

THE MYSTERY OF MOVEMENT.
STUDIES IN HONOR OF JÁNOS FÜGEDI /
A MOZGÁS MISZTÉRIUMA.
TANULMÁNYOK FÜGEDI JÁNOS TISZTELETÉRE

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The meaning of the provoking title of this book, *The Mystery of Movement* is multi-layered and evokes a similarity with the title of the book *The Mastery of Movement* by Rudolf Laban, who was a significant dancer, choreographer and the founder of the dance notation system. The new bilingual volume *The Mystery of Movement* is published in honour of the present-day dance notator János Fügedi to acknowledge his rich academic career, which explains the aforementioned analogy. Fügedi is one of the most significant contemporary ethnochoreologists and movement theoreticians, who has developed the initial ideas of Rudolf Laban through the notation system known as Labanotation. The book *The Mystery of Movement*, edited by Dóra Pál-Kovács and Vivien Szőnyi, is a collection of twenty-two chapters related to dance research, whose authors are associated with János Fügedi as his colleagues, precursors, students and friends.

The book begins with the three warm tributes by Fügedi's colleagues Ann Hutchinson, László Felföldi and Péter Lévai ("János Fügedi – A Tribute", "Fügedi János köszöntése/Greetings to János Fügedi", "Kolléga vagy barát?/Colleague or friend?"), who highlighted the importance of Fügedi's work as a teacher, researcher and archivist. They emphasized the contribution of his integral oeuvre, with specific concern for dance notation, dance analysis and learning-teaching model in dance pedagogy, thus amicably introducing the multifaceted scope of János Fügedi's professional background to the reader.

The book consists of four parts. The first three parts comprise chapters mainly written by Hungarian researchers (and one Romanian) about Hungarian dances in Hungary and Romania. The last part encompasses international contributors (Hungary, Norway, Uganda, Romania, Serbia and Mexico) enriching this publication with the topics and ethnographic examples from various cultures. Thus, the largest portion of *The Mystery of Movement* is dedicated to the rich field of Hungarian dance research to which János Fügedi made a significant contribution. Moreover,

the publication acknowledges Fügedi's widespread influence and professional connections with the researchers passionate about the mystery of the movement all over the world.

The first part, "Historical approach to dance", comprises chapters that illustrate and interpret historical documents about dance in specific historical periods (e.g. manuscripts, collections of photographs, published articles of various genres, media representations etc.). The contributions by Ágnes Eitler, Zsuzsanna Hanusz, Máté Kavecsánszki and Iosif Corina include critical analyses of multiple topics related to the national/regional identification, the impact of political ideologies on the representations of the tradition and the society dynamics in a specific time and space. Thus, the first part offers a broad analysis of historical material with a critical understanding of the roles of certain dances in various contexts.

The second part, "The Anthropological Approach to Dance", includes five articles in Hungarian (by László Kürti, Dóra Pál-Kovács, Anna Székely, Vivien Szőnyi and Sándor Varga). The first four articles cover various topics (based on archival or ethnographic examples), such as the semantics of the kinetic movement (clapping hands) in diverse cultural settings, gender roles and their proxemics' rules in couple dances and the adaptation of dance culture in a specific community. The last article critically illustrates the need for the anthropological method in dance research in Hungary. Namely, Sándor Varga points out the necessity of economic, social and political analyses within the scope of the Hungarian school of dance research. The authors, however, demonstrate the awareness of the issue articulated by Varga by showing multiple directions that the Hungarian dance studies may follow in the future.

The third part, "Practical approach to folklore", moves us to a different conceptual object of research – folklore. The chapters by Hungarian authors (Gábor Bolvári-Takács, Mátyás Bolya, Lujza Ratkó and Ildikó Sándor) are related to folk dance ensembles, folk music, folk dance education and folk games respectively. Two of four chapters in this part of the book report on the digitalisation of music and dance material complemented by the establishment of databases. Moreover, specific articulation is on the role of databases in pedagogy and their practical usage, which explains the "practical approach". The following chapter presents two archival documents and their original content regarding the methodologies of transmitting dance knowledge in prominent Hungarian institutions. It has a practical outline related to the topic of dance pedagogy, but it also corresponds to the first chapter defined by the historical approach to dance. Another chapter deals with a sensitive and always intriguing topic of authenticity. The author's goal to show what is (not) authentic by comparing performances requires a wider bibliographic approach and more examples in order to achieve a more substantial interpretation.

The last and lengthiest part of the book, "Theoretical approach to movement in dance", consists of the nine articles closely related to János Fügedi's main areas of

interest. All authors examine the dance notation and/or the strategies of the movement analysis. The chapters are concerned with the scope of the ethnochoreological approach and analysis of the movement. The authors illustrate their individual perspectives and the range of methodologies based on their own ethnographic examples. The chapters deal with the notating solutions for specific body parts in the Labanotation (Misi Gábor), the ontological discussions about the movement analysis and the role of notation during that process (Henrik Kovács, Csilla Könczei). Furthermore, the authors offer various methodologies of analyses such as the “svikt analysis” of the vertical movement of the body (Egil Bakka and Siri Mæland) and a comparative structural analysis of dance and music (Selena Rakočević). The contributors present the cross-cultural applicability of dance notation and dance analysis by analysing various dances either of their own or the other nations’ dance cultures (Zoltán Karácsony, Ronald Kibirige, Raymundo Ruiz, Judy Van Zile). Thus, the last part of the book reflects on the professional path that János Fügedi outlined within the dance studies.

The book is supplemented by Fügedi’s selected bibliography. This very last part circles the idea of the dedication to János Fügedi by illustrating his rich academic path and connecting his work directly to the broad reading audience.

The Mystery of Movement illustrates the multitude of possible methods, approaches, analyses, results and discussions unified by the same goal – to reveal and understand the ‘enigmatic’ features of certain dance forms. It reminds us that dance researchers must be creative and willing to constantly modify their approaches, guided by a burning passion for revealing the mystery of human movement. Having had the honour of being János Fügedi’s student, even if only for a short time, I am certain that he would wholeheartedly agree with my last observation.

Katarina Nikolić