of *Limpid Stream* in a *Pravda* article soon followed in

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231 Fitzpatrick, p. 198.
232 Ibid.
234 Ibid., pp. 102-03.
February, with the Soviet regime claiming that both pieces did not represent Soviet culture or the Soviet people.\(^{235}\) Though *Limpid Stream* took place on a collective farm in southern Russia, it did not represent peasant life in a realistic manner; “its characters were puppet-like.”\(^{236}\) Shostakovich furthermore had failed to properly study folk music and folk dance and thus the resulting ballet did not represent the ideal of socialist realism.

The potential repercussions for this kind of public censure were dire and Shostakovich endeavored to fix the situation. In a report to Stalin after the “Muddle Instead of Music” article, Chairman of the Committee on Arts Affairs Platon Kerzhenstev related how he met with Shostakovich. Shostakovich told Kerzhenstev that he wanted to make the necessary changes to his music in order to conform to Stalin’s views. Kerzhenstev advised him to eradicate all formalism in his music, and this included dissociating from critics who might encourage or praise it and to avoid Western influences. Kerzhenstev furthermore advised him to “travel through the villages of the Soviet Union and record the folk songs of Russia, the Ukraine, Belorussia, and Georgia and from them select and harmonize the hundred best songs.”\(^{237}\) Shostakovich reportedly readily agreed to this advice. Though Shostakovich made these promises, it did not change the fact that both his works were banned. He himself was “ostracized as part of a large-scale campaign against ‘formalism’ in Soviet art. Many of his friends deserted him. He feared for his life, the future of his works, and the fate of his family.”\(^ {238}\)

The above experience was not limited to Shostakovich alone not to only the artists themselves. Lyubov Vasilievna Shaporina, wife of the composer Yury Shaporin, who would

\(^{235}\) Ibid., p. 109.

\(^{236}\) Fitzpatrick, p. 198.


\(^{238}\) Volkov, p. 23.
have traveled in the same social circles as Shostakovich and left a diary behind from this time period described the atmosphere in the Soviet Union. In her diary she recounts which of her friends were arrested and the pervasive fear caused by arrests during the night, disappearances, camps, exile and executions:

The nausea rises to my throat when I hear how calmly people can say it: He was shot, someone else was shot, shot, shot. The word is always in the air; it resonates through the air. People pronounce the words completely calmly, as though they were saying, 'He went to the theater.' I think that the real meaning of the word doesn't reach our consciousness-- all we hear is the sound. We don't have a mental image of those people actually dying under the bullets.  

From her apartment, she could hear the shots indicating executions being carried out at Peter and Paul fortress. Shaporina noted how she, and others around her, had to carry on and not let such events drive them insane; upon hearing the shots they had to go back to sleep and wake up to live the next day. Shaporina diary demonstrates how Moiseyev no doubt justified his own actions and his use of an extremely idealized view of the Soviet Union while atrocities and abuses took place.

The Search for Soviet Dance

In terms of the area of dance, the above changes in style and approach were similarly applied. During the earlier part of the Soviet regime, the issue of the Bolshoi and more generally, classical ballet’s role in the new communist society arose. Lenin initially endeavored just to leave the Bolshoi a skeleton crew “so that their performances (both operas and dancing) can pay for themselves, i.e., eliminate any major expenses for sets and such.” Especially, as “From the

240 Ibid., p. 353.
billion saved in this way, to spend at least half to wipe out illiteracy and for reading rooms.”

However, the People’s Commissar of Education Anatoly Lunacharsky argued that the Bolshoi was important because it was internationally recognized and that if shut down, it would appear to demonstrate the new regime’s “lack of culture.” On a more practical note, Lunacharsky pointed out that the Bolshoi employed many workers who would, if the Bolshoi shut down, have the right to sue for breach of contract and “we will have taken a crust of bread away from one and a half thousand people and their families, and several dozen children might die of hunger. That is what shutting down the Bolshoi Theater actually means.”

Though Lenin was not entirely impressed with Lunacharsky’s reasoning, after several more of his appeals, the Bolshoi remained open.

In addition to marking the continued existence of the Bolshoi and classical ballet, the 1920s Soviet dance scene was characterized by experimentation. Just as “new means of expression were being born in literature, drama, and film, forms of dance theater also appeared that were previously unknown,” such as the dance symphony which endeavored to interweave dance and music further. While at first the regime looked upon this kind of modernism and experimentation in dance with approval for its ability to eradicate symbols of the old tsarist culture, once the regime became more established there was a shift in the view of dance in Soviet culture. By the late 1920s, the regime, through actions like the 1925 resolution “Concerning the Policy of the Party in the Realm of Literature,” noted the need for accessibility in art. This in

243 Ibid.
turn led to a strong emphasis on realism in art in the late 1920s onward. Soviet choreographers had to react to socialist realism and Stalinism in culture in the same way other artists did.

Moscow’s Island of Dance company’s trajectory followed the path of Soviet culture on a larger scale. The company’s venue, located in Gorky Central Park of Culture and Recreation, opened in 1928 and featured many different kinds of performances. While the Island of Dance, and Gorky Park at large, featured avant garde performance in the 1920s, this changed with the 1930s and the promulgation of socialist realism. For instance, by the mid-1930s, “all tendencies in dance except classical ballet and folk idioms were ‘outside the law.’”

Correspondingly, the Island of Dance featured a program of Dance of the Soviet Peoples in 1936, in contrast to its earlier use of experimental ballet, the company now focused on the use of folk material and mass dances.

Critic Natalia Roslavleva, contemporary to historians of the Moiseyev examined here, attempted to justify the policy of socialist realism and the fear and strictures imposed on Soviet artists as a result. In discussing the history of Russian ballet, she too described pre-revolutionary ballet as stagnant; it “found itself in a cul-de-sac, and no single person, however talented, could have led the art of ballet, so faithfully served by Russian dancers, out of the situation.” Simply trying to reform it from within would not have worked; it needed a different kind of push for change, which came in the form of the 1917 Revolution and the change of the “very purpose of art.”

The makeup of the audience for dance changed -- it was no longer a recreational activity...

245 Ibid., pp. 319-320.
247 Ibid., p. 21.
248 Ibid., pp. 42 & 63.
250 Ibid.
for the bourgeoisie or noble classes – and the dances needed to reflect this change.\textsuperscript{251} Roslavleva claimed that \textit{The Red Poppy} (1927), a successful ballet with revolutionary themes discussed below, not Stalin, Gorky or others who took part in forming socialist realism, “put an end to formalistic trends in ballet for the simple reason that its success was greater than anything that could be produced by opponents of the classical school.”\textsuperscript{252} This statement completely disregards the forced end to “formalism” imposed by the Soviet regime with socialist realism. Rather, Roslavleva proposed that choreographers and dancers simply felt the best way to reflect the changes in society was to move away from formalism and take on more serious subjects, tied to human emotions.\textsuperscript{253} The only question remained, “Where could the authors of future ballets find the best source of such subject-matter?”\textsuperscript{254} She claimed choreographers and artists turned to classical literature and the 1934 Congress of Union Soviet Writers to answer this question.

The role of folklore in Soviet culture in the 1930s is of particular importance to how the Moiseyev’s origins and its continued success should be viewed. “Soviet patriotism” became the focus guiding art during the Great Purge and Socialist Realism: “It became an official requirement that a Socialist Realist work exemplify \textit{narodnost’} in all its meanings, having to do with ‘popular,’ ‘folk,’ ‘of the common man,’ ‘people’s,’ ‘national,’ and ‘state.’”\textsuperscript{255} Expeditions around the USSR to study folk material reflected this emphasis in Soviet art.\textsuperscript{256} The use of folklore furthermore involved the creation of new heroes like Stakhanovites and new elements, like tractors and airplanes, to be featured in newly inspired folk art, creating a kind of “hybrid compound” of original folk material and contemporary context.\textsuperscript{257} However, at the same time it

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{251} Ibid., p. 192.
\item \textsuperscript{252} Ibid., p. 217.
\item \textsuperscript{253} Ibid., pp. 219 & 296.
\item \textsuperscript{254} Ibid., p. 296.
\item \textsuperscript{255} Clark, p. 260.
\item \textsuperscript{256} Robin, p. 28.
\item \textsuperscript{257} Robin, p. 31.
\end{itemize}
should be noted that the interest in folklore was nothing new but was a long-established tradition: “Using folk art and popular art as the basis of cultural revival seems inevitable and natural, part of a basic cultural pattern.”\textsuperscript{258}

The socialist realism emphasis on the sacredness of folklore as a source of the true expression of Soviet culture expressed itself in numerous ways. For instance, librettist Demian Bedny was criticized for his depiction of \textit{bogatyrs} (legendary knights) in the opera \textit{The Bogatyrs} came under scrutiny. Because Bedny mocked and caricaturized the \textit{bogatyrs}, his depiction did not fit in with the recent emphasis on respecting and celebrating folklore; “his libretto was seen as a defamation of a newly revered tradition and potentially also of the leadership itself (he had wrongly assumed that one could mock the Russian past in 1936 as he had in 1919 and even 1929).”\textsuperscript{259} Bedny poked fun at the \textit{bogatyrs}, which the regime condemned because “in the national imagination the most important \textit{bogatyrs} are the bearers of the heroic characteristics of the Russian people.”\textsuperscript{260} As a result, the opera was banned and in 1938, Bedny was expelled from the Writers Union.\textsuperscript{261}

Contemporary historians of the Stalin period claimed ballet was one area in which artists struggled to represent Soviet art, despite the recent ballet past of healthy experimentation and numerous new works being created in the 1920s. Moiseyev recalled that under the Soviet regime and the guidance of the Central Committee, “there was a clear discipline: what was allowed and what is not.”\textsuperscript{262} This, of course, was not true; Soviet artists struggled to conform to the ever-

changing nature of socialist realism and approved cultural expression. With the mixed messages of freedom of expression and cultural expression strictures, Soviet choreographers struggled with how to represent contemporary life in the Soviet Union through dance. Soviet artists across disciplines tried to represent contemporary life -- and artists in other disciplines achieved this goal. However, despite a desire on the part of ballet artists in the Soviet Union to similarly represent contemporary life, success in this endeavor proved elusive. Moiseyev blamed this obstacle to successful, worthy Soviet ballets on the “specific qualities of ballet art.”

Choreographers struggled with the development of a realistic, organic way of expressing Soviet life through ballet.

Folk dance was a potential answer to the issue of creating specifically “Soviet” ballet, and it furthermore reflected the contemporary nationalities policy. Indeed, Gorky told Soviet writers to look to folklore as inspiration as it would better reflect contemporary life and form the basis of socialist realist expression:

“I again call your attention, comrades, to the fact that folklore, i.e. the unwritten compositions of toiling man, has created the most profound, vivid and artistically perfect types of heroes, the perfection of such figures as Hercules, Prometheus, Mikula Selyaninovitch, Svyatogor, of such types as Doctor Faustus, Vassilisa the Wise, the ironical Ivan the Simple and finally Petrushka, who defeats doctors, priests, policemen, the devil and death itself.”

Since the Soviet Union was a “multi-national state,” its culture and therefore Soviet ballet should reflect this. Folk dance could represent this multi-national state: “The dances of each nationality produce their own peculiar impressions. As we look at them, we are, as it were, being initiated into the customs and ways of living of the peoples of the Soviet [sic] republics and

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263 Sheremetyevskaya, p. 30.
264 Ibid.
265 Robin, p. 28.
266 Potapov, p. 147.
we begin to fathom the thoughts, feelings and actions of these peoples.”267 Folk dance could potentially increase understanding among the Soviet nationalities and aid the development of national cultures.

A History of Russian Dance Which Highlighted Folk Dance

Labeling folk dance as the answer for the development of Soviet ballet also meant tweaking Russian/Soviet dance history to suit. Historians claimed dance held a special place in Russian history and identity; that “The dance has always been an inalienable part of Russian life.”268 This history began with the folk dance of the ancient Slavs but later, especially during the eighteenth century, the upper class in Russia moved away from folk dance and preferred foreign ballroom dance.269 The upper class frowned upon folk dance as inferior and did not do anything to develop the genre.270 Even as high society neglected folk dance, Russian folk dance lived on in the lower classes of Russian society.271

The history of dance in Russia changed drastically with the establishment of the first ballet school in 1738. Soviet critics and historians chose to emphasize the appeal of ballet among the noble and bourgeois classes and how Russian ballet became stagnant. Soviet culture needed to disassociate itself from bourgeois Russian culture and accordingly Soviet authors criticized traditional Russian ballet and praised folk dance as far more worthy to represent Soviet culture. Classical ballet grew to dominate the dance scene, but it did not develop and change to reflect changes among the people. Rather, classical ballet “clung to aristocratic and esoteric traditions. Its audiences in powdered wigs and crinolines, in skin-tight hose, elegant frock-coats

267 Ibid.
268 Sheremetyevskaya, p. 19.
269 Ibid., p. 20.
270 Chudnovsky, p. 8.
271 Sheremetyevskaya, p. 20.
and Empire gowns found the traditional ballet very much to their taste with its dryads and nymphs, and demure shepherdesses and peasant girls who bore not the remotest resemblance to their counterparts in real life.” Soviet critics labeled pre-revolutionary ballet as stagnant in contrast to the lively folk dance of the lower classes.

The nature of the folk dance, as well as the nature of those who practiced it, represented a divide within Russian society. Classical ballet and the upper classes were stiff and lacked emotional expression while folk dance and the lower classes showed emotion, color and creativity. Soviet critics could not completely ignore the influence of folk dance historically. Rather, they claimed pre-revolutionary classical ballet tried, sometimes, to use folk dance but failed to produce works that reflected the original folk source.

In the early part of the twentieth century, Russian classical ballet became increasingly well known internationally under the guidance of choreographers like Mikhail Fokine and impresario Serge Diaghilev. The Russian ballet toured Western Europe and grew to dominate the world classical ballet scene. Though some modern choreographers like Fokine and Vaslav Nijinksy utilized folk material, Soviet histories claimed that these choreographers focused too much on demonstrating the excellence of skill through performance rather than the process of creating a worthy folk dance. Their corresponding compositions did not use an effective creative process and did not properly evaluate and use folk source material. These choreographers and others contributed to an atmosphere of liberalism in art, but their artistic products did not succeed in utilizing folk dance in a successful manner. Classical ballet remained “aloof” and apart from folk dance due to a stubborn clinging to tradition, especially by theater management.273

272 Chudnovsky, p. 8.
273 Ibid., pp. 9 & 11.
This perspective very much ignored the contribution men like Diaghilev and Fokine made to Russian ballet and to the twentieth century ballet scene on an international scale. Diaghilev served as the impresario for ballets today which are labeled as modern classics, including *The Firebird* (1910), *Les Sylphides* (1909) and *Petrouchka* (1911) and founded the renown Ballets Russes. He helped to increase the prestige and recognition of the choreographer’s role in a production and worked with choreographers like Nijinsky and Fokine, as well as composers like Sergei Prokofiev, Claude Debussy, Igor Stravinsky and Maurice Ravel. Diaghilev enhanced the position of ballet in the United States with the Ballets Russes’ American tours.\(^{274}\) Michel Fokine’s works “include some of the most famous ballets in history, and certainly some of the most significant of the early twentieth century.”\(^ {275}\) Fokine revitalized ballet and created new dance forms, though Moiseyev and Soviet historians chose to gloss over Fokine’s numerous achievements and what he accomplished in terms of the use of national dance and other dance elements. Indeed, he worked against stagnation and certainly did not conform to the Soviet description of what ballets were like prior to the Soviet time period.\(^ {276}\)

Though Moiseyev in passing acknowledged the influence of Fokine and others who came before him, he maintains a claim to originality in his approach to material and to his dance creations. However, Moiseyev neglected or chose to ignore the way he very much imitated the other Russian artists’ ideas. Moiseyev’s conception of a total work of art that carefully considered all aspects of performance to create an organic final product was nothing new; for instance, Diaghilev was noted for guiding modern ballet to create a piece that was a “fusion of

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\(^{276}\) Ibid.
art, music, and dance.” Moiseyev claimed Fokine focused too much on dance steps and precise execution but this completely disregards Fokine actual goals in his works. Fokine endeavored to make reforms in classical ballet (in the same way Moiseyev claimed to) and was a “champion of expressivity over pure dance.” Like Moiseyev, Fokine found this expressiveness in national dance. Indeed, Moiseyev’s claims for his creative process ignored the fact that Moiseyev continued an established tradition of the use of national dance and the notion of national dance’s expressiveness dating from the nineteenth century. This, once more, largely ignored the rich history of folklore as inspiration for Russian cultural expression.

However, though some choreographers in the 1920s attempted to incorporate folk dance and contemporary life into ballets, later Soviet historians discredit their efforts in order to support endeavors which conformed to socialist realism. These experimental ballets usually featured factory workers and the struggles of the proletariat, but historians claimed they failed in terms of producing worthwhile or popular work. The only ballet that had any kind of success as a Soviet ballet was Reinhold Glière’s *The Red Poppy* (1927) choreographed by Lev Lashchilin and Vasily Tikhomirov. Any critics or officials who may not have welcomed this experiment in Soviet ballet or doubted its probability for success changed their minds upon viewing *The Red Poppy.* *The Red Poppy* took place at a Chinese port, and told the lover story of a Chinese dancer and a Soviet sea captain, ending with the dancer handing Chinese children “a red poppy as a symbol of struggle.” *The Red Poppy* used folklore as “a source of musical language comprehensible to the listener with a broad taste in music.” The ballet depicted contemporary

279 Sheremetyevskaya, p. 30.
280 Chudnovsky, p. 12.
life and its struggles, with “the people” as the “collective hero.” Glière created an entirely new approach and use of ballet by using contemporary issues, both Soviet and Chinese folklore and a variety of classical choreographic elements: adagio, variations, scenes, character and folk dances, mass or ensemble dances, and large pantomimic formations. The ballet was a huge success and the most popular Soviet ballet of its time – it enjoyed performances across the Soviet Union in the 1930s.

Despite this enormous success and the innovative use of folk dance, Moiseyev and other historians chose to label The Red Poppy as only a step in the right direction, not as a ballet Moiseyev and other choreographers should simply try to imitate in terms of approach and content. They had to make the Moiseyev Dance Company the example of appropriate Soviet art and that meant diminishing the success and role of earlier works that utilized similar ideas and approaches.

Other ballets in a similar vein soon followed, such as Flames of Paris (1932), The Fountain of Bakhchisarai (1934) and The Prisoner of the Caucasus (1938). The new Soviet ballets paired classical ballet with folk dance aspects. Though these experiments represented a step in the right direction, according to Moiseyev, infusing classical ballet with folk material did not best represent new Soviet art. Moiseyev no doubt viewed these other ballets and choreographers as his competitors and by labeling their endeavors as ill-suited to representing Soviet art and their success as an aberration, he solidified the Moiseyev’s own position as the epitome of Soviet dance.

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285 Ibid.
Moiseyev’s use of folk dance conveniently combined the nationalities policy with socialist realism to produce a dance form that broke with Russian ballet tradition and could be described as representing contemporary Soviet life. With Moiseyev’s insistence on a creatively new approach to ballet, his work represented headway in the development of Soviet art for ballet. The Moiseyev claimed it successfully incorporated emotional expression into dance to replace the aloofness of Russian classical ballet and expanded the “language” of dance to better depict contemporary life and the changes Soviet rule wrought. While Moiseyev did not try to break entirely away from classical ballet, he recognized that art had to change as life changed. Only Moiseyev was able to “find the essential, the most vivid choreographic means and images to express the national character, the emotions and thoughts of a given nationality, and then to remould these means to attain an even greater expressiveness…” According to Moiseyev and his contemporaries, the State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble of the USSR represented the solution to the problem of Soviet ballet; the culmination of post-Soviet dance experimentation and previous dance traditions.

*Early Recognition of the Moiseyev and Tours of the USSR*

After “winning the hearts” of the Moscow public, the company began to tour domestically. The first stop was Leningrad, the cradle of the 1917 Revolution and a city whose population was known for its artistic taste. The Moiseyev passed the test of Leningrad “with flying colours. The house shook with applause and demands for encores. Newspaper reviewers said the company was responsible for the rebirth of folk art and hailed it as a great popularizer of

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286 Chudnovsky, p. 21.  
287 Chudnovsky, pp. 74-75.
that art.” 288 The Moiseyev encountered diverse audiences and venues on its tours, performing in factories and even out-of-doors for workers, farmers, medical professionals and scientists. Staying close to the people was very important for the Moiseyev, given the source of his dance material. The Moiseyev performed not just in large cities like Moscow and Leningrad, but also smaller cities and towns near Moscow and in the Urals. 289

In the summer of 1938 the Moiseyev traveled to the Ukraine and once more met with uproarious success. The company’s tours “enabled it to keep in close touch with the tastes and desires of the ordinary people.” 290 The Moiseyev went to Lvov, Tashkent, Tajikistan and Latvia. The press noted the success of the Moiseyev and its appeal to Soviet audiences. Soviet Lithuania touted that: “The great idea of friendship among all Soviet nationalities has found artistic embodiment in the work of the company.” 291 From 1937-1940, the Moiseyev gave 600 performances in 35 Soviet towns. 292 Beyond seeing national groups in their local habitats, the Moiseyev endeavored to meet with the local dancers and dance groups. The meetings “proved of mutual benefit. The Moiseyev dancers broadened their knowledge of local dancing traditions while local dancers were able to see how great professional mastery and a serious approach to folk art had transformed their dances.” 293

The Test of World War II

World events tested the Moiseyev and its ability to survive. 294 In his memoirs, Moiseyev recalled the suddenness of the war, and the atmosphere of “vigilance, vigilance, vigilance.

288 Ibid., p. 76.
289 Ibid., pp. 76-77.
290 Ibid., p. 76.
291 Ibid., p. 75.
292 Ibid., p.78.
293 Ibid., p. 77.
294 Chudnovsky., p. 78.
Endless arrests, trains with prisoners.295 The ensemble performed throughout the Soviet Union during the war in order to raise morale. They visited hospitals in the Urals and Siberia, as well as spending over four months with the Pacific Fleet.296

When asked later which tour left the greatest impression on him, veteran Moiseyev dancer Mikhail Tarasov spoke of the wartime tour circuit. He noted that the Soviet regime wanted to continue the ensemble’s performances “at all costs.”297 The ensemble traveled for eighteen months straight; the dancers grew closer as a result, but the touring was not easy. Though favored by the Soviet regime, during the war the dancers did not always have enough to eat. They had to wash and look after their costumes and transport all their supplies. These difficulties paled in comparison with the knowledge that almost everyone knew someone fighting at the front. Even as dancers heard of the death of a loved one, the show had to go on: “One of the dancers would get news that her husband, father or brother had been killed, and though her heart was breaking she’d do her dance just the same. The numbers’ off, I’d think she’ll never be able to dance. But dance she would, gulping down her tears, and she’d smile too.”298 The Moiseyev dancers shared this resolve with their audiences; workers who were exhausted and who lacked proper clothing and nourishment “shivered but smiled. They enjoyed our dancing.”299 Tarasov and the other dancers felt they helped soldiers, workers and ordinary people cope:

I understood then how important it is sometimes to give a person a moment of enjoyment, a breathing spell. We knew, of course, that they were hungry and cold, and that they worked terribly long hours for the front, for the people. They were an example to us, and we tried very hard to be worthy of them.300

295 Moiseyev, I Recall, p. 50.
296 Chudnovsky, p. 78.
297 Ilupina, p. 16.
298 Ibid.
299 Ibid.
300 Ibid.
Despite the circumstances, the ensemble celebrated its 1,000th performance and fifth anniversary during the war. By this time the ensemble had increased and diversified its repertoire while maintaining close contact with the life of the different Soviet peoples, which was so important to the ensemble’s goal. Igor Moiseyev solidified the ensemble’s continued existence with the creation of a school for folk dance, which welcomed students from all over the Soviet Union: “These young dancers have learned to bring with them onto the stage the national atmosphere from which their dance originated.”

Travel to Eastern Bloc Countries and Beyond

During, and especially after WWII the Moiseyev traveled farther afield. The ensemble traveled to cities like Kiev, Odessa, Kemerovo and Sverdlosk within the Soviet Union, where they met with ovations. In 1942 the ensemble traveled to the Mongolian People’s Republic and gave seventy-eight performances to enthralled audiences, “to people who live amidst scenery which has retained a strange primordial fascination, who cherish dearly the legends of their ancestors.” The 1945-46 tours to Finland, Romania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Austria and Yugoslavia also proved very successful. In Romania, the ensemble gave twenty-seven performances to over 33,000 people and in Budapest one concert alone had an audience of 100,000. In Czechoslovakia, “The Soviet dancers gladly responded to the eager demands for encores, performances often lasting three and a half hours instead of the prescribed two or two

301 Chudnovsky, p. 78.
302 Sheremetyevskaya, p. 66.
303 Chudnovsky, p. 81.
304 Ibid., pp. 81-84.
and a half. The audiences were so delighted that there would be as many as eighteen or twenty curtain calls.”

As they toured more and more abroad, the ensemble began to incorporate the dances of the countries visited into the repertoire. For instance, during the company’s tour of Romania, the dancers undertook a close study of the Romanian people, their traditions and their art. The dancers went to performances of Romanian groups, listened to their music and watched their dances. In Hungary, they learned new dances directly from Hungarian dancers and achieved cultural exchange between the Soviet Union and Hungary.

By 1959, the Moiseyev’s twenty-second year of existence, it had visited over four hundred Soviet towns and covered more than 160,000 kilometers in territory. Touring increased the company’s international renown and “not only broadened their knowledge of the world but has deepened their understanding of art.” Though Stalin changed his mind about the policy of korenizatsiia (and about his support of nationalities on a more general level) in the latter half of the 1930s, the company successfully weathered the shift in policy.

Other Examples of Folk Dance Ensembles

The Moiseyev was by no means the only folk dance ensemble in the Soviet Union or the only one to visit the United States. For instance, Nikolai Bolotov and Pavel Virsky founded the Ukrainian Folk Dance Company in 1936-7, in the same time period as the Moiseyev, and similarly enjoyed official recognition and the position as a tool of cultural diplomacy.

305 Ibid., p. 83.
306 Ibid., pp. 81-83.
307 Ibid., pp. 79-80.
308 Ibid., p. 81.
troupe came to the United States multiple times, in 1962, 1966 and 1972 with Sol Hurok serving as impresario.\(^{310}\) The troupe made its American premiere in April of 1962, and, like the Moiseyev, toured across the country to great acclaim.\(^{311}\) The American audience enjoyed the performances so much that critic John Martin of *The New York Times* wrote “If Mr. Virsky is aiming at recruiting not only tourists but even settlers for the Ukraine, it must be noted that he is a first-rate propagandist.”\(^{312}\)

However, the Ukrainian Folk Dance Company never achieved the same renown and popularity as the Moiseyev did.\(^{313}\) Even though their visits to the United States were successful, they were viewed with the Moiseyev in mind and the previous experience of the Moiseyev colored American reception of the Ukrainian troupe. Critics explained to Americans that the dancers performed in “the tradition of the Moiseyev company”\(^{314}\) and “the [Ukrainian] company routines may be compared to the Moiseyev Company from Moscow that caused a sensation in their tour of America several years ago.”\(^{315}\) American audiences would be “familiar” with the Ukrainian company's style of performance because of the earlier Moiseyev experience and indeed, the company was “unequalled except by their spiritual cousins, the Moiseyev dancers.”\(^{316}\) When interviewed by American reporters, like Moiseyev, Virsky tied creation and success of dance group to Revolution and Soviet regime. In his discussion, he noted “‘You see, I am doing publicity for Moiseyev!’”\(^{317}\)

The Moiseyev furthermore served as a model for other Soviet national groups’ own state folk dance ensembles and as a model for other state and private folk dance ensembles.

\(^{312}\) John Martin, “Dance: From the Ukraine,” p. 156.
\(^{313}\) Kisselgoff, “Dance: Ukrainian State Company.”
\(^{316}\) John Martin, “Dance from the Ukraine,” p. 156.
\(^{317}\) Ibid.
internationally. According to Anthony Shay, as the Moiseyev began to tour more extensively beginning in the 1950s, waves of the creation of similar groups can be identified. In particular, countries influenced by the Soviet Union during the Cold War demonstrated just how popular the Moiseyev was; for instance by the 1980s seventeen folk ensembles had formed in Bulgaria.\footnote{318} The waves of folk dance ensembles began in Eastern European nations in the early 1950s, with the second wave in the later part of the 1950s in other areas like the Philippines and Mexico, and a final wave of the establishment of ensembles in the 1960s and 1970s in, for instance, Turkey and Iran. Additionally, private folk dance ensembles formed in multiple countries during this time period as well. The United States, which did not have a state sponsored folk dance ensemble, witnessed the creation of private companies instead.\footnote{319} The formation of these kinds of ensembles served as one further way the Cold War was “fought” and the Soviet felt it could claim victory in states which adopted the Soviet approach to folk dance.

As with the Moiseyev, the issue of authenticity became part of folk dance ensembles’ rhetoric. Often these ensembles (including the Moiseyev, as discussed above) claimed to perform “authentic” dances but this did not reflect the reality of how choreographers created their repertoire. Claiming these were authentic dances that drew from contemporary ideas and sources ignored the dances clear use of the established tradition of character or national dance. Furthermore, choreographers modified dances in many ways in order to theatricalize them and make them suitable to the audience.\footnote{320} Many of the modifications were made with commercial and critical success in mind; even the use of a suite of dances reflected this goal: “In this manner,
the choreographer can string together, with artful transitions, a series of simple dances that would be theatrically uninteresting if used alone.\textsuperscript{321}

In his discussion of state folk dance ensembles, Shay underscores the political nature of the use of folk dance. Part of forming an ensemble’s repertoire involved the claims that nations and cultures were discrete; they were easily identified and dances and dance steps representative of a nation’s specific character could be easily identified and culled for use in the ensemble. This furthered the idea that “these dances originate in some primordial source of the nation’s purest values and that folk dances, music and costumes are timeliness and date from some prehistoric period.”\textsuperscript{322} Such a notion already divorced the dances from the reality of a national group and its culture and aestheticized politics. Because the dances endeavored to represent the nonpolitical by the use of a “timeless” art form and apolitical plot elements, such as a peasant boy farming or a peasant couple falling in love in a very non-sensual manner, the dance “actually achieve the highly political choice of depicting and representing the nation, in its essentialist entirety, in this ‘non-political,’ ‘innocent’ cultural fashion.”\textsuperscript{323} For the Moiseyev the ability to represent nations in this manner served very practical purposes for the Soviet regime as propaganda demonstrating the alleged celebration and support of national groups living in the Soviet Union. Shay similarly notes the contrast in dance depiction versus reality with the Ballet Folklorico de Bellas Artes from Mexico when it visited the United States in the late 1990s. The dancers performed with a similar enthusiasm and spirit to the Moiseyev yet this “gave no hint of the harsh reality of insurrection” in areas of Mexico occurring at that time.\textsuperscript{324}

\textsuperscript{321} Ibid., p. 47.
\textsuperscript{322} Ibid., p. 35.
\textsuperscript{323} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{324} Ibid., p. 36.
The Moiseyev After the Death of Stalin

After WWII, the ensemble continued to grow in renown and solidified its position as a Soviet program. With Stalin’s death in 1953, the company lost his personal support but the Moiseyev continued to thrive. Multiple factors aided the ensemble’s survival. The increased interest in cultural exchange encouraged the Soviet regime to continue official support of the ensemble. The Soviet regime considered the ensemble an important political tool as it embraced cultural products as an effective way to present a positive image of the Soviet Union; they did not need translators and moved among nations more easily than diplomats. Folk dancing in particular demonstrated this facility in travel among foreign peoples of varying backgrounds; “It is enjoyed equally by the man who spends his life in building machines and the man who devotes his time to teaching children.”

The Moiseyev and the way the Soviet regime utilized the ensemble reflected current events. The tours to Eastern bloc countries were formed as part of the June 1945 program “‘The Dances of the Slavic Peoples,’” which the Soviet regime aimed at newly communist countries. The regime created the program as part of an endeavor in which it “extended a hand of friendship… to the countries that had joined the socialist camp.” Everywhere the ensemble traveled in Eastern Europe, it was “welcomed with joyous smiles, open hearts and the warmest handshakes. Our dances were heaped with praises.” This success was tied to the Soviet Union’s political and military actions: “People thanked us for their liberation from fascism. Many who surrounded us had tears in their eyes.”

Moiseyev acknowledged the role the ensemble played as a diplomatic tool and embraced it. In an interview, he proclaimed, “‘I’ll tell you what means more to me than all the critics’ and

325 Chudnovsky, p. 5.
326 Sheremetyevskaya, p. 92.
327 Ibid..
other experts’ passionate declarations of love for the Company. It’s hearing someone in a foreign audience say something like this: ‘I think I really know now what Soviet people are. As I watched the dancing I realized that they are a kind, strong and courageous people, with a fine sense of humour and great generosity in everything they do’Moiseyev claimed he had heard this kind of comment from multiple people in multiple countries, which led him to believe the work he had done in forming the group -- and its continuous development -- was worthwhile.

In 1954, the ensemble visited mainland China, albeit with trepidation. Given China’s wealth of cultural history, the ensemble was unsure if the Chinese would find the ensemble’s performances entertaining. However, Chinese audiences received the Moiseyev with “great elation.” Indeed, the dancers discussed the choreography and dance aspects on “equal footing” with Chinese dancers and choreographers. Observers emphasized the equal prowess of the two cultures, Soviet and Chinese, in this moment of exchange. The Moiseyev exchanged not only friendship with the Chinese people but knowledge of their dance and culture, the “the rich, vivid and unique art of China, which inspires the people of that great country who are building a new socialist world.” The ensemble felt certain the Chinese would utilize art much as the Soviet Union had in the development of a new communist society.

Similarly, on their tour of Egypt in 1957, Moiseyev noted that the Egyptians eagerly welcomed the ensemble’s tour and noted that it would help cement friendship between the two nations. The dancers learned how earnest the Egyptians were to maintain a positive relationship with the Soviet Union on both the political and cultural level. As part of this same

328 Ilupina, p. 5.
329 Ibid., p. 6.
330 Chudnovsky, p. 84.
331 Ibid., p. 86.
332 Ibid., pp. 85-6.
333 Ibid., p. 91.
tour, the Moiseyev also visited Lebanon, where they gave nine instead of the originally scheduled six performances in Beirut because of the audiences’ enthusiastic response to the performances. The local and Soviet press again noted the political significance of the Moiseyev’s performances and success. One Lebanese paper wrote that “While the Soviet Union has given us the possibility of seeing its friendly art which helps to bring the nationalities closer together, the Americans send us warships. What different aims the two missions pursue is clear. Assuredly the people of the Lebanon prefer art to guns.” 334

Despite the uproarious successes in Egypt, Lebanon and elsewhere, in certain places the reception was not wholeheartedly positive, usually because of political issues. In Greece, people formed long queues for tickets in anticipation of the Moiseyev’s performances. 335 Some members of the Greek press criticized the Moiseyev as pure propaganda. However, “The attacks leveled by some hostile newspapers were not able to damp the high spirits of the dancers as a result of their great successes and of their acquaintance with the beauties that Greece had to offer.” 336 The newspaper Efnos, criticized “spectators up in the gallery [who] were ‘full of enthusiasms for the Soviet Union.’” 337 With its numerous tours across the world, the Moiseyev became an international phenomenon and an “envoy of peace and friendship.” 338 In total, between 1945 and 1960 the ensemble toured thirty-three countries on four continents. 339 Everywhere the company visited, it met with an overwhelmingly positive reaction and exchanged both good will and dances. The ensemble subsequently added dances to its repertoire

334 Ibid., p. 93.
335 Ibid., p. 93.
336 Ibid., pp. 93-4.
337 Ibid., p. 94.
338 Sheremetyevskaya, p. 115.
339 Ibid., p. 92.
from many countries, including China, Germany and Mexico to show how the exchange was not one-way or Soviet dominated. 340

Travel to Western Europe

The Moiseyev’s use as a diplomatic tool increased as Western Europe and countries with democratic regimes opened up to cultural exchange with the Soviet Union. In 1955, the Moiseyev toured both France and England and contemporary Soviet writers enthusiastically responded by describing how the Moiseyev dancers conquered the West. In France, the French audience in particular already knew of the excellence of Russian ballet. Even so, by the time of the Moiseyev’s tour in 1955, it had been almost fifty years since a Russian ballet troupe visited, and the French audience had never viewed Soviet ballet. Despite the potential obstacles -- particularly because of political events in Vietnam and Algeria which may have tainted the French audience’s perspective -- the performances were a “triumph.” 341 This kind of success in Paris, as an international center of culture, meant international recognition of the Moiseyev as a prestigious, noteworthy group. Even prior to arriving, the tickets to performances almost completely sold out. This was particularly consequential, as “Paris was a city with no less than 50 theatres and 300 cinemas where the appearance of world-famous artists was quite a commonplace.” 342 The local newspaper France Soir noted that “when three million francs worth of tickets had been sold for a play at the Madeleine Theatre before the première, this had been considered a fantastic figure. Yet before the Moiseyev company’s first performances sales had run to 25 million francs.” 343

340 Ibid., p. 50.
341 Sheremetyevskaya, p. 98.
342 Chudnovsky, p. 86.
343 Ibid.
While some among the French audience may have had their doubts about the Moiseyev because of its communist origins, “Prejudices and doubts entertained in regard to Soviet art were dispelled soon after the curtain rose on the opening performance held in Paris on October 3, 1955.”\(^{344}\) The dancers won over the French audience, and even the French press had to pay the ensemble “ungrudging tribute.”\(^{345}\) Additionally, the dancers traveled around Paris seeing the sights and spoke with everyday Frenchmen, which once more contributed to both the cultural and political aspects of the Moiseyev’s victorious tour in France. A radical deputy in the French Parliament, M. Forcinal, “said that the company had conquered the French capital and by so doing had sown fresh seeds of friendship between the French and Russian peoples.”\(^{346}\)

In Britain, though the Moiseyev wondered if the more dour British audience would receive the Moiseyev with similar enthusiasm, the performances were again an unmitigated success: “Unrestrained enthusiasm had seemed natural from the impulsive and exuberant French, but from the English it came as a surprise to the Soviet dancers.”\(^{347}\) Once more, according to Soviet writers the performance was not simply an artistic victory but a political one too. The dancers received many letters during their tour from everyday British people. These letters expressed adulation for the performances but also the “British people’s longing for friendship with the Soviet Union. This they stated in their letters with cordial sincerity.”\(^{348}\) For instance, one British mother of five wrote about how she hoped the Mosieyev’s tour and the success it achieved would lead toward greater friendship and understanding between the Soviet and British people.\(^{349}\)

\(^{344}\) Ibid., pp. 86-7.
\(^{345}\) Ibid., p. 87.
\(^{346}\) Ibid., p. 88.
\(^{347}\) Ibid., p. 89.
\(^{348}\) Ibid., p. 90.
\(^{349}\) Ibid., p. 90.
After WWII and more so after the death of Stalin, the Moiseyev became a diplomatic tool. The ensemble’s performances reflected a positive image of the Soviet Union and of a peaceful, happy existence for the different peoples living within it. Additionally, Igor Moiseyev and the Soviet regime emphasized how the ensemble not only wanted to perform for international audiences, but also to learn from them. Given the Moiseyev’s domestic and international popularity and its carefully coded multicultural message, it proved a perfect selection as the first cultural representation sent to the United States after the signing of the Lacy-Zarubin Agreement for cultural exchange in 1958.
CHAPTER 3: American Reception of the Moiseyev Dance Company

So completely en rapport were dancers and audience at the end of the evening that when the Russians stood smiling and waving, Americans stood up – smiling – and waved back…For two-and-a-half hours last night at Masonic Auditorium, the Iron Curtain melted away, and people on both sides – discovered again that humanity – like music and dancing – transcends geographical borders, outlasts political change, and above all – loves itself.\(^\text{350}\)

Given the enormous amount of press coverage and political concern regarding the Moiseyev Dance Company, its every move and the audience’s subsequent reaction became amplified. Americans of 1958 attached significance to all aspects of the dancers’ visit, providing an opportunity to examine the critical, political and personal responses to this event. This chapter discusses the initial reception by the American audience in order to draw out the nuances of American opinion of cultural exchange and its impact on Cold War political relations between the Soviet Union and United States. While responses certainly exhibit variety, viewed as a whole, Americans lauded and celebrated the Moiseyev dancers and their performances. This American embrace of the Moiseyev dancers demonstrates several important aspects of the American Cold War experience.

Firstly, this conflict was not just black and white, democracy versus communism, American versus Soviet.\(^\text{351}\) The American reaction to the Moiseyev complicates a Cold War narrative emphasizing differences between the American and Soviet ways of life and ideology. This intense reaction highlights the power of culture in this moment and in this conflict: most commentators noted that the Moiseyev Dance Company proved able to change Americans’ opinions.

\(^{350}\) Dick Osgood (DJ), Transcript from Show World on WXYZ Radio, Tues 13 May 1958, page 8A.,NYPL – PAD.

\(^{351}\) In this respect, this case study echoes other more recent works that complicate the Cold War experience, such as Andrew Faulk’s Upstaging the Cold War: American Dissent and Cultural Diplomacy, 1940-1960 (2010) which argues that dissenting cultural products actually had a greater positive impact on international opinion of America rather than the more black-and-white cultural productions of the State Department.
Additionally, the admiration expressed for the Soviet people is striking. The visit provided an opportunity for Americans to see Soviets “in the flesh,” articulating the differences between the two nations’ cultures as played out on stage and off. Americans expressed a fascination with the abilities of the Soviet dancers and a desire to learn more about them as people. The tour calmed public tensions with regard to the Cold War and defused the characterization of the Soviets as enemies. Indeed, as discussed in Chapter Five, Americans saw in the Soviet dancers people who were not so unlike themselves despite their political, ideological and cultural differences. The impact of the Moiseyev provides a window into how Americans felt about their own identity and culture, especially as compared to their Soviet counterparts, and their views of the Cold War and its imprint on American life. Categorizing the responses in Chapter Four provides evidence of the nuances of this (for the most part) positive reception. Here the moment of the Moiseyev’s American premiere is the focus. This moment functioned as an important juncture of political, racial and gender issues in America and it changed or reinforced American ideas about the Cold War and American and Soviet people.

_Reception Theory_

In assessing American reception of the Moiseyev, multiple aspects of the performances are taken into account in order to understand as fully as possible the American experience of this moment of cultural exchange in the Cold War and what meaning Americans drew from viewing the Moiseyev. Jacqueline Martin and Willmar Sauter trace the study of reception in _Understanding Theatre: Performance Analysis in Theory and Practice_. They note that the early Soviet period, specifically in 1924-25, marked “One of the first known empirical studies on theatre audiences.” Vasily Fjodorov, assistant to theater producer and director Vsevolod
Meyerhold, performed this first study in Moscow. He selected twenty markers of audience reception, including silence, coughing, talking and leaving one’s seat to bombard the stage. This early experimentation in reception study had its own difficulties, such as selecting precisely what the markers of reception meant for understanding the audience’s experience. Martin and Sauter define reception study as the manner in which scholars “investigate the ways in which spectators experience performances.” The spectator experience is made up of both intellectual and emotional reactions to a performance. The debate on the impact of the audience on the performance is tied to the audience experience. Some reception scholars exclude or limit the audience’s influence on a performance and on what this kind of influence could mean for reception while others view the audience as part of the performance experience. Martin and Sauter assert that reception theory must take four aspects of performances into account: what are the important elements of the performance (such as the case, movements and plot) which the audience takes note of, how are these elements interpreted differently by different audience members, what emotions does the audience experience and how does the audience evaluate the performance. These four aspects of performance furthermore reflect the authors’ view of “theatre as process;” the audience’s experience begins prior to the performance in the form of preconceived notions that influence reception.

Susan Bennett is also an advocate for underscoring the role of the audience in a performance. The audience can affect the performance and reception but also, through the performance experience, the audience can learn something about “their own emotive lives.”

Audience expectations influence reception and how they view the act of going to a performance.

353 Ibid., p. 27.
354 Ibid., pp. 29-31.
in addition to how they view the performance itself. An audience’s idea of culture and what it means to go to performances forms part of reception as well. For instance, an American audience may have a different conception of theater culture compared to a European audience due to the lack of state sponsored theater in America. The institutions involved in cultural production mold audience expectations for the performance experience. Thus “If we consider theatre’s role in any given cultural system, and then the audience’s relationship both to the generally held concept of theatre and to specific theatre products, we are more likely to obtain a fuller comprehension of the production/reception relationship.”

In *Words, Space, and the Audience: The Theatrical Tension Between Empiricism and Rationalism*, Michael Bennett examines the “Actor-Audience Relationship” in theatre productions to understand how meaning is made. He argues that the meaning of the experience attached to performance needs to be viewed in “totality.” In order to assess reception, scholars should not focus simply on the performance itself; they should include the ticket purchase, the anticipation leading up to the performance, and the discussion of the performance after the event. This more thorough examination aids scholars to recognize and explore the issue of how a member of the audience understands a performance and gives the performance viewing experience meaning by getting at the tension between the sensory experience of the performance influencing meaning or *a priori* knowledge. Bennett uses this approach in order to evaluate perception of the Edward Albee’s *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (1962) during the Cold War

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356 Ibid., pp. 94-5.
357 Ibid., p. 100.
359 Ibid., p. 11.
period. In this case study, Bennett notes that the “fear” present in the play reflected and influenced corresponding American “fear” of this time period.\textsuperscript{360}

Dennis Kennedy similarly assesses reception in the Cold War context. He examines the performance and use of Shakespeare in Europe on both sides of the Iron Curtain and argues for political and social events to be included in reception history. Kennedy notes the political aspect of reception and performance of Shakespeare, which sometimes simply took the form of greater financial support of Shakespeare productions or directly linking Shakespeare’s plays to a political agenda. Countries on both sides of the Iron Curtain used Shakespeare “as a site for the recovery and reconstruction of values that were perceived to be under threat, or already lost.”\textsuperscript{361}

Reception of Shakespeare’s plays could serve as a retreat from the contemporary tense political situation or could directly be interpreted as containing Cold War themes like impotence and global annihilation. Kennedy feels the Cold War directly influenced reception of Shakespeare and the European interest in Shakespeare’s plays represented a “social commitment” to these works in the Cold War context.\textsuperscript{362}

The above scholars argue for an extensive examination of the performance experience when discussing reception. Accordingly, in evaluating American reception of the Moiseyev, several aspects of the performances need to be taken into account. Reception is evaluated firstly by describing the potential preconceived notions Americans may have brought to performances in light of the Cold War context and debates of American identity, fear of cultural inferiority and gender constructions. Secondly, patterns of reception can be identified using the performance elements critics and individual spectators emphasized and how these elements were interpreted.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{360} Ibid., pp. 103-4.
\item \textsuperscript{361} Dennis Kennedy, The Spectator and the Spectacle: Audiences in Modernity and Postmodernity, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 75.
\item \textsuperscript{362} Kennedy, pp. 80-81 and 92-93.
\end{itemize}
differently by different audience members. The emotions the American audience expressed and how they evaluated the Moiseyev’s success also form a vital part of reception. And finally, the above aspects of reception also can be used to determine what the American audience learned about itself as a result of the Moiseyev tours and the meaning Americans attached to the performances.

*America Presents Itself to the Post-WWII World*

The significance of this initial tour — and the agreement for cultural exchange allowing for the tour — stems from the cultural and propaganda warfare the United States and Soviet Union engaged in throughout the Cold War. After World War II, President Truman did not shut down propaganda as the Wilson administration did after WWI. After reading a report by Arthur W. MacMahon that suggested peacetime propaganda was necessary to present a “fair picture” of the United States to the world, Truman had propaganda organs moved to the State Department to create and disseminate this “fair picture.”

Though it underwent various name changes, the entity creating peacetime propaganda became the United States Information Agency in 1953.

The United States Information Agency addressed “the idea that America needed a permanent apparatus to explain itself to the postwar world.” Activities by the USIA and its predecessors covered a broad range of media but included translation of “useful” books -- such as George Orwell's *Animal Farm* -- into different languages while encouraging international book distribution. The Agency also sponsored exhibitions, such as *The Family of Man* which featured 503 pictures of marriage and family life from sixty-eight countries. Such efforts were

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364 Ibid., xiii.
365 Ibid., p. 73 and 115.
intended to sway non-Americans around the world to support democracy and the United States -- or at least to create a negative image of communism and the Soviet Union. The USIA and State Department efforts were sometimes more overt in nature when responding to contemporary events. For example, in 1958-9, when Khrushchev began stepping up pressure on West Berlin, the USIA widely publicized the way Khrushchev contradicted the “Peaceful Coexistence” policy the USSR touted. Accordingly, the International Press Service put together a story entitled “A Tale of Two Cities” using pictures to make visible the differences in everyday life between East and West Berlin.366

President Eisenhower took further steps with regard to cultural diplomacy in light of the greater openness in the Soviet Union after the death of Stalin in 1953. Shortly after Stalin’s death, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles stated “‘The Eisenhower era begins as the Stalin era ends.’” These words reflected international and domestic changes in both the Soviet Union and in the United States. The atmosphere between the two nations relaxed somewhat and a greater desire for openness came to be expressed by both nations’ governments.367

As the new leader of America’s Cold War enemy, Khrushchev was different from Stalin in appearance and demeanor; he seemed less harsh and less brutal. He also expressed interested in Hollywood and Disneyland and wanted to visit the United States. Khrushchev set a new tone for the Soviet regime in the wake of Stalin’s death. In his “Secret Speech” to the Twentieth Party Congress on 25 February 1956, Khrushchev enunciated how his regime would differ from Stalin’s. While maintaining an admiration for Lenin, Khrushchev took the opportunity to distance himself from Stalin and even criticize him outright.368 “Stalin acted not through

366 Ibid., p. 163.
368 Nikita Khrushchev, “Secret Speech to the Twentieth Party Congress (February 25, 1956), The World
persuasion, explanation, and patient cooperation with people, but by imposing his concepts and demanding absolute submission to his opinion. Whoever opposed this concept or tried to prove his viewpoint, and the correctness of his position – was doomed to removal from the leading collective and to subsequent moral and physical annihilation.”369 He claimed Stalin hurt the Soviet people and the Soviet system. Khrushchev characterized Stalin as overly suspicious and fickle; those working with him personally never knew where they stood and feared what their futures held. These characteristics only increased after WWII as Stalin became more brutal and more suspicious of those around him, as evidenced by his fear of the doctor’s plot. Khrushchev concluded that Stalin hurt the Soviet Union, and accordingly he would try to compensate for the damage Stalin had done.370

Khrushchev expressed an interest in “peaceful coexistence” with the United States and other western countries. His view of culture also differed; he supported Soviet culture but also was very interested in the culture of the capitalistic West.371 Khrushchev believed that “the Soviets did in fact have a great deal to learn from the world beyond their borders; increasing cultural interactions would also help decrease Cold War tensions, it was said, reducing the risk of nuclear cataclysm and leading to greater understanding of the Soviet system abroad.”372 Cultural openness could achieve multiple political goals for Khrushchev and his regime consequently pursued cultural exchange in a way Stalin had not.

On the American side, Eisenhower accordingly supported the use of propaganda in all its forms in this more relaxed atmosphere. He dipped into the President’s Emergency Fund to send

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369 Ibid., p. 136.
370 Ibid., pp. 138-139 & 141.
372 Ibid., p. 9.
artists overseas to perform and display their work. Eisenhower felt such visits would
“...demonstrate the superiority of the products and cultural values of our system of free
enterprise,” and show “that America too can lay claim to high cultural and artistic
accomplishments.” In the late 1950s, President Eisenhower stressed the need for greater
exchange between the U.S. and the Soviet Union as well through his support of the Lacy-Zarubin
agreement which ensured regular exchanges with the Soviet Union.

Impresario Sol Hurok represented a third party interested in cultural exchange, in
addition to the American and Soviet governments. Hurok endeavored for years to facilitate
cultural exchange between the two superpowers. Hurok worked in the arts for over sixty years
and “S. Hurok Presents” became a well-known sight on billboards, programs and advertisements
for entertainment events. “Under his name the great singers, musicians and dance troupes of the
eyear and mid 20th century toured the United States,” including the likes of Galina Ulanova,
Marian Anderson, Richard Strauss and others.373 Though the Bolshoi Ballet may have been
Hurok’s most desired target for exchange, the Soviet Ministry of Culture insisted on the
Moiseyev touring first.374 Hurok met Igor Moiseyev personally in Paris while the Moiseyev
toured Western Europe in 1955. Both men expressed a desire for the Moiseyev to tour the
United States, but admitted they had their doubts as to whether or not this would ever actually
occur.

Hurok, however, assiduously pursued his efforts by contacting both American and Soviet
officials and demonstrating the value of cultural exchange on a larger scale. Through his
cultivation of a relationship with Edward Ivanyan in the Ministry of Culture (and by persuading
other Moscow officials through personal encounters and the visits of famous American artists),

373 “Sol Hurok Dead at 85,” The Boston Globe, 6 March 1974, p. 15.
Hurok secured an agreement in 1956 for the Moiseyev to tour the US. One political factor stood as a barrier, however. The Soviets requested that the American government remove the fingerprint clause of the McCarran-Walter Immigration Act.

The State Department took careful note of Hurok’s efforts. In a March 1956 memorandum, State Department official Robert O. Blake related how Frederick Schang, President of Columbia Artists Management, contacted him to let him know that Hurok had requested booking dates for the Metropolitan Opera in September of that year for the potential Moiseyev tour. Schang expressed concern about Hurok’s actions and wanted to confirm that the State Department had not changed its policy with regard to “large cultural groups” being admitted to the United States (perhaps to ensure that if its policy had changed, Columbia Artists would be part of the cultural exchange initiatives). Blake reassured Schang that nothing had changed that would allow for Soviet cultural representatives to tour the US.\(^{375}\) A month later, Robert O. Blake reported that Hurok had communicated with the Soviet Embassy about a possible Moiseyev tour in the United States. The memo noted that “Mr. Hurok is apparently undertaking a private campaign to build up support for repeal of the fingerprint requirement. During the last few days he has, to my knowledge, interviewed Congressman Celler of New York, Mr. Maxwell Raab and Mr. Jack Martin of the White House.”\(^{376}\) The State Department did not prevent Hurok’s negotiations, but at this point it did not actively aid this kind of cultural exchange.

The 1956 agreement fell through, and the obstacles to establishing a viable cultural exchange agreement continued to mount, including American concern over the potential landing of Soviet planes on American soil to transport the artists. Finally, after securing another

\(^{375}\) “Department of State Memo,” 15 March 1956, NARA 032/3-1556.

\(^{376}\) “Department of State Memo,” 30 April 1956, NARA 032/413056.
agreement with Moscow that included the tour not only of the Moiseyev, but also of the Bolshoi Ballet, violinist David Oistrakh and composer Aram Khachaturian, the American government repealed the fingerprinting clause, so the planned tours could move forward.377

In a National Security Report dated June 29, 1956, the role and goals of cultural exchange were discussed in relation to future policy.378 Exchanges aimed at the Soviet bloc were intended to accomplish several goals, among which were the following:

a. To promote within Soviet Russia evolution toward a regime which all abandon predatory policies, which will seek to promote the aspirations of the Russian people rather than the global ambitions of International Communism, and which will increasingly rest upon the consent of the governed rather than upon despotic police power.

b. As regards the European satellites, we seek their evolution toward independence of Moscow.379

The US government concluded that the impetus behind cultural exchange initiatives was partly a response to changes in the Soviet Union following Stalin’s death in 1953 and Nikita Khrushchev’s rise to power. The Security Council noted “visible signs of progress” in the Soviet Union recently along with “increasing education and consequent demand for greater freedom of thought and expression.”380 Under these new conditions, the dissemination of American ideas and cultural products as they would receive the greatest attention and reception. While the Cold War policies at the time were for the most part defensive, this moment marked a realization that “they can be offensive in terms of promoting a desire for greater individual freedom, well-being and scrutiny within the Soviet Union, and greater independence within the satellites. In other words, East-West exchanges should be an implementation of positive United States foreign

380 Ibid., p. 244.
US cultural products and representatives should endeavor to combat negative images of the United States and challenge Soviet ideals. On a more mundane level, the Security Council encouraged initiatives to “stimulate Soviet desire for more consumer goods by bringing them to realize how rich are the fruits of free labor and how much they themselves could gain from a government which primarily sought their well-being and not conquest.” However, with the repression of the Hungarian revolt in November of 1956, the State Department suspended any exchange initiatives because of the Soviet government’s actions.

Official Cultural Exchange Established

After the obstacles and difficulties along the way in the post-Stalin period, on January 27, 1958 the United States and Soviet Union signed the Lacy-Zarubin Agreement. Special Assistant to the Secretary of State William S. B. Lacy and USSR Ambassador Georgi N. Zarubin functioned as negotiators and signatories on the agreement. The planned cultural exchanges included films, radio and television broadcasts, students, professors, scientist and athletes. The State Department Bulletin announced that “This Agreement is regarded as a significant first step in the improvement of mutual understanding between the peoples of the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and it is sincerely hoped that it will be carried out in such a way as to contribute substantially to the betterment of relations between the two countries, thereby also contribute to a lessening of international tensions.”

381 Ibid.
382 Ibid., p. 245.
The proposed radio and television broadcasts focused on science, technology, industry, agriculture, education, public health and sports, music, and politics. Accordingly, exchange utilized representatives in iron, steel, mining, plastics, agriculture, forestry, lumber, medical delegations. To gain more personal knowledge of each nation’s way of life, students, writers, artists and other professionals would be sent. Section VIII of the agreement identified the first cultural representatives who would travel between the nations. The State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble of the USSR would arrive in the United States in April or May of 1958, and in exchange, the Soviet Union “will consider inviting a leading American theatrical or choreographic group to the Soviet Union in 1959.” The Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra would travel to the Soviet Union in May or June of 1958 and the Bolshoi Ballet would come to the Untied States in 1959. With respect to individual artists, Soviet musicians E. Gilels, L. Kogan, I. Petrov, P. Lisitsian, Z. Dolukhanova, I. Bezrodn, V. Ashkenazi would visit the United States in 1958 in exchange for American counterparts B. Thebom, L. Warren, R. Peters, L. Stokowski and others. In addition, athletes (representing sports including basketball, wrestling, track and field, weight lifting, hockey and chess) took part in competitions with each superpower alternating as hosts. While these agreements were official government matters, they also involved private sector industries, including agriculture, film, athletics and more.

These cultural exchanges were renewed by a series of agreements over the years. The final agreement, signed in 1985 by President Reagan and Premier Mikhail Gorbachev was designed to last until December 31, 1991 but essentially ended with the fall of the Soviet Union on December 25th. The significance of these exchanges in terms of their specificity to the

385 Ibid., pp. 244-246.
387 Ibid., pp. 15-16.
Cold War is underlined by the fact that, after the fall of the Soviet Union, the U.S. government deemed such agreements no longer necessary. Some historians, like Yale Richmond, argue that culture and cultural products led to the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Soviet Union. While supporting this argument is not within the purview of this case study, here culture is similarly highlighted as having a major impact on Cold War relations. The Moiseyev Dance Company led to a greater interest in Soviet citizens and a more reasonable view of Soviet people as fellow human beings with similar hopes, dreams and worries.

One of the better known early exchanges occurred when the American pianist Van Cliburn won the Tchaikovsky International Piano competition in Moscow in 1958. American newspapers highlighted how enthusiastically the Russians acclaimed the Texan pianist and admired his skill; he “needed just an hour and a half to change this country’s opinion of culture in the United States.” Americans felt that Van Cliburn’s reception demonstrated the vibrancy of American culture, particularly since his performance yielded a “display of technical skill that Russians have long considered their own special forte.” Russian audiences dubbed him “‘the American genius,’” and “‘Malchik [the little boy] from the South.’” The press in particular focused on how Russian women adored Van Cliburn, who was “mobbed everywhere by fans, autograph seekers and girls bearing flowers.” Van Cliburn’s successful tour was a feather in the cap of American cultural identity and cultural exchange. Events like Van Cliburn’s popularity “illustrates a number of features of Soviet-American contacts after Stalin’s death: appreciation of the achievements of the other side, friendliness in person-to-person contacts, and

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390 Ibid.
392 Ibid.
the persistence of cultural exchanges in a friendly atmosphere even in times of political tension.\textsuperscript{393}

This could not have happened during Stalin’s rule. For instance, in the 1930s Sol Hurok, who had arranged tours of artists from Russia prior to the 1917 Revolution, tried to initiate tours again but without success. American scholars could not study in the Soviet Union from 1936-58 and very few American tourists were able to travel to the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{394}

\textit{Soviet Preparation for the Moiseyev’s 1958 Tour of the US}

The Soviet regime carefully selected the State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble of the USSR as the first representatives sent to the United States after the signing of the Lacy Zarubin Agreement. The government emphasized the cultural and political importance of the tour, and sent the ensemble with a thorough list of instructions. The government told the ensemble to telegraph the Ministry of Culture as soon as they arrived in New York and to stay in a hotel near the performance venue, the Metropolitan Opera House. Throughout the tour, the dancers and musicians had to allow for four hours, usually from 10am to 2pm, to rehearse and to allow for enough time to get enough sleep at night.\textsuperscript{395}

While the Soviet government endeavored to keep a close eye on the dancers’ with KGB agents to control interactions with Americans, Moiseyev sought to prepare the dancers in a different way. In a communication to the Ministry of Culture, Moiseyev requested several things so the dancers would be at their best as performers and could take advantage of learning opportunities. Moiseyev asked for a series of lectures about America to be held for the ensemble’s benefit, as well as access to books about America and American films. Additionally,

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{393} Rosenberg, p. 124.
  \item \textsuperscript{394} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{395} “Guidelines for the tour in the United States and Canada,” RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 16, p 1.
\end{itemize}
he wanted the dancers to study English, with lessons to be continued on the Ukrainian tour just before they left for New York. Moiseyev also requested an increase in the dancers’ pensions. Moiseyev felt comfortable making all these requests given the gravity of the Cold War situation and the fact that the Soviet government chose the Moiseyev to be the first cultural representatives to the United States. Moiseyev noted that the ensemble “represents Soviet art not only inside the Soviet Union and … democratic countries, but also in the tours of the most capitalistic cities.”

American Anticipation of the Moiseyev

In the wake of the signing of the Lacy-Zarubin Agreement, Americans questioned the Soviets’ sudden willingness to engage in cultural exchange with the United States. At first, Americans expressed suspicion of Soviet motives, seeing the agreement as purely a political, propagandistic maneuver. Then the Moiseyev arrived and swept away American doubts and suspicions.

The Soviet Union’s “sudden” embrace of cultural exchange related to the current Soviet regime, its tone and its issues. The American press noted that under Stalin exchange was out of the question, but with Khrushchev at the helm things had changed. Additionally, as The Pittsburgh Press noted, “The Russians have been trying hard to overcome the cultural black eye they got in crushing the Hungarian students’ revolt.” Americans theorized that Soviet artists were eager to see the rest of the world and what it had to offer artistically and thus had pressured the Soviet government into negotiating the exchange agreement. The artists “realize they have

396“Communication from Moiseyev to Ministry of Culture Comrade Mikhailov regarding preparation for the American tour,” RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 1.
some things to learn from other countries.” Some felt that the repressive Soviet regime was desperate to be seen in a positive light. This last reasoning partly originated from a sense of American cultural superiority; in the United States, artists supposedly did not experience government interference and could take advantage of an open global exchange of ideas and cultural products. Culture, as a result, was thriving, which was not the case in the Soviet Union.

Even while questioning the Soviet motives behind the Lacy-Zarubin Agreement, anticipation grew as the Moiseyev’s April arrival neared. Despite the excitement, some Americans felt that the Moiseyev was not the right choice for American audiences, arguing that the Bolshoi Ballet was a better representation of Soviet culture and that the Moiseyev did not represent “high” Soviet culture. Americans were more familiar with the Bolshoi because of its longer history and international renown.

Critic Walter Terry attempted to allay such criticisms of the choice of the Moiseyev: “There should be no sense of disappointment that the first Russian dance troupe to visit America in many, many years is folk-flavored rather than classical.” Terry reminded the American audience of a recent television broadcast of the Bob Hope Show from Moscow that gave Americans a taste of the Moiseyev with “fascinating glimpses of Russian folk dancers leaping through space, racing about with flashing spears, whirling at unbelievable speeds and tossing off those knee-shattering 'prisyadkas' with communicable abandon.” Terry claimed that the Moiseyev would be just as entertaining as the Bolshoi. “Even without the celebrated Ulanova and ‘Swan Lake,’ interest in this artistic invasion by the Russians is running high.” Once the tour dates were announced, this anticipation turned frenzied as Americans clamored for tickets to

399 Ibid.
400 Ibid.
the first performances in New York. *Dance News* reported that “If the demand for tickets for the Moiseyev Dance Company from Moscow, which opens April 14 at the Metropolitan Opera House, continues as it has until the end of March the company will sell out nearly all tickets before the show opens.” Indeed, even before the box office opened on March 27th, mail orders totaled $180,000. On the day the Metropolitan Opera House opened for in-person ticket sales, a line formed beginning at 7:30 in the morning. Terry related an anecdote in which a Met worker, upon seeing the long line stretching from the lobby down the street and around the nearest corner, said, not knowing that the line was in fact for the Moiseyev, “‘A line like that for 'Tristan’?” in an awed voice. While some may have initially been disappointed in the choice of the Moiseyev, nonetheless Americans were extremely eager to see representatives from the USSR.

Americans were not completely unfamiliar with the Moiseyev. Some had read newspaper accounts of the troupe’s exploits at home and abroad during and after WWII. As the Moiseyev began to extend its tours to include Western Europe in the mid-1950’s, American press coverage increased. In Paris and London, wrote the critic Mary Clarke in *Dance Magazine*, “the dancers were received with joyful enthusiasm not only for their dancing, brilliant as it is, but also for their tremendous vitality, gaiety and the infectious pleasure in dancing which they communicate to an audience.” This kind of coverage contributed to the anticipation as the Lacy-Zarubin agreement came to fruition and America waited for the arrival of the Moiseyev. Moreover, the evidence of the prowess of the Moiseyev, by winning over Western countries like France and Britain, contributed to how Americans received the Moiseyev in their turn.

402 Ibid.
403 Terry, “Russian Dancers to Perform Here,” p. 4.
The Cold War narrative, posited by scholars like Anders Stephanson as an entirely American project, influenced how Americans described and received the Moiseyev. The first few years after WWII, in particular, created the discourse utilized by the US government and, in this case, personal and critical accounts of the Moiseyev. Here three examples are given of what formed the basis of this Cold War narrative and how Americans viewed and spoke about themselves in comparison with the Soviet Union. In his “Iron Curtain Speech,” Winston Churchill in some ways set the tone for the American view of the Soviet Union and the spread of communism. Churchill contrasted life in the US and United Kingdom with life in the Soviet Union. In the US and UK, citizens enjoyed individual rights and freedoms while in the Soviet Union and communist countries, these rights were absent or limited. Communist regimes were police states in which the government interfered in people’s lives. Churchill furthermore pointed to the international goals of communism, a view he supported by noting how “from Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent.” Eastern and Central Europe fell under the spreading communist yoke and this was not the end of communism’s spread; Churchill claimed fifth columnists were present in other countries attempting to undermine established governments and win more states over to the communist side.405 Churchill depicted a world divided between communism and democracy and that these two systems represented opposites.

George F. Kennan’s 8,000 word “Long Telegram” also described the Soviet Union and United States as adversaries and that the systems could not cooperate diplomatically in the future.

Kennan believed that Russia’s historic fear of invasion affected the style of rule in the pre and post-revolutionary period. Marxism flourished in Russia because of Russia’s fear of invasion and lack of friendly neighbors which played into Marxism “viewed the economic conflicts of society as insoluble by peaceful means.”

Because of Russia’s long established fear of invasion and the impact of Marxism, the Soviet regime employed a strict view of the “outside world as evil, hostile and menacing.” The non-communist world was “diseased” and eventually would lead to communist revolutions like Russia’s own and international communism. Kennan echoed Churchill’s view of a divided world in which the two superpowers could not cooperate because the Soviet Union would not allow democracy to stand. In order to ensure its own stability, the Soviet Union would feel it necessary to support the international spread of communism to replace capitalistic democracies.

President Harry Truman added to this narrative in which the Soviet Union represented tyranny and repression, while the United States represented freedom and tolerance. Truman reinforced his concept of freedom and how it contrasted with the style of rule and life in communist countries with the Truman Doctrine. In his speech to Congress on 12 March 1947, Truman claimed it was necessary for the US to “help free peoples to maintain their free institutions and their national integrity against aggressive movements that seek to impose upon them totalitarian regimes.” He believed that each nation had to choose between communism, based on “the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio, fixed elections, and the suppression of personal

407 Ibid., p. 70.
408 Ibid., p. 71.
freedoms,” and democracy, based on “the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from political oppression.” As a model of democracy, Truman said the US had to act on behalf of those fighting communism, such as providing support to struggles against communism in Greece and Turkey.

Even after the death of Stalin and a movement toward closer relations and openness between the two superpowers, the above notions remained present in American views of the Soviet Union and communism in general.

Journalist Peter Edson noted the change in atmosphere: “Russia’s apparent desire for greater cultural exchanges with the West, the receptions given to pianist Van Cliburn and the Moiseyev dancers, the friendlier …new Russian ambassador to Washington, Mikhail Menshikov all are cited as evidence of this new trend [of openness and exchange].” Edson expressed doubt about whether Khrushchev’s regime marked a break with past Soviet repression, citing the execution of the Hungarian liberal leader Nagy after the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and the continued tensions between the Soviet government and Tito in Yugoslavia. The Soviet Union’s alleged willingness to cooperate with the United States “will mask completely the real Communist intent to gain world domination by complete ruthlessness, as revealed in the other news emanating from Moscow.” Even with an apparent change in the political atmosphere and American-Soviet relations, this did not immediately expel the Cold War American narrative of an ever-spreading international communism bent on world domination.

The new trend in exchange and openness furthermore afforded President Eisenhower an opportunity to get in touch with the Soviet people. Journalist Drew Pearson argued: “in dealing

410 Ibid.
412 Ibid.
with an autocracy, the only safeguard you have as a check on its rulers is friendship of its people.” In a democracy like the US, the president needed popular and institutional support to take major actions like declare war, while in contrast, in the Soviet Union, leadership changed without elections or foreknowledge and permission for major actions was not necessary. Accordingly, Pearson believed, it was important to get the Soviet people on America’s side and the first step toward that goal was getting the Soviet people to like President Eisenhower. The exchange agreements and other recent actions leading to greater exposure to the West in the Soviet Union was already bringing down the Iron Curtain as Soviet people saw the wonders of Western lifestyle. In comparison to the “blunt, brutal aloofness of Stalin’s day…the change is nothing less than a political miracle” and could be directly compared to the opening of Japan by Admiral Perry in 1835.413

American Experience of Dance

In addition to the political context, the young and eclectic nature of the US dance scene is another factor that influenced American reception of the Moiseyev. It is useful here to touch briefly on three growing genres in the American dance scene leading up to the Moiseyev’s first tour to the United States in 1958: modern dance, classical ballet and the American musical.

An established American ballet did not form until the twentieth century; ballet performance in the United States in the mid-nineteenth century was sparse and consisted primarily of sporadic tours by foreign ballet dancers. In contrast to the longer history of ballet in Russia, by 1900 no American ballet companies had been established. This began to change in with the 1916 tour of Sergei Diaghilev’s Ballet Russes and tours in 1910, 1915 and 1916 by

Russian ballerina Anna Pavlova. These tours were incredibly popular and led to a greater general American interest in ballet.\footnote{Robert Emmet Long, \textit{Broadway, the Golden Years: Jerome Robbins and the Great Choreographic-Directors 1940 to the Present}, New York: Continuum, 2001, pp. 14-15.}

At first, individual American dancers usually left the US and flourished in European countries -- it was not until the 1930s that a true American ballet emerged in the United States.\footnote{Olga Maynard, \textit{The American Ballet}, Philadelphia, PA: Macrae Smith Company, 1959, p. 60.} In 1933 Lincoln Kirstein created the School of American Ballet and brought George Balanchine to America.\footnote{Maynard, pp. 42, 44 & 49.} In December of 1934, the School of American Ballet transitioned to The American Ballet Company and in 1935, became the resident ballet company at the Metropolitan Opera House. By 1959, three major ballet companies existed in the United States, the New York City Ballet, the American Ballet Theatre and the Ballet Russes de Monte Carlo and there were other, smaller companies such as the San Francisco Ballet, as well. In contrast to ballet in other nations, American ballet lacked state sponsorship and instead, ballet “companies depend entirely on the support of the audience, and their future lies in the artists and the teachers and students in the ballet schools.”\footnote{Maynard, p. 60.}

Besides ballet, modern dance was a major part of American dance in the first half of the twentieth century. Modern dance originated in the United States in the 1920s, with Isadora Duncan labeled by some scholars as the founder of modern dance. Duncan, with dance experience in France and Russia, used her knowledge of those countries’ dance traditions to promote her idea of modern dance, with “self-expression and spontaneity” as her goals.\footnote{Long, p. 15.} The beginning of this boom in American dance is mirrored by how the New York theater experienced dramatic growth through the 1920s. Twenty-six new theaters opened between 1924 and 1929.
alone; in the single year of 1927, 264 plays were produced, not to speak of a myriad of musical and musical revues.”

The late 1920s marked a moment when “modern dancers steeped themselves in the social, political, and aesthetic issues of the day.” In the 1930s, as modern dance became more established, the American Communist Party flourished in the wake of the 1929 Stock Market crash and weakening of capitalism. At the same moment, many modern dancers and dance teachers including Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey and Charles Weidman, had studios near Union Square, close to Communist party activities. Modern dancers were “socially conscious dancers, and the collision of the two revolutionary worlds sparked an explosion of choreographic activity.” Many dancers held leftist political beliefs and some supported or sympathized with the ideas of communism. Just as communism supported the proletariat and proletarian culture and decried bourgeois or traditional high culture, modern dance artists were anti-academy and anti-elitist.

In the 1940s, American dance moved away from political and ideological statements. Additionally, there was a “diffusion” of modern dance into other genres, including music and ballet. American musicals on Broadway used elements of ballet and modern dance but made these dance forms, often associated with “highbrow” culture, more accessible. The beginning of the American musical’s golden age in 1937, marked the successful integration of multiple art genres into one artistic expression in the form of the musical: “playwriting, music, design, dance,

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419 Long, p. 13.
422 Ibid., p. 317.
423 Ibid.
424 Foulkes, pp. 171-2 & 178.
movement, truthful acting.”426 While the American musical finds its roots in other similar art forms, like the Viennese operetta and the Paris opéra-comique, the integration of these multiple elements to create a “total art form for the masses” made the American musical different from similar art forms.427 Scholar Robert Emmett Long points to how the American musical “may have had its roots in operetta, but even at the beginning it was in the process of creating its own identity, and there were many influences involved in, or interwoven with, its development.”428 Americans claimed Broadway musicals as their own artistic expression, especially as America strove to define itself after WWI and WWII when it emerged as a bigger player on the international political stage.

As the American dance scene continued to develop, the question of what American identity was and how dance should demonstrate it became more pressing.429 Martha Graham, American dancer and choreographer, who was an early advocate of modern dance and a contemporary of Moiseyev, expressed a similar view of the value of dance as Igor Moiseyev: “A dance reveals the spirit of the country in which it takes root. No sooner does it fail to do this than it loses its integrity and significance.”430 As the origin of modern dance, Graham felt American dance should demonstrate the “human and the variety of life.”431 This question of American identity and how it should be expressed in dance pervaded all three of the dance forms discussed here.

In Modern Bodies: Dance and American Modernism from Martha Graham to Alvin Ailey, Julia L. Foulkes argued that by 1958, George Balanchine’s New York City Ballet “reigned

427 Ibid.
429 Foulkes, p. 5.
431 Ibid., p. 204.
supreme in the dance world, suited to the times by waging a dance battle on the European turf of ballet – and winning with an aggressive and speedy American style.”432 While other scholars might argue with Foulkes’s argument, she does convincingly point out the larger implications of this argument in the Cold War context and how it was one more way the US and Soviet Union “fought” the Cold War. Because US dance was so young and the US dance boom really taking off, Americans may have been more open to the folk dance creations of the Moiseyev.

The First Performance

The Moiseyev’s 1958 American tour began April 9th with their arrival in New York and ended with their last performance at Madison Square Garden on June 28th and their departure on July 1st. The April 14th premiere became a nationwide event, reported widely in the press with numerous details of the attending audience, performance, dancers and Americans’ reactions.

The Moiseyev stunned Americans, who vociferously expressed their response:

The Metropolitan Opera House nearly burst its aging seams last Monday when the Moiseyev Dance company from Moscow made its American debut. On stage, approximately one hundred dancers performed with explosive exuberance and stunning virtuosity while on the other side of the footlights, the audience exploded with applause and cheers.433

The press agreed that the Moiseyev was riveting and that the American audience could not help but applaud and praise the troupe. The tremendous premiere at the Met swept away any doubts about the Moiseyev being ill-suited for the role of first cultural ambassadors. Indeed, many critics felt themselves at a loss for words in trying to relate the nature of the Moiseyev's performance: “The excitement generated in the audience about equaled the breathless pace at which the Soviet dancers performed. They gave an incredible performance fast, fantastic and

432 Foulkes, p. 179.
fabulous...This is not something to describe but something to see."\textsuperscript{434} Journalists noted that the ushers actually watched the show as well as the audience because it was so engrossing.\textsuperscript{435} Newspapers emphasized again and again that the Moiseyev was something special and that Americans had not seen before.

![Figure 2 From The Russian Suite\textsuperscript{436}](image)

The premiere, in addition to being widely covered by New York newspapers, was also reported across North America. The national press coverage agreed with local coverage as to the exuberant reception of the troupe and audiences’ visible excitement during its first performances. The \textit{Toronto Daily Star} reported that “The company was cheered with uninhibited delight throughout the program, which went in heavily for unmitigated gusto, virtuosity and

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{435}Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{436}Chudnovsky, p. 24.
\end{itemize}
The makeup of the first-night audience was also commented upon: among the 3,600 attendees were prominent New Yorkers as well as celebrities and representatives of the State Department and United Nations diplomats. The Moiseyev premiere was certainly not a typical performance at the Met; it was a celebrated politicized event that garnered American interest nationwide than usual because of the Cold War political implications.

**Popularity Gauged by Ticket Sales**

After the initial success at the Metropolitan Opera, Sol Hurok recognized that “New Yorkers can't get enough of the Moiseyev.” He decided to add more New York performances to the troupe’s tour in late June and to change the venue to Madison Square Garden, which would allow more people to attend each performance. Hurok announced additional performances for June 20th through 22nd, but even this was not enough, and he added four more performances on June 24th, 25th and 28th. In total, New Yorkers alone would pay $365,000 for the Metropolitan Opera House performances. In the added-on performances at Madison Square Garden, the venue experienced the largest advance mail order sale (receiving 18,000 ticket order requests) in its history.

In New York, the Moiseyev clearly had no trouble selling tickets in abundance. Elsewhere, the Moiseyev proved similarly popular: “Detroit, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington, St. Louis, Cleveland, Philadelphia and Boston report solid advance sell-outs and new box office records.” The Boston Garden sold over 6,000 seats in the first

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441 “Still More Moiseyev Perfs.,” Dance Magazine, p. 3.
possible day to purchase tickets and sold a record $30,000 in advanced tickets.\textsuperscript{442} The ticket buying frenzy made good press. One Eugene Groden of Belmont, Massachusetts, told \textit{The Boston Globe} his story of struggling to get a ticket. Mr. Groden, an army veteran and a “devotee of the ballet since he fought the Soviets in Russia,” greatly desired to see the Moiseyev perform. However, he was unable to buy tickets in advance because of work. The article goes on to relate how in a desperate attempt, he showed up at the Boston Garden the night of the performance. However: “There were no tickets. Well-dressed folks were streaming through the lobby and he watched them enviously.” The article highlights Mr. Groden's misery at being unable to attend this highly anticipated event and how disappointed he felt watching other Americans pour in through the Garden's doors. Happily, Mr. Groden was able to buy a ticket from a well-dressed lady, and though he paid a hefty price for it, was finally able to see the Moiseyev.\textsuperscript{443} The ticket sales numbers and press coverage indicate that the Moiseyev was the “must see” event of the time period and an American obsession.

\textit{Exposure to the Moiseyev}

Newspapers offered different estimates of how many people saw the Moiseyev during its tour. \textit{Dance Magazine} reported that more than 100,000 people attended the performances at the Boston Garden alone.\textsuperscript{444} Soviet records carefully counted the number of tickets sold and also the number of estimated viewers who watched the one-hour special featuring the Moiseyev on the \textit{Ed Sullivan Show}, a nationally televised Sunday evening variety show.

\textsuperscript{442} “Moiseyev Tickets,” Boston Globe, 14 May 1958, p. 41. 
\textsuperscript{443} Joe Harrington, “Big Milk Order...But Only Chin High,” Boston Globe, 4 July 1958, p. 19. 
\textsuperscript{444} “Still More Moiseyev Perfs.,” Dance Magazine, p. 3.
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The Moiseyev appeared on the *Ed Sullivan Show*, at the end of the 1958 tour, functioned as the culmination of the troupe’s success. Sullivan’s aggressive tactics to engage the troupe for a performance further demonstrated this success. He spent $200,000 to engage the Moiseyev (even though he usually had a limit of $100,000) \(^{446}\) and he featured the ensemble for the entirety

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of his show, the first time this had happened since the program's inception in the late 1940s. The Moiseyev appeared on June 29th, 1958 with an audience spanning North America.

The New York audience received the Moiseyev with wild enthusiasm. Throughout the tour, the Moiseyev encountered "enthusiastic audiences and ultra-laudatory reviews in every city of its tour..." Despite foreknowledge of the group, the dances it performed, and its virtuosity, audiences were freshly surprised by what they saw on stage. Critics and reporters across the country described the Moiseyev as alternatingly indescribable and explosive. In Chicago, wrote the music-dance critic Claudia Cassidy, about the premiere: "There were times in the Civic Opera House last night when so much rocket power exploded on stage that I suspected those sputniks had been launched by especially selected Moiseyevs." The explosive nature of the Moiseyev dancers could be directly tied to Soviet space capabilities and Soviet advances in the space race. The Toronto Telegram reported: "The spoken or written word is hardly adequate to describe the details effects of these superbly trained dancers, most of them in their early twenties who danced unmistakably with joy last night at Maple Leaf Garden." Across North America, Americans reacted with awe and fascination to the Moiseyev performances.

Another Toronto journalist confessed to listeners on WXYZ Radio: "I think what I witnessed at Masonic Auditorium last night will live in my memory with the top half dozen theatrical events of my life, for the appearance of the Moiseyev Dancers generated an electric charge that went deeper than dancing itself." The Moiseyev functioned as a significant event in North Americans’ lives. Those who saw the company felt changed by their experience.

451 Excerpt from Show World on WXYZ Radio, 13 May 1958, page 8A, NYPL – PAD.
While some reporters had been critical of the fact that it was the Moiseyev, a folk dance troupe, rather than the Bolshoi, a classical ballet troupe, which had been sent, they were quickly silenced by the performances. Rather than criticizing the folk dances on display, they noted how Moiseyev proved able to make the dances not only entertaining, but also fascinating. At the San Francisco Opera House, the audience “stood up and roared some of the longest, loudest bravos in local stage history” while the Chicago Opera House, “There were more than 10 curtain calls and the dancers seemed as moved by the applause as the audience by the performance... From the opening suite of old Russian dances to the rousing Ukrainian suite finale there was a rising roar from the packed 3,600 seat Opera House.” Americans responded loudly and without restraint.

Moiseyev's Opinion of the American Tour Results

Moiseyev deemed the tour a “thundering success” and a triumph. The Soviet government also recognized it as such. After returning to the Soviet Union, Moiseyev presented a short report of the tour in the United States and Canada. He noted that during the tour, which, the ensemble gave seventy performances to approximately 519,000 viewers as well appearing on the Ed Sullivan Show to an additional forty million viewers from across North America. Moiseyev noted that the American audience expressed curiosity and strong interest in the ensemble long before the group actually arrived on American soil. He related the scramble for tickets, adding that the first day of in-person ticket sales for the Metropolitan Opera performances featured “nasty rain” but still, “several thousand people stood in line for their turn

Moiseyev emphasized the political and cultural significance of the tour’s New York debut. The first-night audience included major political figures, such as the Soviet ambassadors, State Department representatives, and ambassadors from India, Indonesia, Iran and other countries, as well as cultural figures, including the president of the Metropolitan Opera Anthony Bliss, choreographer Martha Graham, pianist Arthur Rubinstein, actor-activist Paul Robeson and others. Other important political figures made appearances at later Moiseyev performances, including General Secretary of the United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld, who attended two performances by the ensemble. Unable to attend, President Eisenhower sent a personal letter expressing his regrets. The performance began, with the American and Soviet anthems, which the audience met the first dance with a “thundering” response. An “explosion of applause” greeted each new dance, and when the final piece ended, “the hall from the gallery to the orchestra/parterre applauded for almost 15 minutes.”

After the performance, the audience “did not head home, but rather to the artist’s exit. They flooded between Broadway and Seventh Avenue and in the flood [of people] waited forty minutes for the artists of the ensemble.”

Moiseyev reported that the audience’s enthusiasm for the Moiseyev continued throughout the tour, and in some places, the price of a black-market ticket cost as much as eighty dollars. However, in his report Moiseyev also noted less positive responses. In his memoirs Moiseyev noted a few other, less positive reactions to the premiere. Utilizing his rudimentary English skills, Moiseyev overheard reporters at the premiere phoning in their reactions, which included,
“‘They [the dancers] were forced to dance so well, because if they danced badly, when they returned to Russia they would be banished to the salt mines,’” and “‘These artists, of course, the KGB, trained to be a success.’” In Los Angeles, “a group of anti-Soviet organizations” marched in front of the venue holding posters calling for the boycott of the performances. At the same time Moiseyev emphasized that the picketers were not violent, welcomed an invitation to view the show, and did not appear again the next day. In Boston similar protesters appeared, and this time, members of the audience angrily yelled “‘Beat it!’” at them. One young audience member grabbed a protestor’s sign resulting in a “Mighty buzz off approval in the audience.”

When there were protests to the ensemble’s performances, Moiseyev underlined that welcoming Americans far outnumbered the disapproving Americans and that the protestors were not particularly stubborn.

Moiseyev’s emphasis on the enthusiasm and the majority of Americans’ disapproval of protestors served Moiseyev’s personal agenda. His report to the Ministry of Culture demonstrated the effectiveness of cultural exchange in general and the American adoration for the Moiseyev specifically. This solidified the Moiseyev’s position as a continued diplomatic tool and Moiseyev’s position as head of the troupe.

As impresario and organizer of the tour in all its details, Sol Hurok did everything in his power to make the tour a success. Hurok ensured that all the requested rehearsals took place and that the dancers had enough time off and time to travel without getting too worn out. Though the ensemble had feared the quality of accompanists during the tour, “our fears were unfounded. American musicians played flawlessly everywhere, and they only had one hour to learn our

463 RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 66, p. 9
464 Moiseyev, I Recall, p. 135.
repertoire."\(^{465}\)

At the same time, not everything was within Hurok’s power. The Moiseyev ran into problems with American officials. For instance, before the tour a great deal of heated discussion took place about whether or not the dancers should be permitted to fly on Soviet planes into the US. This discussion ended with the dancers being forced to take commercial flights on other airlines. Moiseyev sensed that the police assigned to the performances agreed with the protestors and were accordingly less eager to keep them under control and from interfering with the dancers and the audience. Finally, officials sometimes prevented the dancers from visiting places they wanted to learn more about. For instance, Jack London’s house north of San Francisco was off-limits.\(^{466}\)

**Official Soviet Reaction to the Ensemble’s 1958 American Tour**

The Soviet government agreed with Moiseyev’s report and his opinion of how well the tour had gone. The Ministry of Culture reported on the results of the tours to North America, noting the complex conditions under which the ensemble worked and noting the number of viewers who experienced the company through its live and television performances. The Ministry of Culture said the concerts were “a huge success” and furthered the “development of cultural ties between the Soviet Union, United States and Canada and of the feeling of sympathy [among them].”\(^{467}\) Accordingly, the Soviet government awarded the ensemble bonuses of 75,000 rubles for its contributions to Soviet art and cultural exchange.\(^{468}\) The government also

\(^{465}\) Ibid.

\(^{466}\) Ibid.

\(^{467}\) “Report by the Ministry of Culture about the results of the tour of the State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble of the USSR in the United States and Canada,” RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 73, p. 1.

\(^{468}\) RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 74, p. 2.
awarded the dancers awards recognizing the ensemble’s contribution to presenting a positive image of Soviet art while Moiseyev himself received the Order of Lenin among other awards.469

Books published in the wake of the tour emphasized the extremely high anticipation Americans felt toward the ensemble’s arrival. This anticipation included numerous photographs, articles and discussion of the potential for breaking down barriers. The first few performances in New York “exceeded all expectations. American audiences cheered and applauded wildly. Everywhere the press paid ungrudging tribute to the Soviet dancers.”470 They also emphasized the impact of the tour on Americans. Wherever the Moiseyev dancers went, “An atmosphere of friendship, good cheer and hospitality surrounded the dancers.”471

Soviet writers took note of how average Americans wanted to meet the Soviet dancers and felt the ensemble accomplished its goal of easing tensions between the Soviet Union and United States. Betty Conrad, a mother of ten, for instance, wrote to the company and invited the dancers to her home to meet her family. She wrote that “‘We shall never forget the Sunday performance you gave,’” and that she wanted to learn more about the dancers on a personal level. Indeed, after the ensemble’s television performance, the “‘Sibias” television company [CBS] was literally deluged with letters and telegrams in which spectators expressed their appreciation and gratitude.” While there were some protestors, contemporary Americans did not take the Moiseyev protestors seriously and claimed they did not represent the majority of the American populace.472 Americans dealt with the protestors promptly, forcing one audience member to leave after “disrespectful behaviour during the playing of the Soviet Union’s national

470 Ibid., p. 94.
471 Ibid., p. 95.
472 Ibid., pp. 95-97.
Most Americans loved and adored the dancers. Sol Hurok summed up that the Moiseyev “was the most talented dance group which had ever visited the U.S.A.”

Contemporary Soviet accounts depicted Americans bowing down before the superior Soviet cultural skill and expression.

Americans recognized Igor Moiseyev individually for his superb work in folk dance with a Dance Magazine Award in 1961 in recognition of his choreographic achievements but also for his political achievements. Moiseyev was the first non-American to receive this award and it served as fodder for the Soviet regime’s depiction of Moiseyev’s success as a diplomatic tool. Clearly the American audience viewed the Moiseyev as something they had never seen before and that the ensemble’s skill elevated folk dance to a whole new level. The ensemble “brought to the American stage the breath and spirit of a vast faraway land and its many peoples who were full of creative virtue and unconquerable optimism.”

The Moiseyev dancers received many invitations to view American cultural expression. For instance, the dancers visited the New York studio of Mikhail Gherman (originally from the Ukraine) and learned the American Square Dance, which became a popular encore in the ensemble’s North American performances. Indeed, Americans expressed an avid interest in Soviet folk dance, and throughout the tour begged the ensemble “for advice, for a lesson, or a lecture.”

Igor Moiseyev complied in New York, where he held a lecture on folk dance for

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473 Ibid., p. 97.
474 Ibid., p. 95.
477 Chudnovsky, p. 95.
478 Sheremetyevskaya, p. 93.
choreographers and dance instructors.479 Contemporary accounts emphasized how much Americans desired to learn from the Moiseyev and to try to imitate the dancers’ skills.

Soviet accounts concluded by noting that, “the American press had never paid such unanimous tribute to any form of artistic endeavour… All the newspapers and magazines, regardless of their political sympathies, al reviewers, whatever their standing, spoke in such high superlatives as ‘fantastic,’ ‘superb,’ ‘magnificent’ of the Soviet dancers’ preferences.”480 The ensemble was an incredibly effective diplomatic tool, more so than any ambassador or traditional means of forming a political understanding between countries. Additionally, Americans admired Soviet accomplishments in the arts and in science and technology and wanted to learn more about Soviet people. They wanted peace and friendship with the Soviet Union. The cultural exchange initiative proved incredibly successful and, as Moiseyev put it, “‘It is to our mutual cultural advantage… [to continue cultural exchange] to consolidate ties of friendship between peoples… The Cold war retreats before the advance of art.’”481

Reception of Later Tours

The Moiseyev toured the United States several times during the Cold War, with return visits in 1961, 1965, 1970. While here the focus is on the first 1958 tour and the initial renewal of contact between the United States and Soviet Union, it is worth noting whether the popularity of the Moiseyev continued or if interest faded as the company became more familiar. The heightened anticipation described above in 1958 stemmed from certain factors that influenced the company’s initial reception. First of all, the Moiseyev Dance Company was the first Soviet cultural presentation of the Lacy-Zarubin Agreement. Second, Americans had never seen the

479 Ibid.
480 Chudnovsky, p. 96.
481 Ibid., pp. 96-7.
troupe perform live before. Third, Americans were eager to see “real” Soviets in person. This anticipation and the later overwhelmingly positive reception could easily have dissipated once the Moiseyev itself, and Soviet peoples in general, became familiar elements in American culture and life.

Once more, advance press for the later tours stoked anticipation. The Lakeland Ledger noted before the 1961 tour that “Moscow is preparing a new 'cultural offensive' against the United States in the form of the popular Moiseyev Ballet” with Igor Moiseyev proclaiming, “'Our hearts are beating wildly... America has given our company many new friends and we have been working hard in preparation for this trip overseas.’”

Looking at the 1961 tour, one finds that Americans continued to be fascinated by the Moiseyev. The audience once more applauded its performances as at the Metropolitan Opera House:

To take his point of departure from the rich folk heritage of the Russians and to carry this still formless and rough-hewn material to a dizzying height of theatrical excitement and intrinsic achievement is no mean feat and is probably un paralleled by any folk-oriented dance companies anywhere. 483

Critics continued to be impressed by the Moiseyev on its return visits, and greater familiarity did not seem to diminish reception or anticipation. In 1961, the initial New York performances were again sold out. 484 As before, Americans clamored for tickets to the Moiseyev and “In response to the overwhelming enthusiasm shown by audiences during their two recent NYC engagements,” four performances at Madison Square Garden were added. 485 Journalists reported that it appeared the Moiseyev’s 1961 tour would be just as successful as its 1958 tour. It “has

482 “Moscow is Preparing,” Lakeland Ledger, 5 April 1961, p. 4.
already racked up a record-breaking advance sale for the Met,” wrote the *Herald-Tribune*, “and will, undoubtedly, leave the $1,000,000 mark far behind when their tour's gross is totaled.”

Critics admitted attending performances with the foreknowledge of what they were going to see:

> We went to see the Moiseyev Dance Company, knowing what to expect...knowing about the insouciant fellow who soars over the girls' heads in *Gopak*...knowing about the wildly gliding circle of Partisans, whose very speed seems to sear away the stage, making it a cloud-leaden plain. We had experienced the group awareness that makes it possible for scores of dancers to move on a single impulse, as in *Venezelya*. Americans went to performances feeling that perhaps the Moiseyev dancers would be less thrilling now that they were a known quantity. However, this did not dampen their enthusiasm:

> “We did not expect the same impact, the same sense of utter surprise as the first time the company appeared in this country just three years ago,” wrote *Dance Magazine* critic Doris Herring, “But there it was again! New-sprung, newly endearing.” In Boston as well as New York, the Moiseyev again “captured” the city's attention and “added Boston Garden to their satellites.” Enthusiasm for the Moiseyev was described in similar terms as before: “From the moment the company of 100 men and women took stage,” wrote the *Boston Globe*’s Kevin Kelly, “they held the vast audience captive and breathless in a breakneck display of folk dance that, once again, proved the vigor of the Russian spirit in the perfection of an art form.”

While critics and audiences continued to be amazed by the Moiseyev on these later tours, some did admit that the dancers had received their “biggest ovation on their first trip to this country...”

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488 Ibid., p. 20.
This statement, however, does not reflect the majority of coverage, which claimed that once more Americans reacted in the same way as they had in 1958.

The 1965 tour elicited similarly positive reviews. On the New York performances:

“Inconceivably, the company seemed even stronger and more energetic than its previous visits, with the male contingent noticeably strengthened by the addition of a number of steel-sinewed youths.”491 Critics were impressed by the addition of a new dance, *Exercises*, which introduced audiences to the company’s training. Though dance critic Jacqueline Maskey “wondered if the rest of the program would pale in comparison,” such concerns were quickly allayed as “a smooth succession of a national dances from the Ukraine, Hungary, Byelorussia, Bulgaria and Poland, alternately swift-moving and stately, flowed across the stage.”492 While others noted that their reviews would not be as detailed as their previous ones, this did not take away from critics’ admiration for the skills and creativity displayed on stage. The Moiseyev was frequently compared with other folk dance groups that visited the United States, and was held up as the highest standard, with other groups judged as inferior.493

Americans did not always react the same way to other groups that came to the United States. When the Leningrad Kirov Ballet toured the United States in 1961, again with the guidance of Sol Hurok, it did not meet with the same success. One of Mr. Hurok’s associates, George Perper, wrote to the Ministry of Culture noting how the company “sustained heavy losses during the tour of the [Leningrad Kirov] ballet…[by] Mr. Hurok’s estimate, …$175,000.”494 In comparison with the Moiseyev, the Kirov did not fascinate Americans in the same way. While certainly the repertoire of the two groups was different – the Moiseyev utilizing folk dance

492 Ibid., pp. 61-62.
494 Letter from George A. Perper to Ministry of Culture, RGALI, f 3162 o 1 d 226, 24.
creations and the Kirov classical ballet – the differing American response does demonstrate that Americans did not just respond wholeheartedly to any Soviet cultural representation in this time period. The Moiseyev had a particular appeal for Americans which was not easily duplicated by other dance troupes, including troupes utilizing folk dance as well.

In 1965 as before, the Moiseyev sold its tickets easily and quickly. In an interview by WNYC radio show host Marian Horosko (a former Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and New York City Ballet Dancer) with Igor Moiseyev and Sol Hurok, Hurok noted: “We have sold out all over.... It is evidence how much they [Americans] remember the Moiseyev company. It has planted in their mind itself.... The first two weeks is all sold out....sold $100,000 in advance in Madison Square Company.”

Americans continued to be eager to see the Moiseyev, despite greater familiarity with the troupe and access to other Soviet artists. While enthusiasm continued with this tour, criticism was offered as well. Jacqueline Maskey, writing in Dance Magazine, felt that the second half of the performance lagged in comparison to the first, though this was compensated for by Gopak’s performed as the finale, which “brought a roaring audience to its feet.”

The advent of official cultural exchange through the Lacy-Zarubin Agreement in 1958 marked a change in the Cold War atmosphere and a new level of openness between the United States and Soviet Union. While both superpowers desired to relax Cold War tensions through the use of cultural representatives, the United States may not have been prepared for just how enthusiastically the American audience would react to the State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble of the USSR’s first tour in 1958. The desire to see Soviet people for the first time certainly explained the high level of anticipation leading up to the ensemble’s arrival. However, the

495 Interview with Igor Moiseyev and Sol Hurok, Helen Gillespie as translator, hosted by Marian Horosko. Recorded in 1966 in Hurok’s New York office and broadcast by radio, NYPL- PAD.
496 Maskey, p. 165.
company’s success was based more on American’s fascination with the Soviet dancers’ skill and American’s ability to see past the Cold War narrative and view the dancers as people, rather than as polar opposites in their ideals and way of life.

On the Soviet side, the Moiseyev’s success established the effectiveness of cultural exchange and especially the American interest in the Moiseyev in particular. This led to the many cultural exchange initiatives thereafter and the Moiseyev’s continued numerous tours to the United States and across the globe. Even as the Moiseyev returned other times and performed many of the same dances, Americans continued to find the troupe incredibly engaging on stage and off; the troupe had a particular hold on the American audience. In order to better understand this American fascination with the Moiseyev, it is helpful to break down and categorize the kinds and patterns of American reception, both positive and negative.
CHAPTER 4: American Identity During the Cold War: Categories of Reception

In 1958 and on later tours, Americans eagerly awaited the Moisseyev Dance Company and lauded their performances. The group elicited a high degree of fascination on the part of the American audience and, on the basic level, proved successful in its efforts to sway American opinion. Viewing the Moisseyev overall highlights this success but, in order to fully evaluate the nature of the American response, examining the variety of responses is necessary.

America Goes Ga-Ga For The Moisseyev

To say that Americans positively received the Moisseyev company would be a huge understatement. Regardless of political leanings and affiliations, critics across the board praised the Moisseyev and noted the incredibly enthusiastic reception on the part of the American audience. Such positive reception ranged in description from “The reception given by the American people to the Moisseyev Dance Company is a sensational one,”497 to the acknowledgment that the Moisseyev is full of “superhuman vitality and unbounded charm.”498 Responses to the Moisseyev were, for the most part, passionate and fervent with praise.

These responses can be broken down thematically in order to better understand the nuances of the categories of response. Reception and response is gauged through press coverage, tickets sales, contemporary interviews, personal notes and remembrances and, finally, Igor Moisseyev’s own report of the Moisseyev’s experience in America. While here the response is broken down categorically, it should be emphasized that in terms of overall reception, Americans actively received the Moisseyev. This active reception meant, at the basic level, curiosity to see the group perform and a desire to learn anything and everything about the dancers. On a higher

level, active reception meant communicating with Igor Moiseyev personally, asking to meet the dancers, and interacting with them off-stage.

*Hungry for Details*

American audiences did not receive the Moiseyev passively. They wanted to know every little detail about the dancers: what they liked to eat, what souvenirs they bought, if they were married, if they liked American music – the list goes on. Indeed, reporters chose to highlight these likes and dislikes in their reports of how the Moiseyev dancers experienced America. They would devote entire articles to the dancers' reactions to everything American -- especially the food -- in comparison to what they enjoyed at home in the Soviet Union:

They grew terribly fond of American pie, which they call 'priog.' [sic] They have gone in rather heavily for the hotdog. They discovered waffles, and like them. They are also pretty happy over American pancakes, which they call 'blini.' In Russia, they have caviar and sour cream with a similar cake. They've gone crazy about milkshakes, especially chocolate-flavored.499

The idea of Soviets enjoying American hot dogs and even labeling American foods with their Russian equivalents tickled Americans. In particular, the press emphasized the collective sweet tooth of the ensemble, noting how the dancers happily consumed numerous desserts yet remained physically fit. The American audience soaked up details of Soviet eating habits with just as much enthusiasm as they had received the dancers’ performances. They very much appreciated the opportunity to learn what Soviets liked about American life and American products. Accordingly every small thing the dancers experienced in the United States became intriguing news in the American press and the American audience readily received such reports.

When describing the dancers offstage, reporters frequently noted what they ate. During the tour, the dancers had the opportunity to eat in the factory cafeteria. Here it was obvious that

“none of the members of the group are dieting. Nearly all of them chose strawberries and returned for second helpings. ‘Yes, of course we have strawberries in Moscow,’ said one with an injured air, ‘but these are FROZEN strawberries.’”  

Reporters were amazed at how the dancers managed to eat so much and still stay in shape. They felt the American audience would want to know all about what the dancers ate and which American foods, even frozen strawberries, they liked. Press coverage highlighted Soviet desire for American food products, especially those the press deemed unavailable in the Soviet Union. The press amplified each new experience of something specifically American and showed Soviets enjoying the fruits of American labor and ideals.

This discussion of food included health and healthy living choices. While the details of Soviet food selections amused most Americans, others worried about the impression the Soviet dancers would draw about what Americans ate and their lifestyles. Elizabeth Palmer wrote to Igor Moiseyev personally to express certain concerns regarding the dancers’ diets. Palmer followed the press coverage of the Moiseyev’s performances and how the dancers occupied themselves off-stage. She identified herself as a nutritionist and stated that press coverage of the dancers featured them consuming candy bars, ice cream and soda. Palmer offered her advice:

As a nutritionist, I hope that they do not make too much of a habit of this. It is well to suggest to them that after their taste curiosity is satisfied, to observe the average American and to notice that our health standards are not what they should be. It is necessary, to maintain radiant health and energy needed for any strenuous type of work such as yours, to stay as close as possible to a high nutrition diet.

Palmer warned against “refined bakery products” and hot dogs (“poor man's food”). She went on to note that in the cities, specifically in Chicago, the water was not the cleanest and that the

dancers should instead purchase bottled spring water as it tasted better and was healthier. Palmer feared that the Soviet dancers would be corrupted by this aspect of American life. Americans formed an avid audience for details about the Soviet dancers’ experience in America and became active participants in their reception to the Moiseyev. Food was one topic in which Americans wanted to share American traditions and more recent fads, as well as opinions about what formed the basis of a good, healthy diet.

**Personal Notes to the Moiseyev**

Perhaps even more telling than the published accounts of American curiosity about the Moiseyev dancers are the personal letters, notes and thank you cards sent to Igor Moiseyev and the company during their tour. These were archived by the Soviet Union along with the documents related to the tour. A typical example: Ona Storkins Mamaroneck, in a note addressed to Igor Moiseyev, proclaimed that “On Saturday, May 3, I had the greatest thrill of my life” (this, of course, being the day she saw the Moiseyev at the Metropolitan Opera House). Ona felt she made a personal connection to the dancers on stage: “The dancers' reactions to the audience's applause in the end was so friendly that it made a perfect ending to a perfect performance.” Wanting to ensure she would never forget this exciting moment, Ona asked Moiseyev to send her the pictures and names of all the performers (or at least those of the soloists). She was more than willing to pay for these and thanked Moiseyev once more for the performance.

Ona’s note further underlines positive American reception to the Moiseyev but also the perception of a personal connection that Americans felt toward the dancers. Certainly

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502 Ibid.
503 Letter from Ona Storkins Mamaroneck to Igor Moiseyev, dated 11 May 1958, RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 105.
Americans viewed the dancing as wonderful entertainment, but their reception went deeper than mere appreciation for the dances. Americans did not view the Moiseyev in a strictly bifurcated manner, as audience and performers, American and Soviet, democracy and communism. They presented a more nuanced view of the dancers and of themselves and how the two fit together.

Audience members found that enthusiasm was immediate, as was the urge to express thanks. One Mr. Roger J. Durmont penned a letter on June 2nd, noting, along with the date, that the letter was written at 1 AM. Addressing Igor Moiseyev directly, he said that he had only just arrived home from the San Francisco Opera House and the Moiseyev program and, upon his arrival, sat down to write to Igor Moiseyev. He congratulated Moiseyev on the skill and success of the troupe, observing, “It was a memorable evening one that I shall not soon forget.”

Immigrants and those of Russian and Eastern European heritage also wrote to the troupe. Peter Gawura of Dearborn, Michigan wrote: “On behalf of the Ukrainian people who were born in Western Ukraine, and those who were born in United States, I wish to thank you for your wonderful dance performances in Detroit, Michigan.” Mr. Gawura regretted that the Ukrainians did not get to meet the dancers and emphasized that he would have liked to invite the dancers to his home also, so that his family and friends could meet them. In lieu of this, he sent this “letter of friendship” and hoped to hear back from the troupe in the near future. Americans wanted to interact with Igor Moiseyev and the Moiseyev dancers on a personal level. They did not view the dance troupe as just a piece of propaganda meant to change Americans’ opinions of the Soviet Union and communism. Rather, they realized that the Moiseyev had a deep impact on them on a personal, individual level.

504 Greeting card from Roger J. Dumont to Moiseyev, dated 2 June 1958, RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 32.
505 Letter from Peter Gawura, dated 11 August 1958, RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 123 p. 1.
506 Ibid., f 2483 o 1 d 267124 p. 2 and 125 p. 3.
American Desire for Soviet Admiration of Capitalism

The company’s tour of the Ford Automobile Factory while in Detroit was one event that received particular political emphasis. This tour was covered not just in the local press, but those in outside papers, like the New York Post. The dancers were quite polite, made notes, and took many pictures. Many noted how the Russians were “typical” tourists, acting like “a senior class from Dubuque.” The fact that they were “typical” proved a disappointment for some. The tour's bus driver, Bill Mulroy, “groused” that “I can't tell them from the regular tourists.”

However, even though the overall group gave an impression of being like any other tourist group (or even a high school basketball team), “Two of the girls, with waist-length pigtails and sad Russian eyes, made you want to hum, 'Ochi Chornie,'” an allusion to the Ukrainian song Ochi chyornye (Black Eyes).

When asked his impressions, one dancer claimed, “We have never seen anything like this before,” while another noted, “The factory is so clean” but refused to compare it with the Soviet equivalent (despite prompting by American reporters). The American press yearned for direct comparisons between capitalism and communism, ideally with capitalism being labeled the superior of the two. However, the dancers were not willing to oblige in this instance. The dancers were most interested in seeing the automobiles coming off the assembly line completed and ready to go. A blond dancer, Susanna Agranovskya, loved the convertibles and exclaimed how “You just push a button and the top folds back!”

The American press vied for Soviet reactions to this model of American capitalism. They hoped to draw out, not just positive

508 Ibid.
509 Ibid. This song is often identified as Russian.
511 Ibid., p. 3.
opinions toward the factory, but also comparisons with Soviet factories and products, no doubt hoping the Soviet dancers would conclude that America’s factories and cars were better.

The presence of KGB agents in their midst no doubt contributed to the dancers’ reluctance to draw direct comparisons between American and Soviet industry. Sending KGB agents, or “companions” was an aspect of Soviet exchange programs that continued through the fall of the Soviet Union. These agents accompanied the Moiseyev dancers on this tour, future tours and tours undertaken by other cultural groups and figures. Communist Party officials and the KGB did careful background checks on all the dancers prior to their departure from Moscow. The accompanying KGB agents imposed a curfew on the dancers and made sure no one got out of line or traveled alone. These KGB agents did not precisely blend with the rest of the dancers and other supporting personnel. As Edward Ivanyan, a Ministry of Culture official, put it, “It was even funny, because they were immediately noticeable to both sides, and had meaningless titles like Personnel Director or Director of the Raising of the Curtains.”

For the dancers, the message was clear: everyone was to conduct themselves in a manner befitting a representative from the Soviet Union to its rival country. This meant presenting a positive image of the Soviet Union at all times and minimizing exposure to possible harmful influences.

Whether Americans recognized the KGB presence or not is debatable. Some critics and members of the audience thought the presence of the KGB was inevitable and that they could even identify specific KGB agents among the dancers while other critics and reporters did not take this at all seriously and felt that the cultural exchange agreement was being followed to the letter, which precluded the need to send intelligence agents with the dancers. Most newspapers did not comment on the potential KGB presence and instead simply noticed that the dancers

“seem to be able to go about New York freely without supervision whenever they have free
time.” This, however, did not tell the full story of a Soviet cultural exchange representative’s
experience abroad during the Soviet period. In a recent interview, singer Dmitri Hvorostovsky
recalled his two female “companions” who accompanied him on a trip to the Toulouse Singing
Competition in 1988. Hvorostovsky did not find the two women too much of an encumbrance,
but this changed when he won the competition:

I was standing on stage receiving a huge ovation from the audience, holding the
envelope stuffed with the prize money in French francs, the KGB boss lady stood
there offstage shouting: “HVOR-O-STOV-SKY, give me the money now!” That
was her mission – to get the money so that the Soviet government could take its
share. But there was still plenty left over to buy lots of presents to bring back to
my friends in Krasnoyarsk.

Though the Soviet regime selected artists like Hvorostovsky to represent Soviet culture and
identity, this did not necessarily mean regime allowed the artists greater freedom or favors.

Russian pianist Vladimir Ashkenazy toured the United States in 1958, after the
Moiseyev’s triumph. He noted how the practice of assigning artists a KGB companion further
contributed to the visiting artist’s financial difficulties. Because the hosting impresario or
organization had to pay for a companion’s (or companions’) travel and board in addition to the
artist’s this often meant the artist stayed in “third class hotels” and other inconveniences in order
to keep the host’s costs low. The impresario or hosting organization, in the case of Ashkenazy’s
US tour, Sol Hurok, paid Ashkenazy about what he would have received for a performance in
Russia and from this, Ashkenazy had to pay a fee to the Soviet Union and for his food and any

516 Ibid.
other additional expenses. Ashkenazy outlined the role of the KGB agents: “to spy on the artists and to check up on their contacts abroad, or to discourage too much fraternization. They were also supposed to line up their own contacts with people who could be helpful to the Soviet Union and garner and useful information for the KGB’s dossiers at home.”\textsuperscript{518} The result for Ashkenazy was a feeling of intense isolation during his American tour.\textsuperscript{519}

Once he returned to the Soviet Union, the KGB asked him all about his trip and who he met with or spoke to and these new acquaintances’ background. Of the people Ashkenazy spoke of, the KGB in turn questioned him about their vices and anything else “they could make use of later.”\textsuperscript{520} Though the Soviet Union desired to accomplish cultural and political goals through the cultural exchange program in order to relax tensions between the superpowers, it held ulterior motives as well in sending artists and others abroad to the United States. Thus when the Moiseyev dancers visited the United States and spoke with reporters, they had to be careful what they said and who they spoke to because of the KGB presence and the intense scrutiny they experienced as part of the tour. Accordingly, American reporters questioned the dancers about what they liked about America and how it compared with the Soviet Union, the dancers could not answer without carefully considering their responses and how the KGB and the Soviet regime would react.

\textit{Reception of the Moiseyev in Light of the Cold War}

Reporters felt that the way in which politicians reacted to the Moiseyev was important. \textit{The Washington Post} reported on the number of dignitaries and politicians, including Secretary

\footnotesize{517} Jasper Parrott and Vladimir Ashkenazy, Beyond Frontiers, NY: Atheneum, 1985, p. 73.  
\footnotesize{518} Ibid., p. 70.  
\footnotesize{519} Ibid., p. 72.  
\footnotesize{520} Ibid., 78.}
of State Dulles and CIA Director Allen Dulles, who saw and met with the Moiseyev. Secretary of State Dulles told the dancers, “One of the things in our Constitution is the pursuit of happiness. You obviously are so happy yourselves that you have given some happiness to everyone in the audience.”

Political events of the Cold War were not ignored when discussing the Moiseyev. Indeed, it was during a Moiseyev performance that Secretary Dulles first heard the news that the Hungarian political leader Imre Nagy had been executed for his role in the 1956 Hungarian Uprising. So taken was he with the dancers that he went so far as to make a surprise visit backstage to meet the dancers during intermission. He told the dancers he felt the best term to describe the ensemble was “happiness,” which he then compared to the Declaration of Independence’s “phrase about ‘pursuit of happiness,’” and the way the dancers were “giving a good deal of happiness to the American people.”

Dulles reacted strongly to the dancers and felt they even could be compared to American values and history; they too could share an ideal put forth by America’s founding fathers. These enthusiastic sentiments contrasted strongly with the execution of Nagy. Upon learning of the execution during this same intermission, Dulles simply said how it was “‘tragic, tragic.’” Dulles noted the solemnness of this news but did not let it interfere with his appreciation for the Soviet cultural representatives who were sent over by the same government instigating the execution.

The impact of the cultural exchange on American relations with peoples living under Soviet rule did not escape the State Department, even though it continued to encourage cultural exchange. In a foreign service dispatch from Budapest on July 3rd, 1958, a US official reported to the State Department that the Americans’ favorable reception of the Moiseyev Dance

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523 “Mr. Dulles Calls Off Cold War for Three Hours,” The Sydney Morning Herald, 17 June 1958, p. 3.
524 Ibid.
Company did not go unnoticed behind the Iron Curtain. In Hungary, local papers related the great success of the Moiseyev in the United States, which could create an unfavorable view of the United States. Such reporting could serve as a:

fairly subtle reminder to the general reader that although the U.S. professes great horror and shock at the execution of Imre Nagy and compatriots, it does not feel called upon to take action to stop U.S.S.R. cultural attractions from appearing in America. At another level, which only the more gullible Hungarian would swallow, it appears to prove that the U.S. public in general holds no regard for the hostile statements of the ‘U.S. ruling circles’; by patronizing Soviet cultural exhibitions the American public is showing its basic sympathy with the Soviets.\textsuperscript{525}

Viewing the American actions as hypocritical could lead Hungarians to feel abandoned by America and its promise to support Hungarian claims to freedom.\textsuperscript{526}

Despite the reason for the Moiseyev’s visit -- that of fostering cultural exchange between the Soviet Union and United States -- some viewed the arts as functioning in a non-political space. Such critics argued that Americans received the Moiseyev without a thought for politics: “Completely ignoring the political implications,” wrote Dance Magazine editor Lydia Joel, “the U.S. public has lovingly accepted the dancers from Soviet Russia.”\textsuperscript{527} However, recognizing the reception as nonpolitical also involved using Cold War rhetoric to note its absence. Additionally, the Moiseyev could cause its audience to forget about politics as they fell under the Moiseyev’s spell: “For three hours a gaily caparisoned and festive gathering forgot about hydrogen bombs, intercontinental missiles and space-girdling satellites.”\textsuperscript{528} Some reporters felt there was no ideological message present in the Moiseyev's performance.\textsuperscript{529} Or at least, if there was one, it could be missed or ignored in light of the Moiseyev’s amazing display.

\textsuperscript{525} Foreign Service Dispatch from American Legation in Budapest to Department of State dated 3 July 1958, NARA 032/7-358.
\textsuperscript{526} Ibid.
The audience that went to see the Moiseyev was not necessarily liberal or left-leaning. As Chicago critic Ann Barzel pointed out, it was not a “‘friends of Russia’ crowd. In fact, when in respect to the visitors their national anthem was played after the 'Star Spangled Banner,’ a couple of dowagers in the third row conspicuously sat themselves down.” However, by the end of the performance, “they caught the enthusiasm and were waving back at the dancers, who, as is the custom in Slavic countries, applauded the audience.”530 The Moiseyev appeared to cut across political affiliations and the preconceived notions of its audience. This does not mean that the Americans in the Moiseyev audience were free of political associations. Cold War terminology penetrated the way both the press and individuals described the audience’s reactions, and opinions of the artistic value of the performances often went hand-in-hand with opinions of their political value.

Success in Bolstering Diplomatic Relations

Many admired the Soviet Union's choice in sending the Moiseyev because of its huge impact. Dance critic Walter Terry wrote in the New York Herald Tribune, “The Russians have made a mighty effective move in sending us a mass of smiling, richly talented ambassadors. For it is quite impossible not to like these spirited folk dancers.”531 Rabbi Mordecai Levy of Temple Beth Hillel in Mattapan, Massachusetts, wrote a letter to the editor of the Boston Globe lauding the Moiseyev's performance as “Sheer artistry; superb entertainment,” but also mentioning its political significance. In viewing the Moiseyev as an expression of folk culture, political differences seemed to ebb. Rabbi Levy encouraged further exchange: “If such endeavors were to increase, the chasms that divide people would be bridged. Every effort must be made to utilize

the cultural values of the two great nations, the Soviet Union and the United States, to bring about such a reality upon man's desire to accept his fellow man.”

The Moiseyev brought with it a certain confidence that world peace could be obtained and culture was an avenue through which to accomplish this. Americans thought it was an effective political tool, and some applauded its use and success.

According to reporters, the Moiseyev proved successful in eliciting better diplomatic relations between the peoples of the United States and the Soviet Union, not just in its performances and more formal cultural exchange, but also on a personal level. Members of the Moiseyev picked up the English language and certain terms commonly used by Americans. By late June of their tour, they glibly used phrases and terms including “Good morning,” “Goodbye,” “Hot,” and, reportedly their favorite, “O.K.”

An American woman traveling with the tour added that the dancers were delighted with their experience and that “the thing about their American tour which pleases them most is the friendliness of the American people, the generous applause from the audiences...They say they can 'feel' the friendship.”

The furthering of better relations through exchange was not one-way. Americans noted that the tour changed the dancers themselves, too.

The Moiseyev and cultural exchange generally came to be portrayed as a more effective way to calm tensions and encourage friendship, rather than traditional diplomacy. Alice Hughes of The Reading Eagle believed the Moiseyev far superior to any prior diplomatic moves:

“The Russian Moiseyev Dance Company in New York did more to unfreeze Soviet and American relations, it would seem, than all the planned propaganda and striped-pants diplomacy that has served to keep our two countries apart these many years. Some believe this cultural interchange of dance and piano music

534 Ibid.
may effect more harmony between Moscow and Washington than a blizzard of white papers flying between the two capitals.\textsuperscript{535}

The ineffective and flurried political diplomacy of “striped-pants” politicians and diplomats represents a sharp contrast to the colorful, costumed diplomacy of the Moiseyev dancers. Americans, according to Hughes, found the Moiseyev a more accessible way to learn about and understand the Soviet Union. Indeed, after the performance at Chicago's Opera House, \textit{The Milwaukee Journal} noted that while the newly arrived Russian ambassador “got a polite, though restrained welcome,” “another Russian product [The Moiseyev] was greeted with roaring enthusiasm.”\textsuperscript{536} The Moiseyev appeared to be able to reach people more successfully and on a different level than more customary political representatives. Reaction to the Moiseyev was so strong that some reporters implied that this troupe's reception could lead to a relaxation in Cold War tensions or even a further step toward more permanent peace. Immediately after the performance, “Bouquet after bouquet was delivered to the dancers, until it looked like a thing called the cold war could be only a myth.”\textsuperscript{537} The positive American reception to the Moiseyev seemed to have great implications for the current political situation.

Like members of the press, Americans on an individual basis were very much aware of the artistic and political impact of the Moiseyev performances. This knowledge is apparent in the notes and letters sent to the performers. For example, Jeanette McCoy wrote: “Your very presence and magnificent performance has brought to our hearts new inspiration and deeper love for your people and country. We are infinitely honored, and it is our dearest hope that one day we can all live as one.” Indeed, she insisted that “You have shown us new life.”\textsuperscript{538} Jeanette felt that she and other Americans received the positive message of mutual appreciation and friendly

\textsuperscript{535} Alice Hughes, “A Woman’s New York,” Reading Eagle, 21 April 1958, p. 11.
\textsuperscript{537} Joesf Mossman, “Standing Ovation Won by Russian Dancers,” p. 3.
\textsuperscript{538} Letter from Jeanette McCoy to Moiseyev dated 21 May 1958, RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 115, p. 1.
relations from the Moiseyev’s performance. For her the impact of the Moiseyev was huge; it brought a new perspective to light that was both artistically and politically inspiring. The Moiseyev was a family experience for many audience members. Debby Jacobs wrote in gratitude to the troupe after seeing one of the Los Angeles performances along with her husband and two children:

On behalf of my husband and children as well as for myself, I want to thank you for sharing with us your extraordinary talents and artistry. The enthusiasm, happiness, humor, friendliness, and love expressed so magnificently through your dancing, will be long-lasting with us.  

Mrs. Jacobs furthermore expressed her desire to have the Moiseyev return again in the future but also to be able to see and meet other Soviet cultural representatives in order to foster a better understanding between the United States and the Soviet Union. According to Mrs. Jacobs, the Moiseyev was accessible to Americans of all ages and had a big emotional impact on her entire family. She was certain this impact would translate directly into better political relations between the Soviet Union and United States.

The letters above represented the majority of Americans’ view of the Moiseyev as a wonderful example of the benefits of cultural exchange, as discussed earlier in this chapter and in Chapter Three. However, some Americans doubted the validity of any positive political outcomes because of which Americans actually attended the performances; namely the middle and upper classes. One American felt he had to tell Igor Moiseyev the “truth” about who attended the company’s performances: “the audience you have been playing before here in America is not representative of the true American working class. But rather the upper-middle class and privileged few of our Capitalist Society. Only about 20% of your audience has been

540 Ibid.
made up of workers and artists." The author demonstrated Marxist influence in the way he described who was able to attend the performances and who did not. He derided this state of affairs and noted how the Moiseyev performances sold out way in advance making it more difficult for the everyday working man to purchase tickets and see the performances. Additionally, “hundreds of tickets have been bought by selfish individuals for resale (by scalpers) for as much as $15.00 a ticket – way beyond the means of the average worker, student or artist.” However, the author still very much appreciated the efforts of the Moiseyev and noted that:

Like the Russian proverb of old – here in America we have a saying, “all that glitters is not gold.” Or as Ilya Ehrenburg, the dean of Soviet journalists once put it ”America is a land of glittering chromium and fancy drug stores – but the American people themselves are sick – for they have lost their souls to Tin Gods.”

The author of this letter criticized the American way of life and American capitalism. He saw Americans as greedy and materialistic and that the kind of American who had the opportunity to see the Moiseyev represented the bourgeoisie rather than the average American worker.

American Protests Against the Moiseyev

Not all Americans agreed that the Moiseyev helped make leaps and bounds in international relations between the superpowers. Nor did all agree that even encouraging cultural exchange and allowing the troupe to come to the United States was a good idea. Though the positive reception of the Moiseyev is underlined above, there is another side of the story worth noting. In several cities the Moiseyev encountered picketers outside their performance venue holding up a variety of signs condemning the exchanges. In Los Angeles, picketers held signs

541 Undated, anonymous letter, RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 96 p. 2.
542 Ibid., RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 97, p. 3. letter
543 Ibid., RGALI f 2483 o 1 d 267, 95, p. 4.
with slogans such as “Free Hungary!” and “Red Butchers!” The picketers at the Los Angeles protest were made up of “anti-Communist Russians” who peacefully held up their signs but then left once the performance started. Inside the concert hall, one person did shout as the Soviet national anthem played, and some of the audience refused to stand during its performance. However, this was soon forgotten once the show started: “The rest of the evening was pure harmony between the lithe dancers and the rapt audience. The amazing leaps drew cheers and the humor evoked guffaws.” While the protests were part of the press coverage, reporters claimed that seeing the performance would change people’s minds. The dancers themselves did not entirely understand what was going on. “One English speaking member of the company noted that “Yet nowhere do we have this – the peekets [sic].” Moiseyev, in his brief report of the trip to the United States to the Soviet Ministry of Culture, noted the presence of the protestors but did not feel they represented the majority of American opinion.

Boston proved to be another city in which picketers very much made their presence known. Prior to the June 13th performance, 200 picketers, including many Soviet refugees, protested outside of Boston Garden. The press noted that Baptist Reverend Oswald A. Blumit of Quincy, Massachusetts, had smuggled bibles into countries behind the Iron Curtain. He claimed that “at least five high-ranking Communist secret servicemen’ are in the cast.” Reverend Blumit, however, led a peaceful protest and, once the performance started, left. At the end of the performance, a man got up on stage with a banner proclaiming “Wake Up, America! Now Moiseyev Dances, Next Khrushchev Bullets!” The man, later identified as a “Polish Freedom fighter,” had his banner pulled down by another member of the audience and the “Freedom

546 Ibid.
547 “Glamour Dancers,” p. 7.
fighter” fled the scene. While this incident proved significant enough to be included in reviews of the performance, it did not appear to have a major impact on the positive reception the troupe received in Boston.

The Moiseyev was unable to completely avoid American fears and tensions regarding domestic Communism. Arthur Lief, an American guest conductor playing with the Moiseyev and Hurok’s son-in-law, was fired by CBS-TV (he was to appear with the Moiseyev on the Ed Sullivan Show) after he would not tellHUAC whether or not he was a communist. A backdrop to this incident was the fear that Soviet spies might be using the Moiseyev tour to enter the United States. The *Boston Globe* reported that the CIA sent an agent to New York to attend a Moiseyev performance and that he was able to identify a dancer as “Col. Alexander Kudryavstev, a leading intelligence officer in the NKGB, who was immediately placed under surveillance by the FBI.”

One additional incident occurred during the Moiseyev's appearance on the Ed Sullivan Show. At the end of the performance, Igor Moiseyev gave a speech, and a loud snort could be heard. Mr. Sullivan, while looking stern, did not comment upon what happened. The *Boston Globe* claimed that this snort may have been the result of “A lunatic fringe [which] persisted in regarding the Moiseyev Dancers as Communist plotters planning the overthrow of democracy.” Despite this protest, the audience lauded the performance: “the cheering capacity audience was almost more than the Boston Garden could contain” and there were fifteen curtain calls.

549 Ibid.
551 Lloyd Shearer, “Must Reading: The Spy War Who’s Winning – We or the Russians?” The Boston Globe, 6 May 1962.
Pickets at the Moiseyev performances usually reflected current events (such as the “Free Hungary” sign noted above during the 1958 tour). When the Moiseyev returned in 1965, picketers protested during a performance at Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto, highlighting the “Russian occupation of the Ukraine.”\textsuperscript{554} At the same time, tensions again were running high because of a fear of Russian spies.

In Boston during the 1970 tour, picketers protested discrimination against Jews in the Soviet Union. This time the signs proclaimed: “Freedom for the 3 Million Soviet Jews,’ 'Save Soviet Jewry,' 'USSR, Let My People Go Now,' and 'Never Again.’” This protest, carried out by dozens of Bostonians, was sponsored by the Boston chapter of the Jewish Defense League, a group concerned with the plight of Jews in the Soviet Union. Even so, the pamphlets handed out by protesters “welcomed the dancers and dwelt on the importance of their performances in promoting friendship and goodwill.” \textsuperscript{555} It is only after making this point clear that the pamphlets went on to describe the discrimination experienced by Soviet Jews who were unable to practice their religion, celebrate their own culture, or emigrate should they so choose.\textsuperscript{555} While the presence of the picketers was noted by the press, their behavior was described as peaceful.

Later on the 1970 tour things turned violent. The Moiseyev was scheduled to perform at Chicago’s Civic Opera House in August. Prior to the performance, protesters from the Community Council of Jewish Organizations stood outside the Opera House with signs. Abbot Rosen of the Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith led the protest.\textsuperscript{556} However, the performance was canceled after a tear gas grenade was set off in the audience forty minutes into the performance.\textsuperscript{557} The fire department had to extinguish a fire created by the grenade. The

\textsuperscript{554} Photograph caption, The Montreal Gazette, 13 May 1965, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{555} “Soviet dancers picketed to protest Jews’ plight,” Boston Globe, 5 Oct 1970, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{557} “Tear Gas Stops the Show,” The Sydney Morning Herald, 28 August 1970, p. 3.
dancers and audience were evacuated, and five people were treated for complications due to inhaling tear gas fumes.558 Prior to the grenade detonation, the *Chicago Tribune* received a phone call in which the speaker claimed that “the next one will not be a smoke bomb,” and demanded that the Moiseyev leave Chicago.559

Despite the incident, the Opera House announced that the season’s six scheduled performances would be given.560 The State Department reacted by apologizing to the Soviet Union after Valentin M. Kamenev, cultural counselor of the Soviet embassy, lodged a formal protest with the State Department.561 As a result of this event, the Soviet Union ended up canceling a future tour of the Bolshoi Opera and the Bolshoi Ballet.562

Tension was greater on this later tour because of the recent defection of a Moiseyev dancer while the company was on tour in Mexico. The press hastened to cover this story. The Mexican government granted asylum to Aleksander Filipov, and he became one of the many Soviet defectors of this era whose situation was closely examined in American newspapers.563 Later, the Pittsburgh Ballet Theater would offer Filipov a position as a permanent guest-artist-in-residence. His defection was depicted with sympathy and the understanding that there were valid political and personal reasons to leave the Soviet Union. However, Filipov, when interviewed, claimed that he did not defect for political reasons, but because he had fallen in love with a Mexican dancer, Lucia Tristao.564

559 “Tear Gas Stops the Show,” p. 3.
560 “Gas Stops Soviet Debut in Chicago,” p. 3.
Cultural Differences both Positive and Negative

In assessing American perception of the company, it is important to consider prior American exposure to folk dancing and preconceived notions about folk dancing that the audience might have brought to a performance. Daniel Walkowitz stresses how pervasive folk dancing was in the United States in the twentieth century so that “Virtually every schoolgirl educated in the United States in the twentieth century grew up doing folk dancing, though few probably thought of it as a substantive part of their education experience.”\(^{565}\) Americans frequently drew their sources for folk dance from English country dance, but dances could become Americanized in translation (such as the Virginia Reel). This invented tradition in turn came to be used to introduce immigrants to American culture.\(^{566}\)

Folk dance did not exist in a vacuum, however, and the context influenced its usage and its participants. In the second revival of folk dance in the second half of the century, many folk dance enthusiasts viewed it as an outlet for expressing dissent from “materialist bourgeois culture.”\(^{567}\) Folk dance’s purported origins in the life of the everyday worker could furthermore be used to highlight more socialist and communist viewpoints, as evidenced by artists like Aaron Copland using folk sources as inspiration in works like *Rodeo* (1942), *Appalachian Spring* (1944) and *Old American Songs* (1950 & 1952).\(^{568}\) However, while folk dance in the second half of the twentieth century had politically leftist associations, it also became a tool used by the United States government in promoting a positive image of America abroad.\(^{569}\) Views of folk


\(^{566}\) Ibid., pp. 2 & 4.

\(^{567}\) Ibid., pp. 163-4.

\(^{568}\) Ibid., pp. 167-8.

\(^{569}\) Ibid., pp. 176 and 196.
dance and its role in American culture varied, but so too did the political connotations and affiliations of folk dance artists and groups.

The Moiseyev claimed to represent the folk dances of the various peoples living in the Soviet Union and the dances included on the company’s programs often depicted everyday life situations. The dances put narratives of love, work and celebration on display in conjunction with athletic and graceful prowess, which easily led to comparisons between American and Soviet culture. Once more, the fact that these were, for most Americans, the first Soviet people they saw contributed to the articulation of cultural similarities and differences. In terms of differences, reception of the Moiseyev often compared capitalism to communism and the cultural expression and mentality therein (i.e. individualism versus collectivism). Reporters observed that there were no featured star dancers of the Moiseyev in the various dances performed. The dancers’ names were not highlighted as much as in an American dance troupe. “And, incidentally, no name is assigned to the dancers, which is typical of the way they play down individuals. It is difficult throughout to learn who is performing. There are no stars, in our sense, who stand out from the ensemble.” The lack of emphasis on individual names and soloists was chalked up to the Soviet mentality and thought to reflect a communist society.

Identification of differences included differences in society and freedom of expression. Reporter Herb Graffis of the Chicago Sun-Times wrote a lengthy article about how scared he felt the Moiseyev dancers were. He claimed “the kids act as though they are afraid one of their outfit will snitch on them back home if they publicly admit there’s something worth liking over here.” He, like other reporters, pressed the dancers to compare their own way of life to Americans’. The dancers, he felt, had no reason to fear Americans. Patronizingly, Graffis claimed, “The kids eventually will outgrow their fear and suspicion as children and nations do when they grow up

and are able to sleep soundly without being scared that dragons are going to creep up in the night and bite them.” While the Soviet government may have fed the Moiseyev dancers propaganda about America and reasons to be on their guard during the tour, Graffis felt confident that having met real Americans, the dancers would bring back positive feelings toward Americans to the Soviet Union. The “kids” (as he insisted upon calling them) “are bound to realize that we are easy and pleasant to get along with. This is the feeling the visiting dancers will smuggle home with them. There is no possible way of keeping it from getting inside Russia. It is a feeling of truth, a feeling that is instinctive with intelligent people.” He felt the positive nature of democratic, capitalistic America was inescapable. Rather than seeing the dancers as infiltrators, Graffis predicted that they would help American ideas spread across the Soviet Union because of the exposure created by cultural exchange. Graffis does not note that the fear he saw in the dancers emanated from the presence of KGB agents in their midst.

Of particular interest during the 1961 tour was one of the new additions to the repertoire; the rock 'n' roll dance “which in its delicious parody of manners, morals, and muscle not only gave a glimpse of some of us but did so with warm-hearted affection and good-natured humor.” This new piece contributed to American anticipation of the 1961 tour as journalists sent back reports about how the Moscow audience had received this dance, which was first performed in Poland and Hungary in 1960. In Moscow, the Moiseyev dancers “shed Russian peasant dress for tapered beatnik slacks and Elvis Presley sideburns to explode in the jazzy acrobatic number titled ’Back to the Monkey.’” An announcer prefaced the dance itself with a brief explanation: “’When we are in foreign lands... We sometimes see how Western youth enjoy

572 Ibid.
themselves. Some members of our company wished to comment on it.”574 The dance articulated differences between Soviet and American culture. The stage was dark with a spotlight highlighting beatniks and a tinkling piano. After the tempo picked up and the dance began full force, “the dancers swung into what would be better described by the initiated as jitterbug rather than rock 'n' roll.” It seemed that this dance received the most applause of the whole performance and the audience “seemed to relish its originality and fast-paced rhythms more than the social parody.” Along with American reporters, the American Ambassador and the Soviet Minister of Culture also attended the performance. The dance not only “raised the roof of Tchaikowsky Hall,” but also “reduced the American Ambassador to helpless laughter.”575 Apparently, Sol Hurok observed the audience's reaction to the “Rock 'n' Roll” dance and announced, “It is time we put rock 'n' roll on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House.”576 The Moiseyev could transgress traditional “high” culture norms on its tours in a way that American cultural representatives could not. As will be discussed further in Chapter 5, the Moiseyev represented more of a “middlebrow” cultural expression which included some highbrow elements. This increased the Moiseyev’s appeal and allowed it to perform in a variety of venues and to a variety of audiences with continual success.

Some American critics felt this parody of a specifically American style of music was entertaining, demonstrating the influence of American culture on the Moiseyev. Others felt that the satirical message was not a positive one. Critic Lillian Moore felt the dance was “disturbing” as it represented an “acid comment on certain aspects of American culture.”577 Though she admired the virtuosity of the dance, she felt that it was at the same time “distressing” because it

was performed across the Soviet Union and “has been interpreted as a fairly accurate picture of
the degenerate society of the west.” Yet the American audience received the dance with pleasure,
apparently unaware of its negative representation of American culture and the American
people. 578 Usually it was described in glowing terms, as a “perceptive, boldly comic dance of
great ingenuity and style.” Dances like “Rock 'n' Roll” simply proved that America did not have
anything like the Moiseyev or anything that could compete with it. 579 While acknowledging that
the dancers “‘made the standard American version of rock 'n roll seem like a minuet of
zombies,’” the Boston Globe also reported that the dancers “can't understand why it procures
such laughter and applause.” 580

Along with the official performances, Americans were sometimes treated to spontaneous
exhibitions of contrasting, side-by-side dance cultures. There are several anecdotes of Moiseyev
dancers watching and learning American folk dances. In New York, sixty Moiseyev dancers
attended an “American 'hoe down’” at Folk Dance House. There they watched and learned how
to dance traditional folk dances like the Virginia Reel, Texas schottische and New England
square dance. 581 A reporter observed that Igor Moiseyev wrote notes throughout the
performance and dance lessons and that “No doubt, he will give Russian audiences his version of
American folk dances on his return.” 582 The implication of such a statement was twofold. The
Soviet troupe could easily learn American folk dances and Igor Moiseyev would be able to
produce a wonderful version of the American dances, as he had with folk dances of so many
other cultures. Indeed at the final performance in New York at the Metropolitan Opera House

578 Ibid.
581 “American Hoedown,” The Norwalk Hour, 5 May 1958, p. 4.
582 Ibid.
the Moiseyev performed the Virginia Reel to “Turkey in the Straw.”\textsuperscript{583} Though the reporter could have expressed fear or disappointment from witnessing how easily American culture could be imitated and adapted by the Moiseyev, instead he and the American audience in general delighted in this form of cultural exchange.

The Moiseyev furthermore highlighted the differing ways in which the two superpowers treated cultural expression. The fact that the Soviet government fully funded the dance troupe contrasted strongly with how the United States “has so far remained the only major country in the world which does not support its arts in this way.”\textsuperscript{584} Soviet training and education in cultural expression appeared more stringent and robust than the American version. It included class every day and a two-hour rehearsal that could involve any one of the one hundred sixty dances the dancers knew. In comparison to American style of rehearsing, “A member of the Metropolitan Opera Ballet, not on tour with that company, who was allowed to watch classes and rehearsals, was very impressed with the initiative of every member of the Russian company and the encouragement of colleagues to constantly improve.”\textsuperscript{585} The author went on to compare the Moiseyev dancers to the Rockettes but noted that “while the technical precision of the latter is machine-like and anonymous, the Russians' spirited exactness of detail, on the contrary, seems to reveal the unique vitality of each individual performer.”\textsuperscript{586} Indeed, the Moiseyev was frequently compared to the Rockettes, with the Moiseyev dancers usually coming out on top in this comparison: “The group is made up of handsome, spirited young people who work together with


\textsuperscript{584} Lydia Joel, “The Moiseyev Dance Company: What is it? What is its Appeal? What is its Lesson?” pp. 32-33.

\textsuperscript{585} Ibid., p. 33.

\textsuperscript{586} Ibid., pp. 33 and 57.
the precision of the Rockettes, but with bursting life rather than the mechanical glaze of our chorus line.”

Joshua Logan, a producer, director and playwright, wrote an editorial during the 1961 tour arguing that the Soviet Union and other European countries were superior in their treatment and respect for artists. Logan noted that a *Life* magazine article about the “Elite of the USSR,” included actors and actresses, sculptors and ballerinas side-by-side with scientists. The Soviet Union, along with other European countries, he contended, better appreciated cultural figures and encouraged them. Sadly in the United States, artists did not receive the recognition they deserved, either by society or in terms of financial compensation. Rather, in the U.S., “an artist still must pay a penalty for working in his chosen profession. For instance, there is a strong discrepancy in the tax laws between an inventor and a writer, between the patent and the copyright.” Instead, “the man who invents a bathroom fixture or a new dog food, if successful, can live in comfort and leave his children a decent inheritance, but seldom the novelist or playwright.” Though an artist might create a work, he did not necessarily get to distribute it or make money from it. Even if an artist was quite successful and profitable, taxes could take away any potential real profit he could earn from his creativity.

Reporter Bob Thomas noted that many Americans, after seeing the Moiseyev, wondered why there was no American equivalent that could compete with the Soviet dance troupe. Thomas turned to Marjorie Champion (a dancer and choreographer) and her husband Gower Champion (a dancer, director and choreographer) Champion to answer this question. They

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587 Frances Herridge, “Russian Dance Troupe Cheered at Metropolitan,” p. 45.
replied, “Serious dancing in America is sick and can take some lessons from the Russians.” Gower insisted that “It is a crying shame that we don't have something to match the Russians.” However, he also claimed that American dancers could do the same and that the folk source material for Americans was “just as rich” as that for the Soviets, listing Mexican, Native American and jazz as potential points of departure for American folk dance. Marge asserted that “our dancers are as good as theirs.” She noted that the problem was, these dancers were not always recognized. In part, this lack of recognition came from gender connotations associated with American dancing. In the Soviet Union dancing was associated with “vigor and masculinity,” while in America dance was “feminized and sick.” The Champions regarded American dance as homosexual in a pejorative sense. They furthermore characterized American dance as weak, even though the American dance boom was well under way and there were a wealth of dance companies, such as Martha Graham’s, and dance productions, such as West Side Story, with a large following in the United States. In contrast to the reality of the American dance scene at this time, both Champions felt the Moiseyev's visit offered an opportunity for American dance to grow healthier and that the impact of the Moiseyev might be immeasurable. Now it was up to American society and culture to take advantage of this great opportunity.

Igor Moiseyev felt the Moiseyev’s tour had more than just a performance role to play. For him, cultural exchange would lead to better political relations and further cultural development for both superpowers.

On the other hand, the Boston Globe did offer a critique of the company when discussing how Moiseyev used folk dance as a source for performance: “I don't think he ever gets to the level of his countryman George Balanchine, whose ballets make beautiful use of folkish stuff

590 Thomas, p. 9.
591 Ibid.
('Firebird,' 'Concerto Barocco').”\textsuperscript{592} Basically, the critic was saying that Moiseyev’s “recipe” – however well performed – was not particularly sophisticated in its treatment of source materials, Moiseyev never managed to create a great work – only very skilled entertainments. The Argentinean \textit{Gaucho} dance, a new addition to the repertoire, rubbed many critics the wrong way. The dance “seems out of place in this sort of program, and is probably best left to the Spanish dance companies which have perfected the style.”\textsuperscript{593} As the Moiseyev traveled more extensively outside of the Soviet Union, it began to add dances from beyond the Soviet sphere of influence. Americans did not always find these additions as appealing, perhaps because they held certain expectations about the kind of dances that would be performed.

It should be noted that there was one Moiseyev dance that some critics felt was a “let down” – \textit{Football}, which depicted a soccer game.\textsuperscript{594} This less enthusiastic reception may be due more to an American disinterest in soccer at the time than a lack of appreciation for the dance itself. However, this less than extremely positive reception of the “Football” dance was not widespread and appeared minor when viewed in conjunction with the overwhelming popularity of the troupe and the eager welcome it received from city to city. The “Football” dance, the one dance in which some critics were less than entirely enthusiastic, could be compared to the American sports-themed musical \textit{Damn Yankees}. \textit{Damn Yankees} (1955) featured a long suffering baseball fan selling his soul so that his team, the Washington Senators, can win the pennant.\textsuperscript{595} The work featured baseball scenes in contrast to the Moiseyev’s soccer scenes. One critic complained that the \textit{Football} dance, while entertaining, was “not the socko number expected” because in comparison with the “Old Russian dances,” it was a weaker dance. Instead,

\textsuperscript{593} Audrey M. Ashley, “Russian dancers will take your mind off those snags” Ottawa Citizen, 2 July 1970, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{595} Music and lyrics by Jerry Ross and Richard Adler, Book by Douglas Wallop and George Abbott.
Americans, as in “Damn Yankees” were better able to choreographic sport dances. This criticism may not speak to a lack of virtuosity in the Football dance but may instead simply be evidence of greater American interest in a more familiar sport like baseball, as opposed to a comparative lack of interest in soccer in America, and once more how the Moiseyev could demonstrate cultural differences between the superpowers.

Cultural Comparison Furthering Communication

In addition to the letters written by Americans to Moiseyev, there are several intriguing examples of Soviet-American encounters. In one instance, Moiseyev (along with lead dancer Lev Golovanov) offered a master class for New York dancers in June of 1958. Five hundred dancers attended the class and from all different dance backgrounds and experiences:

There were modern dancers, ballet dancers, tap dancers, ethnic dancers, choreographers, performers from Broadway shows, members of folk dance societies, distinguished teachers (some of them Russian born), neophytes, balletomanes, photographers, journalists. High school students rubbed elbows with teachers of forty years’ experience. There were expert professionals and there were amateurs barely able to distinguish the left foot from the right.

The critic-historian and former dancer Lillian Moore attended the class. It began with Moiseyev describing how the Soviet Union consisted of many different peoples and many different cultures and how the dances served as expressions of these cultures. With Golovanov he then went on to demonstrate a variety of steps, and the dancers in turn imitated him, “jigging enthusiastically, tripping over the toes of their neighbors, digging their elbows into each other’s sides, and having a perfectly marvelous time.” By the end of the class, all the students remained enthusiastic, and Moiseyev himself commented that “We have found a common language. If we want to

596 Barzel, “Russ Dancers Awe Inspiring.”
598 Ibid., pp. 19-20.
understand each other better, let us dance together more often.” Like the many Americans who wrote to him, Moiseyev pointed to a way to communicate despite language differences.

![Figure 3 Tamara Zeifert and Lev Golovanov in the Russian Suite](image)

**Privileging of the Moiseyev Dancers’ Opinions**

Americans very much wanted to know what the Moiseyev dancers thought of America and of American culture. The dancers, as the first Soviets visiting the US in many years, were viewed as representatives of the entire Soviet population. Their opinions, therefore, would offer insight into prevailing Soviet opinions and illustrate how typical Soviet citizens would react to America. Americans privileged the dancers’ opinions and clamored for their reactions to all aspect of American life. For instance, W. G. Rogers of Hanover, Pennsylvania’s *The Evening*
Sun, asked Igor Moiseyev about any purchases Mr. Moiseyev had made (a camera “and all the fixings” for $1,200) and also whether or not he liked modern art, to which Mr. Moiseyev replied no, though the reporter noted he did like “Picasso (the Communist).”

In an interview with female dancers, reporters asked dancer Galina Korolkova to compare New York to Chicago. She replied, “In New York it is impossible to differentiate one skyscraper from the other. Here you can see them...There is more harmony here, more space.” This statement, no doubt, delighted Chicago reporters but also exemplifies how highly Americans valued the dancers’ perspective. In the same interview, reporters inquired as to what Galina thought about the pointed-toe shoes American women wore, and she replied that she did not favor them. They were not seen a lot in the Soviet Union because “It spoils the form of the leg.” Once more, Americans were curious about the Soviet viewpoint, and the dancers became arbiters of Soviet taste as it resembled or diverged from American taste. They received special status and functioned as representatives for the Soviet people overall.

Dancer Nina Bykovskia received similar attention during her stay in New York. When asked what she thought of the city, she commented that she was afraid to cross 42nd Street: “I stand on the corner and shiver,’ she said, ‘I don't see how anyone that isn't very brave ever gets across. It's too much traffic for a thin space.” This sentiment the reporter humorously contrasted with how Nina is able to “amaze” the American audience with each performance but, despite her incredible dancing and athletic skills, does not feel able to accomplish the everyday feat of the average New Yorker -- crossing the street. Dancer Katerina Shevleva, on the other hand, admired New York's streets “with their beautiful colored automobiles and the women's

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603 Ibid.  
dresses, all different colors – they’re like bouquets of flowers...I wish I could bring the colors back to Moscow with me.” In contrast to Nina, Katerina allegedly “fell in love with Our Town at first sight.”

Reporters prompted the dancers to draw comparisons between Soviet and American lives, just as Americans did in reaction to the Moiseyev. No doubt they hoped the dancers would, like Katerina, love America and think it better than the Soviet Union. Nina Domanovskya claimed a rather superior view of New York and contrasted both its entertainments and its scenery negatively with those of the Soviet Union.

In San Francisco, the desire to know the dancers' impressions of the city and what they liked to do while staying there once more appeared in local and national papers. After the dancers arrived at 4 a.m. and slept until noon, they went out on the town “to investigate the glories of this capitalistic metropolis.” According to the dancers, San Francisco is “‘charushaia’ (Russian for ‘very nice.’)” Once more, the press valued the opinions of the dancers during their visit to the United States and clamored to find out how America fared compared to the Soviet Union. Accordingly, the press highlighted every new experience, item, outfit and kind of food consumed. Reporters noted that the first breakfast for the dancers consisted of a “native dish – American native, that is – clam chowder.”

In grilling the dancers about their leisure time, reporters discovered that they loved rock 'n' roll but preferred visiting museums above all else, and they liked to drink vodka (“But they're always on the job the next morning”). As for their opinion of American folk dance, which will

605 Ibid.
607 Ibid.
be discussed further below, they proclaimed it “Zamylitchatinoya'... Wonderful.” As the best folk dancers Americans had ever seen, no doubt Americans would be flattered by this positive opinion. The reporters followed the dancers around to all the points of interest in San Francisco. Three of the female dancers “gazed at the funny little green and white contraption and decided to have a cable car-ride.” Reporters very much enjoyed telling anecdotes of Soviet-American interactions. At the end of the cable car ride, the gripman, Gene Koll, allowed the dancers to try the grip and ring the car's bells. Making their way down to the wharf, they asked about the price of crabs and found out it was two crabs for one dollar. After proclaiming this too expensive, John Lopiccolo, the crab vendor, offered, “Two for one ruble,” and everyone laughed. The press highlighted positive exchanges between Soviets and Americans. They assigned the dancers not just an official cultural role, but also a social, personal one.

This focus on off-stage experiences of American life and culture continued with later tours. Evidence abounds of the American audience’s continued obsession with what the Moiseyev dancers did, not only on the stage, but off as well. The 1961 tour featured press coverage of an anecdote regarding confusion over the letters CMCP appearing on shop windows on Fifth Avenue in New York. The Moiseyev dancers, seeing the similarity to CCCP, wondered, according to reporters, if perhaps “the 'M' had been substituted in honor of 'Moiseyev.'”

Humorously, the anecdote ends with the explanation that actually, CMCP stood for “Chase Manhattan Credit Plan.” Americans thus continued to wonder what the dancers thought about America and what kinds of cultural disconnect took place as the dancers explored the continent during their spare time.

609 Ibid.
610 Bess, p. 1.
The 1965 tour featured news reports describing the Russian dancers’ visit to the “Whisky A Go-Go” nightclub in San Francisco and joining in the dancing. In particular, reporters noted how quickly the Russians learned the newest dances like “The Swim” – the dancers “didn't invent the swim dance, but took to it like capitalists.” Indeed, one of the male dancers danced “The Hunch” with a Go-Go girl, who convinced him to dance in a suspended glass cage. He improvised on “The Hunch” by adding dance moves from the Cossack squat dance. The Go-Go dancer, whose name was Colleen Costello, raved, “Everything – the minute I did it, he could do it.”

_The Dancers as Celebrities_

The Moiseyev dancers became celebrities in 1958 and even American celebrities wanted to meet and talk to them. In Hollywood, reporter Bob Thomas observed that “Hollywood stars in the audience of 6,000 were among the most enthusiastic fans of the spirited young dancers,” including Jack Benny, Burt Lancaster, Gene Kelly, Milko Taka and Mel Ferrer. He then went on to quote from the famous stars of the day:


The Hollywood stars agreed on the amazing nature of the performances. Even Debbie Reynolds, a singing and dancing star herself, claimed to be overwhelmed by the display.

Hollywood admiration did not end with the performance itself. Civic officials hosted a post-performance party at the Beverly Hills Hotel for the dancers. Among the guests were the

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612 The Milwaukee Sentinel, Untitled Article, 21 April 1965, p. 3.
615 Ibid.
mayor of Los Angeles, the president of the Hollywood Bowl Association, and celebrities like Danny Kaye, Gregory Peck and Clifton Webb. Everyone had a marvelous time – the Soviet dancers “launched into an impromptu offering of rock ’n roll, jitterbug and Charleston dancing” and Moiseyev proclaimed “at the height of the party, that Russians and Southern Californians have one thing in common, explaining ’they both get tremendously excited.’” Moiseyev, like many American reporters, wanted to emphasize the similarities between Soviets and Americans.) Elizabeth Taylor and Eddie Fisher hosted a late party for the dancers as well, with one hundred celebrity guests such as Tony Curtis, Janet Leigh, Mel Ferrer and Lawrence Harvey. At this event, “The visiting Russian dancers got a more orthodox look at the Hollywood night life during this party, including large doses of jazz music.” The celebrity status of the Moiseyev dancers allowed them to mix with America’s own celebrities. In Hollywood, and throughout their tour, they encountered a genuine desire to see them perform and to know all about them but, more importantly, a genuine desire to interact with them off-stage on a personal level and to encourage them to experience American life for themselves.

This latter desire is demonstrated by the Moiseyev dancers’ inability to leave California without also visiting its great tourist attraction -- Disneyland. LA Times reporter Cordell Hicks related all the details of this visit, from the observation that “…the only way you could tell them from the rest of the throng in appearance was when they spoke” to the fact that “They rode everything. Twice.” Typically, they also reported that the dancers shopped at Disneyland, and all bought souvenir hats “with 'Disneyland' in large letters across the crowns.” Additionally reporters wanted to know if the dancers felt that the Soviet Union had anything like Disneyland. The dancers responded that they had many things to entertain children like ballets and puppet

theaters and trained animals. But upon being asked again if any of these things were like Disneyland, they finally responded “Nyet.” With this victory for America’s amusement park in hand, the dancers, “Sunburned and with a bit of chocolate ice cream here and there on young faces … boarded buses and toured unsmilingly back to Los Angeles and rehearsals for their evening performance at the Shrine tonight.”619 While their enthusiasm was expressed by riding each Disneyland ride twice, the consumption of treats and the purchase of souvenirs, the dancers returned to the stereotypical image of the serious, unsmilng Russian after the conclusion of their visit to Disneyland.

Though each city devoted articles to what Moiseyev dancers ate, shopped for and admired in America, later on in the tour reporters did note that some of the dancers were getting tired of these kinds of interactions with reporters. The San Francisco News reported that:

Soviet Russia's stupendous Moiseyev Dancers are it turns out, only humans – and young ones, at that. They're getting mighty weary of doing the hick shopping-and-sightseeing routine to please those quaint American newspapermen, they confessed today. At every stop on the troupe's sensational U.S. tour, local newspapers have had the same idea: Get pictures and stories about those Russkies going mad over American department stores.620

The younger members in particular were “fed up” with this sort of routine.621 This is not reported as rude or as a negative on the part of the dancers. Instead, the commentator remarks that the dancers are human too and growing weary the press’s gimmicks. According to the San Francisco News, the dancers could only endure so much; here the dancers came of as sympathetic figures while American journalists came off as trying too hard to make the dancers’ every move part of the capitalism versus communism debate.

619 Ibid.
620 Scripps-Howard, “‘Shopping’ Routine is Worn Out,” San Francisco News, 2 June 1958, p. 3.
621 Ibid.
On an individual basis, Americans wrote to Moiseyev in the same way they might write to an American celebrity or high society figure. They did not view him as unapproachable or as someone who would not be able to understand Americans’ thoughts, needs and concerns. A few assumed that if they wrote to Moiseyev, he would be able to help them get. Mrs. Seymour M. Hallbron wrote a long letter in which she mentioned repeatedly how well connected she was and reminding Moiseyev that they had met during a reception at Ambassador Lall’s house. Through this connection, she hoped to obtain tickets for a doctor friend in Philadelphia for the troupe’s performances there. “You will be there with your troupe on June 11 and 12 and he [the doctor] cannot get any tickets for love or money. He says they are all sold out. He wants three tickets and he has been so good to me that I would like to present them to him. Would it be possible to have someone send me 3 tickets and I will be very happy to send the check for them.” She went on to say that the good doctor would additionally like to have backstage access for himself, his wife and friends in order to meet the dancers. She noted that the doctor called the Moiseyev the “crème de la crème” and explained, for Igor Moiseyev's benefit (perhaps not knowing he was fluent in French) that this meant the best of the best.

Even those who had not met Moiseyev personally felt they could write to him pleading for tickets. Mr. Sherley Ashton wrote saying that he had studied Russian for three years and was very eager to see the troupe perform. However, he could not get a ticket at the San Francisco Opera House and asked Moiseyev for “any form of ticket, at any price.” Mr. Ashton related how several years before he had worked with a member of the Soviet delegation to the UN and attached his own biography to his letter to reinforce his Russian background. Americans felt

622 Letter from Mrs. Seymour M. Hallbron to Moiseyev dated 22 May 1958, RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 106, p. 1.
623 Ibid., RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 106, p. 3 and d 267, 108, p. 2.
624 Ibid., RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 107 p. 3.
625 Letter from Sherley Ashton to Moiseyev, RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 84 p. 1.
they could write to Moiseyev and appeal to his good nature. Mrs. Halbron, for example, was certain he would want to ensure that people with a certain position in American society saw the performances. Ashton claimed to have a special need for tickets based on his previous experience with Soviet people and the Russian language, an appeal to which he was certain that Moiseyev would respond.

People also wrote expressing the desire to meet Moiseyev and his company. One couple from Chicago wrote Mr. Moiseyev a letter, describing themselves as “young Chicagoans interested in the arts, and in your country and its relations with ours,” requested to meet the dancers, especially those of similar age, even though neither husband nor wife knew any Russian. They hoped the Moiseyev could spare two to four “young people” so that the couple could entertain them in their Chicago apartment. Mr. Ludgin noted that he and his wife “lead surprisingly typical lives.” He was the editor of an encyclopedia and she was a housewife. They wanted to meet young Russians in order to show them a typical American lifestyle, but also because, despite an inability to speak Russian, they could communicate “our interests in music, paintings, and the dance.”

The Ludgins believed that Americans and Soviets could communicate and relate to one another despite the language barrier; the Moiseyev had already demonstrated this through their performances.

Mrs. Shelly Priscilla Koenigsberg expressed similar sentiments in her note to Igor Moiseyev. She too expressed a desire to communicate with the dancers but in the form of written correspondence. In her letter she requested that Mr. Moiseyev pass her address along to someone interested in corresponding “with an American family (we have 3 boys – 14 years, 8

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626 Letter from Donald Ludgin to Moiseyev dated 17 May 1958, RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 90, p. 1.
627 Letter from Shelly Priscilla Koenigsberg to Moiseyev, undated, RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 102.
Mrs. Koenigsberg felt the dancers and an American family had something to learn from one another and could have intercontinental discussions.

Treating Igor Moiseyev in a similar fashion, Reginald Carles wrote to him regarding the poetry of the Spaniard Eduardo Lorca. With his note he included an English translation of Lorca's poetry, claiming that it “deserves a wide audience in the U.S.S.R.” – hoping Igor Moiseyev would help make this desire a reality upon his return to his homeland. Americans wanted to offer their advice to Igor Moiseyev and to the Moiseyev dancers about their own health and well-being as well as how they, as representatives of Soviet culture, could pass along positive messages from the United States.

In addition to individuals, local and national groups invited the Moiseyev to receptions, talks and performances, hoping to meet and interact with the dancers. The Folk Dance Federation of California invited the Moiseyev to a three-day event in which folk dances would be performed and folk dancers from the United States and Soviet Union could meet. The Folklore Education and Research Institute in Chicago similarly wrote to the Moiseyev in order to try to meet the company’s dancers. The Institute wanted to discuss Russian folk dance and asked for a future meeting in order to accomplish this. The Ethnic Dance Theatre of Los Angeles, which had served as host to other groups like the Armenian Ballet Company, Kansuma Kabuki Theatre and Afro-American Dancers similarly invited the Moiseyev to attend performances. All these groups emphasized that the cultural exchange promoted by the Lacy-Zarubin Agreement should not just consist of official performances by the Moiseyev Dance Company.

628 Ibid., RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 103, p. 2.
629 Carles may have been referring to poet Federico Garcia Lorca.
630 Letter from Reginald E. Carles to Moiseyev, RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 120.
631 Telegram from Folk Dance Federation of California to Moiseyev dated 17 May 1958, RGALI, RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 114, p. 1.
Rather, exchange should be taken to the next level, and folk dances and folklore should be exchanged on both sides.

\textit{Fear of Cultural Inferiority}

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\caption{Hora from Moldavian Suite\textsuperscript{634}}
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Recognizing the power and impact of the Moiseyev also meant questioning what could possibly be America’s cultural equivalent. Thus in terms of political reception and rhetoric, discussing the political impact went hand in hand with discussing what America would send to the Soviet Union. Walter Terry recognized that “the Soviet government has made both a shrewd

\textsuperscript{634} Chudnovsky, p. 48.
and pleasant move in sending the Moiseyev dancers here,” and that America needed to decide what to send back to the Soviet Union that would have a similar impact.\textsuperscript{635}

While Americans received the Moiseyev with great enthusiasm, at the same time some people expressed a sense of inferiority after such an impressive performance. Americans questioned how American culture compared with Soviet culture in light of the awe-inspiring dance troupe. \textit{New York Herald Tribune} dance critic Walter Terry maintained that American and Russian dancers displayed many traits in common and that both countries’ dancers “display vast amounts of energy and good nature, move gracefully, respect precision and, with an easy air of bravado, enjoy showing off in feat of physical skill.”\textsuperscript{636} At the same time he questioned, “But who shall we send [to the Soviet Union]?” He “overheard some rather panicky remarks, following the Moiseyev debut, to the effect that we should round up our own folk dance group and pack it off to Russia.”

Terry questioned this proposed course of action, saying that the folk material for American dancers was not as rich as that in the Soviet Union because it was so much younger. In comparison, “the Russian folk dance draws from many nationalities and many centuries of accomplishment.” Additionally, Americans did not take their native folk dance as seriously but rather deemed it a recreational pursuit. In contrast, the Americans felt Russian folk dance, with its professional state-sponsored groups, was taken far more seriously and displayed a certain virtuosity not seen in American folk dance. Despite these negative observations, Terry encouraged his readers not to despair. He felt American folk sources, “and more important, our heritage of freedom as a people are incorporated in many of our theater dance works, ballets and dance-dramas by Agnes de Mille, Jerome Robbins, Michael Kidd, Doris Humphrey, José Limón,

\textsuperscript{635} Walter Terry, New York Herald Tribune, 20 April 1958.
\textsuperscript{636} Ibid.
Martha Graham and many others.” These artists’ works could be sent to the Soviet Union and ‘do America proud.’ He suggested that America should not try to compete with the Soviet Union’s unfamiliar artistic forms, but that America should stick with what it knew and did well:

We cannot duplicate them in the very special area of dance which is their heritage but, when it is America’s turn to repay this dance visit, we can match them in both skill and artistry with dances and dancers unique to our historically youthful but incredibly fertile heritage.⁶³⁸

Demonstrating the similarities between their cultures might not be the best form of cultural exchange between the peoples of the Soviet Union and America. Instead Terry claimed that greater admiration would be elicited by highlighting differences and the different art forms in which each country excelled.⁶³⁹

The fear of cultural inferiority on the part of America often coincided with admiration for the Moiseyev. Reporter Glenna Syse lauded the Moiseyev for their “sheer physical virtuosity, acrobatic excellence and ease of execution.” “They are the best ambassadors of good will this country has ever had from behind the Iron Curtain.” At the same time, however, she admitted some discomfort over how the Moiseyev dancers would compare with American representatives of culture and admitted that:

Just for the sake of reassurance, it was satisfying Friday night to think about Van Cliburn’s recent triumph in Moscow. The young Texans [sic] pianist is helping the United States maintain a balance of power in things cultural. Without that thought, the Moiseyev program might have left us feeling slightly inferior to the U.S.S.R.⁶⁴⁰

Similarly in a Sarasota Herald-Tribune article discussing art as a universal language and reporting about the Moiseyev's New York performances, the reporter also mentioned Van

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⁶³⁷ Ibid.
⁶³⁸ Ibid.
⁶³⁹ Ibid.
Cliburn and his own successes as a representative of American culture. While admitting that the Moiseyev gave a “magnificent performance” and that this cultural exchange “can melt the Iron Curtain,” the reporter quoted a Muscovite as saying, after hearing Van Cliburn, that “‘Now America has a sputnik that beats ours.’” Though the reporter himself did not state a definite opinion as to whether American or Soviet cultural representatives were superior, he did note the discourse that existed regarding fear of cultural inferiority on both sides.

*Igor Moiseyev on America*

American public reaction to the Moiseyev did not change significantly for later tours, as audiences continued to receive the company with open arms and frank exuberance. For some, however the attitude toward Igor Moiseyev himself became more nuanced. The *New York Herald Tribune*’s dance critic Walter Terry interviewed Igor Moiseyev in 1961. Terry noted that upon returning to the Soviet Union in 1958, Moiseyev’s “enthusiastic reports to the Soviet public on American art accomplishments brought down upon him official censure.” According to Terry, this positive view of American culture did not mean (as other reporters inferred) that Moiseyev found American culture or American political ideas superior. Moiseyev, a figure representing the health of political relations between the Soviet Union and United States during the Cold War, became for Terry an almost apolitical figure; someone above the fray of the political conflict. Terry claimed that “One has the feeling that politics never crosses his [Moiseyev’s] mind ... Mr. Moiseyev appears to love the whole world, especially if it is a dancing world.”

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642 Ibid.
644 Ibid.
diplomacy, Terry formed a more nuanced understanding of the message the Moiseyev Dance Company desired to present and the multiple purposes behind it. The positive outcomes from cultural exchange became less associated with the Soviet government and more so with Moiseyev as an individual.

Reporters clamored to know what Moiseyev and his dancers thought about American culture. Moiseyev explained that he wanted not only to demonstrate Soviet culture and art but also to “absorb” American cultural idioms and expressions. In particular, he was eager to see the New York City Ballet, having heard a lot about it and having met the sister of NYCB ballerina Maria Tallchief in Paris. He noted how glad he was that Sol Hurok had invited him to see a Martha Graham production, since “I want to be able to tell in Moscow about the forms of choreographic art in the United States and therefore I want to see as much as possible. In other words, I want to discover America as much as I want to have America discover our form of choreographic art.”

In a June 1958 interview, Moiseyev commented how much he had enjoyed the Martha Graham concert and that Graham’s work was a “strictly American artistic product” and an “exciting, unique and a very positive artistic expression.” The Dance News editor, the Russian born Anatole Chujoy, asked Moiseyev what he thought would be best for the United States to send to the Soviet Union. Moiseyev replied that the musical My Fair Lady, then playing on Broadway, would be easy for Russians to understand and that West Side Story, another Broadway musical, would be a wise choice as well “because it is more contemporary and is a fully original work of young American talent.” Moiseyev did, though, criticize the United

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646 Ibid.
States for sending *Porgy and Bess*, as it had been misunderstood by some and left a “negative feeling.” He concluded by saying that the United States should send dance companies performing American works, “not established classics which could not come up [to] the level of production and execution of the Moscow Bolshoi Theatre Ballet.” At the same time, he warned against sending works like those of Martha Graham, since he was not sure if “her particular art form would reach the Russian theatre-goer as it reaches the American theatre-goer.” In other words, Chujoy entreated the US to send cultural products that were middlebrow pieces, like the Moiseyev, in order to solicit a similar response.

Moiseyev chose to address the American people directly in a lengthy article in *Dance Magazine*. He acknowledged the enthusiastic reception the Moiseyev received and that it “was an experience no member of our dance company is ever likely to forget. It was our first introduction to an American audience, and a more enthusiastic, more exciting one it would be hard to imagine.” However, Moiseyev noted that he and the dancers did not arrive expecting such a reception, but instead had a certain number of misgivings – “We really had no idea of what we could expect. We were afraid, for one thing, that Americans would not understand our dancing and perhaps might not take to it.” This fear, Moiseyev claimed, was justified due to the “lack of any real contact between our two countries over these past years.” Moiseyev did not know what Americans would like and dislike and whether or not they would be able to “understand our national art.” Despite these qualms, “we were in for the most happy kind of surprise.” Throughout the tour, Moiseyev felt welcomed and well-received by the Americans.

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649 Ibid.
650 Ibid., p. 2.
Indeed, despite his fear that Americans might be unable to understand Soviet national art, Moiseyev instead found that Americans formed a “complete understanding” of the dances’ artistic merits. Like the American reporters, Moiseyev felt there was a lot in common between Americans and Soviets – “We found the same warmth, the same openness and expansiveness, the same feeling for humor. It was a constant astonishment to us to see how similar the reactions were [to the Moiseyev].” The City Quadrille number “evoked the same spontaneous laughter in America as it would in any Soviet city. There was the same kind of understanding applause of the Suite of Old Russian Dances….the same delighted chuckles for our comic Two Boys in a Fight.” This surprised Moiseyev; he observed that he did not have to change the dances whatsoever in order for them to be understood by the American audience.

Moiseyev too picked up on the discourse of the fear of cultural inferiority. Prior to coming to the United States, he knew a little bit about American dance but nothing very specific. While on the tour, he took the opportunity to learn as much as possible about American dance and culture. He observed that “American folk dances are greatly varied since they are conceived in widely separated parts of the country with different folk customs, traditions and ways of living. Like the folk dance of any nation, they can serve, it seems to me, as rich raw material out of which fine choreographic productions can be developed.” In the same way, he had created the Moiseyev's dance repertoire using such folk material. However, in order to accomplish this in America, research needed to be done.

Moiseyev himself wanted to study American folk dances and add American dances to his repertoire. He was able to try out the “Virginia Reel” in New York. Here a group of Americans demonstrated the dance and the Moiseyev dancers gradually joined in, after which the Americans withdrew, leaving the Soviet dancers performing alone on the dance floor. Within two days the

Moiseyev added the “Virginia Reel” to their own repertoire as the encore to their performance in New York and other cities. Moiseyev found it amusing that this essential American dance, which was performed after the finale dance “Hopak,” was performed in “Ukrainian national dress” and that the audience “reaction was wonderful.” Americans, Moiseyev remarked, could accomplish similar feats in folk dance using their own folk material. But at the same time, in relating his experience with the “Virginia Reel,” Moiseyev made it clear that the Soviet dancers had already mastered American folk dances, and quite quickly and easily too.

Moiseyev felt that the peoples of the Soviet Union were curious about America, Americans and American culture. He observed that while many in the Soviet Union knew about American cultural expression in the form of literature, theater and art, and “All of this helps us to get a picture of American life,” “without direct contact, it is necessarily an incomplete picture.” This problem of the “incomplete picture” did not just concern the Soviet Union, but other countries. Countries with which the United States did have more contact did not necessarily know much about the positive aspects of American culture, but instead still held “certain misconceptions.” Drawing upon the experiences from his many tours in different countries, Moiseyev related, “I have met Europeans who told me, for example, that the United States did not have much in the way of theater. American moving pictures were very good, they said, but unfortunately the films had harmed the theater art.” Moiseyev hoped to allay American fears of cultural inferiority – he commented that he himself had seen many plays while in the United States and that he, as mentioned above, greatly enjoyed them. West Side Story, The Diary of Anne Frank and My Fair Lady were all quite well done, in Moiseyev's opinion, and should be considered wonderful representations of American culture.654

Moiseyev made sure in his report to note how much the dancers learned during the tour. He remarked that during their free time, the dancers “dedicated [themselves] to the acquaintance with life and culture of the American people. They visited all the great museums of the country – the Met, the Frick in New York, the National Museum in Washington, Chicago, Boston, the Philadelphia museum, etc.” His American education also included tours of factories, film studios and theatres. They viewed American films and shows including *West Side Story*, *My Fair Lady* and *The Music Man*. While acknowledging a widely held impression that the US had a less developed theatrical culture and indeed, when speaking about American culture foreigners usually though of jazz, Moiseyev praised works like *West Side Story* and *My Fair Lady* as representing a “subtlety of directing… and high taste [which] strongly rivals the most refined French samples.” The performances left a “huge impression,” especially after Moiseyev met *West Side Story* choreographer Jerome Robbins. Moiseyev praised Robbins, who had worked with the choreographer Fokine in the early 1940s and considered him an inspiration. Robbins, Moiseyev believed, had achieved the same balance of “the classic and the contemporary style” which Moiseyev himself tried to achieve. Indeed, after viewing *West Side Story*, Moiseyev later recalled, “I had my doubts about the correctness of the statement that our [Soviet] ballet is ‘ahead of the rest.’” New York, in particular, impressed Moiseyev as the cultural center of America. In New York, he said, you could “listen to the best singers and the best musicians, choirs/ orchestras, soloists, conductors who were world renown.”

655 “Moiseyev Short Report about the Tour of the State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble of the USSR to the United States and Canada from 9 April to 1 July,” to RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 64, p. 7.
656 Ibid.
657 Ibid.
658 Moiseyev, I Recall…., p. 141.
659 Ibid.
660 Ibid.
In an undated letter Moiseyev drew positive conclusions about the impact of the American tour overall and the ensemble’s international presence. He felt that cultural exchange “will strengthen this friendship” between the superpowers.\textsuperscript{661} He emphasized that the cultural exchange and its impact was two-ways. Both Van Cliburn and the Philadelphia Orchestra’s successes in the Soviet Union showed that cultural exchange held huge potential value. On the other side of things, the State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble of the USSR met with wonderful success in the United States and Americans expressed much interest in the ensemble and in the Soviet Union in general. Moiseyev felt he could identify a “desire among ordinary Americans to strengthen international ties...Americans want to know more about the country which astonished the world with its satellites, [and] whose contribution to the world treasury of art and literature earned the recognition of all humanity.”\textsuperscript{662} During the US tour, Americans of varying economic and social backgrounds “often expressed the thought of how good [it would be] to do away with the Cold War and substitute it with an atmosphere of friendship, which [already] surrounds the performances of Soviet Artists in America and American artists in the Soviet Union.”\textsuperscript{663} Moiseyev concluded that if cultural exchange continued and if both superpowers wholeheartedly supported it, it could lead to the end of the Cold War.\textsuperscript{664}

After returning to Russia, Moiseyev made statements in which he expressed open admiration of America and its culture, for which he was then censured. For three hours, in front of “600 leading creative artists in Moscow,” Moiseyev stated that they were all “gravely ignorant of the cultural greatness of the United States.”\textsuperscript{665} Moiseyev’s report caused an “uproar” in the Soviet Union. The \textit{Boston Globe}, in terms similar to those used to describe the Moiseyev itself

\textsuperscript{661} Undated letter by Igor Moiseyev, RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 40, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{662} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{663} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{664} Ibid., RGALI, f 2483 o 1 d 267, 41, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{665} “Uncle Dudley, As People to People,” Boston Globe, 18 April 1959, p. 4.
when it was in America, noted that the Moiseyev had taken “dynamite” home with it. The Ministry of Culture censured Moiseyev for his speech, which the *Boston Globe* described as “the full expression of a free spirit.” Poetically, the *Boston Globe* article ended, “In the glare of that sort of cultural exchange the dark flowers of tyranny are likely to wither more quickly than other recent events have encouraged us to hope.”666 It should be stressed that during the Cold War, any experience of American culture by Soviets was problematical. Especially in the late 1950s, with cultural exchange so new, those few Soviet people who traveled to the United States had to be careful how they related their experience abroad once they returned home. The United States remained the capitalistic other that Soviet people were expected to criticize, not praise, and accordingly Moiseyev’s talk came under much scrutiny.

Though there is no indication of it in Moiseyev’s contemporary report on the tour or other official documents included as part of the American tour files, in his memoirs Moiseyev filled in the details about his talk and struggled to understand the censure it incurred. He remarked that as soon as he returned from the United States, people in Moscow pressured him about the tour, which was understandable given the lack of communication and travel between the Soviet Union and United States. This led to Moiseyev giving a talk at the Society for Friendship with Foreign Countries.667 After giving a speech of his impressions of the United States and Americans, Ministry of Culture Minister Nikolai Mikhailov criticized Moiseyev for “‘crawling on his belly in front of American culture.’”668 Moiseyev claimed he had only spoken of interesting aspects of life in America and that he did not overly praise America or American ideals, and thus he did not

666 Ibid.
667 Moiseyev, I Recall…, p. 141.
668 Ibid., pp. 141-142.
understand Mikhailov’s criticism, especially given the amount of praise Van Cliburn, a representative of American culture, received in the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{669}

American reception of the Moiseyev did not reflect a black and white world divided between American and Soviet but instead demonstrated a more nuanced understanding of the Cold War world and of Soviet people. The ensemble received overwhelmingly positive response but with certain complexities. Americans still viewed the Moiseyev (for the most part) with politics in mind and often used Cold War terms or events to describe the dances and dancers. Americans complicated the Cold War narrative by viewing the dancers as people similar to themselves rather than as Cold War enemies. There were those critics and individuals who could not escape the Cold War narrative view of Soviet people and communism as inherently negative or evil but both the American press and Igor Moiseyev himself labeled this as a minority view and one which did not interfere with the overall American population enjoying the ensemble’s performances and taking their multicultural message to heart.

\textsuperscript{669} Ibid., p. 143.
CHAPTER 5: The Moiseyev Dance Company and American Notions of Gender and Race

A number of these Moiseyev reconstructions of folk dances have to do with the familiar boy-meet-girl theme, indicating that Russian art is not all dedicated to boy-meets-hydro-electric plant. Another theory exploded by the visiting Muscovites is the one that Russian girls are built like tractors. There are some mighty pretty ones here, in impressive numbers, too. As they flash about in their exciting dances they amply prove that the work of the lathe is not all that’s well-turned in Russia.670

The tours of the Moiseyev Dance Company represented more than a view of Soviet-American relations and notions of American and Soviet culture. In the Cold War context, Americans engaged in a debate about defining American identity and the role of masculinity, femininity and multiple ethnicities and races therein. American responses to the dancers reflected contemporary discourses, including concern about American masculinity and how ethnic and racial differences should fit into the American image.

In viewing the dancers on stage and off, Americans compared the dancers to themselves and their ideas of American and Soviet identity. Based on the Cold War narrative that political figures espoused, as well as and preconceived notions about gender and the Soviet people, the American audience found the male Moiseyev dancers intimidating in their masculinity and the females surprising in their expression of femininity. However, overall, Americans found the dancers to be similar to themselves as people, despite cultural, political and ideological differences. American reception to the Moiseyev offers an opportunity to examine the debate of American identity. In terms of masculinity, femininity and gender roles, the Moiseyev presented dances with specific steps assigned to men, to women, to the expression of love between men and women, and to national identities.

Sexuality and gender played a major role in American self-identity and concern during the Cold War, with those men having Communist leanings or more liberal ideas often depicted as effeminate while conservative figures were depicted as more masculine. K.A. Cuordileone identifies a pervasive anxiety during the Cold War that expressed in cultural and intellectual discourse. While a general unease grew out of the fear of atomic bombs and the spread of communism, it also indicated a concern with the “modern self.”

In particular, Cuordileone sees this articulated through concerns about the self and masculinity, and its impact on politics and culture in the Cold War era. He points to films and books such as *12 Angry Men* and *The Lonely Crowd* which focused on the “self” and the need for approval by others. A way to address this concern was an increased stress on American manhood and masculinity to avoid producing “soft” and conformist children. The concept of American manhood included heroism, especially in the post-WWII world, and thus politicians emphasized their time in military service or even embellished it. Robert Dean in *Imperial Brotherhood* notes how as soon as WWII began, Lyndon Johnson actively sought to create a military background for himself and joined the Naval Reserve Office Corps as the first Congressman to serve in the military while in office. Both Dean and Cuordileone point to how the idea of being “manly” pervaded not just cultural expression but also politics and foreign policy decisions.

At the same time, this need to have “manly” politicians and male role models also meant labeling what was not masculine. In particular, homosexuality became a symbol to represent the un-masculine. In *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the*

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672 Ibid., p. 120.
673 Robert D. Dean, Imperial Brotherhood: Gender and the Making of Cold War Foreign Policy, Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001, p. 37.
674 Ibid., p. 50.
Federal Government, David K. Johnson reveals that, in addition to those who had alleged Communist connections or leanings, HUAC (House Un-American Activities) and Senator McCarthy also questioned those who were allegedly homosexual. HUAC and McCarthy apparently thought that homosexuals posed the same security risk as someone with alleged Communist connections. Thus at the same time in 1950 as McCarthy made his Wheeling speech about Communists in the U.S. government, Deputy Undersecretary John Peurifoy of the State Department testified in front of a congressional committee that the State Department fired ninety-one employees because they were homosexual, leading to a growing concern about the number of homosexuals in the State Department and in the U.S. government.675 As part of the panic over homosexuals in the U.S. government, employees were brought in for questioning about their sexuality, based on refusal to respond or speculative evidence of their homosexuality. Homosexuals were considered a security risk because it was felt that they would be more susceptible to blackmail and thus could be coerced by other governments.676

It should be noted that fear of homosexuality was not limited to males. A corresponding concept of American femininity existed as well – it included being properly attired and presentable, being concerned with one's appearance and also taking care of one's home. Thus when a Miss Blevins, a secretary clerk in the State Department, became frustrated with her boss, a Miss McCoy, she wrote an anonymous note to State Department security about Miss McCoy's habits. She noted that Miss McCoy did not overly concern herself with her appearance and appeared to spend time with another female employee who had a “mannish voice.” Based on this evidence McCoy was brought in for questioning.677

676 Ibid., p. 111.  
677 Ibid., pp. 119-120.
Liberal democrats became targets as the un-masculine. Being “soft” on Communism and other issues became an indicator of a lack of manly resolve. It is only with John F. Kennedy, Cuordileone and Dean argue, that liberal politicians found a way to demonstrate their masculinity. Kennedy used several tactics to establish himself as a masculine liberal politician. One such tactic was the use of the “New Frontier” slogan in which Kennedy claimed America needed to start over since “Too many Americans have lost their way, their will, and their sense of historic purpose.” Kennedy stressed that America and Americans needed to explore the New Frontier of science and space and seek answers to the world's problems. By asking Americans to be “pioneers,” Kennedy harkened back to the concept of Manifest Destiny and told them that he would lead the way in rejuvenating America. The masculine imagery of pioneers throwing caution to the wind and courageously claiming territory in the Wild West was not lost on the American audience.

Kennedy transformed having a wealthy background, an Ivy League education, and liberal leanings into markers of refinement rather than markers of being “soft” or feminine. Kennedy did this by projecting a virile, womanizing image as well as a competitive edge. He employed his history of childhood illness and subsequent heroic military service to further his masculine image. Finally, Kennedy had youth, which he was able to contrast with Eisenhower's age. He emphasized that Eisenhower tried to regulate Americans and American life too much, while Kennedy would prove to be a better leader because of his creativity and a more “daring” style that would jump-start America. All of these factors changed the nature of Cold War masculinity somewhat to allow the inclusion of liberal Democrats. However, Dean argues that the “need” to be a masculine politician did not end with Kennedy’s ability to make liberal

678 Cuordileone, p. 168.
679 Ibid.
680 Ibid., pp. 170 & 192.
Democrats appear “cool” and masculine, but that because of the pervasive “manliness” requirement in politics, Kennedy and Johnson could not avoid intervention in Vietnam.\(^{681}\)

This anxiety regarding gender, and especially masculinity, appeared outside the contemporary political arena. In 1963, Stanley Milgram published “Obedience to Authority,” the results of his experiments to explore the actions of SS officers in the Holocaust. This study entailed the use of 1,000 American test subjects who were told to read pairs of words to another test subject. The test required the second subject to recall how words were paired. If they did not answer correctly, they would be shocked by a machine, with shocks increasing in intensity as more mistakes were made. Though the second subject would react negatively as the shocks became more intense, the first subject was expected to continue administering the shocks with prompting from the experiment’s supervisor. In reality, the second subject was not being shocked but rather the goal of this experiment was to gauge if and how people obeyed in this kind of situation which involved the punishment of others. In this way, Milgram hoped to better understand why SS officers participated in Hitler’s Final Solution.\(^{682}\)

More recent scholars take this study as a further example of the pervasive nature of the Cold War narrative in American life and, in particular, how it plays into American concerns over gender and identity. Fear of “enfeeblement” of American character and masculinity drove the popularity of experiments like Milgram’s and fed the fire of this anxiety.\(^{683}\) Milgram’s experiment “revealed American masculinity to be disconcertingly passive and compliant;” two thirds of the participants were willing to continue with more and more intense shocks up to the

\(^{681}\) Dean, p. 240.
\(^{683}\) Ibid., pp. 239-41.
point of causing death. As well as fearing enfeeblement of American masculinity, Americans found Soviet masculinity intimidating. In “War Envy and Amnesia: American Cold War Rewrites of Russia’s War,” Ann Douglas explores how the history of WWII influenced Cold War relations. America envied the Soviet Union’s military conduct and chose to ignore the sacrifices made on the part of the Red Army and Soviet people after the end of WWII and into the Cold War. Part of this envy stemmed from reports of Soviet masculinity and bravery in the field. Americans viewed Soviet men as tough, strong and willing to die for their country. America, with its homeland intact and with fewer deaths during the war, did not demonstrate the same level of commitment to the WWII conflict or level of masculine prowess: “Weren’t real men supposed to protect others and die if necessary to do so, not be protected themselves as women and children, or at least the more fortunate among them were?” Americans could not help but be envious of the Soviets’ abilities and the way Soviet men fought.

As for femininity, Jacqueline Foertsch examines the interplay of the fears and anxieties after WWII (as the Cold War narrative came to focus on the fear of the spread of international communism) with the “celebratory mood” of suburbia, wives and family. To be a properly feminine woman in this atmosphere often meant marriage and domesticity. At the same time, Foertsch also notes that this did not preclude a power struggle between the sexes. Some perceived this power struggle to be a result of the changes in gender roles during the world wars, during which women were encouraged to work to aid the war effort.

684 Ibid., p. 245-6.
686 Ibid., pp. 124-5.
In *Cold War Femme: Lesbianism, National Identity, and Hollywood Cinema*, Robert J. Corber points out how feminism became associated with lesbianism during the Cold War and became part of a homophobic narrative in which homosexuality became un-American. Indeed, “Like the communist, the lesbian allegedly threatened the American way of life.” Social scientists and politicians were concerned that educated women who could make enough money to live alone would no longer see marriage and family as important goals. Those who did marry might then neglect to emphasize the importance of these goals for their own daughters, which “[would] weak… the nation’s ability to defeat totalitarianism.” Accordingly, maintaining traditional gender roles was thought to be a vital part of preserving democracy and American identity.

The image of the domestic American wife and mother contrasted with the Cold War narrative’s depiction of Soviet women. Lenin and other members of the Bolshevik party proclaimed gender equality as one of their goals in forming a communist state. While certainly this ideal did not play out simply in terms of policy execution in the work place and in Soviet society, it remained a part of American perception of Soviet life. Hand in hand with this notion of gender equality in the Soviet Union was the notion that Soviet women were deprived of the niceties American women enjoyed. For instance, reports of Soviet women clamoring for gowns, perfumes and furs from Paris and New York at a Christian Dior show in Moscow in 1960

689 Ibid., p. 4.
690 Ibid., pp. 6-7.
691 Ibid., p. 12.
furthered this impression. Soviet women reportedly fought for tickets to the fashion show and were physically overwhelmed by the luxury items they saw.  

Americans, as evidenced through cultural products like the films *Ninotchka* (1939), *Comrade X* (1940) and *Jet Pilot* (1957), were curious about the Soviet ideal of gender equality. In these films, a Soviet woman is introduced who epitomizes the ideals of gender equality; she dresses in simple, militaristic clothes, she is somber and serious, and she prefers to be addressed as “Comrade,” rather than by a female-specific term. The female character, however, is “converted to womanliness and is sexually liberated through exposure to the products available in a market economy: hats, perfume, champagne, steak, jewelry, room service.”  

*Ninotchka*, for instance, is a strong supporter of gender equality until she arrives in Paris and meets Count Leon d’Algout, who introduces her to the pleasures of capitalism. Her “conversion” is complete when she purchases a hat which, when she first arrived in Paris, had struck her as frivolous.

**Soviet Bodies**

The Moiseyev Dance Company influenced or reflected American conceptions of gender and gender roles. In its dances, the company acted out “traditional” gender roles (several dances involved courtship), displaying their bodies in heteronormative interactions on stage. Indeed, American critics and audiences became fascinated by Soviet bodies. Newspaper articles and other reactions emphasized over and over again the incredible athleticism and the toned muscles

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695 Ibid., p. 107.
696 Ibid., pp. 105-6.
of the male dancers: “They can kick up their legs from almost a floor squat without moving their upper torsos. It looks fantastic.” There is mention made not just of the overall dance moves or the effect of the dancers moving in conjunction, but of individual parts of the bodies on stage and their physicality. In press coverage a common observation made was how muscular all the dancers were, noting “the tremendous muscular power and control” involved. As Americans vied to learn about life in the Soviet Union, they discovered that everyday Russian life, as depicted on stage “apparently includes an outsize proportion of pep, agility and muscular fitness.”

Certainly the American audience did not take the dances to mean that people living in the Soviet Union moved in such a way in their everyday lives nor that they all looked exactly like the dancers. Still, it is implied that, in the Soviet Union, people could achieve a high level of fitness. The Soviet body held a lot of potential. The ability of Soviets to sculpt their bodies led to the comparison of the men with steel, perhaps reflecting knowledge of the Soviet industrialization efforts and Five Year Plans: “The men, with their breathtaking leaps, seem a mixture of rubber and steel.” The incredible moves on display left no doubt of how toned the dancers were and how hard they had worked to attain their level of skill.

By and large, the male dancers usually proved more fascinating than the female dancers in terms of skill. As mentioned above, the women were often compared to the Rockettes because of their skill, coordination and precision. “The boys,” however, were considered “much more brilliant. Their jumps and leaps boast the excitement of genuine resilience, their pirouettes and air-turns run into the multiples and when they get to work on those incredible full knee-bend

699 Ibid.
700 Herridge, p. 45.
activities, with kicks, turns, travelings and a host of variations, they fairly lift us out of our seats.”

The brilliance of the men was probably due to the more dynamic roles they performed in “ethnic dances,” rather than to the men being better dancers than the women. However, it suggests how Americans perceived gender as depicted by the Moiseyev; for each gender there were specific roles in the thematic material and moves of each dance. Different dancers’ skills could be divided according to gender: “The deliberateness with which a line of girls wends its stately way across the stage is all of grace, the epitome of femininity. The men can swagger. They can also achieve the ultimate in style as with perfect carriage they strut and glide and stamp.” The female dancers achieved “the epitome of femininity,” and in this case femininity meant being elegant and moving with precise, coordinated movements. The male dancers, on the other hand, represented masculinity once more with coordination, but also with more athletic and large-scaled movements.

Alta Maloney of the Boston Traveler underscored this, claiming the audience preferred the male dancers because of their “virile and lively leaps and kicks.” The males were far more showy and employed vigorous moves while the women had a different kind of charm: they “were plumply lovely in their colorfully… graceful unison and sheer beauty.” The female dancers’ movements were more poised and refined and deferential to the intense energetic moves of the men.

In viewing the muscular Moiseyev dancers, many in the audience still saw people they could relate to and who were like Americans of the same age. As this was the first time for most Americans to be able to see people from the Soviet Union -- just the fact that they appeared

“normal” was intriguing: “The Moiseyev Dancers are young. The girls are pretty, and their smiles are nice. The men seem clean, wholesome, humorous and vigorous.”\textsuperscript{704} Such descriptions contrast with the stereotypes Americans encountered in cultural products, which variously depicted Soviets as somber, militant, industry-oriented and cruel. Others described the dancers as looking like a “group of high school girls and boys in gym class...The girls in pony tails. The boys with blond hair falling over their eyes.”\textsuperscript{705} Though highly skilled in a job far beyond the abilities of the typical American high school student, the appearance of the dancers brought similarities with Americans to the fore. They did not appear alien and wholly different from their American counterparts. In the context of a conflict that touted American values of democracy and capitalism in opposition to communism, this notion is striking. Indeed, the Moiseyev was remarkable in its ability to mold dancers who looked like real people, rather than having bodies that easily identified them as dancers: “The Moiseyev girls looked jolly and, unlike so many female dancers, amply proportioned. And the men, unlike most male dancers, looked like men.”\textsuperscript{706} The Moiseyev proved able to cultivate virtuosity in its dancers without distorting their bodies.

The dancers off the stage merited just as much fascination. As part of these queries, Americans looked for markers of gender. For instance, the dancers were scrutinized for their dress and whether their appearance fit in with the average American man or woman. When the troupe went to Disneyland, reporters noted: “The young women of the company wore cotton frocks, striped T shirts and skirts, and other hot-weather attire that blended inconspicuously with

\textsuperscript{704} Excerpt from Osgood on Show World on WXYZ Radio, 13 May 1958, page 8A.
\textsuperscript{705} “Glamour Dancers,” Los Angeles Times, 26 May 1958, pp. 1 and 7.
\textsuperscript{706} William Ewald, “Exploding Moiseyev Dancers Strain Television’s Limits,” Eugene Register-Guard, 30 June 1958.
that of the American patrons.” Americans wanted to know if the Soviet dancers could adjust to the American way of life during their visit, or whether they would fail to escape their “Soviet” label and stick out like a sore thumb. In particular, they were curious as to what the similarities or disparities in appearance and culture-based likes and dislikes meant for the average Soviet man and woman. Falling back on their preconceived ideas of gender roles and gender interactions in the Soviet Union, Americans wondered if the dancers would prove that these notions were accurate.

The American View of Soviet Men

The press consistently portrayed the men of the Moiseyev Dance Company as incredibly athletic and as very masculine. The American audience did not view the male dancers as feminine because of their ballet-like steps or for their ballet training, but instead found them to be “astoundingly agile and robust.” Indeed, the dancers were regarded as performing steps outside of classical ballet's domain, as this was understood at the time in the West: “Such leaps are never seen, nor required, in classic ballet, as were performed by the men of the Moiseyev Company. During the final number one of the men was catapulted from behind the chorus line in a high flight.” The male folk dancers of the Moiseyev, though they had extensive classical ballet training, were viewed differently by the American audience than American male ballet dancers. The Moiseyev men brought dancing to a new level of athleticism and skill, leaving their masculinity in no doubt. They were able to escape stereotypes associated with male ballet dancers because of their dance moves, costumes and folk dance associations.

709 Mossman, p. 3.
As mentioned above, reporters found the male dancers more skilled and more engrossing, though often this observation went hand in hand with noting that folk dances afforded a “more spectacular part”\textsuperscript{711} for male dancers. Reporters did not downplay the skills of the female dancers, for their grace, beauty and “fleetedness of foot.”\textsuperscript{712} The skills of both men and women were acknowledged, but in the end:

…whatever [dance] you choose [as your favorite] you will always come back to the fabulous feats of the men. They bring down the curtain at intermission and at the end with a display of prisyadka of every imaginable variety which left us more breathless than the dancers. I think my own top moment came when, from opposite wings, two men hurled themselves at each other, locked arms in mid flight and were immediately off dancing together in a mad whirl.\textsuperscript{713}

\textsuperscript{710} Chudnovsky, p. 81.
\textsuperscript{711} Walter Terry, New York Herald Tribune, 20 April 1958.
\textsuperscript{712} Dance News, May 1958, p. 8.
\textsuperscript{713} Ibid.
Such moves bordered on the unbelievable and the perfection with which they were executed awed the American audience. Moreover, in addition to being more “brilliant” than the women, the men could do the same steps as the women: as one journalist noted, the men could “duplicate the women's gliding step.”714 The men were credited with greater abilities than the women and, while remaining very masculine, were quite versatile. The men’s ability to perform the women’s steps is not seen as effeminate or emasculating. Instead, once more it demonstrated just how skilled they were. In particular, the prisyadka – or squat dance -- was extremely popular. Americans were fascinated by how the dancers could perform kicks “done from what appears a sitting position” while “spin[ning] like dizzy dervishes.”715 Again and again reporters tried to explain this dance to their readers, noting how “fantastic” it looked.716

While the description of the male dancers always expressed admiration for their superior abilities, there is no explicit commentary noting potential deficits of American men in comparison to their Soviet counterparts. However, as discussed earlier, praise of Soviet male bodies and masculinity occurs in the context of a general fear of American emasculation. Furthermore, there is an outright questioning of the ability of American male dancers’ to compete with the Soviet display of prowess on stage. It is clear that the male dancers proved the most intriguing and it is only when they are on stage and performing the hopak that “the stage sizzles.”717

While there is no explicit questioning of whether American men were as virile or masculine as the Soviet men on display, the descriptions of the male dancers do play into another

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716 Herridge, p. 45.
are of perceived American inferiority -- the space race. As discussed above, describing the Moiseyev's performances very often involved using “explosive” terms. Along similar lines, reporters compared the Moiseyev to the space race and to rocket power:

If Russia soon puts a man into space it is quite likely to be one of the agile, gravity-defying artists of the Moiseyev Dance Company...And one of these fellows would need no rocket or missile propulsion – just his own. Never has New York seen anything like this world-famed group …

Reception to the Moiseyev reflected and reinforced American concern that the US position in the space race was behind that of the Soviet Union. Similarly, when the Moiseyev dancers noted that they had traveled so much that their total traveled distance would cover a trip to the moon and back, reporter W.G. Rodgers noted that it “Sounds like Sputnik III when you hear it from a Russian, doesn't it?”

After the first Moiseyev tour, American commentators acknowledged that they now could understand why the Soviet Union was able to launch Sputnik before the United States launched its own satellite. Later tours fostered similar rhetoric. The male dancers could “leap to heights only recently reserved for spacemen and hang suspended;” wrote critic Kevin Kelly in 1961, “ they spin on their knees, jump on their toes, invert themselves in mid-flight, dance en pointe, execute split-jumps.” The skills displayed by the male dancers reminded Americans of the perceived space and missile gap, and the political context colored their impressions of the dancers.

Off-stage, Moiseyev men did not seem to fit in with American society as well as their female counterparts. It proved much easier to pick the men of a crowd as they did not shop for America clothing as much as the women, and continued to wear more of the clothing brought

719 W.G. Rogers, “Moiseyev Dancers Believe in Travel,” The Evening Sun (Hanover, PA), 16 May 1958.
from home. The men did prove interesting in their desire for camera and camera accessories: “Almost every male member of the troupe arrived at Boston Airport this morning with at least one camera and gadget bag slung over his shoulder.”

Though more fascinating than the women on-stage, off-stage the men received far less press coverage. This is no doubt due to the fact that they were less approachable and less friendly than the women and less willing to submit to the reporters’ questions on their likes and dislikes, shopping adventures and dating habits. The men were quieter and less willing to try to communicate with reporters, with or without an interpreter. A male dancer speaking to Americans at all was deemed a surprising, noteworthy event: “One of the male dancers seemed virtually capable of delivering a major address [in English]. He put together: 'It is the rule.' This virtual filibuster was uttered when an American woman on the tour, directed to accept his seat on the crowded plane, questioned him concerning why he always so eagerly abandoned his squatter's rights.” With cultural products like the film Comrade X in mind, Americans were probably surprised that a Soviet dancer offered to give up his seat to a woman. Almost as astonishing as the dancer’s words was his gesture, which contradicted the principle of gender equality.

The curiosity about male-female relationships in the Soviet Union continued with press coverage of all aspects of male-female interactions, including how males expressed appreciation for the opposite sex. The Boston Globe informed its readers of a “gem of information” -- “Russian blades don't whistle at them [women] on the street. Instead they drop a few lines of poetry out of the corner of their mouths as they walk by.” This revelation emerged as part of an interview with female dancers, who mentioned that they were whistled at on American streets.

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721 Boston Traveler, 13 June 1958.
and wondered what it meant. Upon being informed of the intent behind the whistles, the dancers appeared somewhat ruffled, and explained how in the Soviet Union, expressing admiration for the female form was quite different. Americans were surprised that Russian men recited poetry to women -- an older, more romantic mode of expression -- in a society noted for its emphasis on gender equality.

**American View of Soviet Women**

Impressions of the Moiseyev men as masculine and athletic remained constant during the 1958 and later tours. However, reactions to the female dancers varied. Some described the girls and women as “pretty” and feminine, while others likened them more to their male counterparts and described them as far too muscular: “Girls in the company are pretty but heavy of hip and thigh. Hair is frizzy and they could learn precision from the Rockettes.” Here the Soviet female dancers are the worse for their comparison to their American counterparts. This view perhaps better suits the stereotypical American view of Soviet women: they lacked feminine niceties because of Soviet culture and the Soviet construction of gender.

For the most part, though, the dancers were seen as very feminine, contrasting with the conventional American view of Soviet women. The feminine side is emphasized in descriptions of the more graceful, slower dances in the repertoire, or numbers with colorful costumes:

The sound of accordions began to sift through the house, as through the musicians were strolling on soft ground in the soft air. A close-knit line of girls in pink, blue, orange, cerise, green, and deep red came upon the stage. Theirs was a gentle modesty. Their steps were small and absolutely precise. Their feet had a ballet-trained articulateness. Their turns, too, were balletic. And yet they maintained a beguiling air of folk simplicity. 

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The women were depicted as graceful and modest; they evoked a nostalgic country scene through the different colors of their costumes and their peasant-like simplicity.

Costumes dramatized their femininity in the Bulba dance, “in which the horizontal stripes of the whirling skirts spun gorgeous patterns and high spirits filled the stage.” For each dance, and to represent gender in each culture, the Moiseyev used costumes with different ranges of color and eye-catching designs. Indeed, the *Detroit Free Press* felt American Broadway costume designers could learn a thing or two from the Moiseyev’s costumes.

![Figure 1 Female dancers in the Bulba Dance](image)

Though usually depicted as modest (or somewhat coy) peasant girls, the women were sometimes described as seductive. Critic Claudia Cassidy noted that when the female dancers came on stage, they initiated the “come-hither of courting the world over” to which the male

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728 Chudnovsky, p. 40.
dancers responded with a “defiant game of ’anything he can do, I can do better.’” The women functioned as goals for which the men competed. Descriptions of the women did not include terms like “erotic” or “provocative,” however. Their type of seduction was one known “the world over” as part of courtship leading to marriage. Though some articles emphasized the prettiness and beauty of the female dancers, they did not come across as lustful or sexual.

Unlike the surprisingly consistent perceptions of the Soviet men, perceptions of the Soviet women varied somewhat, eliciting descriptions of shy peasant girls, manly women and women with a certain seductive power. The majority of press reports concurred with the peasant girl depiction. However, though the men's physical abilities were noted again and again, the women's athleticism was by no means overlooked and “the girls proved that they were just as limber.” Indeed, in the Bulba dance, “the line of girls rolls itself into a ball and goes merrily bowling off at the end.”

Americans observed Soviet notions of femininity on and off stage. As with the men, what the women wore when not performing came under scrutiny. At Disneyland, for example, the women wore skirts: “Every time. No shorts no pedal pushers or other bifurcated attire.” Wearing a skirt at this time was not a surprising or particularly conservative choice; while certainly more formal than pants, it more likely demonstrates how the dancers were under such scrutiny during their tour that they always tried to appear at their best. Given the Soviet ideal of gender equality, it is perhaps understandable that Americans were curious about what Soviet women wore and how they acted, especially (as in this instance). This curiosity allowed writers to lend greater significance to what women wore and for the writers to feel they could use the

732 Hicks, p. 1.
women’s appearance to demonstrate whether or not Soviet women adhered to the Soviet ideal of gender equality.

Compared to the males, the female dancers were more personable off stage. Reporters were able to get them to “warm up.” The women smiled more readily and would even laugh. With this kind of breakthrough, “The crew of reporters and photographers following the troupe around resorted to physical gyrations, pantomime and ridiculous antics to make themselves understood. This probably was the ice breaker.”

Again, when describing the dancers' experience at the Ford factory tour, it is the female dancers who were more enthusiastic and more willing to express their feelings: “The girls fell in love with Walker's gold Continental, and he [a worker] promised one of them to ship her a bucket of paint that color when she gets home in Moscow.”

The men remained, for the most part, more stoic towards the reporters. When speaking to the dancers during their first breakfast in San Francisco, reporters noted that the female dancers were friendly and they looked and acted like American women – “They could have been American women – until they began to speak.” In contrast, the male members “began to saunter into the dining room... nibbled at their heavy breakfasts, watching staring American diners with a wary yeye [sic].” The men came across as unfriendly and even suspicious of others while “The girls were different. They were well mannered, reserved, but laughter always bubbled just under the surface.” In terms of interaction with Americans, the female dancers proved more engaging and likeable – seemingly more like their American counterparts.

733 Ibid.
735 Will Stev[illegible], “Famous Russ Moiseyev Troupe Here.”
736 Ibid.
The Life of a Soviet Woman

Americans wanted to know what life was like for Soviet women in general. Reporters noted that the female dancers “consider home, marriage and motherhood 'very important, of course,' but are lured by the 'vast open horizons of art and travel.’”737 Personal relationships, career and motherhood were frequent topics of conversation. Americans wanted to learn how Soviet women functioned within their society. Dancer Liubov Khruliova, “was moved to tears when asked if she misses her 5-year-old son. She does.”738 Reporters emphasized how many of the female dancers manage “a career and home much as do women here.”739 The American press chose to emphasize the ways in which Soviet women were similar to American women. The life of a Soviet woman was not entirely divorced from the way an American woman would live her life; rather the press claimed that the Soviet woman put the roles of career and family in similar perspective. They claimed for American women a strong desire for marriage and family, but that these goals could be accomplished in conjunction with a career.

An in-depth interview at the Fort Wayne Hotel coffee shop in Detroit with dancer Olga depicted an appealing young Soviet woman akin to her American counterpart. Olga “looks as if she were a senior at Cooley High School or a sophomore at Wayne State University. But her hometown is Moscow, Russia.” The interviewer noted that many Americans had a different idea of what Russian women looked like and Olga defied this preconceived notion because she was “a trim, smartly dressed young lady whose winsomeness overcomes the language barrier.”740 Olga emphasized how much she loved to dance. At home she went on dates, like any young

737 Ibid.
738 Ibid.
740 Manos, “A Moscow Girl in Detroit: Dancing, Kissing, Pie.”
American. The interviewer learned that Olga's father was an architect and that her mother ("as do many mothers in Detroit") had encouraged her to pursue her interest in dance.

Naturally, the interviewer noted how much and what Olga ate and how this contrasted with her fit frame. At the breakfast interview, Olga ate “two fried eggs sunny-side up two pieces of buttered toast a piece of apple pie and one cup of coffee” yet she only weighed 108 pounds. Her clothes included a Soviet “gray tailored suit, a pink plaid blouse and a pair of red shoes” complete with matching red purse. When asked about her thoughts regarding what she had seen in America, Olga mentioned that while she enjoyed the Ford factory, she was confused when she heard that “Americans buy new cars every year,” yet it appeared that they did not all buy new cars this year, since there was unemployment in Detroit. Olga said that she much preferred Niagara Falls to the Ford factory. 741

Olga clearly contradicted the stereotypical image of a Soviet woman. In appearance, she was just like any American girl of the same age. Her parents acted just as American parents would, encouraging her ambition to pursue a career in dance. Again and again, the article emphasized how Olga and the life she chose corresponded to American counterparts, thus belaying American prejudices about Soviet people. When a potentially political topic was introduced -- the Ford factory -- she acknowledged a prejudice of her own which she had come to realize wasn’t accurate. Even when given the opportunity, Olga did not adopt a political posture.

*The Soviet Wife*

As the Moiseyev toured the US, Mrs. Moiseyev became a resource for those who wanted to learn about Soviet culture and gender roles. Her name in fact was Tamara Zeifert and not

741 Ibid.
Tamara Moiseyev, though in newspaper articles she was referred to as Mrs. Moiseyev. She was one of the lead dancers of the Moiseyev and famous in her own right. Newspapers referred to her as Tamara Zeifert, though with the caveat of “in private life [she] is Mrs. Moiseyev.”

Despite keeping her maiden name, Tamara Zeifert fulfilled rather traditional roles as a wife and mother. During interviews she described summer vacations with her husband and their teenage daughter, Olga, at a villa near the Black Sea: “At the memory of the view of the sun on the water, rimmed by the pleasant Crimean coastline, Mrs. Moiseyev’s round brown eyes begin to dance and her ready smile seems to bubble up from a deeper well of internal mirth.” When asked if she liked to entertain, Tamara admitted that during the dance season she was usually too tired, but during the summer break, she loved to host “whole colonies of friends.” If she were at her usual summer home at that moment, for breakfast she would be serving “fruit, milk, or cream” because during the summer the dancers were on a strict diet. The article initially idealized Tamara’s proper duties as a wife and mother who (though her career was never forgotten) enjoyed entertaining and vacationing with her family.

Interestingly, one interviewer’s positive impression changed somewhat when Tamara described how the Black Sea had “‘wonderful fish,’” claiming “‘You have nothing like it here.’” The interviewer, slightly offended (and noting that “patriotic pride stirs in a U.S. citizen's blood”), asked the name of the fish. Tamara again insisted there was no American equivalent. Finally she offered up the name: “schav.” The American reporter – certain that this fish did in fact exist in American waters -- replied that Tamara referred to “sorrel made into a cool, greenish white puree and served most often cold with sour cream.” Tamara responded that it was most definitely not the same thing, and began to lament all the foods she missed from the Soviet

743 “At Home With...Mrs. Igor Moiseyev.” New York Post, 22 June 1958.
744 Ibid. It should also be noted that the discussion of the fruit may involve a mistranslation of клюква (cranberry).
Union, like fruit and meat pies. She particularly craved a certain fruit “though in the U.S. it is probably not known, she feels certain.” Tamara went on to describe it for the benefit of the reporters present:

It is sour and rather disappointing when eaten, though it looks very nice. And in Russia, they have a way of calling things which are blown up beyond their real worth by the name of this fruit – which is really a small dark berry and worth nothing. ‘We have raspberries here,’ …[she is] told firmly. And for another moment, all three of us beam happily at one another.  

The reporters, assuming that Tamara was describing a raspberry, assured her that this food was not unique to the Soviet Union either. Escalating tensions still further, Tamara added that Russia produced the best champagne in the world. The interviewer thereafter refused to take her opinions seriously, and portrayed her as a biased, frivolous woman who simply did not know any better.

Soviet Women Participating in Capitalism

When discussing the female dancers off-stage, reporters often emphasized how much they liked to shop, what they bought, and what aspects of American commercial culture they favored. Images of Soviet women being seduced by the wonders of capitalism fit Cold War narratives that depicted a harsh, impoverished life for those living under communism. A telling episode occurred when reporters invited several female company members on a shopping expedition. The Moiseyev granted five dancers permission to go on the shopping trip, and Mrs. Moiseyev came along as well as soon as she “heard the word 'shopping’” to which Igor Moiseyev sighed, “‘Everywhere we go, my wife goes shopping.’”

745 Ibid.
The dancers and reporters exchanged cigarettes, shopped for dresses and shoes, and discussed Hollywood stars. Articles describing the shopping expedition lavished attention on all the minor details. For example, after exchanging cigarettes, one reporter learned that “Russian cigarettes are mostly Turkish tobacco and packaged 10 to a soft paper box.” The reporter sang “You Are My Sunshine” for the dancers, and they replied with “Moscow Is Smiling at Me,” “a snappy ditty with lots of hand-waving.” One dancer “practically swooned” over a Tyrone Power poster and inquired whether or not he was dead. Another added that she thought Robert Taylor almost as handsome as Tyrone Power and asked how he was too.  

Local reporters were eager to show Soviet desire for American goods and celebrate America’s superiority. But at the same time, they emphasized Soviet and American female solidarity – at least as far as shopping was concerned: “Turn a flock of Russian women loose on a New York shopping spree and you can't tell the communists from the capitalists.” Similarly, the New York Journal American's article recounting the shopping trip was entitled: “Communist or Capitalist...Girls will be Girls Russian Dancers See, Sigh and Buy in N.Y. Shops.” Journalists noted that Soviet women were “just as bargain-minded as any American housewife” and “They tried to buy everything but [Tyrone] Power, who isn't on sale.”

Coverage of this kind of shopping event usually utilized images of the dancers smiling and buying items or trying on clothing, such as a photograph of dancer Lydia Skriabina wearing a “fancy, pink flowered balloon dress in Gibels [sic].” Reporters seemed to think that American readers would be interested in what the Soviet women shopped for and that the readers

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747 “Russian Women on American Shopping Spree: Dancers Have Gay Time in New York Stores – And You Can't Tell Them from Capitalists,” St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 29 April 1958, p. 2D.
748 Curtis, “Communist or Capitalist”
749 Ibid., p. 17
750 Ibid., pp. 1 & 17.
751 Ibid.
would be able to relate to them better in this bourgeois, capitalistic context. Underlining the
dancers’ delight in acquiring American products certainly speaks to the American need to
compete with the Soviet Union on all levels during the Cold War. In this instance, Americans
clearly felt they came out on top.

*Depiction of Male-Female Relationships*

The Moiseyev’s repertoire included dances specifically for male dancers, others female
dancers and still others for mixed casts of men and women. The mixed dances typically depicted
heteronormative relationships, and American reporters and critics were quick to analyze these
depictions. For instance, the “City Quadrille” dance featured “four very proper couples from the
country dancing in the open air.” The dances fit a certain stereotype of male-female relations
in the countryside, exuding “wholesomeness in the attitude of boy to girl,” and the movement
was gendered: “Men and women move differently. The men are spectacular, the women
lyric.” Overall, the men came across as “swaggering, show-off rustics. The women for the
most part, are of the fairly coy outdoor-girl variety.” The men were depicted as virile,
especially in the Yurochka dance in which the male lead dancer romped and flirted with each girl
on stage. This “Don Juan,” after chasing after each girl in the village was then rejected “en
masse” by them all. While amusing, this dance also implied that only traditional monogamous
relationships are acceptable and successful.

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752 Dance News, May 1958, p. 8. For description of City Quadrille, see Appendix C.
753 Barzel, “Russ Dancers Awe Inspiring.”
754 Ibid.
756 Horst, p. 87. For description of Yurochka, see Appendix C.
The only time this male-female relationship changed was in the dance “Partisans.” Here instead, “The sexes are equal even to wearing the same garments and doing the same neck-breaking steps.”\textsuperscript{758} “Partisans” served as the only exception to the heteronormative relationships the Moiseyev depicted. This dance celebrated the role of the Russian people in the WWII resistance; it demonstrated how average men and women took up the call to defend their homeland. In this moment of Soviet history, gender lines were blurred, and the goal of victory over the Nazis took precedence. This was emphasized by the costumes, which were dark and amorphous rather than colorful and folkloric.

\textit{Figure 2 A female fighter in “Partisans”}\textsuperscript{759}

Critic Alfred Frankenstein of the \textit{San Francisco Chronicle} argued that gender-designated steps and dances indicated a certain kind of universality: “one gathers that regardless of period, place, or politics, both life and art derive a vast amount of their dynamism from the fact that

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item[758] Barzel, “Russ Dancers Awe Inspiring.”
\item[759] Chudnovsky, p. 84.
\end{enumerate}
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human beings are of two kinds – male and female.”

Although the Moiseyev portrayed peoples from different regions and cultures, gender, as the company depicted it, cut across borders.

“Whether the boys be Ukrainians of [sic] Byelorussians or Tatars, they would not leap that way in the villages if there were no girls on hand to see them, nor would the girls dance with such poetry and zest if they had only their sisters for audience.” He, like the other reporters, noted the differences in what male versus female dancers could do on stage. For him, the men were always depicted as athletes. While the women could “be equally vigorous,” for the most part their grace and lyricism were meant to be a contrast to the men’s athleticism.

Indeed, the female dancers often appeared to need the male dancers. In coverage of a European performance of the Moiseyev in 1956, Dance Magazine described the “Ukrainian Suite” dance which involved “two young lovers who have to part.” With this parting, at first the dance “is an expression of sorrow by the girls of the village. They step slowly across the stage, in simple but continually changing groups and formations, conveying by the inclination of their heads and bodies as well as by facial expression, a mood of gentle melancholy.” The girls are forlorn without the men and do not dance with the same pep and zip as they do when the men are on stage. “Eventually, however, the lovers are reunited and the entire company launch into a Hopak which is full of life and joy.” It is only with the return of the male dancers that the women are again inspired to demonstrate the true extent of their skills and enthusiasm.

Reporters also noted how men and women interacted offstage. During the Disneyland trip, a report claimed “It was easier to pick the Russian men dancers of out the large crowd. Because of their haircuts, for one thing, and another, their attitude toward women. Equality of

761 Ibid.
763 Ibid.
764 Ibid.
the sexes was the order of the day. No concession was made to the women in the way of handing them in and out of conveyances, or carrying their packages, or allowing them to precede the men into an amusement center.” This conduct confirmed the American perception of gender relations in the Soviet Union, where the genders were equal and the social niceties of deference to women had been eliminated. While the dances depicted a certain stereotypical heteronormative relationship, in reality – and in contrast to American contemporary society -- the dancers frequently did not conform to traditional gender roles. The American press made note of these differences but did not describe the Soviet women as dejected or ill-treated. The expression of gender equality is noted, but not emphasized or exaggerated to fit in to the Cold War narrative in which the Soviet ideal of gender equality would be viewed as negative and the antithesis of American deference and condescension towards women.

In viewing the Moiseyev dancers on stage and in press and television coverage, Americans sought to learn how individuals functioned within Soviet society. Various reactions indicated that Americans’ preconceived notions of the Soviet gender roles were often dispelled by the performances or, on occasion, reinforced by the male dancers’ lack of deference to women off stage. Perhaps most importantly, however, was the observation that these Soviet men and women were quite similar to American men and women. Rather than seeing two entirely different cultures reflecting differing political and economic ideas, Americans saw people they could relate to, who shared everything from shopping habits and Hollywood gossip to hopes, dreams and life goals. At the same time, it is important to note that this reception functioned within a larger discourse of Cold War fears of inferiority, both in terms of American culture and masculinity, leading to a questioning of Americans’ ability to compete with the likes of the Moiseyev dancers. Moiseyev’s particular brand of folk dance, in which heteronormative

765 Hicks, p. 1.
relationships dominated and were not complicated by any form of eroticism. This depiction of relationships held the potential to calm American concern about gender roles and homosexuality prevalent in this time period. Moiseyev carefully crafted his message to make the dances appealing and accessible; the dances did not require a high degree of thought or understanding. If a dance or dance suite had a plot, it was simple and easy to follow. The use of the short dance scenes as opposed to larger narrative ballet meant focus and a lengthy attention span were not necessary as the different dances progressed throughout the performance. Moiseyev presented American (and international) audiences with a simplified worldview which Americans took comfort in during the upheaval and uncertainty of the Cold War period.

The form relationships took in the dances and the short nature of the dances themselves also spoke to the audience and who precisely attended the American performances. In her 2008 dissertation, Lauren Erin Brown examines the role of ballet in America in the Cold War period. She argues that cultural products should not just be labeled as either “highbrow” and “lowlbrow” culture but rather the cultural hierarchy is far more variable and not a simple dichotomy. She demonstrates that ballet in postwar America shows the malleability of the cultural hierarchy and in fact, the popularity of American ballet was derived from the fact that it could navigate between low and high brow ends of the cultural spectrum.766 Ballet appeared in America in “highbrow” venues but also in stadium and on television. Brown addresses the way ballet could be deemed popular, though “part of ballet’s allure was its perception of privilege.”767 The Moiseyev was a cultural product that similarly navigated between lowbrow and highbrow culture. Attending the Moiseyev similarly had that “allure” of being a highbrow event with some of its performances at corresponding highbrow venues like the Metropolitan Opera House and

767 Ibid., p. 211.
Moiseyev’s own Bolshoi background. At the same time, the Moiseyev dances took a more crowd-pleasing, flashier form than a classical ballet performance and more middlebrow in nature.

*Contemporary American Views of Ethnicity and Race:*

As with gender, in viewing the Moiseyev, Americans drew comparisons between their own notions of American identity and the Soviet identity the Moiseyev dancers displayed. Part of this comparison meant identifying what precisely American identity entailed and who could be identified as American. Americans saw similarities between themselves and their Soviet counterparts in the multiplicity of dances and cultures that made up the Moiseyev’s vision of the Soviet Union. Indeed, Americans saw a Soviet multicultural identity that corresponded to a similar American notion that people from varying ethnic and cultural backgrounds could lay claim to a larger sense of being American. This vision of a multicultural identity allowing for the free expression of cultural and ethnic background corresponded to the Cold War narrative that positioned America as the epitome of democracy and freedom. The contrast between this ideal of American multiculturalism and the reality of Americans of different ethnic and racial backgrounds living together contributed to an increased interest in the study of American identity and society at large.

Interest in the makeup of American society resonated throughout social and political discourse at the time of the Moiseyev tours. In *The Lonely Crowd*, David Riesman examined contemporary society, concentrating on the appearance of a new individual whom he designated an “other-directed” personality type. This “other-directed” individual is attentive to the opinion of his peers and overly conformist. Rather than looking to his parents and family for social

cues, he interacts with a wider environment, including the media. The other-directed person is driven by an anxiety that affects all aspects of his life. Riesman tied this anxiety to parenthood and gender roles. He argued that modern parents, anxious about the best way to raise their children, had turned to experts, including those in the media, for advice. Riesman believed that the parents’ pervasive anxiety was passed along to their children.

Riesman’s other-directed type, though not unique to America and certainly tied to the general rise of capitalism, industrialism and urbanization, found “itself most at home in America, due to certain constant elements in American society, such as its recruitment from Europe and its lack of any seriously feudal past.” In particular, he tied the “other-directed” trend to metropolitan America and parts of northwest Europe, in contrast to the social character of peoples living in places like Latin America, southern Europe, Asia and Africa. Riesman compared peoples of different ethnic, cultural and racial backgrounds in order to highlight how American society and identity changed with the rise of the other-directed type.

Nathan Glazer, a co-author of *The Lonely Crowd*, analyzed the various peoples of the United States in order to explain political and social phenomena. While studying membership in the American Communist Party, Glazer separated the groups according to ethnic and cultural background, as well as class and education level, revealing that certain groups were more attracted to communism. The Communist Party reasoned that it would gain the greatest support of those who were the most oppressed, specifically industrial workers and black Americans. However, actual membership did not correspond to those “wooed most ardently.” Instead, Glazer saw greater membership among professionals and middle-class people, especially those

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769 Ibid., pp. 25-6.
770 Ibid., p. 48 and 337-8.
771 Ibid., p. 20.
772 Ibid., pp. 31-32.
with a Jewish background.\textsuperscript{773} Intellectual and cultural figures in the United States also demonstrated a greater tendency to be attracted to communism and were more likely to join the Communist Party.\textsuperscript{774}

Glazer then traced communist interest in the black population of the United States, beginning with Lenin and increasing especially in the late 1920s. The Communist Party attempted to demonstrate its acceptance of black Americans in direct contrast to the racism experienced in American society. However, the impact was not as successful as the party hoped, and in the end the American Communist Party proved unable to maintain a lasting black American membership.\textsuperscript{775}

As to industrial workers, “the earlier and more-assimilated ethnic groups did not enter the party – though it is hard to know whether there were so few Irish because they were an earlier ethnic group or because they were Catholic. The later groups, with important exceptions, such as the Poles – also strongly Catholic – seemed to show a greater tendency to come into the party. Economic and social circumstances did set a general frame, in which elements of religion and culture operated to make a complex picture of response.”\textsuperscript{776} Glazer, like Riesman, concerned himself with comparing peoples of different backgrounds and how they fit into American society and identity overall to understand recent trends in political thought.

Glazer further developed his conception of the makeup of American society in Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians, and Irish of New York City. Here he explored the “role of ethnicity in the tumultuous, varied, endlessly complex life of New York City.”

\textsuperscript{774} Ibid., p. 166.
\textsuperscript{775} Ibid., pp. 169-71 and 180.
\textsuperscript{776} Ibid., p. 186.
Glazer noted that the notion of America as a melting pot (and especially New York with its extremely heterogeneous population) was important to America and its values but was both outdated and inaccurate with regard to contemporary American society.778

New York served as the way to disprove the “melting pot” approach since “almost forty years after mass immigration from Europe to this country ended [in 1963], the ethnic pattern is still so strong in New York City.”779 Glazer argued, though, that because diversity was so great in New York, no one group appeared special or exotic. As a result, usually after a generation or two of living in America, a group’s national identity began to decline. But ethnic groups were continuously remade as a group, not as people completely assimilated into American identity and society. Local politics supported this conclusion, since ethnic groups in New York functioned as interest groups, lobbying for housing legislation and other benefits and being courted by political hopefuls.780 Glazer concluded that:

Ethnicity is more than an influence on events; it is commonly the source of events. Social and political institutions do not merely respond to ethnic interest; a great number of institutions exist for the specific purpose of serving ethnic interests. This in turn tends to perpetuate them. In many ways, the atmosphere of New York City is hospitable to ethnic groupings; it recognizes them, and rewards them, and to that extent encourages them.781

While Glazer attempted to move away from the “melting pot” view of American immigrants and society, he did not think that individual ethnic groups would always be separated. In particular, Glazer used the example of the German population in the United States. The Germans as a group “are vanished. No appeals are made to the German vote; there are no German politicians in the sense that there are Irish or Italian politicians; there are in fact few

778 Ibid., xcvii and 288.
779 Ibid., p. 291.
780 Ibid., pp. 11 & 17.
781 Ibid., p. 310.
Germans in political life and, generally speaking, no German component in the structure of the ethnic interests of the city.”  

However, ethnic identity did not exist in a vacuum and, in fact, Glazer noted a reemergence of a stronger German identity in New York in the Cold War context. Tensions regarding Berlin and the desire for America to maintain a healthy relationship with West Germany allowed for emergence of pride in a specific German identity. As the national identity of ethnic groups declined (usually diminishing completely by the third generation of immigrants), instead American society would be broken up according to religion and race more definitively. What American identity would look like as these developments continued could not be determined at the point in which Beyond the Melting Pot was written. It is not until later, after the end of the Cold War, that Glazer did so.

Riesman and Glazer’s work broke down the makeup of American society and American identity during the Cold War. As America strove to define itself in opposition to the Soviet Union during the Cold War period and to assemble a coherent sense of American identity, Riesman and Glazer looked closely at the influence of race, ethnicity and gender roles on American society. Throughout these writings, there is a recurrence of the theme of anxiety on the part of Americans. This anxiety comes out in particular in Riesman’s writing in which the other-directed person is unsure of himself and looks for direction from his peers and from the media. Glazer wrote of anxiety as Americans wonder why some of their countrymen have joined the Communist Party (presumably rejecting American-style democracy). The question arises:

782 Ibid., p. 311.
783 Ibid., p. 312.
784 See Nathan Glazer, We Are All Multiculturalists Now (1997), in which Glazer argues that Multiculturalism was a way to deal with America’s past discrimination against certain groups and try to maintain a sense of national unity.
will there ever be a unified American identity, as indicated by the concept of the American melting pot, or is this an unrealistic goal for American society?

Linked with the concept of multiculturalism and perception of different ethnicities and races in these writings is the construct of American identity. Eric Foner notes that American identity is not static but rather a process that changes over time, drawing both on the historical record and on invented tradition. In particular, he traces the presence of “freedom” in American discourse and how it becomes intertwined with American identity to the point that “no idea is more fundamental to Americans' sense of themselves as individuals and as a nation than freedom. The central term in our political vocabulary, 'freedom' – or 'liberty,' with which it is almost always used interchangeably – is deeply embedded in the documentary record of our history and the language of everyday life.”

Freedom, like American identity, is not a stable, easily defined concept. Its meaning varies with context and often incorporates and reacts to dissenting voices in addition to those who offer support.

Foner ties the meaning of freedom for Americans and its association with American identity in the Cold War to the “Four Freedoms” speech by President Roosevelt during WWII. In Roosevelt’s 1941 State of the Union Address, he listed the four freedoms: “freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear,” which he touted would someday be universal. Roosevelt used the idea of these freedoms to pose WWII as a fight for freedom and America’s involvement as aiding this goal.

This conception and Americans’ involvement in WWII in general “reshaped Americans' understanding of themselves as a people. The struggle against Nazi tyranny and its theory of a master race placed new emphasis on the civic definition of American nationality while

786 Ibid., xiv.
787 Ibid., p. 223.
discrediting ethnic and racial inequality.” The end of the war saw greater acceptance of the diverse ethnicities living within the United States. However, inequality for black Americans continued to exist.

Many recognized this contradiction within American identity and the conception of freedom, though the media continued to portray freedom in its ideal form – for example, a political cartoon in the *Detroit Free Press* showing the Statue of Liberty welcoming all immigrants to America and Hollywood films that depicted people of various backgrounds working together. Paul Robeson was one figure who was not taken in by such cultural products. In response to the 1947 exhibition, “Freedom Train” which displayed American historical documents (like the Declaration of Independence), he asserted “I want freedom itself, not a Freedom Train.”

Despite the contradictions inherent in the notion of freedom, many black Americans involved in the civil rights movement eventually came to believe that accepting the anti-communist ideas put forth as part of American identity would help their cause. They used Cold War discourse to highlight the fact that racism in America “damaged the American image abroad and thus played into the Russians' hands.” Thus *Brown v. Board of Education*, the 1954 Supreme Court decision that declared segregation in the public schools illegal, spoke about racial discrimination in the context of America’s image abroad, stating that the decision would support the cause of freedom in the worldwide battle.

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788 Ibid., p. 236.
789 And of course the experience of Japanese Americans during the war contradicted this increased acceptance of diverse ethnicities.
790 Ibid., p. 238-9.
791 Ibid., p. 250.
792 Ibid., p. 258.
793 Ibid.
Foner demonstrates how the conception of freedom and its role in American identity directly influenced policy and events in the Cold War. Hence the Truman Doctrine’s claim to be in the “defense of freedom” and to support “'freedom-loving peoples’” allowed for CIA involvement in coups in Guatemala and Iran as part of the freedom effort. Additionally, the concept of the U.S. as a leader of the “free world,” which was composed of nations with anti-Communist policies, unfortunately allowed for the inclusion of anti-Communist, fascist Spain and the apartheid government of South Africa as part of the “free world.”

How Americans viewed multiculturalism, ethnicity and race, and American identity influenced how they received the Moiseyev.

American Perception of Race and Ethnicity as Displayed by the Moiseyev

For the Moiseyev's goals, it is clear that the Soviet Union desired to show off the different races, ethnicities and nationalities within its borders in a positive manner. The Soviet government endeavored to paint a picture of peaceful, respectful existence within the Soviet Union, and the Moiseyev helped to embellish this picture. At the same time, as evidenced by such thinkers as Riesman and Glazer, Americans expressed concern over American identity and the role of multiple ethnicities and races within the body politic. In viewing the Moiseyev and its depiction of multiple nationalities and ethnicities, Americans responded positively to this message of multiculturalism – they “bought” what the Moiseyev “sold.” Still, it is difficult to determine just how nuanced American understanding was of the different groups on stage. Certainly in speaking of the Moiseyev and the dances performed in general terms, usually “Russian” or “Soviet” was the adjective employed. But in terms of delineating the different cultural groups, perception varied.

794 Ibid., pp. 253-4.
Critics emphasized the many different kinds of dances the Moiseyev repertoire contained and how these dances came from a variety of places. Articles and reviews of the Moiseyev noted that there were dances from Kazan, Moldavia, and the Ukraine, among others. Indeed, the number of peoples that made up the Soviet Union whose dances the Moiseyev drew from varied somewhat, though usually topping out at 180 different groups, with a dance repertory based on 3,000 dances from the peoples of the Soviet Union. Circulating these numbers fed the sense of the Soviet Union as a vast territory with exotic locales and peoples. One critic felt that the Moiseyev was evidence that Russia “possesses more varieties of indigenous culture than any other nation on earth, and Moiseyev has drawn on a bewildering variety of folk expression in assembling the program for his American tour.” The Moiseyev dances sprang from a variety of locations, including Central Asia and the Arctic and Europe. They also represented a variety of social constructs, from Western to non-Western and traditional folkways to modern lifestyles.

Additionally, Americans noted the different styles and presentation of the dances, such as the “fierce dance of the Tartars, the stalking dance to the thin beat of the Caucasian drum[,] the Amazonian fury of “Partisans” with its beautifully lighted effects of cloaked riders.” Americans remarked on the visible differences present in the dances in terms of the kinds and styles of dance moves, costumes and the style of the dances. Critics particularly noted the variety of the dances and how the different peoples came to be represented as a result. For instance, the Estonian polka song showed a traditional gender relationship with “a young man [who] is harassed into an unflagging performance by his inexhaustible girl-friend,” contrasting

797 “Its 106 dancers will draw from a repertory based on 3,000 dances of the U.S.S.R.” Parents’ Magazine, undated.
798 Frankenstein.
800 Barzel, “Russ Dancers Awe Inspiring.”
with the “Russian reel that wound itself into a fantastic climax (two gyrating circles of linked
dancers spinning like mad dervishes)…”

It should be noted, however, that those going to see the Moiseyev perform did not
necessarily know much about these places whose dances were represented or any details about
each group’s culture. In describing the dances, critics could employ such terms as “faraway
people with strange sounding names as Adzharians, Tatars of Kazan, Moldavians, Byelorussians,
etc.” For many Americans, the dancers on stage were their only point of reference for that
culture or nation. Accordingly, once more, visible differences played a major role in American
perception of the peoples living in the Soviet Union through the Moiseyev dances. For instance,
even the costumes reflected the variety present in the Moiseyev. A *Boston Globe* article noted
that when traveling, the company took with it 3000 costumes and 2000 shoes. Such numbers,
however, were necessary because of the many different ethnic groups being represented by the
company. Consequently, each dance needed a completely different costume to properly depict
the different dances and peoples on stage. In contrast to classical ballet, in which dancing shoes
would be used a few times and then disposed of, the Moiseyev Dance Company could not part
with their shoes so easily as the “shoes are an essential part of a national costume.” As a result
the company, unlike other dance companies, brought a shoemaker with them to repair the
essential shoes for performances. Even the number of shoes the Moiseyev brought with them
served to reinforce the multiple cultures the dancers depicted on stage.

For some, however, the Moiseyev represented just Russia and Russian culture. They felt
the Moiseyev with all its skill represented a specifically Russian message:

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801 Kelly, “Moiseyev Dance Company Captures Boston Garden.”
802 Harry MacArthur, “Russia Sends Us Some Exciting Folk Dancers,” The Evening Star Washington D.C., 17 June
1958.
The Russians seemed to be born to the stage. Their emotions play clearly and strongly over their faces and through their bodies. Watching them dance is a little like sitting at the edge of the sea and watching its currents and swirls and eddies, all in varying speeds and moods and dynamics, yet somehow flowing harmoniously together. In Polyanaka (The Meadow) there were boys in high, high prysiadkas, lines of dancers slowly sinking (with incredible unison) and rising, a huge leaping circle of men, and endless filigrees of rapid small steps. And the whole added up to the happy dancing of harvesters in a field.\footnote{Herring, “Reviews,” p. 35.}

Though the majority of the press saw a multicultural message, here the Russian association dominates. It is unclear if the use of “Russian” in this instance is due to its close association with “Soviet” at this time or a belief that the Moiseyev represented a specifically Russian culture. Given the names and labels of the dances, which leave no doubt as to their multicultural sources, it is more likely to be the former. However, even so, this close association of “Russian” and “Soviet” demonstrates that, for some Americans, Russians were the dominant people of the Soviet Union.

Moiseyev presented a carefree, happy-go-lucky vision of cultural difference as viewed and embodied by members of the privileged caste. This of course was a fabrication of how national groups lived in the Soviet Union; Moiseyev also presented an escapist view of life in the Soviet Union, which had recently witnessed the upheavals of WWII with the death of over 20 million citizens, economic and urban devastation (about one fourth of Soviet capital resources were destroyed and industrial and agricultural output dropped to below prewar levels) and the forced displacements of 1.5 million people by the Stalin regime.

Moiseyev idealized the ethnic, national scene of the Soviet Union, an image which Americans, experiencing their own domestic issues with regard to race and ethnicity, found soothing. As discussed above, particularly in the earlier part of the Cold War and the heyday of HUAC and McCarthyism, Americans were concerned about what kinds of Americans were
attracted to communism and what the future of American society would look like in light of identity issues. America sought to define itself in the post-WWII world and disconcerting tendencies, such as the rising presence of the so-call “other-directed” type in society as well as the instability of the construction of gender, contributed to general anxiety which the message of the Moiseyev assuaged. Americans also viewed the Moiseyev in light of recent civil rights events and the international gaze. The recent *Brown Versus Board of Ed* (May 1954) decision which declared segregated public schools unconstitutional had domestic and international repercussions. In *The Cold War and the Color Line*, Thomas Borstelmann demonstrates how both the court’s decision and how the Eisenhower administration acted on it were influenced by the international situations of the Cold War and newly forming countries in Africa and Asia. If the judges had decided against declaring segregation unconstitutional, there would have been dire consequences for the United States internationally as it combated Soviet accusations of racism and as it endeavored to engender friendly relations with newly formed countries. The Eisenhower administration immediately took note of how the decision could be used internationally: “The administration as a whole, however, along with many other white Americans, seemed more sure of what they wanted the world to think of the *Brown* case than of what they thought themselves.” The State Department and the USIA immediately took up the decision to use it as propaganda demonstrating black Americans’ position in American society progressing.

During the September 1957 Little Rock crisis, Eisenhower again acted with the international gaze in mind. Governor Orval Faubus resisted the *Brown versus Board of Ed*

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806 Ibid., pp. 57-8.
807 Ibid., p. 94.
808 Ibid.
decision being carried out at Central High School in Little Rock, AR. He utilized the Arkansas National Guard and then encouragement of white mobs to keep nine black students from attending school. After Eisenhower sent in the 101st Airborne to escort the students to school, he described his actions as part of maintaining order and avoided discussing his decision as part of the larger racial issue. Eisenhower’s actions were motivated by Faubus’ defiance but also by the international focus on the events: “Television cameras from around the world whirred as vicious white mobs taunted and assaulted the handful of orderly well-dressed black schoolchildren behaving with great dignity.”809 Little Rock became well known internationally and once more, the Eisenhower administration strove to use it as positive propaganda for America, though this contradicted the actual views of the Eisenhower administration, which concerned itself far more with what the event meant for international relations rather than with the “actual violations of human rights and democratic practices there.”810 In the context of the racial issues of 1950s America, the Moiseyev’s utopia of a variety of peoples living together harmoniously had widespread appeal. As the US government proclaimed itself a democratic, freedom-loving nation in jarring contrast to the reality of American domestic turmoil, the Moiseyev functioned as an escape for the American audience. In the Moiseyev performances, Americans found a highly entertaining version of their own multicultural ideal without the nitty-gritty, violent details of the actual contemporary American racial situation.

Igor Moiseyev as Intrepid Anthropologist

Often the discussion of the different ethnicities and nationalities depicted by the Moiseyev went hand-in-hand with the story of the group’s founding and Moiseyev’s ability to “discover” and preserve dances from a wide variety of Soviet territories. The Boston Globe

809 Ibid., pp. 103-04.
810 Ibid., p. 104.
wrote the company's founding story involving Moiseyev's search for the perfect folk material and perfect dancers:

Thirty-three years ago, dancer Igor Moiseyev switched careers. Glumly aware that he would soon be a little long in the tooth for his energetic lead roles in the Bolshoi Ballet, he began combing the backwater villages of the Soviet Union – sometimes on foot, oftener on donkey back – for remnants of the fast-disappearing art of the folk dance. The result of those travels, with or without a donkey, is being seen by Americans in 20 cities this season as the Moiseyev Dancers make their fourth tour of the country and their first since 1965…

Moiseyev was portrayed as a kind of anthropologist – Johnny Appleseed studying other cultures and bringing their dances to light.

Another retelling of the company’s origins noted that Moiseyev had a special interest in folk dance and accordingly “traveled extensively throughout the Soviet Union studying local customs and dances.” As a result of his study, Moiseyev devised new ways to train and coordinate folk dancers, a task entirely without precedence (according to American newspapers). Igor Moiseyev put together the dances but also founded a special school that “would train a dancer in recreating diversified national images and styles, beginning with ancient and primitive dances and ending with modern works in which present day features, characters and emotion are reflected.” Moiseyev is lauded as preserving and passing on knowledge of these folk dances.

The American press celebrated Moiseyev as a brilliant societal observer, cataloger and artist. He is portrayed as a Soviet citizen with a superior ability to study and choreograph dances across differing time periods and cultures. While his actions in putting together the dances for his troupe are not directly linked to the Soviet government’s orders, the government’s encouragement and approval are implied. Moiseyev, as the Soviet government’s representative, acted as mediator between cultures and brought their dances to a wider audience. The Soviet

811 Kuflik, p. 1.
government through Moiseyev revealed a cultural sensitivity and positive intent -- the government desired to celebrate the cultures living within its borders.

In specialty publications devoted to dancing, the writers were savvy enough to realize that the Moiseyev did not present entirely authentic dances. They noted that these dances were highly stylized and geared toward their audiences so they could be easily understood. While acknowledging the amazing skills and the entertaining nature of the Moiseyev, these writers also emphasized that the dances made “no great artistic demands on the audience. The performers reach out graciously to give you easy-to-take pleasure.”\(^{813}\) The Moiseyev dances were neither intellectually nor artistically challenging for the audience; they were middlebrow, mainstream entertainment (as discussed above) which presented an idealized, stylized view of the Soviet Union. The stylized nature of the dances did not, however, take away from the overall folk “feel” of the performances, as the Moiseyev “still retains its warm-hearted folk quality. The Russian folk music – melodious, melancholy, gay, and mischievous – is irresistible.”\(^{814}\) Even those reviewers who were more critical of Moiseyev’s source material could not deny the dances’ appeal and their ability to represent folk cultures, if only in a distilled version.

*The Power of a Multicultural Message*

Some critics recognized an even larger multicultural message beyond the territories of the Soviet Union. Walter Terry described other countries that Igor Moiseyev visited and studied:

The Moiseyev repertory not only contains folk elements representing the republics, regions, villages and the many nationalities which comprise the Soviet Union but also many dances from countries (China, Hungary, Czechoslovakia) which Mr. Moiseyev classified as being 'in our bloc.' His dance duties and interests, however, take him beyond the 'bloc' but in the role of consultant, rather than choreographer...His services as a dance adviser have taken him to many


\(^{814}\) Ibid.
lands, among them Lebanon (where he remained for two months in 1956) and Egypt. Terry recognized that the Moiseyev hoped to represent the many peoples of the USSR and also other places under Soviet influence or with whom the Soviet Union had friendly relations. Igor Moiseyev stated that he used his techniques to help other countries recognize the value of their folk material: “One of the key acts is to help folklorists who want to transplant their materials to the theater to recognize what it unimportant, eliminate it, and to exploit those ingredients that already possess certain aspect of theater. In Egypt, for example, I suggested ways to elevate the 'danse du ventre' from its almost prostituted state in some of the cheaper clubs to a genuine artistic level. After all, it is a dance traditional to the Egyptians and it should be used. There is no reason why it cannot be used artistically.” He would not, however, utilize or try to change Muslim dances associated with religious ceremony, feeling this would be disrespectful.

Terry saw the potential in the Moiseyev to reach other peoples with its multicultural message. This potential had wider political implications in the context of the Cold War as the US and Soviet Union vied for influence in territories across the globe.

Audrey Kearns also recognized this powerful message: “The heart of a nation speaks to other peoples most eloquently through its folksongs and dances.” According to Kearns, the Moiseyev fully communicated this message with dances that came from over 180 different cultures from within the Soviet Union. While most felt that these dances celebrated the variety and differences among the cultures of the Soviet Union, a few critics felt that the Moiseyev demonstrated how “Basically homogenized the world's people are.” This homogenization view did not dominate the response to the multicultural nature of the Moiseyev, but it does

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815 Terry, “A Magician of Folklore.”
816 Ibid.
support another theme that surfaces again and again when Americans viewed the Moiseyev generally -- that Soviets are people too.

*Americans Draw Comparisons of Ethnicity*

The Moiseyev claimed to represent a variety of peoples in terms of dance, style and appearance and offered the opportunity for Americans to evaluate them. Despite the talent on display, the folk dances could be perceived as crude. One critic noted, in discussing a Caucasian dance (*Adzharian Hero*) with drums: “Although these virile Soviet dancers were well-clad, one felt much the same trial ceremony could be performed by naked Negro primitives.”

This critic took a particular dance and classified it as representing a lower rung on the civilizational hierarchy in the Soviet Union. He then linked this ethnic group with a racial group that he considered to be at a similarly low level in the American hierarchy. In terms of American views of race, this comparison suggests that there is a ranking of races and that the differences in race could be evoked based on cultural expression in addition to skin tone.

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The Moiseyev was sometimes compared to other folk dance troupes that Americans had seen. In San Francisco, critic Clifford Gessler deemed the Moiseyev the best so far – “It’s folk dance raised to the Nth power. The Bay Area has seen folk companies from many lands, for years, but never anything with the scope and impact and sheer brilliance of the Moiseyev Dance Company.” According to Gessler, the Moiseyev demonstrated that the “Russian people produce other and more congenial things than political and economic systems and iron curtains.”

Many felt that the Moiseyev contradicted stereotypical American perception of Russian ethnicity and character. Critic W.G. Rogers noted how “wonderfully gay” the dances were, and this contrasted with his impression that the “Russian character had a darker side.” The Moiseyev

820 Ilupina, p. 110.
contradicted the American opinion that “Russians have no sense of humor” in their dances, like the “Football” dance. 823

825 Horst, p. 87.

Certain writers compared the Moiseyev to other Slavic folk dance groups -- but again with the assessment that the Moiseyev came out on top; it “extended the folk idiom into valid theatrical dance of the highest disciplined virtuosity.” 824 Though not all critics recognized the full extent of the multicultural message on display, many did note that the Moiseyev expanded their knowledge of Russian culture. Upon viewing the Moiseyev, critics concluded: “So much for the common notion that Russian folk dance is all thigh-slapping hijinks, armless catherine wheels, stomping, grinning and clapping.” Instead they were stunned by performance’s virtuosity and complexity. 826 Others did note that, in the later tours, non-Russian dances were
emphasized in addition to the original repertoire, such as dances from Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria and China.

While some comparisons to other groups, ethnicities and artists took place when the Moiseyev performed, perhaps the most important aspect of audience reaction was the recognition that the peoples living in the Soviet Union were real people who expressed emotions (especially positive emotions) and that American audiences could understand them, even without knowing their languages. This aspect of reception could be labeled a “strong non-dance element,” more specifically, the “indisputable excitement that comes of seeing Russians – real people – laughing, dancing, waving. For forty years the door has been shut. We have known Soviet citizens only by hearsay. The impact of having these dancers immediately before us, charming and spirited, evokes an emotion like that of meeting a member of the family who has been away for a very long time.” 827 In particular, Americans were surprised by the fact that the Russians appeared to have a sense of humor. The “Football” dance was one example which taught Americans to ignore their traditional stereotype of Russians as a sober, stern people. 828 Americans, though perhaps not the biggest soccer fans, still understood the humor of the dance on stage, and took part in it with their Soviet counterparts.

In this period of the Cold War and the contemporary discussion of proper masculinity, femininity and the place of different races and ethnicities in the American identity, the Moiseyev tour served as a way to compare American and Soviet identity side by side. Americans noted the high level of masculinity the male dancers displayed and assessed this masculinity using Cold War terms associated with the Soviet Union, like “sputniks” and “steel.” However, though contemporary and more recent scholars discussed the concern with regard to American

828 Arthur Bloom[illegible], “Ovation for Russians.”
masculinity and sexuality, Americans did not shrink away from their appreciation of the Moiseyev due to the male dancers’ incredibly muscular bodies and astounding abilities. The American audience similarly looked for markers of the Soviet ideal of gender equality in evaluating the female dancers of the Moiseyev and while off stage they found some evidence of this, Americans took to heart the more feminine aspects of the dancers and chose to emphasize their similarities to American women in appearance, habits and desires (in both material goods and men). Accordingly the American reaction to notions of gender and sexuality the Moiseyev displayed on stage and off stage did not further stereotypes of how the Soviet genders differed from American genders but instead drew out the two peoples’ similarities and ability to relate to one another. In terms of ethnicity and race, the Moiseyev’s rhetoric and the variety of dances it displayed supported a Soviet multicultural identity. This identity conformed with American Cold War rhetoric lauding American ideals of freedom and tolerance (in opposition to Soviet repression). While it is debatable how nuanced American perception of the different races and ethnicities the Moiseyev displayed was, Americans still understood the multicultural message on at least a general level and embraced it. Overall when the Moiseyev afforded Americans the opportunity to compare themselves to people from the Soviet Union they found more similarities than differences and viewed the dancers as people, which meant a corresponding relaxation of tensions towards the Soviet Union. Igor Moiseyev presented a vision of heteronormative and multicultural utopia in the form of middlebrow entertainment.

Like the Moiseyev Dance Company, the American-Soviet Music Society (ASMS) promoted a conception of multiculturalism and the power of the arts to influence political relations between the Soviet Union and the United States. Their message originated from the US and, though international in scope, targeted Americans as its primary audience. Existing from World War II through the early 1950s and based in New York, the ASMS functions as a counterpoint case study with which the goals and success of the Moiseyev Dance Company can be contrasted. The American Soviet Music Society also took a risk in presenting a multicultural face, one that supported American as well as Russian and other Soviet nationalities' cultures as equally valid. This risk centered on the continued existence of the society itself, and, as will be explored below, as time went on the message of multiculturalism became less acceptable and led to the society's end. By examining the ASMS’s initial success followed shortly by failure and demise, the reason for the longevity and overwhelming success of the Moiseyev becomes clearer. The ASMS serves as a beneficial foil to draw out the reasons for success as it employed a similar kind of rhetoric supporting the power of culture in the Cold War context and multiculturalism. These reasons include the Moiseyev’s use of middlebrow culture, the political atmosphere of a post-Stalin USSR which contributed to the drive for cultural exchange in both directions, and the Soviet emphasis on state sponsored cultural endeavors.

In its debut publication of the American-Soviet Music Review in the fall of 1946, the year the Cold War began, the American-Soviet Music Society (ASMS) opened with its mission statement, consisting of three aims:

- To promote through education and knowledge closer contact, friendship and understanding among American and Soviet musicians.
- To promote an active interchange of musical performances, artists, publications
information and other musical education material between the people of the United States and the people of the Soviet Union.

- To promote a wider knowledge of American music and musicians in the Soviet Union and of Soviet music and musicians in the United States. \(^\text{829}\)

The American-Soviet Music Society, which at first functioned as the Musicians Committee of the larger National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, organized concerts and events featuring both American and Soviet music and artists as well as communicating with their artistic counterparts in the Soviet Union itself. The society included among its members major figures in American music and culture, including Aaron Copland, Leonard Bernstein, Elie Siegmeister, Morton Gould, F. Charles Adler, Ray Lev and Olin Downes. The group furthermore often worked with other prominent artists such as Paul Robeson, Muriel Smith, Pete Seeger, and the choreographer Jerome Robbins.

The society's mission statement of fostering friendship and exchange between the two nations may leave the impression that the society functioned primarily as a cultural appreciation club. However, in the closing essay of this first publication, the society's chairman, Sergei Koussevitzky, expanded upon and underlined the more political aspects of the society:

Today, we musicians feel that we have a right – more than anyone else – to raise our voice, because we give the inspiration and joy of music to all who want to share in it...Indeed, music, like a living stream, breaks all barriers between nations and carries its message of beauty and brotherhood of men. \(^\text{830}\)

Accordingly, the society put together publications, meetings and music which discussed and highlighted cultural connections and mutual appreciation of American and Russian music. The society hoped to demonstrate the equal validity of both countries' cultures and the manner in which culture could be used as a way for each country's people to relate to one another. For instance, at a concert in March of 1947, the society played pieces by American composers like

Elie Siegmeister but also played pieces by Russian composers like Sergei Prokofiev in equal measure. Unfortunately, the society, which at first was welcomed and received positive reception of its ideas and performances, had but a brief existence. Starting in late 1947 and early 1948, it began to deteriorate and was disbanded in the early 1950s.

While it did exist, however, the society acknowledged the precarious times of the post-WWII era. For instance, in the Review article excerpted above, Koussevitzky referred to the nuclear bomb and to the destruction of war and what this meant for the importance of maintaining good relations between the Soviet Union and the United States. At the same time, Koussevitzky here privileged the role of music and artists to reach people both in America and the Soviet Union. In particular, he looked to the significance of Shostakovich’s Seventh or Leningrad Symphony and the way it touched people across the world during the dire period of WWII when the Germans were besieging Moscow. The piece was performed in England and the United States as part of the effort to unite the Allies. The September 1942 publication of Soviet Russia Today stated that “In stirring performances led by the great conductors [Arturo] Toscanini and Koussevitzky [,] the people of America have heard and responded to the triumphant message of the Seventh Symphony of this gifted Soviet Composer.”

The members of the American-Soviet Music Society witnessed the power of music to bind two countries even in dismal circumstances and the members hoped to use this power again as the relationship between the Allies grew more fragile. The American-Soviet Music Society, while involved in music performance and appreciation, had a specific political aim; to bring the American and Soviet peoples and government closer to each other.

831 Ibid.
Origins of the society

The American-Soviet Music Society began as the music branch of the larger National Council of American Soviet Friendship. This organization, which was an outgrowth of previous organizations dating from the Friends of the Soviet Union founded in 1929, was founded in 1941 and lasted until 1990. It had a rocky history, finding popularity in the WWII era as groups banded together against fascism. But in 1946 it was investigated by the House Un-American Activities Committee and, in 1947, the Attorney General cited it as a subversive organization. The shift in sentiment toward the ASMS reflected the contemporary atmosphere as Joseph McCarthy drew greater support and a sense of paranoia with regard to communism existed.

In addition to HUAC and Senator McCarthy, the FBI served to provide information about potential communists and to encourage Americans to remain loyal. FBI head J. Edgar Hoover endeavored to advise President Truman and other officials about the alleged communist infiltration in the government and American society. He explained that loyal Americans needed to ensure their patriotism was without blemish and that they reported any suspicious actions on the part of others. This suspicion stemmed from earlier concern with communism in the United States, such as the Red Scare (1919-1921) and, from the more recent increasingly strained wartime alliance between the Soviet Union and United States in the late 1940s. On the Soviet side, this tension reflected (among other things) Stalin’s policy toward the West and United States; the postwar period marked the height of Zhdanovshchina and repression of cultural and intellectual expression. This Zhdanovshchina campaign entailed the repression of anything that could be interpreted as Western. In the Central Committee resolution of 14 August 1946, Andrei Zhdanov called for the “crack-down…on Western influence in general.” The policy affected the

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personal lives of those living within the Soviet Union: the regime outlawed of marriage between Soviet citizens and foreigners and, in April of 1949, jammed foreign radio broadcasts.\textsuperscript{834} In cultural terms, Zhdanovshchina meant “Artists and intellectuals of all stripes stood accused of admiring capitalist culture to excess – ‘groveling before the West’ was the current phrase, along with ‘rootless cosmopolitanism’” and the required expression of Soviet patriotism.\textsuperscript{835} Given the political atmosphere the ASMS existed in, with increasing paranoia on the part of both superpowers, it is perhaps unsurprising that the group did not survive very long. Both the Soviet and American governments feared each other’s influence and correspondingly would grow increasingly wary of initiatives like those of the ASMS. The ASMS worked to enhance communication between the superpowers through exchange of copyright treaties, cultural products and artists. However, the ASMS’s efforts were will-time and did not thrive for very long.

In its efforts to educate people about the Soviet Union and American-Soviet relations, the Committee disseminated literature and held conferences, including one such conference in 1951 which addressed “Facts, not Fiction--The Soviet Union Today.”\textsuperscript{836} In its capacity as the “Musicians Committee” of the National Council, the group performed pieces of Russian music, such as those by Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff, primarily in New York.\textsuperscript{837} As part of its activities, especially during WWII, the Musicians Committee hoped to celebrate Russian music as a way to support the Soviet Union as America's ally and to raise money for refugees and to work against fascism. Thus members of the Committee worked in

conjunction with the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee to host a concert on May 14, 1944, in which Paul Robeson sang and Leonard Bernstein played piano.\textsuperscript{838} The Committee furthermore “helped in obtaining and delivering to Russian composers and musicians in Russia necessary instruments and supplies for the continuation of their work under the most adverse circumstances.”\textsuperscript{839} The Musicians Committee's members felt these actions were patriotic, pro-American and part of the ongoing effort to defeat Germany, help the Russian people and keep the Allies unified.\textsuperscript{840}

As the Committee’s activities continued, Chairman Sergei Koussevitzky voiced the desire to create a more permanent organization which would aim to create and maintain connections with musicians and the music scene in the Soviet Union. A planning committee formed to design the new organization, including Koussevitzky but also musical figures such as Aaron Copland, Elie Siegmeister, Dr. Margaret Grant (former dean of Eastman School of Music), and Gladys Chamberlain (Director of the New York Public Music Library). This committee called the first public, official meeting of the American-Soviet Music Society on February 16, 1946, and 350 people attended. The \textit{New York Times} announced the first meeting and continued to cover the society's activities throughout its existence.\textsuperscript{841} Aaron Copland presided over the meeting and explained that Koussevitzky “had stimulated the reorganization of the old committee into the new society, which would have a better chance to be of permanent use in cementing the cultural bonds of the two countries because it was being formed in time of peace.”\textsuperscript{842}

\textsuperscript{838} “Robeson-Bernstein in Joint Concert,” article from unknown source, published May 1944, Koussevitzky Archive, LOC.
\textsuperscript{839} Olga Koussevitzky, “In the Matter of the Application for a Passport by Aaron Copland,” November 1953, Koussevitzky Archive, LOC.
\textsuperscript{840} Ibid.
It should be emphasized here that the American-Soviet Music Society appeared to have every intention of being a large, stable organization with political prowess and continuous press coverage. Its abbreviated existence is striking in contrast to the rhetoric employed, which very much emphasized not just the desire but the need for this kind of organization to ease political tensions between the two superpowers over time. Quoting Henry Cabot Lodge, Koussevitzky claimed that “cultural ties would....be the best guarantee of permanent international peace.”

From the very start, the new society hoped to tackle the issue of American-Soviet cultural relations on all fronts; committees for Education, Radio, Recordings, General Information, Popular Music and Concert Music were formed. When Board elections took place in May of 1946, Koussevitzky officially became chairman of the American-Soviet Music Society with Elie Siegmeister, Aaron Copland and Leonard Bernstein as Vice Chairman and other prominent musical figures as Committee Chairman, editors and general members of the board.

World War II was ever present on the minds of the members of the American-Soviet Music Society from the group’s inception. As mentioned above, the society consciously discussed not only the power of music during the war (such as the cultural impact of Shostakovich’s *Leningrad Symphony*), but also the political situation of the post-WWII world in which the atomic bomb existed and American-Soviet tensions escalated. Indeed, one of the very first musical performances hosted by the society took place on May 9th of 1946, in which Alexander Brailowsky, a Russian émigré and society member, performed a piano recital celebrating the first anniversary of the end of WWII. Brailowsky performed only Russian music.

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843 Ibid.
844 While the society did not specifically define Popular Music in its literature, it did label certain pieces as “popular” in its publications, such as Duke Ellington’s “Deep South,” (a piano trio) and Rudi Blesh’s “Shining Trumpets,” – both jazz pieces.
during the second half of his performance, including works by Rachmaninoff, Scriabin, Mussorgy, Liapounow and Prokofiev. In choosing so many Russian works for public performance, the society hoped to emphasize and remind its audience of the Russian role in the victory.

As Koussevitzky wrote in the first publication of the *American-Soviet Review* as cited in the excerpt above, WWII showed artists the power of music to unite peoples across countries. This perspective was not formed simply in hindsight, but during the war itself. In September of 1942, Koussevitzky sent a telegram to Shostakovich in which he wrote:

> May you be blessed for the inspiration and power of your creative genius which you so completely and truly offer to the service of your heroic country and the world of freedom art and culture. In this darkest hour in history your music brings a message of faith in the Victory of mankind. It is a powerful medium which unites two great nations, Russia and America in their fight for the preservation of cultural values and the cause of Liberty.

Even during the war, musicians who later became involved in the American-Soviet Music Society recognized that culture offered a route through which political relationships could be formed and maintained. With this in mind, the American-Soviet Music Society began soliciting for members from its very first meeting in February of 1946. In a membership information pamphlet from that year, the society stated its aims “To promote a closer contact, friendship and understanding among Americans and Soviet musicians through a wider knowledge of American music and musicians in the Soviet Union, and of Soviet Music and musicians in the United States.” Though there is no overall record of just how successful this call to members was, there certainly were many leading members of American music who joined the group and the group’s performances and meetings were well publicized in local New York papers. The

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846 Bean, pp. 5-6.
847 Telegram sent via Western Union from Sergei Koussevitzky to Dmitri Shostakovich, care of Edward Barrett, Overseas Branch Office of War Information, 24 September 1942, Koussevitzky Archive, Library of Congress.
society's events appeared regularly in local papers' advertisements and cultural events announcements as well as music critics' columns.  

Goals of the Society

As part of its larger aims quoted above, the American-Soviet Music Society further outlined several specific goals in its initial meeting program. Certainly a major goal was simply disseminating Russian music -- but in order to accomplish this, the society needed access to such music. Accordingly, one of the first actions on the part of the society (which was voted upon in the first meeting) was to ask the U.S. State Department to negotiate a copyright treaty with the Soviet Union.  

Again, though the society chose cultural avenues to express itself, its inherent political goals permeated its actions. Here it asked the State Department to further friendly relations with the Soviet government which would not only help the society’s immediate goal of publishing and performing Russian music, but also maintain political relations between the two countries. Indeed, it was not uncommon for the society to invite not only members of the press but also members of the State Department to their receptions and performances.  

The society was culturally based but sought to use and accomplish commercial and political agendas. In a membership information pamphlet, the society clarified its major goals and especially those for its future expansion (unknowing that it would be so short-lived). Of particular interest here were several actions outlined with regard to exchange, including: “To Establish Exchange of Artists and Performing Groups,” “To Provide American Musical Scores, Publications, Recordings to the Soviet Union, receiving in return similar Soviet Material,” “To Arrange exchange Performances  

of Works in each country,” and “To Set Up Direct Correspondence Between Individuals in Related Professions in Both Countries, librarians, concertmasters, conductors, string quartets, teachers, students, etc.”

The society set ambitious cultural exchange goals in its first year of existence and presented a precursor to government sponsored cultural exchange. The ASMS wanted to educate Americans about Soviet music and help Americans relate to and appreciate Soviet citizens as well as accomplish the same goals with regard to American music and American citizens for people living in the Soviet Union. This goal entailed the performance of music of both countries but also communication between Soviet and American governments and artists as well as the exchange of artists between the superpowers. However, though the ASMS held similar goals to the Moiseyev, it would not prove to be nearly as successful as the dance company.

The Society’s Activities


Representing the Soviet Union was music by Shostakovich and Prokofiev, but “neither of these celebrated geniuses, however, cast into shadow the American portion,” which consisted of music by Charles Ives, Virgil Thomson, Douglas Moore, Marc Blitzstein, and Walter Piston.

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854 Ibid.
At another concert on March 16, 1947 the society hosted a concert of choral and folk music of the United States and U.S.S.R. As part of the program, early Russian and American church music and folk music was played, such as Alex North's “Negro Mother” and choruses from Prokofiev's *War and Peace.* Again, the society hoped to use all media to communicate their aims and music. Radio station WJZ-ABC premiered Shostakovich's Third Quartet in conjunction with the society. The society did not limit itself to musical expressions of high culture (i.e. classical, symphonic music) but instead welcomed folk music, film music, music from Broadway musicals or their equivalents, and religious music. In addition to disseminating information on American and Soviet culture through music, the society held meetings in which verbal discussion of the two cultures took place. Norman Corwin, who visited the Soviet Union, gave a talk on “Music and Musicians in the Soviet Union” based on his travels, at the Carnegie Chamber Music Hall. The *American-Soviet Music Review* also discussed information on cultural similarities and differences. Corwin recalled how Khachaturian had played parts of his new unpublished concerto for his benefit; he also spoke with nuclear scientist Peter Kapitza. Kapitza explained to Corwin that “speaking about the use of atomic energy in terms of the atom bomb is like talking of electricity in terms of the electric chair.”

Discussion of the political situation went hand-in-hand with cultural events and news in ASMS literature. The *Review* furthermore reported on the re-opening of the Tchaikovsky Museum in Klin and how a committee formed in the US to send material from the US to the museum. The museum requested “portraits of the ‘most outstanding interpreters’” of Tchaikovsky, “bibliographies, modern American musical dictionaries, books, and periodicals

dealing with Tchaikovsky to aid in the compilation of a new academic biography of the composer. 859 American artists readily responded with the requested material and added programs from Tchaikovsky’s appearance at Carnegie Hall. Based on ASMS members’ participation, the museum sent a collection of the museum’s news and brochures to the society. In reporting this kind of exchange, the ASMS intended to demonstrate the benefits of further exchange and what it could mean for cultural enrichment and political relations.

The Review provided evidence for the fruitfulness of cultural exchange again with the example of a tour by violinist and conductor Yehudi Menuhin in the Soviet Union. Menuhin performed for six days and received praise and applause for his efforts. He himself took note of his enthusiastic reception: “It was my listeners that struck me first in Moscow. I am thinking how beneficent for an artist is the association with such an audience as the one I found in Moscow – responsive, attentive, excited, inspiring the performer with a high creative flame and the desire to visit again the country where music has become an integral part of the life of the people.” 860 According to Menuhin, the Soviet people were friendly and appreciated an American performer. He, like members of the ASMS, pointed out the importance of culture to the Soviet people and that this was a way to communicate successfully across borders.

Engagement of Soviet Composers

Another goal of the society was to create more frequent and greater communication between cultural figures from both the Soviet Union and the United States. When prolific Soviet writer and journalist Ilya Ehrenburg visited the United States, the society took the opportunity to initiate such exchange. The society requested that Ehrenburg ask Soviet composers to use

860 Ibid., p. 20.
American folk melodies as sources for music compositions, which, once received, the society would perform at a concert. These melodies, presented to Mr. Ehrenburg at a reception in his honor, included “He's Gone Away, an old North Carolina love song; Black Is the Color of My True Love's Hair, an Elizabethan ballad still sung in the Southern mountains; the square dancers' Old Joe Clark; the spiritual Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho; the cowboys' Old Chisholm Trail.” The society furthermore provided a recording of “Alexander Nevsky” by Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia orchestra and of Soviet popular songs made by Harry Horlick. Such gifts were meant to be “illustrations of what is being done toward making the music of the Soviet Union known in the United States.”

The Ehrenburg reception furthermore functioned as an outlet for members of the society to express their political views regarding tensions between the United States and Soviet Union, as well as the importance of culture in international affairs. Olin Downes “deplored the attempts to bring about dissensions between the United States and the Soviet Union” while Ehrenburg took the opportunity to speak about how American and Russian culture related to the world outside of each country's borders. Similarly to the society’s members, Ehrenburg pointed to recent history saying “I have lived through war and tempest, and still I believe in the force of art.” He pointed to the power of art but also the need for “exchange of art between peoples” and that cultural exchange was in fact the foundation of art.

862 “Music By the Numbers,” TIME Magazine, 17 June 1946.
863 “U.S.-Soviet Music Society Honors Russian Newsman.”
864 Ibid.
Acknowledging that a nation's art and culture came from its own national history, Ehrenburg went on to proclaim that national culture needed to broaden its horizons. No one nation could claim to have an “international” culture which everyone could relate to; claiming to have a superior, universal culture led to racism as exemplified by Hitler’s Germany. According to Ehrenburg, music was a universal language because it could communicate without needing interpretation. He claimed that he was not so naïve as to believe that music could resolve all the world's problems or that it would be the only factor leading to healthy relations between the United States and Soviet Union -- but that music and art are a “part of the struggle” and cultural exchange would prove to be crucial. Ehrenburg applauded the efforts of the American-Soviet Music Society and claimed that “our musicians welcome American friendship and wish to play more American music.”

In October of 1946, the society received eight folksongs in return for American composers to use as inspiration. One of the resulting works was Quincy Porter's Sextet for Strings on Russian Folk Songs. Additionally the society sent gifts to their Soviet counterparts, such as recordings of Copland's “Appalachian Spring,” and other American pieces, along with messages to Soviet composers such as Dmitri Shostakovich, Sergei Prokofiev and Reinhold Glière.

In the American-Soviet Review, the editors listed quotes from the many letters the society received from the Soviet Union as a response to the official formation of the society. These included statements from Gregori Shneerson, Executive Secretary of VOKS Music Section, Uzir Gadzhibekov, an Azerbaijani composer, E.G. Brusilovsky, Chairman of the Organization

committee of the Union of Soviet Composers of the Kazakh SSR, and A. Stepanian, President of the Union of Composers of Armenia. All the excerpts praised the creation of the society and expressed positive hopes for future exchanges between the Soviet Union and the United States. Gadzhibekov pointed out that “Our own Soviet people have come to know and love each other better through cultural exchanges among the different peoples. It has added to our closeness and understanding of each other.” Thus the steps taken by the American-Soviet Music Society could act in a similar fashion to inspire close relations between the two countries.

Brusilovsky responded with equal enthusiasm, noting that the letter from the ASMS announcing its creation “has called forth a most heartfelt response and active interest in all those questions which you have discussed so broadly and with such real understanding of the question now before us of close cultural relationships of the leading musicians of Soviet Kazakhstan and of the United States of America.” Brusilovsky shared similar concerns regarding the future of the two superpowers and an analogous belief that culture could be a way to relax political tensions. The American-Soviet Music Society was inherently transnational and it hoped to maintain transnational cultural communication between the Soviet Union and the United States.

Initial Reception

At the Annual Members Concert on May 27, 1946 performed at Times Hall, the theme was “Contemporary Soviet and American Chamber Music.” Selections included Shostakovich's “Trio in E minor Op. 7,” “Doll's Boy” by Ned Rorem (based on a poem by e.e. cummings), Sonata for Violin and Viola Op. 35 (1945) by Vissarion Shebalin (First New York performance), Synthetic Waltzes by Virgil Thomson, and Rhumba by Norman Dello Joio (First

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Guest artists such as Joseph and Lillian Fuchs and Muriel Smith were also featured. Critics noted the contemporary nature of the concert, commenting that “All but one of the works performed had been written within the last five years, and two had not been heard here before in public.”

At first, the society's efforts were met with a positive reception by the New York audience. In a review of the society's first Annual Members Concert in May of 1946, a critic wrote that the concert “proved [a] musically worthwhile occasion” and that Shostakovich's Trio in E Minor received a “brilliant performance.” Visarion's Shebalin's Sonata for Violin and Viola, Op. 35 performed by Joseph and Lillian Fuchs led to “a rousing ovation, to which the artists responded by repeating the last movement.” While such reaction is perhaps not on the same scale of the reception of the Moiseyev as discussed above, what is underlined here is that at first, the society proved able to find an audience and be positively received. The society quoted another critic as saying, “If last night's event was a sample, the proposed concerts will be most interesting...[the society] offered new music of considerable interest and distinction, admirably performed.”

Some critics noted and even admired the society's attempts, not only to disseminate Russian music, but often to support specifically contemporary music of both Russian and American composers. In discussing the society's performance of excerpts from Prokofiev's new work “Betrothal in a Convent” along with his “Summer Day” (choreographed by Jerome

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873 Ibid.
Robbins) and “A Mirror for the Sky,” American composer Marc Blitzstein praised the innovative nature of the compositions and the importance of their performance:

> These are all firsts, and it says a great deal for the courage and enthusiasm of the artists involved, that they have been eager to expend their energies on this single performance. It is no less pertinent to point out that in a day when the mutual understanding and friendship of the two greatest nations of the world is of supreme importance, a concert of this nature has the chance of making a real extra-musical dent.  

The ASMS very consciously included and encouraged contemporary composers in their efforts as a way of, once more, demonstrating the equal validity and health of both superpowers’ cultures.

**A Cultural Exchange Attempt**

This positive reception continued even when concerts were more Soviet focused. The American-Soviet Music Society featured two singers from the Kiev State Opera, Zoya Haidai and Ivan Patorzhinsky, in a concert on October 5, 1946. Though both singers were Stalin Prize singers -- and though Patorzhinsky had achieved recognition as a People's Artist of the U.S.S.R. and had been awarded the Order of Lenin -- the concert was well received. The hall in which the concert took place was filled to capacity (1500 people). Whenever each of the singers finished a song, they “evoked extreme enthusiasm.” Indeed, one critic commented that, “It was a long program, but not long enough for the overflow audience and standees.” Several local papers, including the *Brooklyn Eagle*, the *New York World Telegram*, the *Daily News* and

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875 Marc Blitzstein, “Toward a Lyric Theatre: New Forms Being Developed Away from the Major Opera Houses,” New York Times, 11 May 1947. Blitzstein was also a former member of the American Communist Party, a fact he would admit at a closed HUAC session.


877 Bean, p. 8.


879 Bean, p. 8.
the *New York Herald Tribune* covered the concert and gave it positive reviews.\(^{880}\) Despite the singers' Soviet background and recognition, the concert was a huge success.

This visit demonstrated once more the desire and need for further cultural exchange. The *New York Times* reported that Haidai and Patorzhinsky claimed: “Soviet musical artists would gladly appear in this country if invited by cultural or official groups...” And indeed, this kind of exchange was a goal of the society and something they hoped to promote based on the success of the two Ukrainian singers in the United States. However, an obstacle presented itself in the society's plans when Haidai and Patorzhinsky unexpectedly departed the country much earlier than anticipated. The U.S. government asked the singers to register as foreign agents and the singers in turn refused and left the country on orders from the Soviet government.

This turn of events outraged members of the American-Soviet Music Society, including Aaron Copland and Sergei Koussevitzky, who wrote to Attorney General Tom C. Clark:

> It seems inconceivable, that a department of our Government should act in such a way as to set a precedent which will completely block the normal and necessary exchange of cultural representatives between the richly endowed nations of the world.\(^{881}\)

Here the society pointed to the importance of exchange, but the U.S. government would not fully recognize it. The government would not be ready to participate in such endeavors until after the society fell apart. Copland and Koussevitzky sent copies of this letter to President Truman and Acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson and called on them to take action:

> We feel that this is a matter which cannot be overlooked by this nation or by the world. It seems unrepresentative of the spirit of musical culture in the United States, which has from its very beginning been notably international-minded and hospitable to foreign artists. We therefore hope that you will give the utmost of your personal attention to this action, which, if it is forming the future policy of our Government and our nation toward cultural representations of the rest of the world, can lead to nothing but similar action on

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880 Ibid.
The United States struggled to define itself culturally and musically in the Cold War period and Copland and Koussevitzky, rather than limiting America's musical identity to music specific to America (such as jazz or popular music or contemporary classical music) instead claimed this identity as inherently transnational in nature. Haidai and Patorzhinsky originally were scheduled to appear in Cleveland, Boston and Pittsburgh as part of their tour of the United States. Had their visit gone smoothly, it might have enhanced the reputation of the American-Soviet Music Society, increased accessibility to Soviet culture, and perhaps prevented the society’s ultimate demise.

A Brief Existence

After the ASMS’s initial positive reception, a shift occurred in late 1947 and early 1948. While there was a general trend of negative reception towards things Soviet, there were also events specific to the society influencing this shift. Larry Adler, a renowned harmonica player and member of the society, came under public scrutiny when a housewife accused him of having communist sympathies. In response, Adler sued for libel and in court denied any communist leanings but also did speak about his American-Soviet Music Society affiliation. Adler appeared in Federal Court in the suit for $200,000 on behalf of himself and dancer Paul Draper, who was also accused by Mrs. Hester R. McCullough of being “pro-Communist.” He “denied he was a Communist, Communist sympathizer, or traitor” though in its coverage of the trial, The Lewiston Daily Sun of Auburn, Maine pointed out that the groups Adler affiliated with, such as

882 Ibid.
884 “Adler Admits He Supported 'Subversives,'” The Lewiston Daily Sun, 26 April 1950, p. 18.
the American-Soviet Music Society, were “tagged subversive.” Adler defended these assertions saying he was patriotic and that such affiliations were part of trying to promote “‘intercultural relations between Soviet and American musicians’” rather than promoting Communist ideas.\textsuperscript{885} Additionally, Koussevitzky resigned in late 1947 and early 1948 and the society deteriorated from then on. By March of 1949, the society was described as “shorthanded” and was having difficulties in getting pieces performed.\textsuperscript{886}

The actions against Adler are not altogether surprising given that many of the American members of ASMS shared liberal political sentiments. These sentiments led to their criticism of the Cold War and the American political policy toward communism. The experience of Aaron Copland is a useful example of how the political sentiments of the American members (and the persecution of these members) contributed to the society’s downfall. His political beliefs, as discussed below, led to his being called before Senator McCarthy’s subcommittee. Copland was not shy about his criticism of the American government. He pointed out the negative impact the Cold War had on American artists and that “the present policies of the American Government will lead inevitably into a third world war.”\textsuperscript{887} For him, ASMS was a way to try to prevent such a war from happening, but also to work towards allowing American culture to develop unhindered.

Criticism of the Cold War, the American government and American fear of communism was sometimes intertwined with the belief that American contemporary composers were not sufficiently celebrated. Composer and active member Elie Siegmeister discussed the lack of appreciation for contemporary classical music on the part of Americans and the way contemporary composers were often neglected. WWII, however, further intensified this situation

\textsuperscript{885} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{886} O’Gorman.
as Americans learned more about places like China and the Soviet Union. Indeed, Siegmeister felt the Soviet attitude toward music and composers should be taken as a model:

In the Soviet Union, this effort [to provide a livelihood for composers] is carried to its logical conclusion: the composer is guaranteed his livelihood, as a benefactor of the state and the people. I have been in the USSR, and have visited the homes of many composers. I have been struck by the absence of a feeling that inhabits almost every American composer I know: anxiety, and a feeling of frustration at not having enough time to compose. The Soviet artist spends his full time at composition. What a dream! And, I believe the results show the sane nature of this system. No-one has demonstrated that better than yourself, with your brilliant performances of Soviet music. ⁸⁸⁸

For Siegmeister and other American artists, the Soviet Union offered a better way to approach contemporary classical music and a better example of how artists should be treated. Thus the society for them became a way to encourage similar changes in the United States. As part of its mission, the society not only wanted to promote better American-Soviet relations but also promote a greater appreciation for contemporary American composers.

Siegmeister and other contemporary American composers felt snubbed by the American audience, which preferred music by European composers and flocked to concerts featuring the traditional classics. This neglect formed a part of a larger issue; namely a negative or at least less positive reception of contemporary classical music. In 1944, Koussevitzky emphasized this issue in a speech, proclaiming: “The coming generation of musicians should not have to blush for the failure of this generation in its treatment of composers.” ⁸⁸⁹ He was an outspoken advocate for the treatment of modern music as part of the classical canon, and for allocating more concert time to the performances of works by leading-edge composers. Celebrating modern music and composers should be an essential part of the ongoing development of culture. ⁸⁹⁰

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While the United States was having difficulties recognizing this, Koussevitzky offered a model for American culture: “We should watch the example of Russia, who offers every means of protection to her young creative artists. The cause of justice for the composer is in line with the American tradition.” The society would be one way in which Koussevitzky and other members hoped to promote American contemporary classical music.

Later, having previously been a member of the society became grounds for suspicion. In May of 1953, Copland testified about his possible communist ties in front of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations with Joseph McCarthy at its head. As part of interrogation, McCarthy claimed there were valid reasons why Copland was before the Committee, including the fact that Copland had “a public record of association with organizations officially listed by the attorney general.” McCarthy asked if Copland knew that the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship (and thus the Music Committee arm of it) was a communist front -- to which Copland replied that he did not. Copland claimed he found out that the Council was cited by the Attorney General as subversive in 1950 and then resigned. But he was confused about whether or not he was still considered a member since, at that point, he was focusing more on the American-Soviet Music Society.

Copland's claim that he was unaware of any affiliations with organizations functioning as communist fronts did not assist his case. McCarthy declared that Copland had “according to the records, ... one of the longest Communist-front records of any one we have had here.” It was through his membership in organizations like the National Council and the American-Soviet Music Society -- and also due to his statements advocating better relations between the Soviet

893 Ibid.
Union and the United States-- that Copland came under fire during McCarthy's heyday. He would have difficulty escaping that smear on his record.

When Aaron Copland tried to obtain a passport later in 1953, Olga Koussevitzky (Sergei Koussevitzky’s widow) wrote a defense of Copland in which she explained that, while both Koussevitzky and Copland had been members of the society, this in no way meant they had communist leanings. She emphasized that Koussevitzky was famous in Russia “long before the revolution” rather than leading up to or during the Revolution (though he did actually conduct a Soviet orchestra briefly after the Revolution). She furthermore tried to show that Koussevitzky, while still supportive of the Russian people, was very anti-communist and that “Down to the time of his death in 1951, Dr. Koussevitzky continued to express his hostility to the Communist governing group in Russia – all the while loving Russia and its people deeply and looking forward to the day when they would prevail against their oppressors and join the other freedom-loving peoples in a free world at peace…”

After establishing Koussevitzky as a bastion of anti-communism and as pro-American, Olga went on to claim that Mr. Copland's association with Koussevitzky (and therefore with the American-Soviet Music Society) in fact showed he was not communist. She noted how much Koussevitzky respected Copland and that “I know that Dr. Koussevitzky would not have associated with anyone he knew to be hostile to our democratic ideals and our way of life or who would be sympathetic to the Soviet masters of Russia...” Again by referring to “our democratic ideas” and “our way of life,” Olga emphasized that Koussevitzky was an American patriot and someone who was an appropriate judge of others' patriotism and beliefs. Towards the

895 Ibid.
896 Ibid.
end of her defense, Olga addressed the issue head-on: “I can state from such association with him that Mr. Copland at no time was and is not now a Communist or Communist sympathizer or follower of the Communist Party line, or a participant in Communist activities…”\(^{897}\)

While Aaron Copland is a prime example of how association with the American-Soviet Music Society later led to suspicion regarding members' patriotism, this was not always the case. For example, Charles Weidman, one of the founders of American modern dance and a member of the society, was not labeled as leftist or communist. Instead, even in the 1950s, he continued to maintain a stellar reputation and was described as “one of the illustrious founders of modern dance and a great comic artist.”\(^{898}\) Weidman, unlike Copland, proved able to avoid the stigma of “communist sympathies.” At the same time, his membership in the society is not mentioned in these 1950s articles – he proved able to avoid his past membership entirely.

Olga Koussevitzky's claim that both she and her husband were American patriots may be emblematic of the different perspective that Russian émigrés brought to the American Soviet Music Society. For Russian émigrés, there were, of course, multiple reasons for choosing to join the society. However, one consistent reason was the patriotism felt toward their new home. Sergei Koussevitzky, who frequently traveled to Paris during his early years in the United States, eventually began to stay in the US for longer stretches throughout the year as he grew increasingly attached to America. His growing affinity for the United States was recognized by his Boston audience. For instance, after fifteen years with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Board of Trustees gave him a very Russian gift in recognition of his anniversary, a silver samovar made by Carl Faberge.\(^{899}\) However, after twenty years, the Board chose to give Koussevitzky a photograph taken while he was conducting the Star-Spangled Banner, along with

\(^{897}\) Ibid.
\(^{899}\) “Honor Koussevitzky, 15 Years Symphony Orchestra Conductor,” Boston Globe, 30 April 1939.
a silver bowl “modeled on one of the finest specimens of early American craftsmanship.”

Over time, Koussevitzky's American affinity increased and this change was visible and recognized by others.

The American audience recognized Koussevitzky as a patriot and, during WWII, he played the Star-Spangled Banner before every performance. Indeed, after one performance in 1942 that included Russian music along with Beethoven's Eroica Symphony, a local Boston preacher, the Reverend Dr. Walton E. Cole, gushed in his sermon, “What a spiritual experience Dr. Koussevitzky gave us last night! It was sane, joyous beauty in a world gone mad.”

Dr. Cole found Koussevitzky's programming choices both appropriate and calming. In particularly, “Eroica,” composed while Europe fought against the conquering force of Napoleon, mirrored the current fight in Europe which rested on Russia's ability to oppose Hitler. This reception of Koussevitzky is a striking contrast to how the German conductor Karl Muck fared at the Boston Symphony Orchestra during WWI, when negative reception escalated and Muck himself was finally arrested during a rehearsal. Koussevitzky instead was regarded as an American patriot and an appropriate person to rally the American people, a status he maintained after WWII until his death in 1951.

Indeed, Koussevitzky was a prominent figure in Boston and American society. He corresponded with several prominent figures of his time, including Franklin Roosevelt, whom he had met before Roosevelt became president. Koussevitzky also exchanged cordial notes with Vladimir Nabokov and Samuel Barber. He conducted a memorial concert for Thomas Edison

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900 “Koussevitzky Honored,” Boston Globe, 30 April 1944.
(1931), for which Mrs. Edison expressed appreciation over the years, thanking repeatedly him for his wonderful music and in memory of her husband.\textsuperscript{902}

Koussevitzky became an active part of American intellectual and cultural society and wanted to expand this role. The ASMS was one way to maintain connections with prominent cultural figures, but also to preserve American culture. Keeping America at peace with Russia was central to keeping American culture healthy. Preventing war between the U.S. and the Soviet Union through the American-Soviet Music Society was certainly a goal behind its formation and his chairmanship.

Koussevitzky had witnessed the negative impact of war on music and music culture in WWII. He told the \textit{Boston Globe} in 1939 that war destroyed musical creativity and that only in places free of conflict could this creativity flourish.\textsuperscript{903} Indeed, Koussevitzky wrote a letter to the US Army Medical Examiner on behalf of Leonard Bernstein, asking that he be exempted from the draft. Koussevitzky noted Bernstein’s talent, “the most outstanding and exceptionally endowed musician of the young generation in this country.”\textsuperscript{904} Koussevitzky's plea was not just about keeping Bernstein alive: “I realize indeed that each and everyone should defend one's country, but I also believe that safeguarding such a talent for the future musical culture is equally essential to the welfare of America.”\textsuperscript{905} Bernstein was pivotal, not just as an individual artist, but as a contributor to culture, which was crucial to America as a whole. Once more, in order to inspire music creativity and maintain a healthy music culture, keeping the peace was essential.

\textsuperscript{902} Invitation - “In Memoriam: Thomas Alva Edison,” 22 October 1931 and letter from Mrs. Thomas A. Edison dated 19 June 1944, Koussevitzky Archive, LOC.
\textsuperscript{903} “Dr. Koussevitzky Says War Hurts European Music,” Boston Globe, 28 September 1939.
\textsuperscript{904} Letter from Sergei Koussevitzky to the U.S. Army Medical Examiner, dated 27 August, 1943, Koussevitzky Archive, LOC.
\textsuperscript{905} Ibid.
However, this is not to say that Koussevitzky constantly wore his patriotism on his sleeve. Rather, he was very selective in choosing where to give his support. For instance, a friend asked Koussevitzky to join a committee in support of Jews in Poland during WWII, and Olin Downes (music critic at the *New York Times* and member of ASMS) asked Koussevitzky to support a group for “Freedom and Democracy” that was trying to overthrow Franco.\(^{906}\) In both of his responding letters, Koussevitzky claimed that as conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, he had to be careful in choosing which groups to join and which causes to support.\(^{907}\) Clearly with the American-Soviet Music Society, Koussevitzky felt differently. Here he threw his wholehearted support behind a cause and viewed it as a patriotic act.

For composer and Russian émigré Nikolai Berezowsky, the musical culture of New York and the welcome it gave him influenced his membership in the ASMS. Berezowsky discovered that young American artists found his music appealing and inspiring. His first wife Alice, herself a music scholar, recounted how he gave a lecture and demonstration at Columbia for graduate music students:

...Kola received a real ovation, and it was thrilling to me to see such earnest students understand and believe in Kola's work. When they finished the 3rd Symphony (they all followed the score) there were a few moments of silence and then they broke into such applause...Professor Moore said that America was proud to have Kola as a citizen and proud that his works were written here, and that the whole musical world looked up to Kola. And there was Kola, blushing like a schoolboy and so modest.\(^{908}\)

Berezowsky invested in his new homeland; he became an American citizen and sought to teach the next generation. Allowing the American music culture to flourish was vitally important, and the ASMS was one avenue to accomplish this.

\(^{906}\) Letter to Ossip Dymow from Sergei Koussevitzky dated December 4, 194-- and letter to Olin Downes from Sergei Koussevitzky dated 28 December 1944, Koussevitzky Archive, LOC.

\(^{907}\) Letter to Olin Downes dated 28 December 1944.

\(^{908}\) Letter from Alice Berezowsky to Sergei Koussevitzky dated 5 April 1939, Koussevitzky Archive, LOC.
Finally, creating and maintaining connections between cultures and membership in the ASMS could be motivated by a desire to communicate with Soviet artists and find out more about their welfare. Sergei Prokofiev originally left Russia and lived in Europe and the United States for several years before returning permanently to the Soviet Union in 1936. Koussevitzky and other friends in the United States and in Europe found it more difficult to maintain correspondence with Prokofiev after his return to the Soviet Union. Koussevitzky and an insurance agent, Ephraim F. Gottlieb, tried to find out about Prokofiev and his health but did not always get a response. In one instance, Gottlieb wrote to Koussevitzky that “Some time ago I learned that Prokofieff was very ill and I tried to reach him again on the telephone. After three days I was told by the operator that I could never reach Prokofieff at that telephone number or anywhere else. I do hope that he is in good health and if you should know anything about him please let me know.” The implications of Prokofiev’s inaccessibility were dire, particularly since he was censured by the Soviet Composers Union on multiple occasions. Seeking information through the US State Department and also through a former attaché to the American Embassy in Moscow proved futile; the attaché advised going through a music organization in order to inquire about Prokofiev's well-being. Thus ASMS was a way to get in touch with Prokofiev and other artists.

The ASMS as a Foil to the Moisseyev

Understanding the role of the American-Soviet Music Society deepens the overall comprehension of American self-identity and multiculturalism in the context of the Cold War. While Koussevitzky and the other members of the ASMS employed similar rhetoric to the

909 Letter from Ephraim Gottlieb to Sergei Koussevitzky dated 15 September 1948, Koussevitzky Archive, LOC.
910 Letter from Alexander Kirk (former attaché) to Ephraim Gottlieb dated 23 June 1948, Koussevitzky Archive, LOC.
Moiseyev, such as highlighting the important role of culture and the arts in maintaining peaceful and healthy relations between the Soviet Union and United States, it did not survive changes in domestic policy, public opinion and the highs and lows of Russo-American interactions during the early Cold War. As mentioned above, both the Soviet and American governments rejected or discouraged the idea of cultural exchange in the late 1940s. In the US, McCarthy, Hoover and HUAC’s views of what American patriotism entailed and of potential communist infiltration translated into a refusal to aid the society’s exchange efforts. In the Soviet Union, “although in Stalin’s last years the Soviet Union participated in the Olympics and some American cultural influence seeped into the country,” this period also marked the campaign of Zhdanovshchina. It would take a regime change in the Soviet Union and the Eisenhower administration’s new emphasis on exchange to start the movement toward cultural exchange, accomplished with the Lacy-Zarubin Agreement. Indeed, it was only after Khrushchev’s Secret speech at Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party that the Soviet Union signed cultural agreements with the West, beginning with Norway and Belgium in 1956, the UK and France in 1957, and negotiations with America in October 29, 1957.

With this comparison, certain factors should be taken into account at the outset. First of all, while the society was clear about its aims being political in nature and, accordingly, interacted with the U.S. government and political figures, it was not a government supported group. As mentioned above, it asked the government to negotiation copyright treaties and to support cultural exchange but met with varying degrees of success in these entreaties.

The Moiseyev, on the other hand, was very much an official organ of the Soviet government; members of the ballet were government employees. Further, the message of the

911 Rosenberg, p. 124.
Moiseyev was both political and an official representation of Soviet policy regarding the different ethnicities and nationalities living within its borders. American reception of the Moiseyev furthermore had official American approval – the Lacy-Zarubin Agreement was negotiated at the highest levels of government. Quite unlike the Moiseyev, the American Soviet Music Society represented a much more unofficial view of multiculturalism.

This should not, however, give the impression that the society in any way presented a more independent, objective viewpoint with regard to multiculturalism. The members of the society, while certainly spouting rhetoric to further friendly relations through cultural expression, had their own views of both the Soviet and American governments and the role of art in society. Membership in the society on the part of the major American cultural figures often went hand in hand with sympathy with for, or even membership in, the Communist Party. Prominent American musical figures joined the society, several of whom were mentioned above, such as Leonard Bernstein, Aaron Copland, F. Charles Adler (a student of Gustav Mahler), Mordecai Bauman and Charles Weidman (a founder of American modern dance). Though certainly each member had his own reason for joining, many of the leading American members did have leftist political leanings which may have influenced their decision to join the society.

Regardless, both groups did represent a certain view of the role of culture in international affairs and in the world in general. Both the ASMS and the Moiseyev privileged the role of culture in a nation's identity and in how nations interacted with each other. They both felt that culture was a way for nations to communicate and form friendly relations – by learning more about each other's cultures, the Soviet Union and United States could better understand each other and could preserve peaceful relations.
The American-Soviet Music Society, though it existed only briefly, presents an alternative way to view Cold War cultural relations between the Soviet Union and America. It differed from other contemporary organizations and discourses with respect to the American perspective on the Cold War. Firstly, it was not simply either pro-communist or anti-communist; it chose a more complicated perspective on the relationship between the two countries. As a group supporting friendly relations between the two superpowers, it was not simply made up of leftist or pro-communist thinkers but rather a more diverse mixture which included prominent members of American cultural institutions. The group hoped to facilitate relations between America and the Soviet Union through cultural exchange and appreciation; it privileged culture and artists in a way politicians and government workers did not. And finally, it included émigrés who came to the United States because of the 1917 Revolution yet they hoped to create and maintain connections with the homeland they fled.

This alternative discourse is perhaps best demonstrated in a two-part concerts series presented by the society in the spring of 1947, entitled “Songs of Two Lands” and “Theatre Music of Two Lands,” given at the Town Hall in New York City on March 16th and at the New York City Center on May 12th, 1947. The “Songs of Two Lands” featured religious music from Russia in the form of The Byzantine Singers directed by Christos Vrionides, Armenian folk music, American folk music including Pete Seeger on banjo, the American Folk Singers, music from Broadway musicals, and further folk songs from both sides. The program included first performances of several pieces, such as “On this Dark, Starless Night,” a chorus from Prokofiev's *War and Peace*. The music for the “Theatre Music of Two Lands” was similarly diverse. It included film music from Walt Disney's “Mickey's Grand Opera,” music from

modern American dance, film music by Aram Khachaturian for *Girl 217*, and the American premiere of selections from Prokofiev's comic opera “Betrothal in a Monastery.”

While the concert primarily used music previously composed, it also performed world premieres of Prokofiev's concert suite “Summer Day” (also recorded as “Music For Children”) but choreographed (and in part, danced) by Jerome Robbins with pianist Ray Lev at the piano.

One other premiere, and indeed a piece composed for the occasion, was Gail Thompson Kubik's folk opera *A Mirror for the Sky*. While a recording of the work is unavailable, the choice of characters and lyrics present a specific vision of American identity. The opera focuses on the life of John James Audubon, an American explorer, ornithologist and painter in the early nineteenth century. In choosing Audubon and making the other characters around him tough men who live in the wild, Kubik showed American identity growing out of the ability to survive and tame the wild. In particular, the “Keelboater Songs” in the first act describes life in the American Midwest:

*First Keelboater*: Met me a Man on a flatboat top/I danced him around and around/ the whey-faced, sugar-loving, milk fed fop/jumped two jumps and fell down, down.

*Audobon joins in*: Alligators, Lightning, earthquake flood/burning brimstone instead of blood/ a flatboater's made of hell and whiskey/ one-half bad, the other half risky. Teeth like a panther, claws like a bear/iron for his legs and steel for his hair.

*Refrain*: He can drink the Ohio dry as a bone/live on rattlesnakes, chew on a stone.

Got a fistful of thunder and a pocket full of gold/stay away from boaters if you want to grow old.

Keelboaters and other early settlers in the American Midwest come across as stalwart men willing to throw caution to the wind (“stay away from boaters if you want to grow old”). Again, while one of the major aims of the society was to educate and disseminate Russian music and culture, American music and culture was not forgotten but was placed side by side with its

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914 Ibid.
915 Act 1, Scene 3, script from *A Mirror for the Sky*, from the Charles Weidman Scrapbook, New York Public Library Music Research Collections.
Russian counterpart. Here a contemporary piece is used to show the strong identity of the United States and its rich history.

Though the music was certainly the focus of these performances, the rhetoric used in the programs for performances is another example of this alternative discourse. The program for the Theatre concert called all music lovers to look at the “problem facing the world's people today ... that of fellowship. Can two peoples separated by language, geography and different economic systems get along in one world? Musicians think they can and have thought so for many generations.” The program acknowledged the difficulties of the post-WWII world but told its audience that musicians would lead the way in showing the different countries of the world how to live together peacefully.

The society, through the concert and its program hoped to show that Americans and American culture was (and always had been) connected with Russia -- that simply because the two political regimes were different did not mean that they could not continue to develop this relationship. Indeed, the society claimed that America, above all other countries, loved Russian music: “Americans have always felt a special warmth for Russian music; perhaps in no other country outside of the U.S.S.R. is Russian music played so often and so well as in the United States.” America was, in fact, “indebted” to Russia, not only for its music, but for its people. Many leading cultural figures in America were from Russia (Vladimir Horowitz), or were descended from Russian émigrés (Copland, Bernstein, the George Gershwin and Benny Goodman). Though many of the artists the ASMS used as examples of “Russian” influence were from Jewish families living under the tsarist regime, the goal behind the rhetoric did not allow

916 Program for “Theatre Music of Two Lands.”
917 Ibid.
for a nuanced understanding of what type of “Russian” émigré predominantly came to the United States prior to the 1917 revolution (i.e. Jews fleeing persecution).

Furthermore, this cultural influence was not one way; the society hoped to show that Russians loved American music too. Russians were avid fans of jazz and composers like “Prokofieff and Maikovsky [sic] have recently requested the latest scores of American composers, while Shostakovich has found time to orchestrate, *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*, and other American folk songs.”

The American-Soviet Music Society sought not only to create connections between two cultures but, in so doing, further identify and define American music. According to the society, American music owed something to Russia and Russian composers and émigrés. Works like “A Mirror to the Sky,” while consciously trying to be American and using lyrics emphasizing liberty and manifest destiny as inherently American, could be performed in conjunction with Russian pieces and be considered of equal merit.

The society furthermore hoped to simply show Americans the human side of the peoples living in the Soviet Union and the Soviet Union's vibrant culture. Accordingly, recent American visitors to the Soviet Union often spoke at society meetings and such discussions were published in the *American-Soviet Music Review*. Jessica Smith, editor of *Soviet Russia Today*, spoke extensively on her visit and claimed that “Practically everyone you meet in the Soviet Union is a music lover.” She pointed out how music was a large part of early education and of every Soviet city's cultural life. She noted Soviet appreciation of American music as well, such as an annual concert devoted to contemporary American composers on July 4th and the performance of

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918 Ibid.
Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, which was very well received by Russians. A further article in the *Review* points to the more than six hundred music programs of American works that were broadcast on the radio in the latter half of 1945. Such broadcasts enabled Soviet citizens to hear American works like Samuel Barber's “Overture of the School for Scandal” and Roy Harris's “Fifth Symphony.” Pointing to mutual appreciation of each culture's music would, in the eyes of the society, engender more positive sentiment on the part of Americans towards the Soviet Union.

Inherent in the conversation created by and in reaction to the society's activities is the issue of “Soviet” versus “Russian.” For the society's members, there was a distinction made in how these two labels were used. The society clearly stated that it wanted to improve relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, which they acknowledged was more than Russia. For instance, in the *Review* (as will be noted below), they posted congratulatory letters from musical organizations and figures across the U.S.S.R., such as the Union of Soviet Composers of the Kazakh SSR and the Union of Composers of Armenia – not just the Composers' Union in Moscow or Leningrad.

The society furthermore hoped to engage with Soviet artists working in the Soviet Union – they knew that the life and working conditions of these artists were distinctly unlike that of artists in the United States and was part of the larger Soviet state. Elie Siegmeister, in a 1943 letter to Sergei Koussevitzky (which is discussed further above) noted that in the Soviet Union, “the composer is guaranteed his livelihood, as a benefactor of the state and the people.” The Soviet composer lived and functioned in a different environment and the society's members

920 Ibid.
923 Letter from Elie Siegmeister to Sergei Koussevitzky, 25 November 1943, p. 3, Koussevitzky Archive, LOC.
knew this well.

However, at the same time, the society tended to refer to the culture and music of the Soviet Union as “Russian.” For instance, in a concert program featuring American and Russian theatre music, the society discussed the affinity Americans had for Russian music at length, not Soviet music, while acknowledging that this music was played in the U.S.S.R.  Accordingly, the society discussed Prokofiev's opera War and Peace as “a grand lyrical and heroic opera dedicated to the majesty of the Russian people and its undying glory.” Though the piece was composed in the U.S.S.R. by a “Soviet” composer, it contributed to the Russian culture and music tradition. In trying to explain the longevity and vibrancy of the culture, the society chose to recognize the origins of Soviet culture but also pointed to its continuity with pre-Revolutionary culture – a specifically Russian culture that still existed. This was a culture that Americans could relate to and appreciate and, indeed, had a history of appreciating.

Koussevitzky spoke of cultural exchange in much the same way as did the Americans and Soviets who promoted the Moiseyev. For instance, in the concert mentioned above with Ukrainian singers Haidai and Patorzhinsky, Koussevitzky is quoted as saying:

“The visit of these two Ukrainian artists is an unprecedented occasion for American musicians and music-lovers. At their Town Hall recital we shall have, for the first time in many years, an opportunity to hear outstanding artists of the Soviet Union in performance of lieder, folksongs, and arias from [the] opera....”

Koussevitzky noted the visit as an historic event, hoping it would set a precedent for further exchange. The sudden departure of the two Ukrainian singers, however, dashed Koussevitzky’s hopes for future cultural exchange. The ASMS’s early attempt to solicit cultural exchange did

924 Program for “Theatre Music of Two Lands.”
not establish regular tours of Soviet artists, though it did employ the same ideas and rhetoric that the Moiseyev used a few years later.

In a similar vein to American press coverage of the Moiseyev dancers, reporters showed the “human” side of the Ukrainian singers. In particular, Haidai’s efforts during WWII showed her sympathetic nature: “Though she has never been in America, Zoya Haidai has sung for Americans. During the war, Mme. Haidai organized a group of musicians which toured Southern and Western battlefronts including Iraq and Iran. At the request of General Connelly, in command of U.S. forces in Iran, Mme. Haidai sang for the American troops....”927 The American press did not follow the Ukrainian singers’ every move in the same way the press did when the Moiseyev tour arrived in the United States in 1958. However, the Ukrainian singers’ visit was not the result of the same kind of official initiative on the part of American and Soviet governments, nor did the singers get the opportunity to complete their tour to other cities in the United States. Both these factors no doubt contributed to reduced curiosity about the singers and less press coverage of the singers’ experience off stage. At the same time, the singers do appear sympathetic in the press and, like the Moiseyev dancers, complicate the Cold War narrative’s view of American and Soviet identity and how much they were supposed to differ.

The ASMS claimed equal validity for both American and Russian culture and for American and Russian cultural productions. It also tried to support the notion that contemporary American classical music composers could be placed in the same category as Soviet composers and should be appreciated just as much, contributing to the discussion of a fear of American cultural inferiority, especially with regard to classical music and traditional dance forms like ballet. Prior to the society's creation, its future members recognized this need to promote contemporary music and contemporary composers. In a letter to Koussevitzky in 1943, Alice

927 Ibid.
and Kola Berezowsky noted how Koussevitzky's crusade to support American music was not, at the moment, being fully recognized. Alice wondered “if the American people were really aware of what you have done for them.” Here she referred to not just Koussevitzky's service with the Boston Symphony Orchestra (now in his twentieth year with that institution) but also the fact that Koussevitzky:

> Alone among the great musicians who have come to this country, you have put the welfare of the nation, musically speaking, above everything else. It would probably have been much easier for you personally to have played down to the people...instead, you chose the difficult path of lifting the people. Alone among the musicians, you have made America yours in the only way that really counts...by fostering and protecting the best native talent the land affords. Someday, when the history of our period in music is written, every American citizen, not just the musically educated will recognize this. And they will learn that you have done this, not by practising a narrow, falsely cultivated, chauvinism....you have done it by pitting the best in American music against the best in world music.  

Alice couched Koussevitzky’s accomplishments in patriotic terms. He chose to challenge the American audience, not to simply let them passively listen to music. Significant as well is the comment that Koussevitzky may not be fully recognized for this contribution now, but instead it would require the “passage of time” for his efforts to be fully appreciated. Once more, the ASMS functioned as an outlet for American artists and composers to receive recognition for their works. The question remained, however, whether or not the American and international audience appreciated this attempt to promote American music and American artists.

It appears that there was every intention to make the society into a stable and international initiative, with regular concerts and publications. In the program for one performance, this intention is mentioned in passing:

> In addition to its concert series, the society publishes the American-Soviet Music Review, a quarterly magazine containing articles and information on both American and Soviet

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928 Letter from Alice and Nikolai Berezowsky to Sergei Koussevitzky dated 10 October 1943, Koussevitzky Archive, LOC.
929 Ibid., pp. 1-2.
music, the second issue of which will appear in April. Details on subscription and membership may be obtained at the society.930

The coverage of the society for the most part appears only in New York newspapers, with a few outlying articles from publications such as The Montreal Gazette and The Lewiston Daily Sun. Once more, however, the society had greater ambitions and these may have led to fruition had sympathies not turned against it. The society made an effort to get other cities involved – for example, when it invited the Fine Arts Quartet, a group based out of Chicago that played regularly on the local radio on Sundays, to perform Shostakovich's Quartet No. 2 in its New York debut (the New York debut of both the quartet and of the piece).931

Originally the society hoped to spread across the country. It touted its intention to be “nation-wide in character” with “chapters in various cities” whose heads would then, in turn, be part of an executive committee for the overall national organization.932 Once more it is difficult to say what could have been, given different circumstances and greater longevity of the group. But the aim was certainly for it to be a large, national organization with a presence in multiple states, which then in turn would communicate with Soviet counterparts abroad.

At first the 1946 Haidai and Patorzinsky tours sponsored by the ASMS generated similar press coverage to that received by the Moiseyev Dance Company in its 1958 tour. As with the Moiseyev, reporters emphasized the fact that the Ukrainian singers represented an unprecedented act of cultural exchange, describing them as “the first prominent musicians from the Soviet Union to visit this country since Sergei Prokofieff's brief sojourn in 1938...”933 Foreshadowing

930 Program for “Theatre Music of Two Lands.”
the treatment of the Moiseyev dancers, the ASMS wanted Haidai and Patorzinsky to get a taste of American culture as well and invited them as their personal guests to a concert.\textsuperscript{934}

\textit{Cultural Inferiority Concerns}

Reviewing the March 17\textsuperscript{th}, 1947 concert, critic and ASMS member Olin Downes noted that the concert consisted of “enough music for three concerts, and much of it very interesting.”\textsuperscript{935} He in turn described the American and Soviet elements, including early church music -- which for Russia consisted of the Byzantine Singers, and for America, selections of William Billings' works. With the two cultures presented in this side-by-side fashion, it would be difficult not to include the political aspects of the music or to avoid comparing the two. Downes noted Billings’ “choruses were sung by Americans in the revolution which gained them their freedom from English tyranny” and that while Billings was a “crude technician,” “he had things to say, and his music is more than a historical curiosity.” While somewhat critical of Billings, Downes thought the music was still worthwhile. He described the Russian folk songs as “interestingly diverse,” with Russian instruments such as balalaikas as accompaniment.

The Russian folk songs were paired with American folk songs, including Pete Seeger on banjo. Downes once more defended American music: “The American folk-songs stood up well against those of a nation long famous for the interest and variety of its folklore.”\textsuperscript{936} Here, as with reaction to the Moiseyev, a fear of cultural inferiority becomes apparent. In analyzing Alex North's “Negro Mother” in the concert, Downes once again is musically critical but politically supportive:

\begin{footnotesize}
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  \item \textsuperscript{934} “City Symphony Concert,” New York Times, 23 September 1946, p. 28.
  \item \textsuperscript{936} Ibid.
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The voices were excellent, the interpretation highly intelligent, the music – doctrinaire, with little of musical distinction to carry its well meant and undoubtedly sincere message on a theme which is of import to every American.  

Russian émigrés who were members of the American-Soviet Music Society appeared to appreciate American culture and the American cultural context in which they lived and worked. They did not criticize American music as inferior or crude in comparison to Russian music. Instead, they praised American composers and music as part of their desire to demonstrate the high quality of American cultural identity. They also desired to maintain peace with the Soviet Union, help artists in the Soviet Union and ensure cultural exchange between the two countries, as this would benefit composers in the United States who could be neglected by the American audience.

Certainly there is a similarity in rhetoric and goals between the Moiseyev and the ASMS. However, while the Moiseyev witnessed incredible success in its tours, the ASMS endured a short life and sentiment toward it turned negative. There are several possible reasons why each group's story played out as it did. While the domestic foundations of the ASMS might at first seem to be a point in its favor for gaining the support of the American audience, these origins were not as exotic or exciting as those of the Moiseyev. The Moiseyev's origins were in strange lands that many Americans had not heard of before. Igor Moiseyev had traveled far and wide, sometimes by donkey, in order to discover the secrets of folk dances across the vast Soviet Union. The Moiseyev itself was much flashier in appearance and in performance, with its vibrant costumes and incredibly skilled dancers, while the ASMS did not have these kinds of tricks up its sleeves.

The Moiseyev dancers, as discussed above, were objects of American curiosity because of their foreign origins and American eagerness to meet “real” Soviets. The members of the

937 Ibid.
ASMS, though they included Russian émigrés, could not (with the brief exception of the Haidai and Patorzinsky tour) claim to have any Soviets for the American audience to observe, meet, and question about their lives in the Soviet Union. It should certainly be noted as well that the failure of the ASMS is a sign that the American audience was less receptive to its own classical music culture. Americans continued to look to Europe as the epitome of classical music compositions and did not find a full appreciation for American contemporary composers despite the best efforts of the society. Indeed, because the Moiseyev used a flashier, more middlebrow form of entertainment Americans found it easier to watch and absorb while the ASMS’s performances were more highbrow in nature. Though the ASMS did use film music and folk music, classical music still dominated its performance repertoire.

And finally, certainly timing is an issue as to why the society failed and the Moiseyev succeeded. HUAC and the rise of Senator McCarthy provided obstacles in the way of the society's success. In a different atmosphere in another period of the Cold War, the society may have continued to solicit positive reception on the part of the American audience, rather than gradual disenchantment with the society's goals and efforts. Instead the ASMS became another casualty of the increasing American concern about communist infiltration, especially as many of the native-born American members of the society held leftist political views. In contrast the Moiseyev’s founding and its establishment occurred in a favorable context for the group’s success. Founded during the phase of kozenizatsia, a nationalist policy celebrating national differences and encouraging the expression of nationalist expression, as well as socialist realism, which entreated Soviet artists to use folklore as inspiration, the Moiseyev flourished. After Stalin’s death, the Moiseyev’s renown helped it become a propagandistic tool heavily utilized by Khrushchev’s regime and his newly initiated policy of greater openness toward exchange,
solidified the Moiseyev’s position in Soviet society politics for the next several decades. Throughout these changes in policy, regimes and events, Igor Moiseyev acted as a savvy operator; he knew when to use government favoritism and when to avoid it and he molded the Moiseyev’s rhetoric and history to suit the contemporary context and current political and cultural policy.
CONCLUSION

The Moiseyev Dance Company enjoyed and continues to enjoy domestic and international success. In its rhetoric and performances the troupe made certain assertions. It claimed to represent a vibrant multiculturalism in the Soviet Union. By choosing to represent the multiple nationalities of the Soviet Union and celebrating the differences on stage for Soviet and international audiences, the Moiseyev claimed a corresponding Soviet respect and tolerance for national and cultural differences. Contemporary Soviet writers and Moiseyev himself underscored this cultural inspiration in the dance creation process; a Moiseyev dance was the result of careful study of a particular culture and its people in order to draw out the national character. Igor Moiseyev claimed after the creative process, his version of the dance represented an authentic folk dance. Moiseyev defended his changes he made to the original material; he claimed that, for instance, Byelorussian recognized the Moiseyev’s Bulba dance as an authentic Byelorussian dance that existed long before Moiseyev modified it.

Finally, as its success grew, Soviet writers and Moiseyev depicted the dance troupe as a specifically Soviet art form. The dance troupe was created when socialist realism was the rule of the day and artists struggled to conform to these new strictures after the 1920s era of avant garde experimentation in Soviet art. Socialist realism exhorted Soviet artists to create pieces that represented proletarian culture, which, according to Stalin, Gorky and other influential figures, meant art accessible to the masses and realist in style. In contrast, “formalism,” experimentation and modernism were viewed by the regime as decadent and bourgeois; Western and formalist influence had to be avoided at all costs; creating a piece that could be labeled as such would mean public censure, at the very least, if not arrest and possible prison time or execution. In this atmosphere, ballet choreographers grappled with identifying and creating specifically “Soviet”
ballets that conformed to socialist realist guidelines. Igor Moiseyev claimed folk dance, specifically his vision of folk dance, represented the direction Soviet ballet should take. Folk dance, because of its origins, better represented the makeup of Soviet society and successfully overrode the bourgeois, Western origins of classical ballet.

However, these claims did not represent the reality of life in the Soviet Union. Though the Moiseyev formed under the policy of korenizatsiia, which celebrated and supported the flourishing of nationalism and nationalistic artistic expression, at the same time Stalin soon revoked the policy (and even as early as 1935, claimed Russian nationalism as foremost among nationalist in the Soviet Union and as the nationalist responsible for the 1917 Revolution). The shift in policy involved not only an emphasis on the superiority of Russian nationalism but also prejudice against and the persecution of national groups. Communist officials representing local national elites became victims of the Great Terror (1937-39) and in some cases, of forced relocation. Thus, even as the Moiseyev claimed to celebrate the Crimean Tatars by dancing the Dance of the Tatars of Kazan, the NKVD carried out this national group’s forced relocation. In reality, the allegedly “authentic” dances Igor Moiseyev created involved drastic changes with the company’s audience and artistic success always in mind. Igor Moiseyev (and the other artists like costume designers and musicians who also took part in the dances’ creations) endeavored to make the dances as entertaining as possible, which meant dances with dramatic leaps, precisely synchronized moves by part or all of the company’s cast, and flashy costumes that looked superb in motion and were modernized so that they were not too outdated and showed off the dancers’ fit bodies. In addition, Soviet writers and Moiseyev claimed he was an appropriate judge of which dances represented a particular nationality, what should be changed while maintaining “authenticity,” and what characteristics embodied a nationality. The result was a multicultural
message with a Russian bent; Moiseyev as the “discoverer” or “preserver” of a nation’s folk
dance came across as superior to the nationalities he studied and the dancers themselves, for the
most part, reflected a Russian ethnicity and only “acted” in the roles representing other
nationalities. The Moiseyev dances, furthermore, still drew on Russian classical ballet within
some of its dance steps and in the Moiseyev dancers’ training. While Igor Moiseyev and
contemporary writers asserted that he created true “Soviet” ballet, Moiseyev used Russia’s rich
dance traditions in his own work and continued an established tradition of using
folk/national/character dance established in the previous century and used more recently by
choreographers like Fokine.

Though the Moiseyev was hypocritical in many aspects of its rhetoric, it was able to
survive the changes in leadership and policy during the Soviet period through today. The troupe
survived the changes due to multiple reasons, but prominent among them was the personal and
official patronage of the Soviet regime. Stalin admired Moiseyev’s parade work and continued
his support with the State Academic Ensemble of Folk Dance in the USSR. The Soviet regime
felt the Moiseyev dances reflected socialist realism and could be labeled as appropriately Soviet
ballet. After Stalin’s death, the company thrived because the Soviet regime recognized the
benefits of using the Moiseyev as a diplomatic tool. The troupe toured extensively in the Soviet
Union from its early years, and after WWII, helped welcome Soviet Eastern European bloc
countries into the communist fold. As the troupe traveled outside of the Soviet Union and
Eastern Europe, it presented an extremely positive picture of the Soviet Union to the Cold War
world. This image demonstrated the vibrancy of Soviet culture and, as noted above, supposed
support of multiculturalism in Soviet society. The Soviet regime’s continued support of the
Moiseyev until 1991 was also tied to Igor Moiseyev’s ability to maneuver the troupe so that it
conformed to contemporary cultural policy under Stalin and then became an irreplaceable cultural tool. Moiseyev’s personal and political charisma ensured domestic and international recognition of the company throughout the Soviet and post-Soviet period. Moiseyev used this savvy particularly when the Soviet regime selected the company to function as the first large-scale cultural representation sent to the United States in the Cold War. The company toured the United States in a time of anxiety; the American government and Americans in general struggled to identify a specifically “American” identity after WWII. With the international spotlight highlighting any domestic issues and constantly comparing the two Cold War superpowers, Americans experienced a fear of cultural inferiority in comparison to their Soviet counterparts. The Soviets, with their wealth of cultural tradition and famous artists to draw on, appeared to have cornered the high culture market in the Cold War conflict. Additionally, Americans were concerned with potential emasculation and change in gender roles as well as the racial and ethnic makeup of American society.

However, the Moiseyev did not reinforce American fears of cultural inferiority and anxiety with regard to gender and ethnicity/race. Rather, Americans found comfort in the Moiseyev’s idealized depiction of gender roles and various peoples living together harmoniously. For its time period, the 1958 Moiseyev tour also marked a performance and event that a large number of Americans witnessed. Between the performances and the *Ed Sullivan Show* appearance, the Moiseyev reached an audience of over forty million. The Soviet and American governments privileged culture and its ability to change minds, and, after seeing the Moiseyev, Americans heartily concurred. They believed the Moiseyev believed the Moiseyev could bolster political relations and were more effective than traditional diplomats.

American reception complicates our view of the Cold War experience and the more
recent scholarly discussion of the Cold War narrative. Americans became fascinated by the Moiseyev, but not simply for its entertainment value. After learning all the details of how the Moiseyev dancers lived in the Soviet Union, what they looked like, what they ate and their goals in life, Americans felt Soviet people thought, acted and lived just like them. Soviet people did not represent an enemy with whom the United States would never be able to cooperate, as espoused by the Cold War narrative. Rather, Americans could see something of themselves in their counterparts behind the Iron Curtain.
EPILOGUE

No doubt, we are now in a period of decline, of decadence all art forms. Unfortunately, this is not surprising. Art is not divorced from life, but, on the contrary, expresses it in the form of images. Art reflects our morals. [There has been] A recent extraordinary decline of morals.

Culturally, our society is heading into a deep abyss. Look at your TV, [the way] all singing is in English, [even while] not knowing the English language… [Young people] are completely forgetting that they are Russian, that there is a great Russian culture and Russian music… Unfortunately, imitation and fascination with everything American captured not only our country…

This art is very much dilettantism… What's going on stage? Solid amateurism, coarsening tastes. Shake your hips, sing a few words … strum the guitar and – [this is] a huge success … In these conditions maintain staff becomes more difficult. – Igor Moiseyev, 1996.

In 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev became General Secretary of the Communist Party and set a new tone for the Soviet Union. Gorbachev instituted a series of reforms, guided by perestroika (restructuring) and glasnost (openness). Gorbachev’s reforms, which introduced a semi-free market economy, increased participation in government and greater freedom of expression, led to a variety of opinions of what the future of the Soviet Union should entail. A few short years later, citizens in the Soviet Union and Eastern bloc countries moved toward independence in largely non-violent revolutions, and the Soviet Union fell on Christmas Day, 1991. Throughout this period of upheaval and beyond the Soviet Union’s end, the Moiseyev continued to tour internationally and continued to achieve a great deal of success on its tours. After the fall of the Soviet Union, with a mild name change (from State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble of the USSR to State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble), the Moiseyev sustained an international reputation and an enthusiastic international audience. However, the simple fact of the Moiseyev’s continued existence does not address how American reception of the Moiseyev has changed during this time period.

Though *glasnost* allowed for greater experimentation in choreography in the Soviet Union, *New York Times* critic Anna Kiselgoff noted that Soviet choreographers and artists still felt beholden to American audiences, who wanted the same kinds of dances when attending a Soviet troupe’s performance. Thus, even though Igor Moiseyev declared an interest in jazz and creating a jazz inspired dance for the troupe in 1988, Americans were not interested.\(^\text{939}\) In the opening excerpt above, Moiseyev bemoaned the domination of American culture and its attraction worldwide. He felt Russian culture was now being neglected; the international audience and artists from Russia and elsewhere ignored rich Russian cultural history. However, this criticism of the dominance of American culture did not stop Moiseyev from continuing to utilize the more popular, if repetitive dances American audiences knew and loved.

For cultural exchange, *glasnost* entailed more secondary artistic troupes being able to travel to the United States.\(^\text{940}\) The Moiseyev enjoyed continued popularity in the 1980s but now it was much easier to sign Soviet artists to visit the United States – the Soviet regime was no longer in charge of all aspects of exchange and groups could enter into their own agreements.\(^\text{941}\) However, at the same time, a few individual Americans felt the need and ability, in the period of *glasnost*, to decry the Moiseyev’s representation of Soviet life. In a letter to the editor published in the *New York Times* on 5 February 1989, one Vera Toman of Port Jefferson, NY, accused Moiseyev of holding too narrow a view of multiculturalism. She believed Moiseyev only supported a specifically Russian view of the Soviet Union: “Even though much of the folk dance material he has theatricalized came from many ethnic groups within the Soviet Union, he does


not acknowledge them as non-Russian. At age 83, he cannot be expected to change the imperialistic views he learned in the czarist and Communist empires.”

Additionally, Toman pointed out that the above New York Times article from 13 November 1988 utilized a photograph of the Ukrainian Hopak to erroneously illustrate Russian folklore. Almost two years later, in another letter to The New York Times editor, Seymour Yusem of New York claimed that The New York Times “failed to mention the outright propaganda nature” of Soviet cultural exchange. Yusem asserted that the Moiseyev was the worst example of this; “for three decades [it] has been promoting the picture of happy Soviet ethnics busy doing their native dances.” He disparaged the depiction of giggling peasant girls and athletic peasant boys all living and working together in perfect harmony. Additionally, Yusem found the militant nature of some of the dances disturbing, especially the dance of Cossacks, a group that had murdered thousands of Jews, and which enjoyed a positive depiction in the Moiseyev dance. In conclusion, Yusem declared: “It is time to deliver a glasnost message to the Moiseyev troupe, with its militaristic idealization and phony ethnic paradise.”

With Gorbachev’s reforms in the 1980s and the movement toward independence of Eastern European bloc countries and Soviet republics, harsh criticisms of the Moiseyev and its message made their way into the American press. While reviews of the Moiseyev’s performances continued to be positive, they went hand-in-hand with criticism of the Moiseyev’s political message.

Seventy-seven years later, how the Moiseyev Dance Company is viewed and remembered is complex. In Moiseyev’s obituary, The New York Times described him as the creator of “a new form of theatrical folk dance…and whose troupe was one of the most popular

943 Ibid.
945 Ibid.
dance companies of the 20th century.” In the same obituary, controversy over the “ideological content” is cited because of how the Moiseyev conformed to the ideas of socialist realism. At the same time, Moiseyev himself refused to join the Communist Party and “did more than parrot officially sanctioned views” and admired American culture.947 Dealing with its propagandistic past as an official tool of cultural diplomacy still haunts the Moiseyev. Despite some criticism, like in the examples above, of the Moiseyev’s utopian vision of life in the Soviet Union, on its website today the Moiseyev still proudly states that “In 1989, immediately following the ensemble’s Israeli tour, Russia and Israel established diplomatic relations.” 948 The legacy of the Moiseyev is also present in the folk dance ensembles of the republics of the former Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc. The Moiseyev was the “model for most professional folk companies,” but as such, similar issues of “ideological content” were present in these companies.949 The Moiseyev Dance Company’s legacy is complex; both the company’s and Soviet regime’s goals are a vital part of evaluating the troupe’s impact and the Cold War context in America and abroad. However, despite the propagandistic nature of the troupe it has survived beyond the Soviet Union and demonstrates the huge impact it had on American-Soviet relations and on international cultural exchange making it still popular today.

APPENDIX A: TEXT OF THE LACY-ZAROUBIN AGREEMENT,
JANUARY 27, 1958

Agreement Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on Exchanges in the Cultural, Technical and Education Fields. By agreement between the Governments of the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, delegations headed on the United States side by Ambassador William S. B. Lacy and on the Soviet side by Ambassador G. N. Zaroubin conducted negotiations in Washington from October 28, 1957 to January 27, 1958, with regard to cultural, technical, and educational exchanges between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. As a result of these negotiations, which have been carried on in a spirit of mutual understanding, the United States and the Soviet Union have agreed to provide for the specific exchanges which are set forth in the following Sections during 1958 and 1959 in the belief that these exchanges will contribute significantly to the betterment of relations between the two countries, thereby contributing to a lessening of international tensions.950

SECTION 1: General
(1) The visits and exchanges enumerated in the following Sections are not intended to be exclusive of others which may be arranged by the two countries or undertaken by their citizens.
(2) The exchanges provided for in the following Sections shall be subject to the Constitution and applicable laws and regulations in force in the respective countries. It is understood that both parties will use their best efforts to have these exchanges effected in accordance with the following Sections.

SECTION II: Exchanges of Radio and Television Broadcasts
(1) Both parties will provide for an exchange of radio and television broadcasts on the subjects of science, technology, industry, agriculture, education, public health, and sports.
(2) Both parties will provide for regular exchanges of radio and television programs, which will include the exchange of transcribed classical, folk and contemporary musical production on magnetic tape and records; the exchange of filmed musical, literary, theatrical and similar television productions.
(3) For the purpose of strengthening mutual understanding and developing friendly relations between the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, both parties agree to organize from time to time an exchange of broadcasts devoted to discussion of such international political problems as may be agreed upon between the two parties. The details of the exchanges shall be agreed upon at the working level.
(4) Both parties will provide for an exchange of samples of equipment for sound-recording and telecasting and their technical specifications.
(5) Both parties will provide for an exchange of delegations of specialists in 1958 to study the production of radio and television programs, the techniques of sound recording, the equipment of radio and television studios, and the manufacture of films, recording tape, tape recorders, and records.

http://archive.org/stream/departmentofstat381958unit#page/n3/mode/2up
SECTION III: Exchange of Groups of Specialists in Industry, Agriculture and Medicine

(1) Both parties agree to provide for an exchange of delegations in 1958 in the fields of iron and steel, mining (iron ore), and plastics industry. Both parties agree as to the desirability of arranging additional exchanges in industry during 1958-1959.

(2) Both sides will provide for the exchange of delegations of specialists in agriculture, the American side receiving during 1958-1959 nine delegations of Soviet specialists in the following fields: mechanization of agriculture, animal husbandry, veterinary science, mixed feeds, cotton growing, agricultural construction and electrification, horticulture (including vegetable growing), hydro-engineering (irrigation) and reclamation, and forestry, lumbering and millwork. In 1958-1959 the Soviet side will receive nine American delegations of specialists in the following fields: the study of agricultural crops, veterinary science, soil use and the use of water resources (irrigation and drainage), mechanization of agriculture, agricultural economics (excluding distribution of agricultural products), cotton growing and plant physiology, sheep raising, biological control of agricultural pests, and forestry, lumbering and millwork.

Details of the exchanges will be agreed upon by representatives of the Department of State of the United States of America and of the Embassy of the Union Soviet Socialist Republics in the United States America.

(3) Both parties agree to provide for the exchange 1958-1959 of eight medical delegations of five to six specialists for periods of two to six weeks to become familiar with research and achievement in the following field: new antibiotics, microbiology, physiology and pharmacology of the nervous system, radiobiology, biochemistry, metabolic diseases, endocrinology, community and industrial hygiene.

Both parties recognize the desirability of providing exchange of delegations in the field of the manufacture of medical apparatus and instruments.

(4) Both parties agree in principle to provide for an exchange in 1958 of delegations of specialists in fisheries.

SECTION IV: Visits by Representatives of Cultural, Civic, Youth and Student Groups

(1) For the purpose of establishing contacts, exchanging experiences, and becoming more familiar with the public and cultural life of both countries, the Soviet side will arrange to invite to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics during 1958 groups of American writers (5-6 persons), composers (5-6 persons), painters and sculptors (3-4 persons). In 1958, the United States side reciprocally will arrange to invite similar Soviet groups to visit the United States.

(2) Both parties will provide for the exchange in 1958-1959 of delegations of representatives of youth and delegations of women in various professions.

(3) Both parties agree to provide for an exchange of delegations of student and youth newspaper editors 1958-1959.

(4) Both parties will promote the development and strengthening of friendly contacts between Soviet American cities.

SECTION V: Exchange of Visits of Delegations of Members of the United States Congress and Deputies of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.
The proposal to exchange delegations of members of the United States Congress and deputies of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will be subject to further discussion between the two parties.

SECTION VI: Joint Conferences of U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. Organizations

The desirability of agreement to hold joint conferences of interparliamentary groups in 1958 and 1959 or meetings of representatives of the United States and Soviet associations for the United Nations and UNESCO is a matter for the organizations concerned.

SECTION VII: Cooperation in the Field of Cinematography

Recognizing the importance of developing mutual cooperation between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in the field of motion pictures, both parties have agreed to the following:

1. To make provisions for the sale and purchase of motion pictures by the film industries of both countries on the principles of equality and on mutually acceptable financial terms. Toward this end, not later than January 1958, Sovexportfilm will enter into contact with representatives of the motion picture industry in the United States, to be approved by the Department of State of the United States, for the purpose of the sale and purchase of films in 1958.

2. To arrange for the holding simultaneously in the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of film premieres (American films in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Soviet films in the United States of America, respectively), inviting to ... premieres leading personalities of the film industries of both countries.

3. To carry out in 1958 and exchange of 12 to 15 documentary films in accordance with a list to be mutually agreed upon by the two parties. On the Soviet side the exchange of documentary films will be carried out by Sovexportfilm, such films to be recorded in the English language, and for the United States of America by the United States Information Agency, such films to recorded in the Russian language.

4. In the second half of 1958 to provide for carrying ... for a period of up to one month an interchange of delegations of leading motion picture personalities, scenario writers and technical personnel to be approved by each side for the purpose of becoming acquainted with experiences in the production of motion pictures in the respective countries.

5. To recognize the desirability and usefulness of organizing joint production of artistic, popular-science and documentary films and of the conducting, not later than May 1958, of concrete negotiations between Soviet Union organizations and United States film companies on this subject, such United States companies to be approved by the Department of State of the United States. The subject matter of the films will be mutually agreed upon the two parties.

6. To recommend to the appropriate United States organizations the making of arrangements for the holding of a Soviet Film Week in the United States in 1958 to recommend to the appropriate motion picture organizations of the Soviet Union the making of arrangements for the holding of a United States Film Week in the Soviet Union in 1958, and to envision the participation in these Film Weeks of delegations from each side numbering 3 or 4 motion picture personalities for a period of two weeks.

7. To recognize the desirability of producing feature films, documentary films and concert films for television or non-theatrical showing in the United States by Soviet motion
picture organizations and the producing of similar films by appropriate United States organizations for television or non-theatrical showing in the Soviet Union. Additional concrete negotiations on this question will be carried on between the Department of State of the United States and the Soviet Embassy in the United States of America.

(8) To designate a standing committee of four members, two from the United States and two from the Soviet Union, the powers of which will be for a period of one year and which will meet once in Moscow and once in Washington during that year to examine problems which may arise in connection with the implementation of the provisions of this Section. The authority of this committee may be extended by mutual agreement.

SECTION VIII: Exchange of Theatrical, Choral and Choreographic Groups, Symphony Orchestras and Artistic Performers

(1) The Ministry of Culture of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will invite the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra to visit the Soviet Union in May or June 1958 and will send the ballet troupe of the Bolshoi Theatre of the Soviet Union, numbering 110-120 persons, to the United States in 1959 for a period of one month.

(2) The Ministry of Culture of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, on the basis of an existing agreement with Hurok Attractions, Inc., and the Academy of the National Theatre and Drama, will send two Soviet performers—E. Gilels, pianist, and L. Kogan, violinist—to the United States in January-April, 1958, and will invite two American soloists—B. Thebom, vocalist, and L. Warren, vocalist—to visit the Soviet Union.

(3) The Ministry of Culture of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will send Soviet vocalists I. Petrov, P. Lisitsian, and Z. Dolukhanova, as well as I. Bezrodi, violinist, and V. Ashkenazi, pianist, to the United States and will invite R. Peters, vocalist, L. Stokowski, conductor, and others to visit the Soviet Union.

(4) The Ministry of Culture of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, in accordance with an agreement with Hurok Attractions, Inc., will send the State Folk Dance Ensemble of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United States in April-May, 1958 and will consider inviting a leading American theatrical or choreographic group to the Soviet Union in 1959.

(5) The Soviet side will send the Red Banner Song and Dance Ensemble of the Soviet Army or the Choreographic Ensemble "Beriozka" to the United States in the fourth quarter of 1958 and invite one of the leading American choreographic groups to visit the Soviet Union.

SECTION IX: Visits by Scientists

(1) The Academy of Sciences of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the National Academy of Sciences of the United States will, on a reciprocal basis, provide for the exchange of groups or individual scientists and specialists for delivering lectures and holding seminars on various problems of science and technology.

(2) The Academy of Sciences of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the National Academy of Sciences of the United States will, on a reciprocal basis, provide for the exchange of scientific personnel and specialists for the purpose of conducting joint studies and for specialization for a period of up to one year.

(3) The details of exchanges mentioned in paragraphs (1) and (2) will be agreed upon directly between the presidents of the Academy of Sciences of the Union of Soviet
Socialist Republics and the National Academy of Sciences of the United States in Moscow in the early part of 1958.

4. The Ministry of Health of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will send in 1958 to the United States a group of Soviet medical scientists (3-4 persons) for a period of 2 to 3 weeks to deliver lectures and exchange experiences and will receive a similar group of United States medical scientists to deliver lectures and exchange experiences at the Institutes of the Academy of Medical Sciences of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and at medical institutes in Moscow, Leningrad, and Kiev.

5. In 1958 the Ministry of Agriculture of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will, on a reciprocal basis, invite United States scientists to visit the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for the purpose of delivering lectures and exchanging experiences in the fields of biology, selection, pedigree stockbreeding, agrotechny, mechanization of agriculture, stockbreeding, and others.

SECTION X: Exchange of University Delegations

1. Both parties will provide for the exchange in 1958 of four delegations of university professors and instructors for a period of 2 to 3 weeks in the fields of natural sciences, engineering education, and liberal arts, and the study of the systems of higher education in the United States and the Soviet Union, each delegation to consist of from five to eight persons.

2. Both parties will provide for an exchange of delegations of professors and instructors between Moscow and Columbia Universities and Leningrad and Harvard Universities. Further exchanges of delegations of professors and instructors of other universities of the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, shall be decided upon as appropriate by both parties.

3. Both parties will provide for an exchange of students between Moscow and Leningrad Universities, on the one hand, and United States universities, on the other, amounting to 20 persons on each side for the period of the academic year 1958-1959. For the academic year 1959-1960, the number will be 30. The composition of the student groups shall be determined by each side.

4. Both parties will provide for an exchange of delegations of educators (8-10 persons) for a period of days in the latter part of 1958.

SECTION XI: Exchange of Individual Athletes and Athletic Teams

Both parties will provide for an exchange of individual athletes and athletic teams and in 1958-1959 will provide for the holding of the following contests in the United States and in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

1. Basketball games between representative men's and women's teams to be held in the Soviet Union in April 1958.

2. Basketball games between representative men's and women's teams to be held in the United States in 1959.

3. Wrestling matches between representative teams to be held in the United States in February 1958.

4. Wrestling matches between representative teams to be held in the Soviet Union in 1959.

5. Track and field contests between representative teams to be held in the Soviet Union in July 1958.
(6) Track and field contests between representative teams to be held in the United States in 1959.

(7) Weight lifting contests between representative teams to be held in the United States in May 1958.

(8) Canadian hockey games between representative teams to be held in the Soviet Union in March-April 195_

(9) Chess tournaments between representative teams be held in the United States in 1958.

The details of these exchanges of athletes and athletic teams as well as financial arrangements for these exchanges shall be discussed between appropriate America and Soviet sports organizations.

SECTION XII: Development of Tourism
Both parties will promote the development of tourism

SECTION XIII: Exchange of Exhibits and Publications
(1) Both sides agree in principle on the usefulness exhibits as an effective means of developing mutual understanding between the peoples of the United States and the Soviet Union. Toward this end both sides will provide for an exchange of exhibits on the peaceful uses atomic energy in 1958.

(2) Both parties will promote the further development of exchange of publications and various works in the field of science and technology between scientific institutions and societies and between individual scientists and specialists.

(3) Provisions will be made for the Central Scientific Medical Library of the Ministry of Health of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and corresponding medical libraries in the United States to exchange medical journals.

(4) Both parties will promote the exchange of curricula, textbooks, and scientific pedagogical literature through the appropriate agencies of higher and secondary education and directly between educational institutions.

(5) The Ministry of Health of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will arrange to make available in 1958 from 8 to 10 medical films for presentation in the United States. On a reciprocal basis, the United States will arrange to make available the same number of American medical films for presentation in the Soviet Union.

(6) The Ministry of Agriculture of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Department of Agriculture the United States are prepared to exchange in 1958 on such agricultural subjects as stockbreeding, mechanization of agriculture, construction and utilization irrigation and drainage systems, protection of plants from pests and blights, and fight against erosion.

(7) The representatives of the American and Soviet having exchanged their views on the problems of distributing the magazines *Amerika* in the Soviet Union and *USSR* in the United States, have agreed on the desirability and necessity of promoting the distribution of magazines on the basis of reciprocity. Examination of measures taken by both parties to achieve this end continue at the ambassadorial level.

SECTION XIV: Establishment of Direct Air Flights
Both parties agree in principle to establish on the basis reciprocity direct air flights between the United States and the Soviet Union. Negotiations on terms and conditions satisfactory to both
parties will be conducted by appropriate representatives of each Government at a mutually convenient date to be determined later.

SECTION XV: Entry into Force
The present agreement shall enter into force on the … is signed.

[IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, duly authorized, have signed the present agreement and have affixed their seals thereto.

DONE, in duplicate, in the English and Russian languages, both equally authentic, at Washington this twenty-seventh day of January, one thousand nine hundred fifty-eight.

FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:
WILLIAM S. B. LACY

FOR THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS:
ZAROUBIN
APPENDIX B: EARLY AMERICAN TOUR REPERTOIRES

1958 Tour

Igor Moiseyev – Artistic Director
Samson Galperin – Conductor

Dancers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tamara Zeifert</th>
<th>Lev Golovanov</th>
<th>Sergei Tsvetkov</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tamara Golovanova</td>
<td>Irina Konyeva</td>
<td>Nina Kuznetsova</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lydia Skryabina</td>
<td>Lylia Shaldina</td>
<td>Mikhail Alexandrov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivan Voronkov</td>
<td>Nikolai Danilov</td>
<td>Nikolai Kosogorov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boris Berezin</td>
<td>Vassili Savin</td>
<td>Anatoli Fyodorov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galina Korolkova</td>
<td>Viacheslav Larionov</td>
<td>Gorgony Shliapnikov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boris Petrov</td>
<td>Ludmilla Butenina</td>
<td>Igor Fylatov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanislav Kulikov</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dances:

I. Suite of Old Russian Dances
   First episode – Maiden’s Entrance
   Second episode – The Round Dance Khorovod
   Third episode – A Peddler’s Box Korobochka
   Fourth episode – The Grass Travushka
   Fifth episode – Male Dances and Finale

II. The Dance of the Tatars from Kazan

III. Yurochka

IV. Khorumi

V. Polyanka (The Meadow)

VI. Zhok: A Moldavian Suite
    Hora – a female round dance
    Chiokyrlie (The Lark)
    Zhok – mass dance

VII. Mongolian Figurine

VIII. City Quadrille

IX. Bul’ba (Potatoes)

X. Partisans

XI. Football

XII. Two Boys in a Fight

XIII. Ukrainian Suite – Vesnyanki (Spring Tide Ritual Songs)

1965 Tour

Igor Moiseyev – Artistic Director
Nikolai Nekrassov – Musical Director and Conductor
**Dances:**

I. Exercises on a Russian Theme  
II. Partisans  
III. Sunday  
IV. Zhok: A Moldavian Suite  
   - Hora – a female round dance  
   - Chiokyrlie (The Lark)  
   - Zhok – mass dance  
V. PontoZoo (Hungarian)  
VI. Lyavonikha (Hungarian)  
VII. Bulgarian Dances  
VIII. Two Studies in Mood (Polish Krakowiak and Russian Trepak)  
IX. Caucasian Dances (Georgia)  
X. Sanchakou (China)  
XI. Gypsies  
XII. Old City Quadrille  
XIII. Two Boys in a Fight  
XIV. Gopak  

**1970 Tour**

Igor Moiseyev – Artistic Director  
Nikolai Nekrassov – Musical Director and Conductor  
Sergei Kolobkov – Conductor  

Soloists of the Dance Company:  
- Mikhail Alexandrov  
- Yuri Alexandrov  
- Boris Berezin  
- Nelly Bondarenko  
- Anatoli Fyodorov  
- Lev Golanov  
- Rhudi Khodzhoyan  
- Nikolai Kosogorov  
- Stanislav Kulikov  
- Olga Moiseyeva  
- Boris Petrov  
- Ninel Samsonova  
- Boris Sankin  
- Vassily Savin  
- Galina Yeliseyeva  
- Alfat Yenikeyev  

**Dances:**

I. Suite of Old Russian Dances  
   - First episode – Maiden’s Entrance  
   - Second episode – The Round Dance *Khorovod*  
   - Third episode – A Peddler’s Box *Korobochka*  
   - Fourth episode – The Grass *Travushka*  
   - Fifth episode – Male Dances and Finale  
II. Yurochka  
III. Khorumi  
IV. Polyanka (The Meadow)  
V. Zhok: A Moldavian Suite
Hora – a female round dance
Chiokyrlie (The Lark)
Zhok – mass dance

VI. Old City Quadrille
VII. Partisans
VIII. Sicilian Tarantella
IX. Gaucho
X. Sunday
XI. Dance of the Buffoons
XII. Gypsies
XIII. Two Boys in a Fight
XIV. Gopak
APPENDIX C: A SELECTION OF MOISEYEV DANCES

Name: Suite of Old Russian Dances
First episode – Maiden’s Entrance
Second episode – The Round Dance Khorovod
Third episode – A Peddler’s Box Korobochka
Fourth episode – The Grass Travushka
Fifth episode – Male Dances and Finale
Origin: Russian
Characteristics: Travushka is a play dance and utilizes humor and the Russian popular song Vosem’ devok odin ya (Eight girls and a single boy)

Name: The Dance of the Tatars from Kazan
Origin: Tatar (from the Tatar Republic)
Characteristics: Use of humor and spectacular acrobatics for the men. The plot involves two young women playing a trick on two young men.

Name: Yurochka (Georgie)
Origin: Belarusian
Characteristics: Depicts a peasant Don Juan who chases all the local girls but they in turn spurn him.

Name: Khorumi (an odd number)
Origin: Adzharian (western Soviet Union, ethnically related to the Georgians)
Characteristics: Use of ancient warrior costumes – depicts warriors out scouting for their enemy and then the battle. Utilizes Caucasian drum for sharp, staccato rhythms.

Name: Partisans (from dance cycle Soviet Pictures)
Origin: Various nationalities
Characteristics: Depicts soldiers of different nationalities forming partisan groups to fight the Germans in the Northern Caucasus. Use of dark cloaks to imitate the movement of riding horseback.

Name: Zhok: A Moldavian Suite
Hora – a female round dance
Chiokyrlie (The Lark)
Zhok – mass dance
Origin: Moldavian
Characteristics: The Chiokyrlie dance uses individual and group dances and finishing with a large round dance. The Zhok is a mass dance with precisely executed patterns.

Name: Seven Girls
Origin: Bashkirian (Bashkir Republic located in southeast)
Characteristics: A female folk dance depicting legend of seven beautiful girls.

Name: Old City Quadrille from cycle Pictures of the Past
Origin: Russian
Characteristics: Shows customs of pre-revolutionary Russia in the form of young men showing off for young women.

Name: Two Boys in a Fight
Origin: Nanaian (Siberia)
Characteristics: Utilizing a single dancer, it depicts a wrestling match between two people.

Name: Polyanka (Meadow)
Origin: Russian
Characteristics: Characterized by increasing tempo and speed of dance steps ending in a round dance with tambourines and balalaikas as accompaniment.

Name: Ukrainian Suite – Vesnyanki (Spring Tide Ritual Songs)
Origin: Ukrainian
Characteristics: Depicts two young lovers who part. The women dance slowly across the stage to impart the sadness of the lovers’ parting but then try to cheer her up with more active dancing. Once the male lover and other men return, the dancers move in a celebratory manner and finish with The Hopak (or Gopak) utilizing prisyadkas (the squat step) and leaps.

Name: Football from cycle Soviet Pictures
Origin: Modern/Soviet
Characteristics: Depicts a soccer match using fantastic acrobatics.

Name: Bul’ba (Potatoes)
Origin: Belarusian
Characteristics: Depicts the planting and harvesting of potatoes.

Name: Mongolian Figurine
Origin: Mongolian
Characteristics: A female solo dance utilizing Mongolian religious figures and ornaments.

Name: Venzelya
Origin: Russian
Characteristics: Use of Russian popular Russian melodies and use of interweaving patterns formed by the dancers.

Name: Summer from The Seasons
Origin: Russian
Characteristics: Depicts love and marriages.

Name: Bulgarian Dances
Origin: Bulgarian
Characteristics: Complex rhythm and rapid movements.

Name: Exercises on a Russian Theme
Origin: Russian
Characteristics: Depicts a ballet exercise class including warm up and practice exercises performed at the bar demonstrating basic steps of Russian folk dance.

Name: Trepak
Origin: Russian
Characteristics: Depicts family life in pre-revolutionary Russian village.

Name: Lyavonikha
Origin: Byelorussian
Characteristics: The “classic” Byelorussian folk dance using light, airy movements.

Name: Pontozoo
Origin: Hungarian
Characteristics: A male dance with syncopated rhythm enunciated by the dancers slapping their hand on their boottops.

Name: Sunday from cycle Pictures of the Past
Origin: Russian
Characteristics: Life and customs of pre-revolutionary Russia.

Name: Gypsies or Gypsy Dance
Origin: Bessarabia near the Romanian border
Characteristics: Depicts a campfire scene of gypsies and the female gypsies dancing in a seductive manner.

Name: Sanchakou
Origin: Chinese
Characteristics: Tells the story of General Tsiao-Tsian in China a thousand years ago and mistaken identity.

Name: Dance of Buffoons
Origin: Russian
Characteristics: A dance of folk jesters from pre-revolutionary Russia

Name: Sicilian Tarantella
Origin: Sicilian
Characteristics: Based off of Moiseyev’s travels to Italy depicting chariots

Name: Gaucho
Origin: Argentinean
Characteristics: Combination of Spanish zapateado with dancing on the side of the soles to depict the gait of Argentinean cowboys.
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