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Editor ■ GÁBOR BARNA

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# *Acta Ethnographica Hungarica*

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AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ  
MEMBER OF WOLTERS KLUWER GROUP

half of the second millennium and reaches the conclusion that they could be remnants of a military rite.

In an article titled "Melody types of the stepping and running round-dance of the Sárköz region" Imre Olsvai presents many examples of the melodies accompanying one of the most archaic dance types that flourished in the Sárköz region up to the First World War. István Pávai draws attention to previously unexamined dance history data and tries to place them in the historical typology elaborated and used by dance folklorists, in his article on "19<sup>th</sup> century data on Hungarian dance culture in Wallachia and the Székelyföld region". János Sipos compares Tuvan, Mongolian and Hungarian melodies, finding parallels in their musical structure in a number of cases. In her article on "The role of folk songs from Upper Brittany in the culture of the present age" Zsófia Pesovár writes about the present social roles of love songs revived by the folk music revival movements of Brittany. Katalin Lázár's article "Dance elements in folk games" points out that Hungarian folk games with dancing and singing were intended principally to arouse children's motivation for activity through the enjoyable experience rather than to teach dance steps. In her study on dance history Réka Pávai Ferkó presents early sources on Moldavian Hungarian folk music and folk dance previously unknown to Hungarian dance folkloristics.

In "The appearance of the findings of folk dance research in various areas of teaching" Mária Zórándi writes about the interaction of Hungarian dance folkloristics and folk dance teaching and the way the two areas use each other's results. László Antal's article on "The scholarly analysis and classification of Hungarian folk dances as the foundation for folk dance pedagogy" points out that besides passing on the stock of movements, it is an important task of folk dance pedagogy to teach the cultural context of traditional dances. In "Ernő Pesovár, folk dance researcher and choreographer", János Horváth attempts to present Ernő Pesovár's work as a choreographer in the light of his activity and achievements as a dance researcher. Ferenc Sebő writes about the parallels between folk dance studies and folk dance as stage performance, and the beneficial influence the two have had on each other.

A number of studies in the book present approaches, data and research findings that are new in Hungarian dance folkloristics, but the illogical thematisation and selection of texts makes use of the volume difficult.

Sándor VARGA

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*Tanz und WahnSinn / Dance and ChoreoMania.* Johannes Birringer – Josephine Fenger (Hg.) Jahrbuch Tanzforschung Band. 21. Gesellschaft für Tanzforschung – Henschel Verlag 2011, Leipzig. 331 pp, 24 black and white illustrations and figures.

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The 31 studies in this volume deal with the connection between dance and the state of ecstasy. Parallels for this can be found in Antiquity, but the phenomenon, known as choreomania grew to a mass scale in mediaeval Europe. There are many contemporary reports and church warnings about choreomania that evoked a state of ecstasy or changed consciousness, generally regarded as abnormal and sometimes considered to have therapeutic value. Some of the studies trace the cultural historical connection between dance and mania from

the 14<sup>th</sup> century right up to the postmodern world. Following introductory essays by the two authors (Josephine Fenger: Dance – Crisis and catharsis; Johannes Birringer: Am I you? Dance and choreomania), the first thematic unit comprises studies bringing historical, theoretical and critical approaches to the history of mania appearing while dancing.

Studies in the second thematic unit examine the possibilities for physio- and psychotherapy presented by the change in physical and mental state under the influence of dance; the authors support the findings of their investigations with examples drawn from descriptions in dance history, ethnological observations and theatre.

Studies in the third and fourth thematic units deal with the connection between dance, mania and performance, presenting manifestations of mental illnesses in modern and postmodern art. The authors examine the question of how the different writers and choreographers are able to portray in their work changed states of consciousness and mental disorders (such as schizophrenia or erotomania) with the help of dance scenes.

The authors of studies in the fifth thematic group examine dance scenes in films and works of literature portraying periods of crisis in different European societies (e.g. the Yugoslav civil war, or the period of German national socialist views). They describe their viewpoint as social and political pathology in which they seek the influences on society of the norm-violating, deviant behaviour of individuals and vice-versa: the effect of social changes and situation on dances.

The strength of the volume is that it draws attention not only to cultural and social historical viewpoints but also to research containing many other social and natural scientific approaches (anthropology, sociology, psychology of art, etc.). Hungarian dance research should also be guided by this approach that focuses on interdisciplinarity.

Sándor VARGA

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Desmond MORRIS: *Owl*. London, Reaktion Books, 2009, 224 pp, 40 color plates, 60 half-tones.

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In my country “animal”, more precisely, in adjective form, “animalish”, means ‘very, excellent’. If we say “animal(ish) good” it means ‘beastly good’. One can say it both in positive and negative way. Negative characterizations like “animal(ish) evil” may also occur, but, in general, the positive mood dominates: one’s marriage, examination or book should be uttered in that way. In its common meaning here “animal” has a positive sense.

By the way the word *animal* is an adjective itself: “something with soul” – from the Latin word *anima* ‘breath’ hence ‘soul’ – referring to the well known classificatory principle: objects do not have soul, but animals and man have.

The elegant book of Desmond Morris by Reaktion Books (an independent book publisher based in London and specialized in innovative culture history and art history) was published in November 2009 in the smaller macbook size series called “Animal”. The series editor is Jonathan Burt – and indeed it was an excellent idea to create to several animals an overcoat-pocket book of their own. Not only Cat and Horse, but Crow and Tortoise, Giraffe and Elephant, and even Cockroach and Flea will be described in separate