

Vesna Bajić-Stojiljković

Links between the Moiseyev Dance Company and the Folk Dance Choreography production in Serbia¹

This chapter presents an attempt to examine the links between Serbian choreographic dance tradition with the often highlighted influence of the Moiseyev Dance Company² from Russia. At this point it is important to observe to what extent its impact could be seen in the choreographic pieces of the choreographers who were involved with the State ensemble Kolo since its inception, these being Olga Skovran and Dobrivoje Putnik, and other choreographers engaged in semi-professional³ and amateur folklore ensembles from Beograd, these being Dragomir Vuković, Branko Marković and Desanka Đorđević in the period after World War II until the mid-1990s.

Using a comparative method of structural and formal dance/music analysis⁴ of the available Moiseyev choreographies and the choreographies

¹ This chapter arises from the research conducted for a doctoral dissertation *Processes of (re)defining the structural, dramaturgical and aesthetic aspects in the stage presentation of traditional dance and music in Serbia*, registered in 2009 at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade, which is still in progress.

² According to the simplified Library of Congress transliteration system, the choreographer's surname should be transliterated as 'Moiseev'; however, a common Western spelling is 'Moiseyev', which has been retained here.

³ The term *semi-professional* is used in Serbia for folklore ensembles which are not directly funded by the state, but by the city councils. These usually employ at least several people (artistic director, leader of the orchestra, administrators) and do not function exactly as amateur folklore groups. Their repertoire is based on more complex choreographies of folk dance, with serious dance training. The dancers are usually amateurs, they are not employed as in the professional ensembles, but their skills and dance technique is greater than that of the amateur dancers.

⁴ In my doctoral thesis I develop the method of structural and formal dance/music analysis of FDC as the main methodological tool. I have published several papers on this topic (see Bajić-Stojiljković 2011; 2012; 2014a; 2014b; 2015).

of folk dance by the authors mentioned above, I will try to answer the following questions: How are folk dance and music treated? Is there a related choreographic structure between them? What kind of kinetic expression do they promote? What does their spatial composition look like? Are there links between Moiseyev's approach and Folk Dance Choreography (abbr. FDC) production in Serbia?

Before I turn to the aforementioned issues, I will introduce Moiseyev and his professional Dance Company and the Folk Dance Choreography production in Serbia from the historical viewpoint.

On Moiseyev and the Moiseyev Dance Company

The State Academic Ensemble of Folk Dances of the Peoples of the USSR [Gosudarstvennyi Akademicheskii Ansambl Narodnogo Tantsa S.S.S.R.], known in the West as the Moiseyev Dance Company (Shay 2002: 10) was founded in Moscow in 1937 by its artistic director and choreographer Igor Alexandrovich Moiseyev (1906–2007), after his successful organisation of the 'all-USSR folk dance festival' held in Moscow in 1936 (Ibid.: 66–67).

Moiseyev was a professional dancer of the Bolshoi ballet company from 1924 to 1939 (Ibid.: 66), 'sympathetic to the efforts of innovative Soviet choreographers of the 1920s and 30s' (Anderson 2007) with the aim to enrich the Soviet ballet. As Chudnovsky said, 'a close integration with the folk dance has been one of the fundamental principles underlying the development of the Soviet ballet' (Chudnovsky 1959: 11), which Moiseyev recognised and 'grew more and more obsessed with the idea of wholly devoting himself to the folk dance and even of creating a folk ballet' (Ibid.: 16). Because of his invention of a revolutionary synthesis of classical ballet and ethnic dance, Moiseyev was widely acclaimed as the greatest folk dance choreographer of the twentieth century (Anderson 2007). Within his Dance Company he created 'a new form of theatrical folk dance in Russia' and his troupe was one of the most popular dance companies of the twentieth century (Ibid.). The Moiseyev Dance Company's energy, virtuosity, precision and ingenious distillation of folk styles from various regions set audiences cheering worldwide. Chudnovsky noted that the company 'strove to revive the best examples of the folk dance, to bring out the beauty, heroic elements and optimism inherent in

them' (Chudnovsky 1959: 19) and 'a wealth of feeling, joy, merriment, a beauty and harmony of sound and movement' (Ibid.: 21).

A majority of Moiseyev's works were inspired by the traditions of the various regions of the Soviet Union. But he also created dances with Chinese, Cuban, Sicilian, Spanish, Polish, Argentinean, Bulgarian, Mexican, Venezuelan, Hungarian, Mongolian, Czech, Slovak, Japanese, Vietnamese and, of course, numerous Russian ethnic groups. In the early 1960s his dancers entertained American audiences by performing the *Virginia Reel* and a parody of rock and roll (Anderson 2007). Moiseyev used to say that 'bringing various peoples closer together is the bottom line of our efforts' (Pushkova s.a.). And so it was – even in a time of ideological confrontation between the West and the East.

Throughout his life Igor Moiseyev choreographed about 300 performances, more than 170 of which he created for his Dance Ensemble. From his first ballet productions, such as *The footballer* (1930), *Salammô* (1932) and *Three fat men* (1935) Moiseyev searched for new means of expression (Chudnovsky 1959: 15). Beside a vivid dance with emotional expressiveness, he gave much attention to the dramatic content. Almost every choreography was created around important themes, for example wedding, historical scenes, rounds, marital dances and spring and winter youth dance-games (Ibid.: 20). Moiseyev continued to work with traditional ballet companies throughout his career. His last choreography, *Spartacus* at the Bolshoi Ballet, was staged in 1954 (Pushkova s.a.) After 1955 the Ensemble toured France, England, Egypt, Japan, and the USA; it continued to perform into the early twenty-first century (Britannica 2013).

The impact of this company was barely visible in the ensemble's early years. Following World War II, however, the impact of the Moiseyev ensemble was immense in every republic of the USSR and throughout the Eastern bloc (Shay 2002: 67).⁵ After several successful tours throughout the entire Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, all of the states of the USSR formed companies that emulated the Moiseyev model.

⁵ Philip Koutev, one of the first Bulgarian choreographers, was also inspired by the Soviet folk ensemble 'Pyatnitski', as he established the first professional, state-supported Bulgarian folk ensemble in 1951 (Buchanan 1995: 388). Similarly, the 'folklorismus era' in Poland was started by the formation of ensembles such as Piatnicki, Alexandrov, Moiseyev, Bierzka and others (Dąbrowska 2002: 95).

The USSR's direct political domination over Eastern Europe, and its popularity and influence in other regions of the world led to the widespread emulation of Soviet models of different types of institutions, including the formation of the state sponsored dance companies. (Shay 2002: 10)

Moiseyev's professionalism allowed him to stay apolitical in a highly politicised society – more than once he was summoned to various Communist Party members' offices to be questioned on his refusal to join the Party. But as his performances were favoured by Josef Stalin, no one dared to interfere with the ensemble (Britannica 2013). He received many honours and awards from the Russian state and numerous other countries, including SFR Yugoslavia.

Moiseyev's approach to Folk Dance Choreography

Moiseyev used typical movement patterns, especially the motifs of particular ethnic groups or nations, based on their traditional dances. Sources say that Moiseyev spent his childhood and adolescence travelling around Russia with his father, thus becoming acquainted with the cultures of various ethnic groups (Shay 2002: 66). According to Darya Pushkova, 'His free time was devoted to roaming the Russian provinces. Traveling on foot or on horseback, he trekked across the country learning its traditions; all the local dances he observed in places such as Pamir, Belarus, Ukraine and the Caucasus, eventually made their way into the repertory of his own folk ensemble' (Pushkova s.a.). 'Later, when his fame as a choreographer was firmly established, he constantly pursued his studies of various peoples and their dances, wherever he might be – in all parts of his own country, in the towns of China, amidst the ruins of ancient Greece, in the European capitals', wrote Chudnovsky (1959: 15). Moiseyev's idea was not to transpose folk dances *literally* to the stage; instead, he studied music, history, traditions and customs of a nation or a region and then selected the details that most vividly reflected their characters and thus managed to create his own unique theatrical interpretations (Ibid.: 32).

He was able to find in a dance 'a new depth and content' (Ibid.: 19), thus opening a new world of thoughts, emotions and moods that spectators never suspected existed in it (Ibid.). Very often, people from other countries were astounded at how sensitively he captured their cultures (Pushkova s.a.). His work was especially admired, however, for the

balance that it maintained between authentic folk dance and theatrical effectiveness. Thus, although the ensemble became famous for its spectacular and acrobatic leaps and jumps, Moiseyev's choreography consistently derived from what he called 'root movements', the basic steps characteristic of a particular type of folk dance (Britannica 2013).

Moiseyev developed 'a total and complete movement vocabulary that is extremely unique and is emulated by many companies throughout the Eastern bloc' (Shay 2002: 72). His dance vocabulary, as Anthony Shay also notes, is based on ballet techniques, with simple footwork, spectacular and highly athletic virtuosic solo figures, rapid spinning, miming elements, mass scenes, highly precise and disciplined formations based on basic geometric elements, with a very fast tempo (Shay 2002: 68–73). Moiseyev attributed his dancers' virtuosity and versatility to their knowledge of classical ballet, which he described in an interview in 1970 as 'the grammar of movement' (Pushkova s.a.) While criticising the classical ballet, Moiseyev maintained that it had many good traditions to be studied and assimilated. Among these he singled out its high professional standards, technical virtuosity and great potentialities for expressing human thoughts, feelings and moods (Chudnovsky 1959: 24). Moiseyev believed that 'with ballet technique as a base, one can do anything' (Pushkova s.a.)

Moiseyev's intention was to present a certain type of character, hence he created as so-called 'character dance'.⁶ This type of stage dance developed into an independent dance form within the genre of classical ballet, with the origin from the folk dance (Chudnovsky 1959: 27). With the aim to portray national features, Moiseyev reshaped and extended it to create, as Anthony Shay said, 'a unique movement vocabulary' (Shay 2002: 68). His choreographies always attempted to present characters which would represent a member of a certain ethnic group. These

⁶ Andriy Nahachewsky emphasises the very strong relationship between character dance and ballet in Soviet Union. He said that character dance was established in the Soviet Union as a separate genre of dance by the 1930s and 'developed as a combination of the classical ballet tradition, as well as the many ethnic and national dance traditions that the Soviets inherited from the Tsarist Russian empire' (Nahachewsky 1997: 142). According to Nahachewsky, similar movements developed in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and other countries under Soviet influence, gathered around the term 'folk-staged dance' which came into common use to identify the genre (Ibid.).

characters are generally one-dimensional – they are not individual people, but rather types of people, noted Shay (Ibid.: 70).

According to the systematisation of the principles of staging proposed by Ukrainian choreographer Kim Vasylenko in 1983, which was also promoted in ethnochoreology by the Ukrainian ethnochoreologist Andriy Nahachewsky some years later (Nahachewsky 1997, 2012), Moiseyev's approach is classified into the third, the highest principle of staging (Nahachewsky 1997: 145) or, in my conceptualisation, on the third level of *stylisation*, which I named *composition* (Bajić 2006: 62–66).⁷ That means that, although Moiseyev used 'root movements' from traditional dances, he was not interested to preserve its original form or step pattern, but he used only elements of the form of a particular dance, composing a new dance and trying to keep its, let us use Nahachewsky's formulation, 'spirit of the original culture' (Nahachewsky 2012: 210). Nahachewsky explained that the 'character of [the] music, costumes and/or dance lexicon are generally urban, contemporary and theatrical. These dances often develop a theme or story, or perhaps evoke another genre such as ballet or contemporary dance' (Nahachewsky 1997: 145).

It is important to note that the Moiseyev's approach is, in the first place, a response to classical ballet – a striving to develop classical ballet with new elements and new character to express a wider range of human feelings and activities, with the aim 'to bring to the stage as complete a picture as possible of contemporary life' (Chudnovsky 1959: 23).

Besides determining the levels of stylisation, another important parameter in defining Folk Dance Choreography (FDC) is its genre classification (Bajić 2011). Considering the form and the content of FDC, I classified Moiseyev's choreographies in two genres: *dramatisation* (because of the presence of the narrative) and *variation* (because of intense variation and invention of step patterns). It is important to note that Moiseyev did

⁷ Relying on ideas of Vasylenko and Nahachewsky, who conceptualised three *principles of staging* in the process of theatricalisation (Nahachewsky 2012: 192), I tried to apply it on Serbian choreographed dance tradition, involving the term *stylisation*. I proposed *three levels of stylisation: adaptation, modification and composition* (see: Bajić 2006).

not create *suites* or *medleys*,⁸ as one of the widespread genres of FDC in Serbia (in Serbian: *splet*), often related with the first and the second level of stylisation.

In favour of this, Chudnovsky noted that Moiseyev's first choreographies were individual dances (for example *Kalmyk dance*), which were after a while replaced by more complex choreographic pieces and one-act ballets, for example, Russian suite *Seasons of the year*, Ukrainian suite *Vesnyanki*, Moldavian Suite, and many others (Chudnovsky 1959: 20).

As Shay quotes, Moiseyev's intention was to raise the performance skill to the highest artistic level in order to influence the creation of new national dances (Shay 2002: 71–72). On the other hand, he wanted to improve upon dances that peasants actually performed in the field, 'reinterpreting them, enriched by professional art and imbued with an expressive contemporary flavour' (Ibid.: 70). Because of his interpretation and approach to choreography, Moiseyev's artistic work is highly valued. In this context Georgi Abrašev, the Bulgarian ethnochoreologist and choreographer cited that Moiseyev thought that choreography should develop the potential of dance elements already created by the people, because they were unable to develop their dances to their fullest potentials themselves (Abrašev 1989: 183).

As Irina Kozlova wrote in her article 'Folklore and Art' (Kozlova 1997), for Russians the aesthetic, ethical and educational functions of folklore are the most important, because it (folklore) has gradually lost much of its applied function (Ibid.: 208). She adds that different types of adaptation and transformation of traditional folklore have become more expressive and have significantly begun to override the original authentic forms (Ibid). Throughout the entire article Kozlova emphasises the idea of folklore as the 'living power of modern original amateur culture' (Ibid), which is very evident in the case of Moiseyev who advocated for contemporary interpretation of folk art.

⁸ The composition of the *suite* or *medley* implies merging several dances, usually from one region, in a single unit or form, without any narrative or plot. Although the terms *suite* and *medley* are often used as synonyms, the differences between them are quite evident, because the *suite* refers to the form of music/dance composition, while I have conceptualised *medley* as the first genre category of FDC (Bajić-Stojiljković 2015: 37–38).

Ethnochoreologists agree that stage folk dance has to correspond not only with folklore, but with the stage dance tradition as well. László Felföldi highlights the importance of the correspondence with the cultural politics of the revival movement as well as the pedagogical expectations (Felföldi 2002: 115).

Moiseyev's activities were extremely important in the development of education in dance and in improving the literature on choreography. As observed by Shay, 'a spate of books appeared throughout the Soviet Union and several satellite states that showed how to perform Moiseyev-style dances for the stage, including movements, steps, formations, and finally, sample choreographies appropriate to each ethnic group' (Shay 2002: 67). In the capital city of every republic of the former Soviet Union special dance schools, called *Koreografski instituti*, similar to high schools for the performing arts, were established, where one could learn classical ballet and folk dance. These exhibited a very serious approach with a defined strategy in the development of artistic folk dance. Moiseyev wrote a number of articles in which he set out to evolve a theory of the folk dance (Chudnovsky 1959: 22).

For his pioneering approach to traditional dance, Anthony Shay described Moiseyev as the 'ancestor of the genre' (Shay 2002: 57–81), because he has created a new and parallel dance tradition or genre (Ibid.: 70). Andriy Nahachewsky is even more precise in saying that Moiseyev is the 'father' of the third principle folk-staged dance genre (Nahachewsky 1997: 145).

Folk Dance Choreography in Serbia

When it comes to the production of stage folk dance in Serbia, it is noticeable that the third principle of staging or the third level of stylisation existed in Belgrade in the early 1920s, through the unique approach of a choreographer and a dance teacher, Maga Magazinović (1882–1968). Upon attending courses by Emile Jaques-Dalcroze and Mary Wigman in Germany, she founded a School of rhythmic and modern dance ('Škola za ritmiku i plastiku') in Belgrade, in 1910 (Magazinović 2000: 21, 25). Her early choreographies, partially influenced by Serbian folk dances, included their original names, such as *srbijanka*, *vranjanka* and *đurđevka*, from 1921 (Ibid.: 523), *koknješte* and *vranjanka* from 1922 (Ibid.: 524), *Neda grivnu*, *zaplet* and *trojanac*, from 1923 (Ibid), *šumadinka*, *slavjanka*, *vranjanka* and *đurđevka*,

from 1924 (Ibid.: 525), *gružanka*, *šumadinka*, and *vrzino kolo* from 1929, were described as scenes with folk motifs (Ibid.: 527), then *bojerka* from 1930 (Ibid) and *Kosidba na planini* from 1935, described as a scenic view of stylised folklore (Ibid.: 529).

It remains unknown today what those choreographies looked like or how they were performed on stage, but according to their names and the author's explanations, they must have included the elements or motifs of the traditional (original) kinerhythmic models which Magazinović then brought to the principles of the modern dance. We cannot be sure whether she used kinerhythmic patterns of traditional dances for her choreographies *Jelisavka, majka Obilića* [Jelisavka, Obilić's mother (1926)], *Molitva Kosovke devojke* [Prayer of the girl from Kosovo (1927)], *Smrt majke Jugovića* [The death of the Jugović's mother (1927)], but she was certainly inspired by Serbian history and tradition.

Magazinović was undoubtedly familiar with Serbian traditional dancing as she danced as a pupil and later student in a folklore group (Mosusova 2012: 9). She was also acquainted with the work of the Janković sisters, the first ethnochoreologists in Serbia, and later with Olivera Mladenović (née Živković), all of which enabled her to gain a deeper insight into the field of traditional dancing (Magazinović 2000: 25, 26; Mosusova 2012: 14).

Around the same time, in the mid 1920s, Russian dancers and choreographers contributed to the production of the so-called folk-ballets for the Yugoslav ballet stage. They created choreographies which included elements found in traditional folk dances (Milin 2003: 75). As Melita Milin argues, Russian contribution to the evolution of ballet in Serbia was very important, although modern dance, the so-called plastic-ballet, had already existed in Serbia before the introduction of classical ballet, principally thanks to Maga Magazinović (Milin 2003: 73).

When Magazinović closed her school in 1935, there was nobody to continue her work in modern dance. A new approach which led to reviving rural traditions became more evident through the activities of rural and urban folklore groups. From this point it becomes evident that the third level of stylisation, found in the work of Maga Magazinović and her folk ballet, almost disappeared in the years after World War II, only to

reappear later, in the late 1950s, in a new and different form of Folk Dance Choreography.⁹

Although Serbia was under a strong Soviet influence only for a short period of time (1943–1948), many new trends that were established in those years could directly contribute to the development of the dance choreography in the region. Dance ethnologist Elsie Ivancich Dunin [Elzi Ivančić Dunin] and choreographer Stanimir Višinski state that ‘the Moiseyev company toured the Slavic countries in the fall and winter of 1945–1946, providing the first post-war exposure to his approach to folk dance choreography’ (Ivančić Dunin and Višinski 1995: 8). During one of their concerts the amateur folklore group ‘Ivo Lola Ribar’ from Belgrade performed as hosts, under the artistic direction of Olga Skovran, who became the first director and choreographer of the Serbian state ensemble ‘Kolo’ two years later (Mladenović 1962: 22).

The scenic representations were not a novelty in Serbia at the time of the Moiseyev Dance Ensemble’s visit to Yugoslavia. During the pre-war period, in the beginning of the 1930s, in different parts of the former Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians the concept of the scenic representation of traditional dances appeared and started to develop with ‘villagers demonstrating their own dances to an audience of ‘outsiders’ out of village’ (Ivančić Dunin and Višinski 1995: 5). The sisters Janković wrote that the first festival of dance was held in Ljubljana in 1934, then a year later in Croatia, Southern Serbia and Macedonia, and in 1938 in Belgrade (Janković 1939: 298–303). These festivals chiefly promoted the traditional village dance, in its non-stylised form, but at the same time featured performances of various balletic and rhythmic stylizations by some of the urban dance groups (Ibid.: 298).

During the late 1930s some Serbian amateur folklore groups participated in several important international folk programmes in Western Europe (Janković 1939: 194–195, 299; Ivančić Dunin and

⁹ The need to create an artistic form of dance based on traditional dance forms was very strong during the post-war period. Also, the sisters Janković emphasised the importance of, but also cautiousness in creating scenic art based on traditional dance (Janković 1949: 65). Being very versatile personalities, whose scholarship was accepted worldwide, they both had the opportunity to observe various examples of scenic interpretation of traditional dance in different countries, presumably including Moiseyev’s approach, but neither of them was involved in the creative choreographic process, nor did they write about it.

Višinski 1995: 6). In the pre-war years there were many events presenting traditional village dances on the stage by village groups and some urban folklore groups, but there were not that many expressive authorised choreographies, and the idea of an actual scenic presentation in the form an elaborate choreographic piece had yet to be developed; this happened in the late 1940s.

From that period we can consider the beginnings of Folk Dance Choreography production in Serbia. Through the work of five key choreographers – Olga Skovran, Dobrivoje Putnik, Dragomir Vuković, Branko Marković and Desanka Đorđević, whose creative work covers the second half of the twentieth century, we can reconstruct the choreographic activity in Serbia and identify policies for its development. All of the aforementioned choreographers had different approaches and visions, striving to achieve their own originality. But, in general, their heterogeneity still relied on common postulates for presentation of traditional dance from Serbia.

The influence of the Moiseyev Dance Company

The Moiseyev Dance Company was an exemplary prototype for establishing a state-sponsored professional folklore group, which was immediately accepted by three Yugoslav republics – Serbia, Croatia and Macedonia. Regardless of the fact that in 1948 Yugoslavia became politically independent from the USSR, many cultural organizations continued to promote folk dance and music by organising festivals and other such events. That same year the State Ensemble ‘Kolo’ was founded in Serbia, and a year later ‘Lado’ in Croatia and ‘Tanec’ in Macedonia.

However, Moiseyev’s approach to folk dance and music material was not directly transposed onto these ensembles, as was the case, according to Anthony Shay, in other countries under Soviet control. Because of this, in the case of Serbia I will not use the term *model* which is used in many discourses explaining the influence of the Moiseyev Dance Company (Shay 2002; Ivančić Dunin and Višinski 1995; Maners 2002), but rather describe it as, to use Grażyna Dąbrowska’s formulation, an *example* that would be followed (Dąbrowska 2002: 95).¹⁰

¹⁰ The term *model* implies transferring the entire system of functioning, from repertoire, training, technique, ways of choreographing, education to all the administration and state support.

Comparative analysis of the repertoire of the Moiseyev Dance Company¹¹ and Folk Dance Choreography production in Serbia

Upon analysing some of the available video examples of Moiseyev's Folk Dance Choreographies on YouTube (namely: The Ukrainian dance *Gopak*, The Russian Dance Suite *Summer*, The dance of Kalmyk, The Romanian Dance *Briul*, Tatar dance, Moldovan dances, Gypsy dances, The fleet suite *Yablochko*, Greek dance, Sicilian *Tarantella*, Egyptian dance, Jewish dance, *Malambo*, Partisans), some basic differences could be seen between their repertoire and Folk Dance Choreography production in Serbia. The main difference relates to the kinetics: the use of the body in dancing and the use of step patterns of traditional dance in creating the kinetic dimensions of the entire choreography (see Table 2). Another big difference is in connection with the spatial composition and its parameters, alongside differences in the level of stylisation and the choreographic genre (see Tables 1 and 3).

In the early years of the Ensemble 'Kolo' the main way of creating choreographies was to collect and to present traditional dance in a suite form with the first and second level of stylisation.¹² Choreographies from Serbia basically do not contain many highly virtuosic elements, especially not those that originate from ballet technique. If there are some technically complex elements, for example, squats, twists, fast repeated motifs, they appear occasionally, especially in choreographies that consists of dances from Southeastern Serbia. Regarding the kinetic dimension, choreographies are based primarily on the 'original' step patterns of traditional dances, slightly varied. Although in a small number of examples, variations are present also in the early years of Ensemble 'Kolo' in choreographies created by the first Serbian choreographers Olga Skovran and Dobrivoje Putnik, but it would also become evident later, in the work of Dragomir Vuković and Branko Marković, both very popular

¹¹ I do not have the information of the exact year when some of Moiseyev's choreographies were created. However, at this point the most important thing is to observe the specific features of his choreographic approach, which are evident in every choreography, regardless of when they were created.

¹² While Olga Skovran's choreographies were 'textbook example' of the form of suite, Dobrivoje Putnik loved to experiment with form by means of including and composing different variants of step patterns.

and world-renowned choreographers.¹³ The way of performing choreographies on the stage is not really ‘authentic’ – in choreographies of the Ensemble ‘Kolo’ (especially in its early years, but also later) movements are refined, subtle and stylised, sometimes resembling the ballet.

The spatial dimension is solidly designed and includes traditional dancers’ formations, mainly in group, rather than solo formations (see Tables 1, 2, 3). In relation to the kinetic dimension, the spatial dimension is more developed.

Character roles for individuals or a group of dancers are not often presented. Serbian choreographers normally used dramatic elements taken from rituals and customs, interweaving them with traditional dance and music, which is not the case with Moiseyev. The choreographer Branko Marković¹⁴ had a unique approach which resulted in very complex choreographic compositions which included dramatisations with programme titles, but these were unlike Moiseyev’s despite the fact that both Marković and Moiseyev’s choreographies of folk dance were rooted in ballet technique.¹⁵ The differences could be observed in the way they combined ballet and folk dance elements, precisely, from which point of view they approach the FDC. Branko Marković enriched folk dance with

¹³ Dragomir Vuković was the only choreographer from Serbia whom Moiseyev himself hired to set his two choreographies *Shopske dances* and *Dances from Serbia* in his Dance Company repertoire (Kuzmanović-Tubić 2008: 13).

¹⁴ Branko Marković, ballet dancer and choreographer, worked in the semi-professional ensemble AKUD ‘Branko Krsmanović’ from Belgrade. His choreographic production is nowadays considered a gem of Serbian choreography, a unique and somehow isolated approach in-between others.

¹⁵ The term *ballet technique* is widely used in many ethnochoreological and other dance narratives, but without precise explanation. Ballet technique consists of special leg and arm positions, the position of the whole body and the specific movement of the whole body. Moiseyev did not use all the elements of ballet technique for his choreographies, but he concentrated on those movements with clearer expressions. His dancers are very often in low, *demi-plié* positions; the dancers’ legs are frequently bent. There are not many high positions, except in some virtuosic elements (pirouettes, leaps, jumps etc.). The feet are in the position of forced arch or on the whole or half-foot. Movements are clearly performed. A high amplitude of raising gestures of legs could be seen as well as some other elements from ballet technique: pirouettes and other turns, rotations, gestures, positions of arms, posture of the torso, movement of the whole body.

ballet elements, while Moiseyev enriched ballet with folk dance – both of them in their own unique ways.

With regard to the music, the difference is evident, because the music for all Moiseyev's choreographies is composed and dramaturgically related to the dance, with very few exceptions. As Chudnovsky pointed out, 'the choreographer and the composer soon learned to think and create in perfect concord and to grasp not only the general concept of the dance but its various parts and details, both dramatic and choreographic' (1959: 61). Moiseyev's choreographies are usually accompanied by a full symphony orchestra, but the usage of some instruments that reflect the specific tradition is very evident (for example, the accordeon *bayan*, which is assigned with significant solo parts in many arrangements and can accompany even the entire choreography without the orchestra, as it is in *The dance of Kalmyk*). For the musical accompaniment of the dances of the Caucasus and Central Asia some special instruments are used (for example, *tar*, *kyamancha*, *duduk*, *tambourine*, *zurna*, and others) (Ibid.: 62; 63). As to arranging folk melodies Chudnovsky noted that the Company's composer 'neither mechanically copied what had been recorded nor relied too much on their imaginative powers. They tried to retain the original harmonic or polyphonic style, to integrate it with new elements and create something new out of it' (Ibid.: 67). He further added that the composer tried to capture the essence and colour of the melody and visualise the harmonic and polyphonic potentials with the orchestration. In concordance with the dance, composers also used dramatic elements borrowed from symphonic music, such as the system of leit-motifs (Ibid).

The music for FDC in Serbia is based on traditional melodies, which are used in their original forms but arranged for the 'classical' orchestra. The relationship between music and dance is not, in a majority of the examples, dramaturgically conceptualised, because a dramatic relationship between them does not exist. In the orchestra some traditional instruments, such as *frula*, *tambura* or *tapan* can be heard, but the overall sound is orchestral.

There were also big differences in the system of the dancers' education and training. In the early years, the dancers of 'Kolo' were given some lessons in classical ballet, but they were not trained in it from their

childhood as Moiseyev's dancers were.¹⁶ The highly informative and practical values of the dance training of 'Kolo' dancers consisted of inviting village dancers from whom they would learn step patterns and, especially, the movement, i.e. the style of dancing (Skovran 1965: 435–436). The formal education in folk dance and FDC did not exist then and still does not exist in Serbia.

The first artistic director of the Serbian professional dance ensemble 'Kolo' Olga Skovran and her dance collaborator Dobrivoje Putnik were not trained in the choreographic institutes in Russia like many of the choreographers from the Soviet Union and other countries – for example, Bulgarian choreographers who 'had attended a choreographer's course in Bulgaria where the Moiseyev model had already been introduced (Ivančić Dunin and Višinski 1995: 14). Therefore, their idea on how to adapt traditional dance for the stage in a professional ensemble was stimulated neither primarily from inside, nor from outside the SFR Yugoslavia.¹⁷

¹⁶ When Moiseyev founded the State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble, which featured 35 dancers, they were principally amateurs, and performed dances from the 11 republics of the USSR. Subsequently he built a company of about 100 professional dancers trained by either the Bolshoi Theatre School or its National Dance Department, which Moiseyev headed; all ensemble dancers had a background in classical ballet (Chudnovsky 1959: 16; Britannica 2013).

¹⁷ Both Olga Skovran and Dobrivoje Putnik trained as gymnasts and worked as teachers in schools. Olga Skovran took some additional courses in choreography in Czechoslovakia, while Dobrivoje Putnik was a well-known teacher in summer folklore schools or seminars. Both of them were choreographers and directors in Ensemble 'Kolo'.

Table 1: *The structure of the Folk Dance Choreography*

CHOREOGRAPHIC STRUCTURES		
<i>Parameters</i>	<i>Moiseyev's Approach</i>	<i>Approach of Serbian choreographers from 1948</i>
Dance part	+	+
Instrumental part	+	+
Vocal part	-	+
Spoken part	-	+
Play-act part	+	- (+)
Costume	+ stylised traditional	+ traditional
Stage design, lighting	+	-
Time	2–10 min	3–14 min
Level of stylisation	third	first and second, rarely third
Choreographic genre	<i>dramatisation, variation</i>	mainly <i>suite</i> , but also <i>dramatisation</i> and <i>variation</i>

Table 2: *Analysis of the dance part of the Folk Dance Choreography*

THE DANCE PART		
<i>Parameters</i>	<i>Moiseyev's approach</i>	<i>Approach of Serbian choreographers from 1948</i>
Kinetics	Movements of the whole body (legs, arms, head); ballet technique, virtuoso elements (high leaps, pirouettes), elements or motifs of step patterns of folk dances; changes of levels (from low to high position); energy of movement; prominent soloists.	General movements or movement focus is on legs; no ballet elements, although some virtuosic elements can be seen; movements are stylised with regard to the traditional way of performing; step patterns are used, with variations; collective performing with some solo roles.
Space	<i>See table 3: Spatial composition</i>	
Time	2–8 min	5–8 min

Table 3: *Spatial composition*¹⁸ of the Folk Dance Choreography

SPATIAL COMPOSITION		
<i>Parameters</i>	<i>Moiseyev's approach</i>	<i>Approach of Serbian choreographers from 1948</i>
(1) <i>Mise-en-Scène</i>		
Formation		
1. <i>Grouping of dancers</i>	one, two, three, group	two, three, group
2. <i>Number of dancers</i>	two to group	two, three, but mainly group
3. <i>Gender of dancers</i>	male, female, mixed	male, female, mixed
4. <i>Geometric configuration</i>	circle, line, point	circle, semi-circle, line
5. <i>Reciprocal body orientation of dancers</i>	face-to-face, side-by-side, face-to-back, back-to-back; markedly facing the audience, even in a circle	face-to-face, side-by-side, face-to-back
6. <i>Connection between dancers</i>	With or without connection; with arms down and up, by the shoulders, with crossed arms forward and backward	Always connected by hands with arms down and up, by the shoulders, with crossed arms forward and backward, by belt
Spatial motive	The line, the solo, the duo, the trio, the open circle, the closed circle	The line, the solo, the duo, the trio, the open circle, the closed circle
(2) <i>Pathway</i>	Straight, curved, subsequent, individual; direct, indirect, dialogue	Straight, curved, subsequent, less individual; direct, indirect, dialogue
<i>Spatial complexity</i>	Monophony (single, multiple), polyphony; spatial canon, spatial imitation	Monophony (single, multiple), less polyphony

¹⁸ The term *spatial composition*, which I propose, consists of separate scenes, the so-called *mise-en-scènes* and *pathways*. Inside *mise-en-scènes* different formations can be observed with *pathways* inside them (see Bajić-Stojiljković 2014b: 406–425).

Conclusion

It is evident that Moiseyev's impact was not strongly felt in the Serbian choreographic dance tradition because the system of presenting traditional dance and creating choreographies, as well as the education of dancers and choreographers, was very different from the approach of the Moiseyev Dance Ensemble in Russia. A school for choreography did not exist in Serbia (and still does not exist), and Serbian choreographers went their own way by observing other ensembles and trying to apply what they saw for the creation of Serbian staged folk dance, as well as presenting some new aspects of the staged style of choreographing. On the other hand it is unquestionable that Moiseyev's influence was felt, especially in terms of creating the form of the choreography and its spatial composition.

The acclaimed and famous Moiseyev Dance Company did not directly guide Serbian choreographed folk dance production from the beginning, since it had been developing independently, through the original approaches of individual authors of choreographies of folk dance. However in later years some connections could be observed, especially in the development of *dramatisations* and *variations*, two different genres in FDC. Whether or not those were direct influences, I cannot say at this point. On the other hand, the introduction of ballet into the Serbian folk-stage tradition can be found only in one semi-professional folklore ensemble – AKUD 'Branko Krsmanović' from Belgrade (as well as other ensembles, such as AKUD 'Španac', to which the same choreographies were transposed). The programme orientation of AKUD 'Branko Krsmanović' was mainly based on the unique artistic work of Branko Marković, a ballet dancer and choreographer. The others, including the professional Ensemble 'Kolo', did not accept the importation of ballet technique in the presentation of FDC.

The crucial difference between Russian, precisely Moiseyev's, and Serbian approach to the stage folk dance is in the different contexts from which they originated – ballet tradition (Russian) vs. village tradition (Serbian). This fact is confirmed by Olga Skovran, the doyen of FDC production in Serbia, who said that folk tradition was of primary importance (Skovran 1965: 434).

The only similarity that could be found between Serbian choreographed dance production in the second half of twentieth century and the Moiseyev Dance Company is the programme orientation. In Yugoslavia the programme policy of the repertoire of the Ensemble 'Kolo' was to represent dances from different Yugoslav republics, and that policy was preserved until the late 1980s. This was also the case with the Moiseyev Dance Company, whose repertoire included dances from all of the nations of the former Soviet Union (Shay 2002: 75–77). Being state-sponsored professional dance ensembles, both 'Kolo' and the Moiseyev Dance Company were powerful tools for a 'representation on a wide variety of levels – political, historical, ethnic, economic, gender, and aesthetic, among others' (Ibid.: 10).

References

- Abrashev, Georgi. 1989. *V'prosi na khoreografskata teoriia*. Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo.
- Anderson, Jack. 2007. 'Igor Moiseyev, 101, choreographer, dies.' *The New York Times*, 3 November 2007, http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/03/arts/dance/03moiseyev.html?_r=0
- Bajić, Vesna. 2006. *Od originalnog zapisa tradicionalne muzike i igre ka preradi, obradi i kompoziciji. Muzičko i igracko nasleđe u kulturno-umetničkim društvima i obrazovnim institucijama u Srbiji*. Graduation paper (manuscript). Belgrade: Faculty of Music, Department of Ethnomusicology.
- Bajić-Stojiljković, Vesna. 2011. 'Stage production of traditional dance and music: folklore practice in Serbia.' International conference *Stiki med tradicijsko glasbo in plesom ter evropsko glasbeno kulturo v različnih okoljih in obdobjih*. Ljubljana: Oddelek za muzikologijo Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani (forthcoming)
- Bajić-Stojiljković, Vesna. 2012. 'Application of kinetography / Labanotation to the Serbian choreographed dance tradition.' In: Marion Bastien, János Fügedi, Richard Allan Ploch (eds.), *Proceedings of the Twenty-Seventh Biennial ICKL Conference, International Council of Kinetography Laban, Budapest 2011*. Budapest: Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Musicology, 95–103.
- Bajić-Stojiljković, Vesna. 2014a. 'Dance and stage: a proposal for structural analysis of space of folk dance choreography.' In: Elsie Ivancich Dunin and Catherine E. Foley (eds.), *Proceedings for the 27th Symposium of the ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology*. Limerick: The Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, University of Limerick, 11–18.

Bajić-Stojiljković, Vesna. 2014b. 'Teorijsko-konceptualne postavke prostorne kompozicije koreografije narodne igre (na primeru koreografije *Igre iz Srbije* Olge Skovran).' In: Sonja Marinković, Sanda Dodik and Ana Petrov (eds.), *Vlado S. Milošević: kompozitor, etnomuzikolog i muzički pedagog Tradicija kao inspiracija*. Banja Luka: Akademija umjetnosti Univerziteta u Banjoj Luci, Akademija nauka i umjetnosti Republike Srpske i Muzikološko društvo Republike Srpske, 406–425.

Bajić-Stojiljković, Vesna. 2015. 'Staged folk dance in theatrical narratives.' In: Elsie Ivancich Dunin (ed.), *Dance, Narratives, Heritage: Proceedings for the 28th Symposium of the ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology*. Zagreb: Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, ICTM Study Group on Ethnochoreology, 2015, 37–42.

Buchanan, Donna A. 1995. 'Metaphors of power, metaphors of truth: the politics of music professionalism in Bulgarian folk orchestras.' *Ethnomusicology* 39 (3): 381–416.

Chudnovsky, M. 1959. *Folk Dance Company of the USSR*. (Igor Moiseyev, Art. Dir.). Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House.

Dąbrowska, Grażyna W. 2002. 'The place of tradition in culture: Authenticity and the stage' In: László Felföldi and Theresa J. Buckland (eds.), *Authenticity – Whose tradition?* Proceeding, Budapest: European Folklore Institute, 93–99.

Felföldi, László. 2002. 'Authenticity and culture.' In: László Felföldi and Theresa J. Buckland (eds.), *Authenticity – Whose tradition?* Proceedings. Budapest: European Folklore Institute, 110–129.

Ivančić [Ivančik, Ivancich] Dunin, Elzi [Elsie] and Višinski, Stanimir. 1995. *Orata vo Makedonija – scenski del – Tanec*. Skopje: Institut otvoreno opšestvo Makedonija.

IFMC Folk Dance Study Group. 1974. 'Foundations for the analysis of the structure and form of folk dance: a syllabus'. *Yearbook of the international folk music council*. Vol. 6.

Janković, Ljubica i Danica. 1939. *Narodne igre*, knjiga III. Beograd: the authors' own edition.

Janković, Ljubica i Danica. 1949. *Narodne igre*, knjiga V. Beograd: Prosveta.

Kozlova, Irina. 1997. 'Folklor i umetnost.' In: Miško Šuvaković (ed.), *Izuzetnost i sapostojanje: V međunarodni simpozijum Folklor, muzika, delo*. Beograd: Fakultet muzičke umetnosti, 205–209.

Kuzmanović-Tubić, Ljiljana (ed.). 2008. *National Ensemble 'Kolo'*. Catalogue. Belgrade: The National Ensemble 'Kolo'.

Magazinović, Maga. 2000. *Moj život*. Edited by Jelena Šantić. Beograd: Clio.

Maners, Lynn D. 2002. 'The transformation and rearticulation of folk dance performance in former Yugoslavia: whose tradition, whose authenticity?' In: László Felföldi and Theresa J. Buckland (eds.), *Authenticity – Whose tradition?* Proceedings. Budapest: European Folklore Institute, 79–92.

- Milin, Melita. 2003. 'The Russian musical emigration in Yugoslavia after 1917.' *Muzikologija/Musicology* 3: 65–80.
- Mladenović, Olivera. 1962. 'Scensko izvođenje partizanskih igara.' *Narodno stvaralaštvo Folklor*, sv. 1. Beograd: Savez udruženja folklorista Jugoslavije, 21–26.
- Mosusova, Nadežda. 2012. 'Moderna igra u Srbiji. Povodom stotridesetogodišnjice rođenja Mage Magazinović i stogodišnjice njene škole.' *Igraj, igraj, igraj*, Četrnaesti pedagoški forum scenskih umetnosti, zbornik radova. Beograd: Fakultet muzičke umetnosti, 7–19.
- Nahachewsky, Andriy. 1997. 'Conceptual categories of ethnic dance. The Canadian Ukrainian case.' In: Selma Odom and Mary Jane Warner (eds.), *Canadian Dance Studies* 2. Ontario: York University, Graduate Programme in Dance, 137–150.
- Nahachewsky, Andriy. 2012. *Ukrainian Dance. A cross-cultural Approach*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland.
- Pushkova, Darya. s.a. 'Prominent Russians: Igor Moiseev' <http://russiapedia.rt.com/prominent-russians/art/igor-moiseev/>
- Shay, Anthony. 2002. *Choreographic politics. State folk dance companies, representation and power*. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press.
- Skovran, Olga. 1965. 'Scenska primena narodnih igara u Ansamblu "Kolo".' *Godišnjak grada Beograda*, knjiga XI–XII. Beograd: Novinsko izdavačko preduzeće 'Sedma sila', 431–464.
- The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica (abbr. Encyclopedia Britannica). 2013. 'Igor Moiseyev – Russian choreographer' <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/387760/Igor-Moiseyev>