

DEFECTING TO THE LAND OF SWEETS:
BARYSHNIKOV'S *NUTCRACKER* AS
ANTI-SOVIET STATEMENT

Lizzie Johnson (The College of William and Mary)

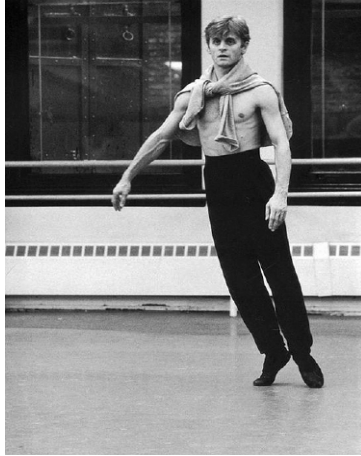
The 1977 film version of Mikhail Baryshnikov's *Nutcracker*, a lavish but altogether darker look at Russia's most famous ballet, is an overlooked cultural artifact of the Cold War. Staged just two years after his defection, *The Nutcracker* was Baryshnikov's experiment in complete creative freedom, challenging Russian ballet in front of an American audience. His psychological interpretation of the famous piece, which has roots in the work of shunned Soviet choreographers like Alexander Gorsky, Fyodor Lopukhov, and Leonid Yakobson, but also appealed to his own notions of drama and sexuality, was a dialogue with Soviet ballet through the accessible medium of American television.¹ However, notions of Russianness, celebrity, and the mythic status of Soviet defectors have obscured the value of this version of *The Nutcracker* in dance and Cold War scholarship. This paper will discuss Baryshnikov's *Nutcracker* as an artistic rejection of socialist realism through dance, and will establish the film's merit as a piece of Cold War media and *Nutcracker* canon.

The lack of scholarly attention paid to Baryshnikov's *Nutcracker* is surprising, especially considering the growing amount of scholarship in dance as Cold War culture since the 2000s. Fortunately, a firm foundation has been built by the research of Catherine Kodat, David Caute, Christina Ezrahi, and Janice Ross. With their help, I have read this version historically, placing it in the context of Baryshnikov's highly publicized defection, contrasting it with previous productions, and decoding the anti-Soviet sentiments within. I argue that defection was both a catalyst and a theme of Baryshnikov's *Nutcracker*, and through a close reading of the film, explore the idea of Baryshnikov's Clara

as a defector figure and a reference to the apolitical pre-Soviet ballerina. Perceptions of Baryshnikov as a defector also clearly shaped how American dance critics viewed this *Nutcracker*, and how Baryshnikov presented himself to the world. For those who grew up watching it during the Cold War, this *Nutcracker* is primarily an encapsulation of a tumultuous time, now tinged with nostalgia. Baryshnikov's version feels firmly rooted in the past, though in which past is sometimes hard to tell. Besides the stylistic choices and political context of the late seventies, it is also a product of the surprisingly complicated history of *The Nutcracker*, and perhaps even the posthumous influences of past Soviet choreographers Lopukhov, Vainonen, and Yakobson on Mikhail Baryshnikov.

The story of Baryshnikov's *Nutcracker* really begins with his defection to Canada in 1974, the media coverage of which was second only to Rudolf Nureyev's in 1961. After dancing the final night of a tour with the Bolshoi ("on loan" from the Kirov), Baryshnikov slipped away during the curtain call, into a getaway car, and escaped to a farmhouse in Canada.² "[The Bolshoi] took me to that tour with the understanding and assurance that I would behave," Baryshnikov joked in a 2013 interview, "and I didn't."³ Baryshnikov admitted, however, that his decision was the result of only "a couple of days" of planning.⁴ "When I was in Toronto, I finally decided that if I let the opportunity of expanding my art in the West slip by, it would haunt me always," he told *The New York Times* in 1974, just days after defecting. Shortly afterward, Baryshnikov was offered a place at the American Ballet Theatre in New York City. Like other defectors before him, Baryshnikov framed his decision as "an artistic choice, not a political one."⁵ Yet, with the ballet world at his beck and call, and complete creative control—in short, all the artistic freedom he could want—Baryshnikov chose *The Nutcracker* as his first choreographic project. This ballet, highly familiar to American audiences yet still undeniably Russian, provided Baryshnikov with both a perfect template for creative dialogue, and a guaranteed Western

audience for it. To fully understand Baryshnikov's *Nutcracker* as a piece of Cold War media, however, we must first take a critical look at the staging as it appeared on television in 1978.



Mikhail Baryshnikov

Though Baryshnikov's *Nutcracker* has been noted for its “boldly revised” plot and sexual subtext, Act I of this version is very similar to the original.⁶ Clara (Gelsey Kirkland), an adolescent in this version, is given a nutcracker by her godfather Drosselmeyer (Alexander Minz) on Christmas Eve. The Nutcracker transforms into a Prince (Mikhail Baryshnikov) and spirits Clara away in a sleigh after she helps him defeat the Mouse King. In Act II, Clara is welcomed to the Land of Sweets, and she and the Prince watch performances in her honor. It is at this point that the ballet shifts from a tale of childhood Christmas to a coming-of-age story.

Baryshnikov made several critical cuts to the Land of Sweets dances, including the Arabian or Coffee dance, which is defined by its exoticism and sensuality. Cutting this dance places further emphasis on the Act II *pas de deux*, which usually belongs to the Sugar Plum Fairy (absent from this version) and her consort.⁷ In Balanchine's version especially, it is a beautiful but staid finale, and portrays a courtly kind of love. Yet, for Baryshnikov, the *pas*

de deux is the romantic climax of the ballet—so much so that it becomes a *pas de trois*, wherein the Prince and Drosselmeyer vie for Clara's love, passing her back and forth in a series of lifts. Clara chooses the Prince, but is powerless as Drosselmeyer ends the dream, and the ballet ends with her staring wistfully out a snowy window.⁸ Every Christmas from 1978 to 1991, this was *The Nutcracker* beamed into American homes.

But critical responses to this “deeply serious, even psychological” *Nutcracker* were mixed. “It’s lively, it’s different, it’s clearly popular,” wrote *Variety* dance critic Land, “but it’s not really *The Nutcracker*.”⁹ The Russian ... has used but also abused nostalgia.”¹⁰ Joseph Mazo at *Women’s Wear Daily* found Baryshnikov’s interpretation firmly rooted in the past, calling the plot changes “neo-Freudian” and the aesthetic reminiscent of “19th century Russian form.”¹¹ In 1986, *Los Angeles Times* dance critic Lewis Segal revisited Baryshnikov’s staging and dubbed it, “a fantasy of male power and manipulation”—though, admittedly, this review was also in the wake of Gelsey Kirkland’s memoir, which gave the details on her rocky personal and professional relationship with Baryshnikov.¹² Indeed, when discussing Baryshnikov’s *Nutcracker*, critics almost always ended up talking about Baryshnikov himself. In their preoccupation with “The Russian,” “the defector-star,” or, according to Segal, the misogynist, many of these critics missed the fact that Baryshnikov referenced and built on a tradition of controversial Soviet *Nutcrackers*.

Baryshnikov’s version has clear roots in the experimentations of Soviet choreographers Gorsky, Lopukhov, and Vasily Vainonen. In her article, “Dancing Through the Cold War: The Case of ‘The Nutcracker,’” Catherine Kodat chronicles the ballet’s many versions, from its premier in December of 1892 to Balanchine’s 1954 rework. The original *Nutcracker*, a collaboration between composer Tchaikovsky and librettists Petipa and Ivanov, was written in a hurry and, according to dance historian Andrew Johnson, was being critiqued “almost

from the day after it premiered.”¹³ In particular, Petipa's original *Nutcracker* was criticized for its lack of “a subject,” or frame story, to narrativize the dances. Ironically, it was this “plotlessness” of the original that George Balanchine would capitalize on in his 1954 version.¹⁴ However, the first attempt at reworking the ballet came in 1919, when Alexander Gorsky debuted a “somewhat psychological” *Nutcracker*, which added a dose of balletic realism to the fairy story.¹⁵

Gorsky, probably through mime or costume, framed the Sugar Plum Fairy as “Clara's idealized version of the beautiful adult woman she would like to grow up to be.”¹⁶ This dynamic added something new to the *Nutcracker*, but also mirrored the hierarchy within Soviet ballet, in which the star ballerina dancing Sugar Plum was a figure of both idolisation and competition for any ambitious student dancer cast as Clara. Gorsky's version was also more in tune with the company's needs, creating more opportunities for adult dancers with the removal of children from the ballet. The roles of Clara and the Prince were played by adults for the first time in this version, though they still had little to do in Act II except watch others dance.¹⁷

But while Gorsky's version was full of mostly superficial changes, the next iteration of *The Nutcracker*, by Fyodor Lopukhov in 1929, dared to experiment with choreography. In *Like a Bomb Going Off*, a biography of Lopukhov's contemporary Leonid Yakobson, dance historian Janice Ross briefly discusses how Lopukhov was initially successful in updating several classic ballets with Soviet ideology. With the addition of “non-dance vocabulary” like “constructivist decor, allusions to sport and physical culture, and acrobatic movements” Lopukhov aimed to make each ballet “more accessible for new proletarian viewers.” When applied to *The Nutcracker*'s already flimsy narrative, however, this formula “severely backfired.”¹⁸ Critics immediately denounced Lopukhov's choreography for The Waltz of the Snowflakes, which mimicked to “a Western chorus line.”¹⁹ The most extreme change was to the *pas de deux*, which now began

with series of cartwheels and ended with the Sugar Plum Fairy “lifted head downwards and doing the splits.”²⁰ The result was something most ballet audiences of the time did not recognize as a *pas de deux*. Though Baryshnikov’s version does not feature any “acrobatic tricks,” his addition of Drosselmeyer into the dance, which turns a traditional “showpiece” for a prima ballerina into a *pas de trois*, appropriates the dance in a similar fashion.²¹ Gelsey Kirkland’s Clara, now in the arms of two partners, hardly touches the ground for most of the adagio.²² Consequently, both Lupohov and Baryshnikov challenged audience’s expectations of a *pas de deux*, twisting norms in ways that, we will see later, were highly incompatible with socialist realism.

Finally, Vainonen’s 1934 staging, which “represents the first fruitful effort to...create a work of sustained dramatic interest across two acts,” is perhaps the closest to Baryshnikov’s version.²³ Where Petipa’s original libretto left a blank slate, Vainonen and Baryshnikov attempted to weave a story. Like Baryshnikov, Vainonen’s version confined child dancers to the party scene, aged Clara up to adolescence, and had the *pas de deux* danced by Clara and the Prince.²⁴ The result was a more adult, and perhaps even more individualistic story, in which Clara is a distinct character, and less of an avatar for the audience. Baryshnikov also used Vainonen’s choreography for the Waltz of the Snowflakes in his version---something critic Joseph Mazo picked up on in 1978, even if he did find it “unappealing to Western eyes.”²⁵



*The Waltz of the Snowflakes in
George Balanchine's 1954 Nutcracker*

But while Mazo recognized this link between Baryshnikov and Vainonen, his disparaging tone is telling. Many American critics plainly saw Baryshnikov, and by association, his work, as foreign, and disliked what they saw as a “remov[al] of childhood,” and “diminish[ment] of Christmas, reindeer, and snow” from a holiday tradition.²⁶ To Mazo, Segal, and their contemporaries, Baryshnikov was still thawing out from austere, old Russia, or was perhaps, too wrapped up in his own “fantasy of male power”²⁷ to craft a *Nutcracker* on par with Balanchine. But Baryshnikov's version, for all its flaws, was neither lazy nor self-obsessed, but a fiery debate with Soviet ballet tradition. It turns out there was plenty of Soviet experimentation and rebellion to draw from.

When Baryshnikov came to the West, he brought *Vestris*, a ballet by his mentor, Soviet choreographer Leonid Yakobson, with him. Janice Ross's book *Like a Bomb Going Off: Leonid Yakobson and Ballet as Resistance in Soviet Russia* is the first ever biography of Yakobson, a contemporary of George Balanchine, and a fascinating analysis of ballet under the Soviet regime. The rebellious qualities of Yakobson's work meant that “little official effort” was made to preserve his legacy—in fact, Yakobson's name was “prohibited from mention in the major newspapers...including his death in 1975, when no formal obituary appeared.”²⁸ Furthermore, Ross writes that, “[d]uring Yakobson's lifetime, Soviet authorities had permitted essentially no major books, films, profiles, articles, or regular reviews of him and his work.” Without “the usual historical traces of critical reception and contemporaneous scholarship,” Ross relies on the most personal of primary sources. Through “scores of interviews with those who knew Yakobson or his work,” his widow's rare recordings of performances, and letters, Ross reveals Yakobson to be so tireless in his art that he was even choreographing from his deathbed in 1975.²⁹

Ross posits that it was this creative drive, as well as his revolutionary roots, that kept Yakobson pushing the boundaries

of the state until the end. Born in 1904, Yakobson witnessed the birth of the Soviet state and the heyday of modernist dance in the 1920s. In the aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution, he published various essays on why the new Soviet Republic should do away with classical ballet just as it had [with] the Tsars and the bourgeoisie, to prevent “artistic stagnation.”³⁰ However, when Lopukhov’s experimental production of *The Nutcracker* got him fired as director of the Leningrad State Academic Theatre for Opera and Ballet, Yakobson reevaluated his loyalties. He now understood, according to Ross, “the treachery of accommodation and the fickleness of party judgements.”³¹ And yet, unlike Lopukhov, Yakobson realized his own position of power within this narrative. As Ross writes, “Yakobson fulfilled an important but risky function for Soviet officials. He and his art were needed but feared.” And while authorities “could try to shape his dances from outside, command, forbid,” they were powerless to stop the creative processes taking place in the rehearsal room.³²

Similarly, in *Swans of the Kremlin*, Christina Ezrahi describes how, even with the enforcement of Lenin’s socialist realist theory and its notions of *partiynost* (“party consciousness”), *narodnost* (“orientation toward the people”), *ideynost* (“ideological content”), and *klassovost* (“class content”), all of which were intended to “preclud[e] an individual voice in art” classical ballet was still “by its very nature difficult to control by a censor’s hand.”³³ Perhaps, then, the secret to Yakobson’s ability to evade censors was that he never underestimated the audience. In contrast to the West, where ballet was mostly enjoyed by the elites, ballet had a huge audience in Russia. And as Ezrahi points out, “Since the medium of ballet was movement, not text, the ballet was seen as particularly accessible for the sizable illiterate post-revolutionary audience in the Soviet Union.”³⁴ Yet, unlike Lopukhov, who in his efforts to make a *Nutcracker* for the proletariat, journeyed into the abstract, Yakobson worked through suggestion, checking all the socialist realism boxes, but with choreography that offered just “a glimpse”³⁵ of modernist dance technique. Yakobson “often

worked deliberately against expectation” by casting against type, and encouraging dancers to portray characters who were often old, ugly, or suffering.³⁶ Even after being “dismissed” from the Kirov as a “Cosmopolitan” in 1951, Jakobson continued to create, and, like any good revolutionary, he saw the potential in working with students. Ironically, Jakobson’s work during this period was “scrutinized less for ideological correctness.”³⁷

But the “Thaw” following Stalin’s death brought Jakobson back to the professional stage. In 1969, Jakobson choreographed *Vestris*, about the scandalous life of 18th century ballet dancer Auguste Vestris, for Kirov soloist Mikhail Baryshnikov. Describing his time with Jakobson to Ross, Baryshnikov emphasized his own inexperience: “[*Vestris*] was a real, serious, meaty project [and] my first choreographic experience with a really great master. I knew instinctively he was really one of probably two choreographers of that originality.”³⁸ The ballet was an “unpredictable” juxtaposition of the “classically pure” and the ugly,³⁹ with Baryshnikov executing beautiful jumps one minute and affecting a “tottering posture of decrepitude”⁴⁰ the next. Jakobson, a Jewish man himself, even made Baryshnikov wear a prosthetic nose that suggested the appearance of an anti-semitic caricature.⁴¹ “One of the things that made Jakobson’s *Vestris* difficult for authorities,” Ross writes, “was that it depicted aspects of reality so outside the sanctioned Soviet dance norm.”⁴² Indeed, in portraying one of ballet’s forefathers as painfully human, ethnically ambiguous, yet also technically beautiful, Jakobson challenged and changed Soviet ballet tradition by teasing complexity.

And just as Jakobson dared to portray an icon of ballet in his own image, so too do many of Baryshnikov’s character choices in *The Nutcracker* feel like deliberate reclamations of Soviet ballet tradition. As Ezrahi explains in *Swans of the Kremlin*, in regard to culture, the Bolsheviks were “propagandists seeking to capitalize on the power of pre-revolutionary cultural symbols by recasting them in their own [Soviet] image.”⁴³ The ballerina was no exception, and, through the magic of socialist realism,

was to be transformed in Ezrahi's words, from "a mindless doll into a socially conscious citizen." Ballerina Viktorina Kriger used similar imagery of decadence and frivolity in an op-ed in 1928, admitting that, before the Revolution, the ballerina was, "a toy" who could "only drink champagne, which is just as sparkling and reproachful as her art. She is...as light as a dandelion. But what about intellect?" However, as Ezrahi points out, this attempt at repackaging the ballerina as "a social activist," like most of socialist realism, "promoted a view of Soviet life that had little to do with reality."⁴⁴ The only ballerinas who made any kind of political statement were the ones who defected.



Baryshnikov in the role of Vestris

What, then, are we to make of Gelsey Kirkland's Clara, who is one of the dreamiest, most passive portrayals?⁴⁵ At times, it seems the goal of Baryshnikov's choreography is to make her the "dandelion" ballerina of old who "now flies away in the breath of a breeze."⁴⁶ And what about the erasure of the Sugar Plum Fairy, which increases Clara's importance in ballet, but places her on an emotional rollercoaster of adolescent love with no female role model to speak of?⁴⁷ In fact, Baryshnikov's fusion of the Clara and Sugar Plum roles, two of the most active ballet heroines, according to Olena Ushchapivska's essay, "The Representation of Female Characters in the Music of Russian Ballet"⁴⁸ is another

function of his romantic, ultimately anti-Soviet interpretation. Rather than choose between archetypes, Baryshnikov crafts the perfect romantic heroine in the West's more "ambiguous" style⁴⁹—mortal, a bit immature, but with the lightness of the apolitical, passive, pre-Revolution ballerina.

Nevertheless, during the Cold War, Baryshnikov kept his criticism of Soviet ideals in the artistic realm. In his first interview after defecting, Baryshnikov painted himself as an artistic martyr: "What I have done is called a crime in Russia...but my life is my art."⁵⁰ He also insisted that the decision to defect was not political, as if the censorship from which he had fled was not part of an oppressive political regime. Yet, for Baryshnikov, the question of his political significance may have seemed obvious, even boring. Baryshnikov's body and the art he created with it had long since become a political propaganda tool in the Soviet Union. Baryshnikov was such a symbol of Soviet triumph that for years after his defection, officials peddled the narrative that he was kidnapped, and preserved his apartment to create the illusion that he might come back.⁵¹ Unlike Makarova or Nureyev, he never did, perhaps because, for Baryshnikov, the chance to use the phrase "my art"—to essentially own his talent and to glorify himself rather than the collective—was the biggest lure of America. His defection was not the simplistic "leap to freedom"⁵² the media portrayed, nor was he really the "tormented artist"⁵³ Gelsey Kirkland imagined him to be. Instead, Baryshnikov, perhaps better than anyone else, understood that the only way to escape the Soviet narrative was to be removed from it. Having seen the erasures of Nureyev and Makarova, he defected with the knowledge that as his star rose in the West, his image would simultaneously be erased from posters in the Soviet Union. Faced with the choice between a planned career at the Kirov and attaining the mythic status of a dancer defector in America, Baryshnikov chose the West.

Additionally, whether he wanted to discuss it or not, Baryshnikov was defined, in the media at least, by his experience

of defection. And at various points in his career, he actually capitalized on this. In the 1976 film, *The Turning Point*, for example, Baryshnikov played Yuri, a recent defector breaking hearts at an American dance company. A decade later in *White Nights*, he played a Kirov star who agonizes over whether or not to flee the Soviet Union.⁵⁴ These early film choices show how, as an artist and a public person, Baryshnikov not only demonstrated that he understood the lens with which Western audiences viewed him, but showed a willingness to play to it. In the context of these performances and through a close reading of the ballet's choices, Baryshnikov's *Nutcracker* is clearly an allegory for defection.

In Baryshnikov's version especially, Clara can easily be read as a defector figure. During the Christmas party scene, she appears as privileged and pampered,⁵⁵ perhaps, as any Kirov star, surrounded by opulent decorations and presents. Though shown dutifully greeting guests and fulfilling her role as the decorative daughter, Clara is also noticeably bored by the party's rigid rituals. Later, her adoration for the nutcracker is ridiculed by the other young people, who are perfectly happy with their identical gifts. Clara is also constantly chaperoned and minded; when her nutcracker's jaw is broken (in this version by a tipsy guest and not her brother, Fritz) she is quickly consoled by Drosselmeyer before being shepherded off to bed by her governess. After a rash decision, not unlike Baryshnikov's spur-of-the-moment defection, she is spirited away to the Land of Sweets, a place of prosperity and dreams, where multiple nationalities dance together.⁵⁶ There is a similar sense of magic, and of being transported to "a different world" in the defection narratives of Nora Kovacs and Istvan Raab.⁵⁷ Raab's descriptions of the sensory delights of defecting to the West, like tasting a banana for the first time in years, or seeing beautiful department store windows,⁵⁸ hint at the same sense of fairy tale wonder in Hansel and Gretel's gingerbread house, or the idea of candy coming to life in the Land of Sweets.

Baryshnikov's expansion of Drosselmeyer's role adds yet

another dimension to this 'defector' reading. Drosselmeyer never truly leaves Clara's side in Baryshnikov's version, but instead reappears periodically throughout Act II. With every subsequent appearance, he radiates a sense of betrayal of the *Rodina*, or homeland.⁵⁹ Drosselmeyer, in other words, is a walking guilt trip, and, like the letters many defectors received from pleading friends and family, a firm reminder of what Clara has left behind. "Your soul is Russian," Natalia Makarova's friend and fellow dancer Alla Osipenko wrote to her, "it will not survive what you are doing."⁶⁰ Drosselmeyer seems to have a similar concern for Clara's soul. During the *pas de deux* turned *pas de trois*, he is waiting at the end of every lift to collect Clara and take her back to the real world. Despite ultimately choosing the Prince, Clara is still affectionate towards her godfather, and continues to seek his approval. Clara thus exhibits a sense of conflict between duty to one's homeland and the pursuit of one's own desires. Such was the unique loneliness of Baryshnikov and other dancer defectors during the Cold War, whose politicized bodies sparked notions of Russian souls and Western ones. While one cannot say that Baryshnikov directly reproduced his experience of defection through *The Nutcracker*, the various parallels between the story and the staging's real life context speak to the power of the defector as an icon of the Cold War era.

The tension in Baryshnikov's version is more apparent when compared with the 1993 film version of George Balanchine's *Nutcracker*. Decidedly thin in plot and technically beautiful, Balanchine's staging premiered in the United States in 1954, and, as Catherine Kodat discusses in "Dancing Through the Cold War," appealed to the "dominant social and sexual ideologies of the period."⁶¹ Balanchine accomplished this not just with his depiction of "idealized middle class life,"⁶² but also his use of defined female archetypes, such as the maternal Mother Ginger, and the queenly Sugar Plum Fairy.⁶³ Balanchine's version was perfectly attuned to a populace stressed by the early years of the Cold War, eager for childhood wonder. It was this innocence

and elegance of Balanchine's version that spawned a ballet craze lasting until the 2000s, and an "American" ballet aesthetic of pink tutus and music boxes. Most importantly, Kodat argues, Balanchine's version "became a part of American culture, "the template" for other productions, and "remains to this day the only ballet many Americans have ever seen."⁶⁴ Like Balanchine himself, who left the Soviet Union in 1924 but became known as the Father of American Ballet, the 1993 film, despite its Russian subject material, is fully Americanized.⁶⁵ It is also undeniably a Christmas story, complete with a soothing narration, lots of snow, and Macaulay Culkin as the Nutcracker Prince. And while the soft focus, fade transitions, and dreamy closeups of Baryshnikov's version anchor it firmly in the style of the 1970s, the Balanchine film is ageless, with the aura of any professionally filmed ballet performance.⁶⁶

Yet, as I have shown, the very things that make the Baryshnikov film less accessible today—the dated elements, the strays from the familiar plot, and the re-Russified star—are exactly what make it such a fascinating piece of Cold War art and media. As the debut choreographic project of a recent defector, this *Nutcracker* is more than just a retooling of a classic ballet. Taken in context, not only in terms of Baryshnikov's defection, but also the censorship struggles of choreographers like Gorsky, Lopukhov, Vainonen, and Baryshnikov's mentorship by Yakobson, this *Nutcracker* is a charged, even self-reflexive reevaluation of Soviet ballet. That this version was preserved on film, much less broadcast for Western audiences throughout the Cold War, is yet more proof of its place within Cold War media history. Unlike a live performance, Baryshnikov's *Nutcracker* appears today exactly as Cold War audiences saw it on their television screens. Forty-one years later, Americans can still watch Baryshnikov dance in his prime and relive the Christmas broadcasts. The value of Baryshnikov's version, however, does not stop at nostalgia, as the lack of scholarship on it suggests. Unlike Balanchine, Baryshnikov's interpretation is not universal or easily

adapted. And much like the Cold War itself, its complexities are sometimes over-simplified. This version is about more than “fairy-tale mist”⁶⁷ or even Baryshnikov’s technique, just as the Cold War was about more than just the United States and the Soviet Union. Thus, while Baryshnikov’s *Nutcracker* is far from a definitive version, it is an ideal artistic window into the Cold War and the surprising, polarizing power of the dancer-defector.

Notes

¹ Catherine Gunther Kodat, "Dancing Through the Cold War: The Case of 'The Nutcracker,'" *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal* 33, no. 3 (2000): 1-17.

² "Baryshnikov, Defecting Dancer, Says Decision Was Not Political," *The New York Times*, July 7, 1975, <https://www.nytimes.com/1974/07/07/archives/baryshnikov-defecting-dancer-says-decision-was-not-political.html>.

³ Ian Brown, "Interview with Baryshnikov is a tricky pas de deux," *The Globe and Mail Online*, August 17, 2013, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/interview-with-baryshnikov-is-a-tricky-pas-de-deux/article13825689/>.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ "Baryshnikov, Defecting Dancer, Says Decision Was Not Political."

⁶ Lewis Segal, "Ballet Theatre: Baryshnikov Version of 'Nutcracker,'" *The Los Angeles Times*, December 11, 1986, Np., Para. 3.1, http://articles.latimes.com/1986-12-11/entertainment/ca-2099_1_ballet-theatre.

⁷ A dance between two partners, usually a male and female.

⁸ *The Nutcracker*. Directed by Tony Charmoli. New York: Jodav Productions, Inc., 1977.

⁹ Segal, "Ballet Theatre: Baryshnikov."

¹⁰ Land, "Dance Reviews: Baryshnikov's Nutcracker," *Variety* 287, no.4 (1977): 74.

¹¹ Joseph Mazo, "Arts & People: Dance," *Women's Wear Daily* 134, no. 99 (1977): 22

¹² Segal, "Baryshnikov Version of 'Nutcracker,'" Para. 3.2.

¹³ Kodat, "Dancing Through the Cold War," 5.

¹⁴ Ibid., 5-7.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Kodat, "Dancing Through the Cold War," 5-6.

¹⁸ Janice Ross and Lynn Garafola, *Like a Bomb Going Off: Leonid Yakobson and Ballet as Resistance in Soviet Russia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 18.

¹⁹ Ibid., 92.

²⁰ Kodat, "Dancing Through the Cold War," 7.

²¹ Ross, *Like a Bomb Going Off*, 92.

²² Segal, "Baryshnikov 'Nutcracker,'" Para. 6.3.

²³ Kodat, "Dancing Through the Cold War," 5.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Mazo, "Arts & People: Dance," 22.

²⁶ Mazo, "Arts & People: Dance," 22.

Land, "Reviews," 2.

- ²⁷ Segal, "Baryshnikov," para. 3.2.
- ²⁸ Ross, *Like a Bomb Going Off*, 7-8.
- ²⁹ Ibid.
- ³⁰ Ibid., 85.
- ³¹ Ibid., 95.
- ³² Ross, *Like a Bomb Going Off*, 58.
- ³³ Christina Ezrahi, *Swans of the Kremlin: Ballet and Power in Soviet Russia*, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012), 235.
- ³⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁵ Ibid., 11.
- ³⁶ Ibid., 16.
- ³⁷ Lynn Garafola, foreword to *Like a Bomb Going Off*, x-xi.
- ³⁸ Ross, *Like a Bomb Going Off*, 14.
- ³⁹ Ibid., 12.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., 15.
- ⁴¹ Ibid., 17.
- ⁴² Ross, *Like a Bomb Going Off*, 24.
- ⁴³ Ezrahi, *Swans of the Kremlin*, 235-236.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid., 30.
- ⁴⁵ Segal, "Baryshnikov."
- ⁴⁶ Ezrahi, *Swans of the Kremlin*, 236.
- ⁴⁷ Segal, "Baryshnikov," para. 5.2.
- ⁴⁸ Olena Ushchapivska, "The Representation of Female Characters in the Music of Russian Ballet," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 48, no. 1 (2017): 57-69, JSTOR.
- ⁴⁹ David Caute, "The Ballet Dancer Defects," in *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 468.
- ⁵⁰ "Baryshnikov, Defecting Dancer, Says Decision Was Not Political." *The New York Times* (1975): 34.
- ⁵¹ Caute, "The Ballet," 497.
- ⁵² Ibid., 468.
- ⁵³ Gelsey Kirkland, *Dancing On My Grave*, (New York: Berkley Books, 1992), 164.
- ⁵⁴ "Mikhail Baryshnikov," filmography, *Internet Movie Database*, <https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000864/>.
- ⁵⁵ Caute, "The Ballet," 470.
- ⁵⁶ *The Nutcracker*, Jodav Productions, 1977.
- ⁵⁷ Caute, "The Ballet," 470.
- ⁵⁸ Ibid.
- ⁵⁹ Ibid., 468.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 496.

⁶¹ Kodat, "Dancing Through the Cold War," 3.

⁶² Ibid., 9.

⁶³ *George Balanchine's 'The Nutcracker.'* Directed by Emile Ardolino. Burbank: Warner Bros, 1993.

⁶⁴ Kodat, "Dancing Through the Cold War," 2.

⁶⁵ "George Balanchine," *New York City Ballet - Discover*, nycb.com.

⁶⁶ *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker*, 1993.

⁶⁷ Ushchapivska, "Representation," 62.

Images

Page 104: "Mikhail Baryshnikov," originally uploaded to Flickr on March 23, 2012, accessed on May 7, 2019 via Flickr, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/53035820@N02/6861700356>.

Page 107: "Snowflake Waltz NYC Ballet 1954," originally uploaded to Wikipedia on April 20, 2013, accessed on May 7, 2019 via Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Snowflake_Waltz_NYC_Ballet_1954.png.

Page 111: "Baryshnikov in the role of *Vestris*," courtesy of The Reborn Art Charitable Foundation, accessed May 6, 2019 via www.reborn-art.ru.