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## Peter Andreevich Gusev and the Origins of the Classical Choreographic School in China / Пётр Андреевич Гусев у истоков классической хореографической школы в Китае

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**Abstract:** This article examines the activities of the outstanding Russian Soviet choreographer, teacher, and dancer, P.A. Gusev, during his time in the People's Republic of China in the 1950s. It describes Gusev's work in terms of its general influence on the formation of the Chinese classical choreographic school. The features, forms, and methods of his pedagogical work are reflected, and its diversity and multifaceted nature are emphasized. Gusev's desire to train and educate a new generation of Chinese choreographers and dancers is noted in the course of classes at the choreography courses

at the Beijing Choreographic School, as well as the first ballet troupe in China, Experimental Ballet, which was part of the Beijing Choreographic School (now the National Ballet of China), combining the trends of classical world choreographic art and traditions of the great national dance art of China. The article presents an analysis of the productions of classical ballets by Gusev, as well as by students and young Chinese choreographers studying at the choreography courses. Among them are "Swan Lake" by P.I. Tchaikovsky, "Le Corsaire" and "Giselle" by A. Adan. The process of preparation and the course of rehearsals of these ballets are described. A detailed description of the first Chinese national ballet, "The Beautiful Fish," which later became known as the Chinese dance drama, is given. The article presents an analysis of P.A. Gusev's results as a basis for the further development and prosperity of Chinese classical choreographic art. In conclusion, the importance of organizing ballet masters and dance school courses at the Beijing Choreographic College, the outstanding role of P.A. Gusev in it, and the need for interaction and continued cooperation in the field of ballet between the PRC and the USSR, established by Soviet figures in the middle of the last century.

### **Keywords:**

Classical National Ballet, Choreography training class of Beijing Dance School, Le Corsaire, P.I. Tchaikovsky, A. Adan, Giselle, Swan Lake, Moscow Ballet School, P.A. Gusev, China

**Аннотация:** В статье рассматривается деятельность выдающегося русского советского хореографа, балетмейстера, педагога и танцовщика П.А. Гусева в период его работы в Китайской Народной Республике в 1950-е годы XX столетия. В ней дается характеристика творчества Гусева в аспекте общего его влияния на процесс становления китайской классической хореографической школы. Отражены особенности, формы и методы его педагогической работы, подчеркивается разнообразие и многогранный ее характер. Отмечается стремление Гусева к обучению и воспитанию нового поколения китайских балетмейстеров-постановщиков и танцовщиков в процессе занятий на курсах балетмейстеров в Пекинском хореографическом училище, а также первой в Китае балетной труппы – Экспериментальной труппы балета, входящей в состав Пекинского хореографического училища (ныне Центральная балетная труппа Китая), сочетающих тенденции классического мирового хореографического искусства и традиции великого национального танцевального искусства Китая. В статье представлен анализ постановок классических балетов Гусевым совместно со студентами и молодыми китайскими хореографами, обучающимися на курсах балетмейстеров. Среди них «Лебединое озеро» П.И. Чайковского, «Корсар» и «Жизель» А. Адана. Описан процесс подготовки и хода репетиций этих балетов. Дана подробная характеристика первого китайского национального балета «Красавица-рыбка», получившего впоследствии название китайской танцевальной драмы. Представлен анализ результатов деятельности П.А. Гусева как основы дальнейшего развития и процветания китайского классического хореографического искусства. В заключение делается вывод о значимости организации курсов балетмейстеров и танцевальной школы в Пекинском хореографическом училище, выдающейся роли в ней П.А. Гусева и о необходимости взаимодействия и продолжения сотрудничества в области балета между КНР и СССР, заложенных советскими деятелями в середине прошлого столетия.

### **Ключевые слова:**

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П.А. Гусев, Московская балетная школа, Лебединое озеро, Жизель, П.И. Чайковский, А. Адан, Корсар, курс балетмейстеров, классический национальный балет, Китай

The Soviet ballet school played an important role in the formation and development of 20th-century Chinese choreographic art. The teachers set specific goals when teaching young Chinese dancers: when the students, trained by Russian teachers, were ready to begin stage practice, a classical ballet repertoire was selected that matched their capabilities. It was also assumed that the knowledge gained by Chinese students in the field of classical dance would help them create ballets with librettos based on plots from Chinese folklore and would give rise to a new trend in Chinese choreographic art. With the direct help and under the guidance of Soviet specialists, a professional model of teaching and performing the Chinese national Ballet was gradually formed. The nineteen fifties became a period that laid a solid foundation for its further development.

One of the most prominent teachers and choreographers of that time was Peter Andreevich Gusev: "Gusev had a versatile talent. He was very good at setting up a new business," writes ballet researcher A. A. Sokolov-Kaminsky. In China, he was the soul of the school he organized. When Gusev's former colleagues from China came to Moscow for the International Competition, a whole performance was played out in the auditorium. The Chinese, restrained by nature, were temperamentally rushed to Gusev and hugged and kissed him. According to them, "Gusev's work for China is invaluable: he combined our classical dance school with the traditions of Chinese theater. To this day, the Chinese in ballet follow the path trodden by Gusev" [\[7, p. 73\]](#).

Pyotr Andreevich Gusev (1904-1987) was a Russian Soviet artist, choreographer, dancer, teacher, ballet theorist, founder of the Chamber Ballet Theater, People's Artist of the RSFSR (1984), professor (1973) [\[4, pp. 470-476\]](#). Gusev, a graduate of the Leningrad Choreographic College, was an excellent classical dancer who professionally mastered all the techniques of duet dancing. He became a partner of the most famous ballerinas of the Soviet Union — G.S. Ulanova, O.V. Lepeshinskaya, and M.M. Plisetskaya. Gusev had an amazing professional memory and perfectly knew the texts of all classical ballets. In 1952, the choreographer staged K. Karaev's ballet *Seven Beauties*, he also created many individual choreographic numbers.

Gusev, a highly educated man, admired the history of great China and its unique art and culture. He treated the Chinese people's desire to master a new kind of dance art for them — classical ballet — with great respect and understanding. Gusev, a teacher, gave all his strength and knowledge to hardworking and talented Chinese students, ballet dancers, and choreographers. He arrived in Beijing on December 26, 1957, with the aim of teaching. In 1958, Gusev served as the chief teacher of the ballet masters course (1958–1959) at the Beijing Choreographic School. The selection of applicants to study there was very strict. The examination committee consisted of three Soviet teachers, including Gusev, and their Chinese colleagues. Graduates of the first academic class for the training of choreographers, Li Chengxiang, Li Chengliang, and Wang Shiqi served as assistants. Several rounds were held to select students for the ballet department. The exam included the applicant's characteristics (origin, political views, ability to work, etc.), as well as professional achievements in dance theory and performance [\[1, pp. 209-210\]](#). After the entrance exam, professional choreographers with rich creative and practical experience working in various artistic collectives from the country became students of the ballet master's course.

Professor Gusev's course at the Beijing Choreographic College consisted of choreography lessons, acting, duet dancing, individual lessons and rehearsals. During teaching, Gusev encouraged students to study and master all types of dance: ancient, modern, Chinese, and dances of the peoples of the world. The choreographer repeatedly stressed that, based on their knowledge of various dances, they should incorporate features of Chinese national dance art into their work. According to the memoirs of Gusev's translator, Zhu Lizhen, "Teacher Gusev, having recovered from a serious heart disease, continued to work hard. His work schedule usually started at 9 a.m., sometimes earlier, and he taught a class for teachers. From 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. (or even 1 p.m.), he had already given a class to choreographers or conducted individual classes. Performance rehearsals were from 14:00 to 18:00, dance rehearsals were from 19:00 until the end of school at 22:00. He was very respectful of the extraordinary diligence of Chinese dancers. At the same time, he himself tried to understand and study Chinese dance more deeply. His remarks during lessons and rehearsals were gentle, as if he were consulting with the dancer on how to make a particular fragment better: "Try to show your fragment more attractively, think for yourself how best to do it," or "watch the performances of the artists at the Beijing Opera again, learn and study their dances." [\[13, pp.151-155\]](#).

As an excellent virtuoso dancer, Gusev never forced Chinese students to repeat what he could do himself; he demanded that his students compose choreographic works based on their knowledge and skills. At the same time, Gusev made it clear that copying elements of traditional Chinese operas or folk dances to reflect modern life was not enough. He believed that students should rely on tradition while looking to the future, and study and master all types of national folk art, since this would greatly benefit both the students themselves and their choreographic work. Gusev believed that martial arts, acrobatics, and national Chinese drama were the standard of Chinese art that had developed over the centuries, and all of this could and should be used by young choreographers in modern productions. Remembering these great achievements of Chinese national culture, it is also necessary to actively draw on the achievements of classical Western art, organically combining them.

Gusev's choreography classes, which included sketches of productions and improvised choreographic skits, were very interesting and informative. Students were so passionate about these activities that they sometimes couldn't even eat or sleep after completing them, overwhelmed by their creative excitement. Gusev used K.S. Stanislavsky's system in his acting lessons for choreographers. His classes included improvisational studies on various topics, which developed students' creative abilities and improved their imagination and thinking. The topics were very diverse: "Old spouses in search of land for cultivation," "Homecoming," "Partisan," "Peacock and Hunter," etc. Gusev conducted a thorough analysis of each new choreographic composition, sometimes inviting students to join him in discussing the production. His assessment of students' creative displays was always friendly, respectful, and sincere, which aroused students' trust and love for their teacher [\[3, p. 23\]](#).

Gusev believed that a rich and active imagination is the most important natural condition for a choreographer. "We spent our entire two-year studies on endless sketches," writes Fan Jinji. "We worked all night to show our work in class the next day. If it was performed a little carelessly, the consequences were very serious. I remembered how once, while improvising in class, I got distracted and did not continue the sketch. Gusev was displeased and flew into an indescribable rage. And it was very difficult for me. But I was so scared and so nervous that, forgetting about any pride, I concentrated on completing the tasks of

P.A. Gusev" [\[10, p. 44\]](#).

The students of the ballet masters course made significant progress in their studies under the guidance of an outstanding teacher. In 1959, the large-scale Chinese ballet "The Beautiful Fish" and the dance dramas "Liu Hulan," "Huang Jiguang," "The Red Sister," and the mass dance "Man's Determination Overcomes even the Sky" appeared in their repertoire for graduation practice (another name given by the political leaders of that time is "Man is Stronger than the Sky"), many small works were also created [\[1, p. 210\]](#).

In addition to the ballet class, choreographer Gusev conducted directing lessons. In addition, he always supported the idea of teaching students in practice during performances. Gusev produced three world-famous classical ballets in China: Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake, Le Corsaire, and Adam Adam's Giselle. At the same time, the production of the above-mentioned play "The Beautiful Fish" took place (together with teachers and students). This great, interesting work was carried out in a short time and at a high professional level.

Gusev first staged the ballet Swan Lake in China in 1958. The great interest of Zhou Enlai (1898–1976), at that time the first premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, in the appearance of this ballet on the stage of the Chinese Opera House contributed to the beginning of rehearsals. After watching Swan Lake on the Novosibirsk stage, Zhou Enlai asked Gusev about the possibility of staging it in China as soon as possible. Gusev agreed. It took less than five months from the first rehearsal to the release of Swan Lake. For the first time in the history of Chinese ballet, a complex performance was staged in such a short time. The premiere of "Swan Lake" took place on July 1, 1958, at the Tianqiao Theater in Beijing. Choreographer P.A. Gusev prepared the 1st act and the direction of the entire ballet. The second and fourth acts were left in the choreography by M. Petipa and L. Ivanov, created back in 1895 at the St. Petersburg Mariinsky Theater. The prologue, the first, the third acts, and the finale are presented in the choreography by V.P. Burmeister, the chief director of the Moscow Academic Musical Theater named after K.S. Stanislavsky and V.I. Nemirovich-Danchenko [\[11, pp. 32-34; 8, p. 60\]](#).

"Swan Lake" was performed by students of the Beijing Choreographic School, which by that time had celebrated only four years since its foundation. It should be noted that almost all the ballet dancers who participated in the premiere of the play were students of the second and fifth grades. At that time, fifth-grade student Bai Shuxiang was dancing the parts of Odette-Odile. She went down in ballet history as China's first "white swan." As a rule, graduates of ballet schools need years of classroom instruction and creative practice to perform roles in a ballet such as Swan Lake. It can be argued that this was an amazing event: the students. Those who were still studying at the college at that time were able to perform the roles in Tchaikovsky's most difficult ballet at a high professional level. Having gained initial experience participating in a full-fledged performance during the ballet "Vain Precaution" rehearsals, the young Chinese dancers chose "Swan Lake" as their next work, a masterpiece among a number of classical ballets. The choice of this particular ballet was not accidental for three reasons:

- The ballet Swan Lake has always been in the repertoire of the major ballet troupes of the theaters of the Soviet Union, touring in China, and it has become synonymous with classical ballet in China.;
- The ability of the dancers of the ballet company to perform such a ballet as "Swan Lake" testified both to their high professional level and to the significant degree of development

of the art of classical dance in the country. The Chinese government, which paid close attention to ballet and the newly established classical dance school, wanted to see results in this field of art at the level of international achievements.;

– Gusev, who recreated *Swan Lake* for the Chinese National Ballet company, was sure that the Chinese audience would enjoy the performance also because it had a happy ending: The Prince saves the Queen of the White Swans from the charms of an Evil Genius, and she turns into a beautiful girl. The happy ending in the fairy tale corresponded to the aesthetic tastes of the Chinese public.

The performance of "*Swan Lake*" on the Beijing stage was a premiere not only for the dancers of the troupe, but also a work in which the entire staff of the Opera and ballet theater took part for the first time. This is also the symphony orchestra of the Chinese Children's Theater, which was conducted for the first time by Zhu Xinen. The set design was by Qi Mudong and Huang Feng, teachers at the Central Academy of Drama. For the first time, Li Keyu from the Central Academy of Fine Arts became a costume designer [\[1\]](#).

P.A. Gusev chose *The Corsair* ballet to be staged in 1959 as the third classical ballet for the repertoire of the Experimental Ballet Troupe of the Beijing Choreographic College, which was organized with Gusev's active participation to undergo stage practice for future graduates (the first was "*Vain Precaution*," the second was "*Swan Lake*"). The choreographer wanted to demonstrate to the audience the students of the Beijing Choreographic College's excellent mastery of the art of classical dance. Gusev, like no one else, knew what benefits participation in such complex classical performances as *Swan Lake* and *Corsair* brought to dancers, and how their skills grew from one performance to the next. The choreography of the ballet *Le Corsaire* is replete with complex technical variations, *pas de deux*, etc., which can only be performed by high-class dancers. Experts noted that "... during the preparation of the performance and daily rehearsals, Chinese dancers continued to improve their skills, and ballerina Bai Shuxiang, who performed the role of Odette in the ballet *Swan Lake*, perfectly mastered the complex technique of classical dance as Medora in the ballet *Corsair*, and her skills were at the highest level" [\[1, p. 231\]](#). Participation in the rehearsals of "*The Corsair*" allowed novice Chinese stage directors to master techniques for working with the choreographic text and the work's dramatic basis (the libretto of the ballet is based on the poem "*The Corsair*" by the English poet Lord Byron).

In 1960, the Beijing Metropolitan Theater hosted the ballet *Giselle*, recreated by Gusev, the fourth of the classical heritage presented in China. Its release was the last production of classical repertoire ballets, prepared jointly by Russian and Chinese choreographers. Zhong Runliang and Zhang Wanzhao performed the roles of *Giselle*; the roles of Albert were performed by Sun Zhengting and Jiujie Tong Fukang; Li Chengxiang and Wang Shiki performed the role of forester Hans; and the role of Myrtle was performed by Bai Shuxiang and Zhao Zhuheng.

The choice of *Giselle*, the pearl of classical ballet, for the Beijing stage required choreographer Gusev to work closely with the artists and the entire theater staff, from teachers and tutors to lighting and installation designers. Several important aspects should be noted:

– "*Giselle*" is considered the peak of classical romantic ballet. His script is a model for creating a ballet performance, and the score is an example of an ideal combination of classical dance movements and music written by composer A. Adan specifically for this ballet. It requires performers to have absolute mastery of classical dance and acting, as

well as special musicality.;

– In addition to all the above requirements for an actor, Gusev was well aware that performances such as "Giselle," which contain the entire arsenal of classical dance movements, serve as serious practice for Chinese students. They consolidated the skills and abilities acquired by the students through lessons in the performance of classical heritage. After classical dance lessons, students and young teachers participated in joint performance rehearsals, which also gave them knowledge in tutoring and choreography.

As Li Chengxiang writes in his monograph: "Gusev often said that directors should learn from actors with extensive stage experience, so it is very useful for students trying their hand at directing to play some roles in dance performances that he staged" [\[3, pp. 24–25\]](#). With the help and guidance of professionals such as Gusev, the ballet performances of the world classical heritage "Swan Lake," "Corsair," and "Giselle" accelerated the learning process of Chinese masters in the field of classical dance and were prepared in just three years. During this short period, young Chinese choreographers have flawlessly mastered the art of organically combining elements of Chinese and classical dance in performances of the national Chinese ballet.

It was thanks to their participation in the rehearsals of the ballets listed above that the first generation of new Chinese dancers emerged in the persons of Bai Shuxiang, Sun Zhengting, Zhang Chunzen, and others. At the same time, Gusev trained a group of competent teachers and tutors who have the skills to work on a ballet performance, such as Zhang Xu, Qu Hao, Wu Xiangxia. They were professionally trained by their teacher, which ensured high-quality performances, even after Gusev's departure to the Soviet Union. In addition, the work on preparing the Tchaikovsky and Adana ballets has undoubtedly been a valuable opportunity for training young choreographers across the country. Through the empirical observation method and the study of theory, they learned the basic rules of creating a dance performance and applied them in their own creative practice. Therefore, it would not be an exaggeration to say that in the nineteen fifties, Gusev's creative activity had a profound impact on the development of classical ballet in China. Thus, Soviet ballet teachers imparted the ballet style of the Russian Soviet school to Chinese ballet dancers.

In November 1959, under Gusev's leadership, an Experimental Ballet Troupe was officially registered as a stage practice for graduates of the Beijing Choreographic College [\[2\]](#). It was decided to start work on the first national ballet, "The Beautiful Fish," which was assigned to graduate interns. Gusev became the main choreographer; librettists: Li Chengxiang, Wang Shiki, Li Chengliang; composers: Wu Zuqiang, Du Mingxin. [\[1, p. 242\]](#).

Gusev rightly believed that students, thanks to the independent writing and development of the ballet's libretto, choreographic text, and music arrangement, would better master artistic techniques and the general creative process when preparing a new performance. The basis for this assumption was the choreographer's professional experience, according to which, for the successful release of any performance, close cooperation between the director, conductor, musicians, stage actors, artists, decorators, and all theater staff is necessary.

The ballet "The Beautiful Fish" included three acts: eight of his paintings told about a beautiful love story (the content of this play is not a traditional myth from the history of China, rather its plot echoes the plot of "Swan Lake," which, as noted above, was a huge success with Chinese audiences).



It was extremely difficult for Gusev, who was suffering from a serious heart condition at the time, and the Chinese students, who had no experience in creating dance drama, to complete the task. They became acquainted with a large body of literature, drew on the main points of many folk plots, and studied the region's nature and wildlife to enrich the ballet's content. The actors spared no effort, rehearsing three times a day, sometimes until late at night. The director's excellent work and the student actors' performances were key to the success of "Beautiful Fish."

Li Chengxiang, one of the librettists, later described the process of creating this ballet as follows: "Having studied the art of choreography for many years, I tried to bring to life what I saw and understood. However, although I had some experience, my work did not always satisfy me. And, of course, P.A. Gusev's participation in this work with us helped us all a lot. In the dance 'Twenty-four' from 'The Beautiful Fish,' I tried to use Lev Ivanov's method in the ballet "Swan Lake" to express the dramatic conflict between a Mountain Demon and a Hunter" [\[3, p. 200\]](#).

Of course, the tasks set for the music makers were new and no less difficult than those for the choreographers. Gusev's role, with his impeccable professional taste, rigor, and benevolence, combined with his willingness to cooperate, was also very significant in this part of the play's creation. According to the memoirs of Wu Tsutsyan, one of the composers who wrote the music for the ballet, "Peter Andreevich was a tall, fit, and energetic man, like many good dancers. He spoke bluntly, cheerfully, and decisively, and greeted us warmly. He confirmed that, as a director, he would respect the general idea of creating music and the integrity of each musical passage in the play, as well as that the dance would be staged in accordance with the musical notation. P.A. Gusev said that, of course, he would have the right to discuss this or that episode of the score with the composer, express his opinion and requirements regarding one or another musical element in the characterization of the actors of the ballet, and, in case of full agreement between the composer and the director, some fragments will need to be finalized. This applied to all the play's directors. We were very glad that Peter Andreevich liked the music we wrote. However, I repeatedly had to rewrite the music for the Mountain Demon image. He, as the main negative character, is a representative of "evil." Gusev demanded that the music be rough and harsh, yet convey greed, cunning, and a strong desire. It was not easy to do, but Gusev was very pleased when the last note was written, and the score was finally completed" [\[9, pp. 18-19\]](#).

The premiere of the ballet "The Beautiful Fish" took place at the Bolshoi Theater of the Palace of National Culture in Beijing and was timed to coincide with the 10th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. After watching the performance, Zhou Enlai, in a conversation with P.A. Gusev, confirmed that he was pleased with the creative results of the production, noting the harmonious combination of elements of European ballet and Chinese dance in it, made possible by the choreographer's proactive and responsible approach to work [\[13, pp. 164-165\]](#).

As evidence of the success of the performance, we cite the text from the "Note by the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the USSR to China S. V. Chervonenko to the Chairman of the State Committee for Cultural Relations G.A. Zhukov, Minister of Culture of the USSR N.A. Mikhailov on the staging of the Chinese ballet "The Beautiful Fish" in the USSR (No. 1412 dated December 10, 1959): "Ballet music, written on the basis of Chinese folk melodies, is well received by listeners accustomed to European music, and is, in our opinion, a great success of the composers. The dances were staged with professional skill and great imagination. The decorations and costumes are tastefully decorated in the



national style. The Beijing audience well received the performance and was highly praised by leading comrades from the Ministry of Culture of the People's Republic of China. After reviewing this ballet, we also agree with this assessment and believe that the ballet deserves our attention" [\[6, pp. 576-577\]](#).

However, the perception of ballet by the Chinese public was not so clear-cut: the reason was both the music, which seemed too experimental and bold, and the idea of combining classical and Chinese dance movements. Gusev mentioned this in a conversation with Zhou Enlai, noting that some of the audience left after watching only half of the performance (among them was the head of the Beijing Municipal Party Committee) [\[13, pp. 164-165\]](#).

Gusev himself appreciated the ballet "The Beautiful Fish" as follows: "<...> firstly, this dance drama has a simple and understandable content. The audience is worried about the fate of the main character; secondly, the libretto of the ballet, which contains many fantastic and colorful scenes, is clear to the audience, the scenes of this dance performance received their positive assessment; thirdly, modern classical choreography was used in the performance - everything was expressed in dance, minimizing the pantomime; fourthly, the combination of in one performance, classical dance and Chinese folk dance proved successful and was approved by the audience" [\[2, p. 51\]](#).

Pyotr Andreevich intended to stage "The Beautiful Fish" (in the USSR, the ballet was called "Ginseng") at the Maly Leningrad State Opera House. This idea was apparently initiated by the conclusions reached by the statesmen of the two countries after the Beijing premiere, which are confirmed by the text of the document cited above, the "Notes" of S.V. Chervonenko. So, one of his summarizing points is the following: "We would consider it advisable: a) to stage the ballet 'The Beautiful Fish' in one of the Soviet ballet theaters. To invite a composer, artist, and teacher of Chinese dance to the USSR for the production" [\[6, p. 577\]](#). Gusev wrote a letter detailing his vision for this production to the then director of the theater, Boris Ivanovich Zagursky: "Dear Boris Ivanovich! This ballet will be staged in Beijing by means of Chinese classical dance. If you approve the script, then I will make the ballet a European classic. To a large extent, this will require different music. The composer, of course, will go for it. The Chinese are prone to extravaganza, so the script is somewhat overloaded with such scenes. I would like to emphasize in the play the attractiveness of a person, his life and work, i.e., the theme of the Snow Maiden walking towards people. The evil in the face of the bird wizard is quite modern — deception, slander, provocation. The heroes are active. The images evolve, especially the pierced Fish. She, a carefree, curious girl, gets into trouble, loves, resolutely follows her loved one, is defamed and slandered, becomes a prisoner in misfortune, but loves and believes, fights and wins. Of course, the insidious "bride" is a Magician; she is the same artist as the Goldfish. In short, a ballerina has something to do. Ginseng is still underdeveloped here. We need to make them more active and supportive of good people, not on a whim, but for specific good deeds. That's what I'll try to get from the Chinese here. Otherwise, the material is very rich in dance, which is the most important thing for me. Almost everything is dancing, because strong feelings and active actions drive the whole plot. Waiting for your reply. I hug you and wish you good health" [\[7, pp. 138-139\]](#). However, unfortunately, the production was never carried out in the Soviet Union.

After its 1959 premiere, the ballet "The Beautiful Fish" was described as a Chinese dance drama. In 1979, the Central Ballet Company of China presented it as a three-act ballet in five paintings. In the same year, they performed with him as part of the celebration of the

30th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China and won the second prize for choreography and performance. In 1994, when the Beijing Dance Academy<sup>[3]</sup> celebrated its 40th anniversary, the ballet was transformed into a drama of four Chinese folk dances. At the same time, he was awarded the "Classics of Chinese Traditional and Modern Dance of the 20th century" nomination, which became an important milestone in the history of Chinese ballet.

The premiere of the Chinese dance drama "The Beautiful Fish" was largely due to the creative work of Soviet choreographer P.A. Gusev, an excellent connoisseur of classical ballet, and young Chinese specialists who were already well-versed in both classical dance and Chinese folk dance. The attempt to combine classical and Chinese folk dance in one performance was a great success. "The Beautiful Fish" became the starting point for a new direction in Chinese musical and scenic creativity: Without the ballet Krasavitsa Rybka, there would have been no performances such as The Red Women's Squad and The Gray-Haired Girl, staged in the 1960s. In the history of Chinese dance art, the ballet "The Beautiful Fish" has become a completely new phenomenon, profoundly impacting the further development of Chinese dance drama and the creation of music for such performances.

The Chinese students remembered Professor Gusev with gratitude, just as he never forgot about them. After returning to the Soviet Union in 1960, the Soviet teacher and choreographer remained interested in the further development of Chinese dance. In the 1980s, young Chinese dancers who participated in International Ballet Competitions in Moscow, Varna, the USA, and other countries worldwide surprised the world with their professional mastery of the classics, knowledge of the ballet repertoire, and artistic performances of *pas de deux* and variations.

For various political reasons (including the Cultural Revolution of 1964–1976), it was only in the 1980s that Sino-Soviet cultural ties were restored. During this time, many of Gusev's Chinese students became leading figures of Chinese culture. They came to Moscow with their students and wanted their teacher, who was at the origin of classical choreographic art in China, to see everything they had achieved over the past 20 years.

In 1985, Chinese dancers and teachers took part in the Fifth Moscow International Ballet and Choreography Competition. According to Zhu Lizhen's memoirs: "... the Chinese delegation met with choreographer P.A. Gusev at the entrance to the Bolshoi Theater. Everyone rushed to each other, hugged, then stood holding hands tightly. His eyes were a little wet, and he was worried when he told us: "I came from Leningrad and was looking for you. I couldn't find you, so I decided to wait here at the entrance to the theater. You're finally here. I was worried that you wouldn't come..." <sup>[13, p. 189]</sup>. Gusev always thought about his students, about his years of work in China, a country and its people and culture he loved so much. In the most difficult times, when there were disagreements and there was no mutual understanding between our countries, he called on the peoples of China and the Soviet Union to return to their former friendly relations and not to take offense at each other, but to return to creative exchanges in the field of culture and art <sup>[13, pp. 189-190]</sup>. When Gusev was presented with the great achievements of Chinese ballet under the leadership of the new policy of reform and openness, he was very happy and said, "You're doing everything right. Ballet is an international art. It should be open and comprehensive. Every ballet school has strengths and recent achievements that should be incorporated into its practice. As long as you stick to this, the Chinese ballet school, which has established a strong position on the world stage, will certainly be a great success. Then we said, "Thank you to the Soviet teachers for laying a good foundation back in the 1950s." He smiled

cordially and said, "You are catching up and surpassing us. Soon you will become teachers. We will learn from you. The youth surpasses their predecessors" [\[13, p. 160\]](#).

In 1986, the Central Ballet Company of China toured Leningrad. Gusev, who was in his eighties, left the hospital to see the actors of the Central Ballet Company. Meeting with former students more than 20 years later — Bai Shuxiang, Zhong Rongliang and others — was very important to him: "I am so happy, I see my children, today you are like children to me. I really didn't expect you to have reached such a high level in just 25 years! Everyone said that the Central Ballet Company performed admirably, and it even seems to everyone that its history is not 25 years old, but 100" [\[5, p. 126\]](#).

It has been only four years since the founding of the Beijing Choreographic School in 1954, and a year, from "Vain Precaution" in 1957 to "Swan Lake" in 1958. In such a short period of time, production directors, choreographers, tutors, and ballet dancers were trained in China by specialists from the Soviet Union. A new kind of dance art has appeared in the country — classical dance. From the ballet Swan Lake in 1958 to the ballet Giselle in 1960, it took only three years for choreographic art to be created in China, which, thanks to the work of the outstanding Russian Soviet teacher and choreographer P.A. Gusev, continued to develop and soon reached the international level. His work was highly appreciated in the above-mentioned "Note": "to note in an appropriate form the successful work of P.A. Gusev in helping Chinese friends in the development of classical ballet" [\[6, 577\]](#).

The analysis of P.A. Gusev's influence on the formation of the classical choreographic school in China conducted in this study allows us to draw the following conclusions:

- Firstly, the productions of "Swan Lake", "Le Corsaire" and "Giselle" under Gusev's direction demonstrated a high level of classical dance skills by young Chinese artists and contributed to the rapid spread of the traditions of Russian Soviet ballet in Chinese dance art.
- Secondly, Gusev, as the chief teacher of the ballet masters course (from 1958 to 1959) at the Beijing Choreographic School, combined strict selection and intensive training with creative search, which allowed him to train a new generation of Chinese professional choreographers and choreographers-tutors, taking into account the national characteristics of the country.;
- Thirdly, under the influence of Gusev's choreographic philosophy, he and his students created the Chinese dance drama "The Beautiful Fish," applying knowledge in both classical and Chinese folk dances, which contributed to the birth of a unique Chinese national ballet. This ballet, a completely new phenomenon, had a profound impact on the further development of Chinese dance drama and on the creation of music for such performances.;
- Fourthly, Gusev contributed to the creation of China's first ballet troupe, the Experimental Ballet Troupe, which is part of the Beijing Choreographic School, as well as the training of the first batch of theater workers.

Thus, thanks to the efforts of P.A. Gusev, a professional choreographic training system was established in China, laying a solid foundation for the formation of the Chinese national ballet. At the same time, the country introduced a strict rehearsal technique typical of the Russian Soviet ballet school. The legacy of Pyotr Andreevich Gusev remains the most important factor in the history of the formation of a choreographic school in China, combining the best traditions of two great cultures and paving the way for international recognition of Chinese ballet.

[1] It is interesting to note that after almost 62 years, in November 2019, for the first time in St. Petersburg, the ballet "Swan Lake" by P.A. Gusev, performed in his hometown by students of the Beijing Dance Academy, was presented to the audience.

[2] The Central Ballet Company (also known as the National Ballet of China) was founded on December 31, 1959, as the Experimental Ballet Company of the Beijing Choreographic School. In 1963, it was transformed into the ballet troupe of the Chinese National Opera and Dance Drama Theater. Later, the group was reorganized and received its modern name — the Central Ballet Troupe of China.

[3] In 1954, the Beijing Choreographic School (also known as the Beijing Dance School) was founded, the first professional dance school in China. In 1978, it was renamed the Beijing Dance Academy.

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## Результаты процедуры рецензирования статьи

Рецензия выполнена специалистами [Национального Института Научного Рецензирования](#) по заказу ООО "НБ-Медиа".

В связи с политикой двойного слепого рецензирования личность рецензента не раскрывается.

Со списком рецензентов можно ознакомиться [здесь](#).

Предметом исследования статьи «Пётр Андреевич Гусев у истоков классической хореографической школы в Китае» стала деятельность П.А. Гусева как балетмейстера-постановщика, «форм и методов обучения, которые хореограф применял в процессе своей работы в Пекинском хореографическом училище», как отметил сам автор.

Методология исследования более чем разнообразна и включает сравнительно-исторический, аналитический, описательный и др. методы.

Актуальность статьи необычайно велика, особенно в свете возросшего интереса современного научного сообщества к истории и культуре Востока, в т.ч. китайскому балету.

Научная новизна работы также не вызывает сомнений, равно как и ее практическая польза.

Перед нами – достойное научное исследование, в котором стиль, структура и содержание в целом соответствуют требованиям, предъявляемым к статьям такого рода. Оно отличается обилием полезной информации, написано живым и ярким языком.

Остановимся подробнее на его достоинствах и некоторых недостатках. Отметим, что автор указал: «Цель данной статьи — показать влияние, которое оказали представители советского балета на становление китайской балетной школы». Порекомендуем ему исключить эту фразу как лишнюю из текста статьи.

В начальных абзацах своего исследования автор полно, подробно и интересно знакомит читателя с главным героем своего труда и приводит множество важных фактов, касающихся его профессиональной деятельности. Он пишет: «Курс профессора Гусева в Пекинском хореографическом училище состоял из уроков хореографии, актерского мастерства, дуэтного танца, индивидуальных занятий и репетиций. В процессе преподавания Гусев призывал студентов изучать и осваивать все виды танцев: старинные, современные, китайские, танцы народов мира. Хореограф неоднократно подчеркивал, что, опираясь на знание различных танцев, в своем творчестве они должны использовать особенности китайского национального танцевального искусства. <...> Ученики курса балетмейстеров достигли значительного прогресса в учебе под руководством выдающегося педагога. В 1959 году в репертуаре интернатуры появился масштабный китайский балет «Красавица-рыбка» [8] и танцевальные драмы «Лю Хулань», «Хуан Цзигуан», «Красная сестрица», массовый танец «Решимость человека преодолевает даже небо» (другое название, данное политическими вождями того времени — «Человек сильнее неба»), было также создано множество небольших сочинений».

Это свидетельствует о его глубочайших знаниях и умении донести их до читателя. В образной манере художественного повествования исследователь передает информацию, делая статью доступной любой категории читателей, а именно: «Балет «Лебединое озеро» Гусев впервые поставил в Китае в 1958 году. Большая заинтересованность Чжоу Эньлая (1898–1976), в то время первого премьера Госсовета КНР, в появлении этого балета на сцене китайского оперного театра способствовала началу репетиций. После просмотра «Лебединого озера» на Новосибирской сцене Чжоу Эньлай спросил Гусева о возможности скорейшей его постановки в Китае. Гусев ответил согласием. От первой репетиции до выпуска «Лебединого озера» прошло менее пяти месяцев. Впервые в истории балета Китая самый сложный спектакль был поставлен в такие короткие сроки. Премьера «Лебединого озера» состоялась 1 июля 1958 года в театре Тяньцзяо в Пекине. 1-й акт и режиссура всего балета были подготовлены балетмейстером П.А. Гусевым. Второй и четвертый акты оставлены в хореографии М. Петипа и Л. Иванова, созданной еще в 1895 году в Санкт-Петербургском Мариинском театре. Пролог, первый, третий акты и финал представлены в хореографии В.П. Бурмейстера, главного режиссера Московского Академического Музыкального театра имени К.С. Станиславского и Вл.И. Немировича-Данченко».

Автор также подробно и необычайно живо рассказывает о других балетах, созданных П. А. Гусевым в Китае - «Жизель», «Красавица-рыбка».

Он подводит важные итоги в ходе своего повествования: «После премьеры 1959 года балет «Красавица-рыбка» получил название национальная танцевальная драма. В 1979 году Центральная балетная труппа представила его как трехактный балет в пяти картинах. В том же году они выступили с ним в рамках празднования 30-летия со дня основания Китайской Народной Республики и завоевали второй приз за хореографию и исполнение. В 1994 году, когда Пекинская академия танца праздновала свое 40-летие, балет был преобразован в драму из четырех народных китайских танцев. Тогда же он был отмечен в номинации «Классика китайского традиционного и современного танца XX века» и стал важной вехой в истории китайского балета», - отмечает в своей работе исследователь.

Библиография исследования обширна, включает серьезные, в основном иностранные,

*источники по теме, оформлена корректно.*

*Апелляция к оппонентам весьма достаточна и сделана на достойном профессиональном уровне.*

*Но, завершая свой увлекательный рассказ о недолгом, но чрезвычайно плодотворном этапе работы П. А. Гусева в Китае, автор не делает выводов из написанного, оставляя свой труд незавершенным и лишая читателя возможности осознать тот большой вклад, что внес выдающийся хореограф в китайский балет. Нам, в свою очередь, остается предложить ему это сделать. Не сомневаемся, что автор изыщет такую возможность, поскольку его текст свидетельствует о тщательно проделанной работе и огромном количестве изученного материала, а также о его незаурядных исследовательских способностях.*

*На наш взгляд, статья после доработки будет представлять большой интерес и практическую пользу для разнообразной читательской аудитории - практиков балета, студентов и педагогов, историков, искусствоведов и т. д., а также всех тех, кого интересуют вопросы развития китайского искусства и международного культурного сотрудничества.*