

## The Religious Base of the Russian Dance Traditions

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### ABSTRACT

*The author considers the religious origin of Russian dance as a reflection of the divine idea of isomorphism. To each people the history sets bilateral cultural work – over the country's nature in which he can live, and over one's own nature, over the spiritual forces and public relations», – writes V.O.Kljuchevsky [1, p. 61]. And, naturally, these basic national problems are reflected in the national creativity.*

**Keywords:** *Cult, glee, image, music, consciousness, embodiment.*

### INTRODUCTION

Researchers V.I. Dal, J.A. Bahrushin, S.N. Hudekov, A.F. Losev, etc., are considering that the most ancient Russian dance is a round dance which at certain steps of development meets at all people and is dance of a cult origin. It confirms etymological relationship of words: Horo (Bulg., Mold.), kolo – (serb.), korola – (It.), karol – (FR.), koro (n) – (Tyrk.), yohor (Buryat.), horumy (Georgia) with Greek χορός – dance which became a basis of the given term.

It is impossible to establish precisely the time of origin of the national music and dances in Russia, it is clear that this process concerns the antiquity of slavic tribes. Some modern researchers of dance (V.V.Romm, E.A.Novgorodova, A.N. Alexey, etc.) on the basis of researches of the Siberian petroglyphs concerning by an epoch of a paleolith of images of «little men», see these little men «dancing» and consequently insist on existence of Paleolithic dancing culture. J.A.Bahrushin comes out with the assumption of the Antsky state (territory of modern Ukraine): «By 500<sup>th</sup> years of our era the people occupying modern territory of Russia, already possessed the dancing art». [3, p.7].

Origin of a round dance traditions in pre-Christian Russia many Russian researchers, in particular, Slavophiles, connected with occurrence of the Greek colonies on Black sea, believing that, as well as in the Ancient Greece, household, theatrical, orgiastic dances never lost continuity or communication with ritual cult

traditions. These traditions through the colonies of Greece could be inherited by southern Slavs and from them could extend further on all territory of pagan Russia.

Continuing this thought, J.A.Bahrushin writes: «Many of the pagan dances which have come from Greece, were rudiments «apollon» or «dio128 nis» pagan cults and though, after acceptance of Christianity have been adapted for Christian holidays, but, as a matter of fact, remained pagan, such as svjatochnye and «carnival grotesque dancings». [3, p. 8]. Round dances of ancient Slavs have been also adapted for the Christian religion which have come from the Byzantine and have survived till now, such as, for example, Troitsk, Kreshchensky, Christmas, Svjatochnye. [3]. And on the basis of S.M. Solovyova's researches, we can come to a conclusion that it was the result of two-religion system which proceeded till XIII century in Russia. The people resisted some centuries to Christianity and different ways brought paganism in Christianity (by an allegory, coding, hint, renaming on the accord, executed function or internal close essence, etc.). Eventually national (primary pagan) outlook, ethics were dissolved in Christianity, having created a unique alloy – the Russian Orthodoxy with the slavic scenarios of liturgical services.

On the relationship of slavic paganism with the Greek culture and in, particulars, with apollon cult, specifies what value in Russian dancing tradition was taken away to solar dances which were part of a cult of worshipping the Sun.

J.A.Bahrushin solar round dances names «the mass dance which execution is accompanied by a choral song, before devoted to the Sun. We will pay attention that on the citation «days of an equinox annually marked at the time of paganism, winter and summer opposition continued to consult and after Christianity acceptance... the Celebrations devoted to the Sun, differed special splendor and were accompanied by numerous dances» [3, p. 8].

«In the Russian monuments of culture have been saved the traces of worshiping the sky under a name of Svoroga, to a thunder and a lightning under a name of Peruna, to god of winds of Stribogu» [1, p. 132-133]. Slavs believed in Horsa – the Sun, (according to N.Gumilev).

The celebrations devoted to the Sun, differed special splendor and were accompanied by numerous dances. In departure of a cult of Dazhboga there were some elements similar to Drevne by the Greek cult of the archaic period, with Apollo-radiant cult. On Jamvlihu Apollo – mind solar, Platon considers that Apollo supervises behind harmony. The Slavic dancing tradition first of all is based on harmony. On Kornutu through Apollo space is shined, Plutarh takes away to it general ordering function. All dances of a solar cult had the initial scenario, the text and music.

Salustskiy considers as its god-coordinating [5, p. 198, 346] with later cult of Atona in Ancient Egypt. The sun cult in general is extended in the countries of the south of Eurasia where indispensable attributes of this worship were «live fire», or internal burning – obsession «Fire». But how to estimate a legend of Pindara about Apollo who has come to Greece from Giperborei? How to estimate ancient Hindu legends about existence of the Great civilization which is behind mountains (Tibet, Tien Shan), desert (Gobi, Kara Kum), impassable woods and snow deserts where the people worshipped to the Sun – to Horsu or even to two Sun? The Minusinsk valley quite demonstratively is underlined territories of modern Khakassia as «native land» of a cult of Apollo, on Great steppe – Eranvezhu, through forward Asia come later to Greece. And then there is a question on primacy of influence of the Greek cults on slavic, and is faster on the contrary. As there is a second assumption of their general source. So, for example, Famintsyn writes «... in taken Sreznevsky a fragment from one ancient monument it is a question of APOLLO; meanwhile in corresponding places of other

monuments APOLLO'S name, god of the SUN, is replaced name HRS» [5].

Frezer D. believes, that the cult of worshiping the Sun and sunlight is connected with fire and is a country holiday, in the book «Gold branch» he specifies that two holidays most popular in the Christian world coincide with the period of summer and winter opposition. «From the immemorial time in Europe there is a custom, following to which peasants in certain days of year kindle fires, dance round them or through them jump ». It is a general characteristic of holidays of fire [5, p. 600]. A.Afanasev writes that the «Fire» at ancient Slavs was esteemed as« the Deity creating crops». Fire was the intermediary between people and gods [7, p. 13]. Besides, in slavic mythology often there are names of Jarilo and the Christmas carol in mentions of fire. As to fire cleaning and curative properties [in the same place] were attributed.

But what is interesting, in the different slavic sources is that we meet different names of the Sun. Whether can say it what in different slavic tribes God of the Sun was called in own way? Or it means that during the different historical periods and in different territories as there could be names? But when we are convinced what Christmas carol Christmas almost in all sources equally on December, 25th (to Christian times is transferred for December, 23rd to separate from Christmas of the Christ?). Christmas of Dazhboga – the Bycycle Day, on March, 25th, is connected with Dazhbogom in different tribes (the pronunciation – Dabog differed only, Dazhbog), Christians throughout many years celebrated Easter on March, 25th.

But Christmas of Jarilo and Horsa sometimes coincide with Ivan Kupaloj though separately from Jara (Jarila) Horsa was celebrated in the autumn (after Dionisija), and their functions are often inconsistent. In this case it is necessary to search for logic in definition of a true name of the Sun. It, in 130our opinion, means that those names which have various variants, it is possible to group in four groups. A Christmas carol, (Avsen – in East Slavic mythology – the character connected happy New Year or Christmas (Old Russian «ousin», that is «bluish» and «prosinets» – the name of December and or January). The name of Usen was known already in the documents of XVII-th century.

Worship of four suns confirms slavic origin of a solar cult as people Mediterranean, especially Africa and Minor Asia, simply don't know

seasonal distinctions. For Slavs four forms of the sun are connected not only with the space phenomena, but also with the terrestrial natural phenomena of revolution of the season. Solving a problem about sun names, we know Christmas carol and Dazhboga dates of birth, also we know that names of Horosa and Dazhboga are often mentioned with the beginning of year, it isn't surprising, as at Slavs and at русичей year began in March, then in September and, as nowadays, in January. But never with the beginning of year the name of Jarilo communicated. However the name of Horosa is often mentioned with Dionisom or after Christmas of Dionisija. That is Horos – the autumn sun. Also there is Jarilo. This most hot sun. But the Christening is connected with a name of Jara. Ardent the river, for a christening of new god has been given. Thus, all falls into place. Functions of names of the Sun in Slavs culture are various, and their distinction is based on revolution of the season then Jar the sun and Horos take the counterbalancing positions. At the end of the V century – at the beginning of VI century in connection with easing of power of Rome great moving or (dispersion) of Slavs recutting all card of Europe has begun. Slavs recognized as the master of the Universe of one god – Peruna (younger brother Dazhboga) – Svarozhicha (by analogy to Zevsom), god of a thunder, a lightning, war. It is not necessary to forget that during this period the most part of the Slavs who are near Roman empire, was христианизирована, more precisely, was under Roman унией, but also the paganism remains yet not eradicated. And as we see, solar holidays coincided with the main Christian holidays: Christmas of the Christ, Easter, John's Christmas of the forerunner, Christmas of the god.

For Christmas of God the baby-Kohl-dy (authors remark) children went on houses sang and danced Christmas carols and for it received gifts for the arisen Kohl-dy (authors remark), On the Bycycle day, Christmas da-god, drove round dances with colored eggs and Easter cakes. On Jarilo It (jar-is given) drove round dances round live fire, in steams jumped through a fire, danced. The period of fierce struggle of Slavs for statehood and autocracy is connected with a cult of Svarozhicha Peruna, toolkit of this cult are man's military marches and dancings with the fighting weapon or with tsupagamy.

Presently rudiments of these dances are hopaks, the Cossack man's dancings with the sabres

showing man's force and dexterity. Koshubsky, guralskie, zbuytskie dances, dances with sticks, spears – all were born in Tatra mountains. There are legends about pirry origin of these dances which during ancient times were executed around a fire.

The magic essence of military dances, remained and after change of the deputy of god of the Sun with the earth, there is no saying from whom, has passed the power, but Perun became the Supreme God of the Solar cult in VI century. Sometimes it identified with Yarom. Though, Rozhdestvo Peruna is sometimes also connected with the Christmas of Jara, but more often with Ilya. In the statehood organization, cult pirry dances promoted sublimation of military spirit, national identification and fighting unity. At first sight, Fishermen gives the version contradicting our hypothesis about an accessory of winter solar dances to the Apollinicheskyy cult. He writes that «celebrations of winter opposition have been devoted the Christmas carol. The Christmas carols which characters are dressed in animal skins, sometimes put on masks up to now have reached, beg, dance».

The surroundings of this character is more similar to participants of dionis games «In image of dressed (a goat, etc., we will notice that Dionisy carried a goat skin and there was a chrome) participants of national Christmas ceremonies with games and songs... Go on court yard». Besides, Rybakov writes that «legends have kept for us and the second name of the Christmas carol – Anisy (Dionisy)» [4, p. 129]. Here we also observed the mixture of two cults which has really occurred after paganism cancellation. Apollo's cult and a cult of Dionisy are – antagonists. In Russia similar characteristics which describes Rybakov, archaic god of fun and pleasures Kors, but in any way Kohl-da, the eternal baby, as the arisen boy possessed New year. Probably, these functions belonged to the autumn Sun-horsu. On holidays of Horosa people played umikalnie games and danced which were executed on national celebrations in the beginning of the last century, in territories ever occupied or occupied by Slavs.

Under the encyclopedia the Christmas carol, the Slavic-and-Russian mythological character connected with a spring cycle of fertility by younger son Svaroga, was god of live fire. To Fire-Christmas carol which also named Svarozhichem or Bozhichem, worshipped the same as da-ggod. «Kolo» – the sun. Kohl-da is the Sun-tsar baby» [14].

The prefix «da» at southern Slavs meant «terrestrial», «god» – «Tsar», that is the mythologized image of the terrestrial tsar. As writes Frezer, in accordance with the evgemericheskaya theory formulated in IV century by R.H.Evgemerom, «the images of gods fixed in myths and goddesses, it is memory of real people, about there are living tsars and tsarinas» [3, p. 364].

In honor of a winter solstice, – writes Rybakov: – when «on December, 25th turned: “the Sun for the summer – winter on a frost”, “In honor of god of the Christmas carol” [4, p. 129], “Slavs kindled live fire”. “In the end of December in connection with a winter solstice; fire burned till January, 6th, till the end of a winter Christmas-tide. The sun sign designated January, month of flare up of the sun”. [4, p. 168]. Slavs performed round dances around live fire. Jumped through fires in snowdrifts. Jumping through the fires two times a year had at Slavs the mystical character connected with the funeral ritual of Slavs. Original slavic «Memento Mori». «In connection with a spring equinox on March 25th pagans celebrated the Velic day – Rozhdestvo Dazhdboga. The christians celebrated on March 25th Easter. Later the Christianity (after split) has removed a holiday of Easter and a carnival week Holiday for February-March, depending on the Lent beginning». The holiday came to an end with the set of fire and burning of a stuffed animal of Winter. [5, p. 168]. During the pre-Christian times, on the eve of Christmas of Dazhdboga, the Christmas carol was burned. Originally, it was considered that, under the protection of Dazhdboga there were all deities of fertility, woods, cattle breedings, hunting and plants.

In the Velic day hymns in honor of the Sun were executed: «You ascend, ascend, the red Sun», dancing games: «Come, come, the Sun», etc. On a sacred week, after the spring equinox, drove round dances of Ladodenija on the Red Mountain, sang and danced “Vesnjanki”. The Slavicsacred ritual round dances devoted to the Sun or Kostroma that are concerned “Vesnjankam”: asking a crop or conjuring a crop, such as – «you garden, you my garden», «Braid, a wattle fence», “Jar-hmel”, «And, we sowed millet, sowed» or other.

In Europe the holiday similar to the carnival week, was called «Lent Fires». So, for example, in France, in Ardene, «inhabitants all settlement danced and sang round fires which were kindled on the first Sunday of a post, ... the more

briskly there will be a dancing round a fire, the the crop» will be richer during the current year. «In Brabant... Women and the men changed clothes for a female dress with burning torches went to fields where danced and sang comic songs ...». «In the evening for a supper of a fir-tree of a fritter and pancakes» [5, p. 570-571].

«Fires of a summer solstice» across all Europe were arranged on the eve of a summer solstice which is necessary for John’s the Babtist holiday. On the eve of sacred John inhabitants displayed fires, men and women gathered round them, danced and sang» [5, p. 582]. «To give to these holidays an easy Christian shade, day of a summer solstice named in honor of John Krestitelja, however there are no doubts that these holidays have started to consult B.C. ». [5, p. 581]. In Russia the pagan name of a Christian holiday till now has remained, John Krestitel is nicknamed by Ivan Kupaloj. In honor of a summer solstice, writes Fishermen: «At people all slavic and next to them Ivan Kupaly’s holiday on June, 23-24rd, in day of summer opposition » is celebrated by live fire. [4, p. 168]. In this holiday two elements of a pagan cult - fire and water» incorporate. In Sweden celebrating of eve of sacred John is simultaneously a holiday of fire and a water holiday; it is supposed; that during such time sacred sources ... » [5 possess wonderful salutary force, p. 584]. Almost to the middle of XIX century the custom of the device of summer fires in France was accompanied by dances round them and jumping [in the same place]. Custom to display fires on the eve of a summer solstice, to dance round them and to jump through them there was until recently in the Wales, in Spain, Italy and Sicilies. In Bohemia for sacred John’s holiday were danced “contradance” pair dances. We find the description of a plot of such dances at the Milling cutter in «the Gold Branch», in the same place we find that «... in Russia on the eve of sacred John young men and girls steams jump through a fire, having control over a straw stuffed animal of Kupaly» [5, p. 585].

From the description of festivals of B.A.Rybakova we would like to allocate steady attribute – “fire”. S.N.Hudekov connects with worship fire also the Ancient Greek cult occurring from a word πυρά – a fire, explaining an origin pirry dances or fire dances. [2, p. 214]. On the Greek islands Lesbos, Kalimnosa the custom of the device of summer fires on the eve of sacred John till now has remained. People there dance round fires with songs, holding on a



head stones, and then jump through a flame and throw in it stones. «Slavs did not always celebrate the autumn equinox », underlines B.A. Rybakov [4, p.168]. But many researchers, including S.N.Hudekov, consider that all solar holidays began round dances-hymns.

Some researchers consider that all closed round dances which in the basis have a circle, personify movement of the sun round the earth, are called as solar. In our opinion, the closed round dances at the different people carried ceremonial magic functions and were executed on holidays in honor of various gods and had various functional problems. But solar, “gymnist” only at Slavs of a solar cult-svarozhichej and connected by Solar phases, that is solar dances are called what are executed on the holidays having for days of winter and summer opposition and a spring, autumn equinox, these days kindle fires, dance round them or through them jump. All dances connected with worship to fire as a symbol of solar heat and light, are called as solar – worship fire is a general characteristic of solar holidays. Extended on the territories of historical fireworship the Sufism also attached huge significance to circular dances for which movement on a vicious circle against the sun is characteristic not simply, but also spinning round own axis, thus, entering participants into a trance after itself. So, for example, D.S.Dugarov considers that «the element of a ritual complex of white shamanism» in yohore is borrowed from the dancing culture of Doiran and Indo-European tribes [Dugarov], primogenitors of the Dionisijsky cult.

Except the solar round dances, in Russian dancing tradition existed chain round dances which were executed as on the holidays devoted to other gods, and on patrimonial and family holidays. Influence of archaic Greece was especially obviously traced in chain dances in which head was horeg – «the leader of a round dance». Horeg played a flute or on lyre and conducted behind itself dancing, setting a certain course (a dancing combination). In the same way and in an Old Slavic round dance ahead of a chain went konovod (bash at Bulgarians), knowing canons or defining next game. «Konovod – gets and sets drawing and dance movements» and shows a prototype of the dancing-master [9, p. 577]. But solo dancings and pereplyas in which men competed basically were the most widespread on patrimonial and family holidays. J.A. Bahrushin considers that «unlike an esthetics of the majority of the West

European dances the base to creation of Russian national dancing art were esthetic installations of Russian national dancing» [3, p. 11]. These installations have the following positions: «All kinds of solo dancings, including dancings-games, the hunting or military dancings, had the maintenance, that is a dramaturgic basis. Frequently this basis was very primitive, as, for example, in pereplyas» [3, p. 11]. In this characteristic we find common features with installations in the Greek dance. «As» Art for art – an impossible thing for antiquity, – was written by A.F.Losev, – and dance couldn't be called that without the maintenance and a plot [10, p. 77]. Similar requirements then will be shown and to ballet.

«There is nothing sensually perceived that wouldn't possess the maintenance, hence, ballet won't be ballet if in it there are no these basic elements distinguishing and defining all being, both animated and inanimate. The ballet content is a plot», – Noverr [11, p. 117].

«Mechanical execution didn't admit spectators who highly appreciated individuality dancing .... Individuality of the actor was shown in trick» [3, p. 11]. «Except high masterly skill and artistry, it was necessary to have self-control and not to give in on jokes of the spectators which problem was to make laugh the dancer that it «has lost the face», thereby to remove it from participation in the game – competition or dance». The obligatory requirements of Russian people to dancing art are – the «beauty and harmony». Harmony consisted in unity of a rhythm (the musical size of movement, music and poetic foot), rate (music, dance, a word), a harmony (character of music, dance and the maintenance). Horea is based on a principle of triple – three in three. Observance of the principle of triple also opens a rhythmic or magic code of dance.

School to come to the fore front in the world which is substituted now by dionisism. So, in the aesthetic approach to the Russian dancing influence is obviously traced «apollo dance\*», the basic signs of this are:

- First – figurativeness,
- Secondly – pithiness,
- Thirdly – facts of life (realism)
- Fourthly – beauty,
- Fifthly – logic,
- Sixthly – expediency,

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- Seventhly – consciousness of a healing and clearing role of dance,
- Eighthly – sense of proportion and self-restriction from wild impulses.
- Ninthly – энергетизм and virtuosity.

Solo dancings and pereplyas in which men competed basically were the most widespread on patrimonial and family holidays. As well as in olden time, first of all thought highly of individuality dancing, named “Trick” with which solo dancing, or pereplyas had began. «Pereplyas is usually executed by the men and it is dancing competition. After the dancer who has begun dancing will do some masterly knees, it is replaced by another, aspiring to execute these, and then more difficult of a knee. After this in dance the first again joins, again complicating movements. So proceeds until one of participants won't win another. Pereplyas it is considered by the people as a duel», – Bahrushin [3, p. 7], – in which it was shown not only the highest virtuosity, but also endurance, the will to win, personal self-affirmation.

Single improvisation-performing dancing was usually executed by the girl, thus dancing wasn't a song illustration, and expressed internal experiences of the performer. Data of the Greek language doesn't allow to open etymology of a name Apollo that testifies to not Indo-European origin of an image. Attempts of ancient authors (e.g., Platon) to solve value of a name of Apollo aren't subject to scientific discussion though for them and the tendency to connect in one unseparable whole a number of functions A is characteristic. (Plat. Crat. 404 e – 406).

B.A. Rybakov gives the dancing description behind a documentary miniature of the Radzivilovsky annals illustrating the story about the games of ancient Slavs: «In drawing we see two groups of the young men clapping dancing located on hillocks. In the middle the girl in long clothes with the sleeves which are hanging down below brushes of hands approximately for length of an elbow is represented. It dances, swinging hands, as wings. Before it the young man dances with the lifted hands. The artist has made a figure of the girl in one and a half time more largely, than the young men, underlining domination of the girl in this dance – ceremony. Two musicians sit at a foot of hillocks and play the pipes-flutes, one musician with a drum costs near to the girl and, probably, too participates in dance» [4, p. 782].

As well as in the Greek round dance, in the Slavic round dances included the game scenes based on improvisational game. Improvisation was characteristic for all kinds of Russian dancing, especially for трепака – solo or pair Russian dancing. But round dances should be comprehended. As an example of such judgement game round dances «serve And we sowed millet, sowed», «Lenok», «Torches», «Gold gate», «Jar hmel» – they under the form are traditional European country dances, and as a matter of fact round dances. They reflect the labor processes and form the poetic relation to work. It is typically Russian is art-educational approach of the relation to work: with songs barge haulers pulled barges on the rivers, with songs oarsmen rowed with oars, harvested, threshed etc., and during short rest also danced.

The improvised dance as a form self-expression took place not only in solo «pereplyas», but also in mass dancings-walks. One of favourite dances was trepak. «The fine feeling that in these celebratory minutes not to notice something more trepak and feelings raised by it» Is necessary very much wrote V.O. Kljuchevsky. «The round dance has dispersed, but its songs and movement, appear, still were in the air. The same songs and movements are executed by all Russian earth celebratory minutes, finishing them by trepak with the music of accordion”... “trepek of Tula”, “trepek of Penza”, “trepek of Kursk” [1, p. 233]. The mass improvisational execution of dance is widely presented in Russian wedding walk. Each of its participants – visitors, matchmakers, bridesmaids and friends of the groom – had full freedoms for the self-expression. Ability to improvise was appreciated highly so умелец sometimes was called as the magician, «the favourite of gods».

The content and lexicon of dances are integrally connected with a melody, rhythm, rate and harmony. As a matter of fact, the closed round dance was the culmination of the holiday devoted to the Sun. All these round dances were Christmas, were found in honor of a birth of the new Sun. Year began with a birth of the 137 Spring Sun-dazhdboga for which Christmas on the Velic day round dances all night long on March, 25th were found and were accompanied by easter symbols (colored eggs and Easter cakes. On June, 24th Christmas (Jara, Peruna) the Jarilo Sun, (jumping through a fire, bathing in water, gifts to the water, guessings). On this day, probably, occurred the «stealing of girls», accompanied by the games and dancings.

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Thus, the four main slavic holidays, devoted to the «four» suns\*, have generated poetic, musical and dancing culture of Slavs which had development in the Kiev Sacred Russia. Till the XIII century cults existed in parallel, and in a divine service ceremony there was even a penetration into a Christian liturgy. In 1551 by the «Stoglav Cathedral» the dances have been expelled from liturgy, but they did not disappeared, and transferred to people and in parallel with dances of agricultural cults began to be called as national.

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It is found in the river Zbruch fourfaced, under one cap, with an idol. Analogies to the Zbruchsky idol are known in a small sculpture almost all slavic regions: the tetrahedral wooden core with four faces (the end of IX century) also has been found out in Voline (Pomorze, Poland), the horn edge, topped with four heads, – in Preslave (Bulgaria), etc.

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