

Preface

This volume makes available, for the first time and in definitive English translation, a comprehensive selection of György Martin's most important papers. It fulfills a long-held ambition to disseminate the work of this internationally known Hungarian ethnochoreologist to a scholarly readership. Following Martin's premature death in 1983, even in Hungarian, only the *Magyar tánc típusok és táncdialektusok* (*Hungarian Dance Types and Dance Dialects*)¹ in several reprints, and the posthumous publication of his two works *Lőrincréve táncélete és táncai* (*Dance Life and Dances in Lőrincréve*)² and *Mátyás István "Mundruc": Egy kalotaszegi táncos egyéniség vizsgálata* (*István Mátyás "Mundruc": Individual-based Investigation of a Kalotaszeg Dancer*)³ gestured toward the profound depth of that achievement. This significant oeuvre in folk dance research is thus, only now, being introduced to scholars of dance folkloristics and all those who are interested in the research and practice of traditional dances.

Almost four decades have passed since Martin died, but his influence on Hungarian folk dance research is still apparent. We refer to his texts in our writings regularly and use them as principles in our educational programs. One of the most important methodological issues in Hungarian ethnochoreology is related to his work, as well. We consider that the classic folkloristic approach relying on dance history, which Martin represented at the highest level among Hungarian colleagues, ought to be integrated into the contemporary international scholarly discourse.

While Hungarian folk dance researchers have introduced new paradigms to pose new questions, we find it essential to maintain our distinctive perspective and scientific identity, one that evolved in the Eastern Central European academic and social context. As a result, we hope that we can contribute to the establishment of a scholarly stream that is sensitive to social issues and can interpret contemporary cultural processes without neglecting their historical background. We intend to present a method that is grounded in sustained, comprehensive, and detailed field study and meticulous analysis. We wish to achieve change in the discipline of ethnochoreology, alternately termed dance folkloristics, considering past accomplishments and, at the same time, comprehending the full range of contemporary disciplinary practice. We regard the publication of these papers, selected for their particular importance, as an initial step in this process.

¹ Martin 1970–1972.

² Karsai–Martin 1989.

³ Martin 2004.

Until now, in the international academic milieu, Martin's achievement could be encountered only by means of the few of his works that were translated into English or occasional references to his studies by Hungarian folk dance researchers that might appear in scholarly literature, conferences, or in reviews. Moreover, the results of his lifework are challenging to interpret for an interested foreigner unaware of either the entire academic and social background behind his work or the most significant theories that governed Martin's individual scientific research. These are the primary motivations for publishing a selection of his writings in English. At the same time, during the compilation process, we bore in mind that a volume introducing the research results of Hungarian dance folkloristics was going to be useful as a textbook in university education.

The present volume represents only a part of Martin's lifetime work. Two of his most impressive and summarizing books, *A magyar körtánc és európai rokonsága* (*The Hungarian Circle Dance and Its European Relationships*)⁴ and the *István Mátyás* volume mentioned above have been published only in Hungarian (the first with a German summary, the second with English introductions). The presentation of Martin's oeuvre can be considered comprehensive only once these works become available in English as well.

A Brief Overview of Contents

The present volume comprises four main parts. The first section, "Prolegomena: György Martin's Role in Ethnochoreology and Dance Folkloristics" includes summary overviews, specific interpretations, and critical reassessments of Martin's various essays, by way of an introduction to the merits of his work and the indispensable role he played in Hungarian ethnochoreology. These overviews and commentaries are meant to help readers interpret Martin's studies within their social, historical, and intellectual contexts. Other readers, seeking an unfiltered impression of his distinctive voice, may choose to begin with Martin's own works, here presented in translations that revise earlier versions when the editors have deemed appropriate. However readers approach this collection, the editors have aimed for a well-rounded representation of Martin's contributions in a contemporary light when taken as a whole.

Colin Quigley begins the section of commentaries, emphasizing that a large part of Martin's works were and have remained unknown in anglophone ethnochoreology as a consequence of language barriers. Reviewing how the papers translated during Martin's lifetime were perceived by this readership, Quigley reflects on what was lost

⁴ Martin 1979.

to the international community. Lajos Vargyas chronologically surveys Martin's life-time work based on his writings and introduces his main scholarly results. Vargyas's overview confirms that Martin can rightly be regarded as the main representative of those who established Hungarian ethnochoreology. Tamás Hofer positions Martin's achievements in the field of Hungarian social and cultural history research in the European context. Hofer defines the Hungarian folk dance research as an equal and independent discipline in comparison to the other branches of folklore research, such as Hungarian folk music and decorative art, which had already achieved significant results by the time Martin was publishing his findings. Katalin Paksa assesses Martin's work from the perspective of ethnomusicology. She highlights the research topic within musicology on which Martin initially focused on: the different rhythm types of the accompanying musical instruments and how his findings influenced the detailed structural analysis of dance. Contemporary scholars cannot avoid that certain conclusions drawn by Martin from the dance's formal and structural investigation in the early phase need to be complemented in accordance with later and more detailed analyses. Sándor Varga also adopts a critical stance in the last paper of the introductory section, by scrutinizing the issues of theorization and perspective that arose ten years after Martin's death but essentially remained unsettled.⁵

The next three parts represent a compilation of Martin's papers, each part also preceded by introductory essays. "Historical and Comparative Studies: European Cultural Relations among Dance Traditions in the Alpine-Carpathian Region" consists of those historical and comparative studies that investigate the dance culture of nations living in this territory in the contexts of major European cultural changes and periods. "Theoretical Works: The Structural Approach" presents introductory and descriptive studies in the structural analyses applied most frequently by Martin in ethnochoreology. The review of Martin's theoretical works is complemented by Zoltán Karácsony's interpretation of the statements Martin made in connection with the mode of dance representation. Last but not least, "Case Studies: Traditional Dance Research in Transylvania" comprises papers representing practical applications of Martin's theories.

We have followed a standard bibliographic practice in the table of Contents, by listing the papers in each section following a single mention of the author; Martin's papers are thus numbered for easy referencing within this volume and we avoid needless repetition.

⁵ See László Kürti's critics on the previous direction of Hungarian dance folkloristics (Kürti 1995).

Fidelity to Texts and Editorial Corrections

The discussions of certain subjects, especially the solo male dances, overlap in different papers, which may seem redundant; for the sake of integrity, we left these parts untouched. Also, for the sake of fidelity, we did not change specific wording and expressions, such as the “Carpathian Basin,” that may carry different meanings for different nations living along the Carpathians. Correct identification of the region might be the “Alpine-Carpathian Region,” which we use in our introductory texts. A similarly maintained usage in Martin’s texts is the term “Gypsy” for the Romani population of the region.⁶

Martin cites Richard Wolfram in his papers several times. We are—just as Martin was—aware of Wolfram’s national socialist (Nazi) past; as a matter of record, we definitively reject his extreme political opinions and cultural interpretations. We call attention to the careful consideration that his data require.

Some papers among this selection have already been published in English. We have checked the previous translations and corrected them if it was needed—either because the former English interpretations were misleading or for the sake of unambiguity. We unified the forms of in-text references that may have differed from one study to another. In cases of Martin’s or Martin and Pesovár’s papers in this volume that refer to a work re-published here, the original source is completed with reference to the paper included in this book in the form, e.g., “Martin 2020/5” or “Martin–Pesovár 2020/8.” The number after “/” refers to the number of the paper preceding the title. As retrieving these references is evident, they are not included in the “References Cited” chapters of the studies.

We felt that in certain papers, Martin or the editors of his works published after his death overused italics for emphasis, especially when the structure of the Hungarian sentences broke the continuity of the ideas he intended to emphasize. We kept the emphasis only when it helped to highlight the significant aspects of research results and to point out importance.

Identification of Geographical Regions

The English translations raise the issue of the naming of geographical or ethnographic regions, rivers, and mountains. In this respect, we follow the directives given by Gábor Gercsák summarized in his paper “Using Hungarian geographical names in

⁶ Note, however, the diverse terms used to identify different groups of the Romani people in Hungary. See Forray 2008: 11.

English language translations.”⁷ To provide further information on the locations, we have included a geographical map of the ethnographic regions in the front inside covers on which most of the toponyms applied in the book are indicated. The back inside covers provide a map of the Hungarian dance dialects. For the sake of unambiguity, names of settlements and counties are indicated as in the 1913 Hungarian gazetteer.⁸ The names are included in the chapter “Index,” in compliance with their present political borders.

The term “region” is capitalised when it is part of the Hungarian place name (e.g., the name “Kalocsa-vidék” appears as Kalocsa Region; “Maros-Küküllő-vidék” is written as Maros-Küküllő Region; Felső-Tisza-vidék as Upper Tisza Region, and so forth). Otherwise, when referring to a geographical area, it remains in lower case.

Martin referred to the area indicated as Bánság on our map of Ethnographic Regions as “Bánát.” We kept his identification in his texts; note, however, that the name “Banat” is a mirror translation of the Hungarian word Bánság into the languages of the neighboring nations such as Croatian, Romanian, and Serbian. We have also retained Martin’s use of Kárpátalja to designate the multi-ethnic area known as Zakarpattia Oblast in Ukraine.

The large northern part of the Hungarian language area is indicated as Felföld on the map of Ethnographic Regions. Martin referred to this area interchangeably either as Felföld or as Felvidék. Both expressions identify approximately the same region; however, the name Felföld usually refers to it as a geographical-ethnographic region, while Felvidék indicates the territory as a historical-political entity. We changed Martin’s identifications in his texts according to their usage in geographical or historical contexts.

Names of Dances, Customs, Institutions

By way of derogation from the previous general practice, we decided not to use translated dance names in this volume. On the one hand, we considered that translations may be confusing and can lead to ambiguity. Instead, we have published dance names in their original language (Hungarian, Romanian, Serbian, Slovakian, and so forth). On the other hand, the same dance names appear in different papers of Martin several times; the repeated translations would have been redundant. For information, however, in the chapter “Index,” we provide a translation of all the dance names where the translation is possible. We avoided interpretation or explanation but endeavored to find a literal translation to present the actual meaning of names. An ex-

⁷ Gercsák 2001.

⁸ *A magyar szent korona*, 1913.

ception of this approach is the paper titled “Ethnic and Social Strata in the Naming of Dances: Different Types of Historical Nomenclature in Hungary and Europe,” where dance names are the focus of the research and immediate understanding of names is a key requirement. Here, the translations of names appear after the original names in brackets.

We also kept the original names of customs and some other names related to dance events or rites. In their case, we give a translation in brackets where the names first appear.

Several papers mention Martin’s first place of work, the Népművészeti Intézet (Institute of Folk Art), established in 1951, its legal, reorganized successor from 1957, the Népművelési Intézet (approx. Institute of Public Education), and its Néprajzi Osztály (Ethnographic Department) in connection with his career and as institutions housing the first collections of films and other results of fieldworks. To avoid repetitions, the names of this institution will be mentioned later on only in Hungarian.

Archived Materials Cited

Martin based his ethnochoreological approach on the evidence of folk dance documentation and dance notation. He was not only comfortable using musical notation but also an expert at applying the system of Kinetography Laban that necessitates specialized knowledge. Dance notation appears with remarkable frequency in the studies published here. For the present publication, we re-edited motifs and shorter dance sections inserted within the texts,⁹ but not the longer dances appended to the end of the papers. Comparing the dance notations published formerly with film footage as their source, we ascertained that several notated sections differed to a certain extent from what the footage shows. In all probability, the reason lies in the deficiencies of technology and available devices in the period, which may have limited the observability of films.¹⁰ As the studies can only be understood collectively with dance interpretations, we decided to enclose the formerly published dance notations in scanned facsimile versions. However, we digitized the film footage from which the dances were notated and have made them available in the online *Knowledge Base*

⁹ The old orthography of these re-edited, in-text kinetographic notations was corrected to meet the current standards (see Knust 1979; Hutchinson Guest 2005; Szentpál 1976). However, the notation convention of contacting gestures is different in all the re-edited examples from the standard indication of kinetography. The simplified use was proposed by János Fügedi and Gábor Misi (Fügedi–Misi 2009). Application examples of the proposal can be seen in Fügedi 2016: 63–64. Notation graphics was made by the *LabanGraph* application (Fügedi 2019).

¹⁰ János Fügedi and András Vavrincz mention similar findings in their anthology of *Old Hungarian Dance Style: The Ugrós* when comparing earlier notations to footage (Fügedi–Vavrincz eds. 2013: 31).

of *Traditional Dances*.¹¹ In the list of dance examples, we include the digital object identifier (DOI) for both the footage and the enlarged copies of dance notations.

Martin's papers identify the dances and tunes discussed with archive numbers of film footage and tape or disc recordings. In their IDs, abbreviation "Ft." stands for *Filmtár*, the Film Collection of the Traditional Dance Archive in the Research Centre for the Humanities Institute for Musicology (TDA RCH IM). Martin referred to these films in his papers dated before 1964 as stored in the Népművészeti Intézet (later Népművelési Intézet). Today, they are archived in the Film Collection of the TDA RCH IM. Some footage is identified as "MGy" or "ÁNE;" "MGy" refers to films that were in György Martin's possession, "ÁNE" to the footage made by the Magyar Állami Népi Együttes (Hungarian State Folk Ensemble). These films are also stored in the TDA RCH IM.

Music examples in Martin's papers are referred to as "Mg" (magnetophon tape) or "AP" (*Akadémiai Pyral* disc). These recordings have been published recently in the *Sound Archives at the Institute for Musicology*.¹²

We completed the data of dances with the notation archive IDs, where the abbreviation "Tit." represented the *Táncírástár* (Dance Notation Collection). Occasionally, a reference to "Akt." appears, denoting the *Akadémiai Kézirattár* (Collection of Manuscripts). Both collections are parts of the TDA RCH IM.

Numerous images (photos, paintings, engravings) are also included in the original papers. Several of them are only loosely related to the contents of documents; either we have re-published the original images, or we have replaced them with ones of better quality. Some of them are left out because they are lost, untraceable, or raise copyright issues. Most of the photos are marked by the prefix "Tf." that refers to the *Fotótár* (Photo Collection) of the TDA RCH IM.

The Editors

(Translated by Valér Bedő and János Fügedi)

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¹¹ Fügedi ed. 2016.

¹² Bolya ed. 2019.

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