

**Universitatea de Arte din Târgu Mureş (University of Arts Târgu Mureş),  
Doctoral School**

**Scientific doctoral thesis in the field of theater and performing arts**

*Body, beauty, harmony, pedagogy – the work of Sára Berczik*

*Test, szépség, harmónia, pedagógia – Berczik Sára életműve*

*Summary*

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**Thesis booklet**

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## **I. The rationale behind choosing the topic, the objective of the research**

The doctoral thesis exploring the legacy of Sára Berczik is, on the one hand, a tribute to my former master, and on the other hand, its purpose is to present her professional and intellectual knowledge, as well as to ensure its reachability for instructors studying movement pedagogy. The dissertation is a summary presentation of Berczik's professional past, a case study and impact study looking for connections between past events, her educational methodology and pedagogical approach. As such, it bridges a gap, since such a summarizing, comprehensive study has not yet been written about Sára Berczik. There are records and books, but each of them only presents a certain part of Sára Berczik's system. In my doctoral thesis, as a result of my research, I shed light on new facts and events that have not been discussed yet. An important element of the impact assessment was to carry out a survey and a comparative analysis of how her systemic approach and the different forms of movement she explores are able to promote and serve the work and development of dancers and actors. I am examining her pedagogy, her achievements, and comparing them with the pedagogy of three other defining movement artists of the time: the pedagogical methodological principles of Valéria Dienes, Olga Szentpál and Lili Kállai. What I was looking was, partly, to find out what movement-related topics influenced Sára Berczik's pedagogy, and how were they used, as well as what effect did the results of the movement experiments during her admittedly short career as a stage performer later had on her teaching methodology, on its thematic units. Practically I am just continuing her idea, examining her methodology by revealing its positive or negative aspects, in order to, having the results, offer movement teachers the opportunity to try out the Berczik methodology, or even to consider it as a complementary technique to another system.

## **II. Research methods**

On the one hand, the research is based on observation: my goal was to record the results of the targeted observation from the years I spent with Sára Berczik, and to explore the part of her teaching methodology. On the other hand, it is an attempt to find connections in Sára Berczik's work that have not yet been found. During the analysis, the various educational structural elements and certain connections were revealed. After interpreting the materials following the fact-finding, I evaluated them and tried to understand Sára Berczik's motivation, way of thinking, perception, point of view, inner values, and outlook on life. I

synthesized the revealed essential connections and the structure of the various functional units. I applied a comparative analysis between Sára Berczik and the contemporary movement artists. I carried out an impact study – Sára Berczik: *Halál és a leányka* (trans.: *Death and the Maiden etude*) – to present the force–space–time relationship illustrated and analyzed in the education system. In a case study – J.S. Bach: *Five-part fugue* – I analyzed a movement morphology examination of her musical studies. The connections of her life path revealed in the various documents are bridging the gap. In part, the processing of contemporary press articles helped to comprehensively systematize her life, as well as her pedagogical and artistic work, along with her place and role in professional training and hobby activities. During my research, I was also able to rely on the written materials published as books and studies, as well as on the interviews found in the Nemzeti Audiovizuális Archívum (National Audiovisual Archive), which Tamás Vitray conducted with Sára Berczik: *Remember 2/2*, (year of production: 1989), *Spend an hour with me* (year of production: 1996); additionally to written sources and legacies found in the archives of the Liszt Ferenc Zeneművészeti Egyetem (Liszt Ferenc University of Music) and the Színház- és Filmművészeti Egyetem (University of Theater and Film), as well as in the Dance Archives of the Országos Színháztörténeti Múzeum és Intézet (National Theater History Museum and Institute), and materials found in the Theater Library of the Országos Széchenyi Könyvtár (National Széchenyi Library). My research was complicated by Sára Berczik's multiple name changes and different uses of her name (Sári Perczel, Margit Pollacsek, Sára Berczik, Sára P. Berczik, Lászlóné Papp).

### **III. The main findings and results of the dissertation**

Firstly, I made Sára Berczik's place in communities of memory the subject of my investigation. As a result, individual memory frames with shared knowledge have surfaced. As Assmann writes: “The past does not arise by itself, but is born as a result of cultural construction and reproduction; always guided by specific motives, expectations, hopes and goals.”<sup>1</sup> The culturally identical pedagogical community scene where Sára Berczik created and taught is still connected to the dance club Budai Táncklub (Buda Dance Club). The

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<sup>1</sup> Jan Assmann, 2018, *A kulturális emlékezet; Írás, emlékezés és politikai identitás a korai magaskultúrában* (trans.: *Cultural memory; Writing, memory and political identity in early high culture*), Zoltán Hidas (trans.), Budapest, Atlantisz Kiadó Publisher, 91.

smaller social collective, i.e. the movement pedagogues and leaders who teach here, provide an insight into Sára Berczik's system of aesthetic gymnastics for future generations. However, it is important to note that “memory not only reconstructs the past, but also organizes the experience of the present and the future,”<sup>2</sup> drawing attention to the values of the past and their role in our present. The sense of belonging and togetherness are linked exclusively within the collective. On the one hand, in addition to cultivating her memory, they want to make – through the foundations – Sára Berczik's educational approach, artistic aspirations, and the results of her professional, methodological and performance activities over the years known and recognized more widely. The sport of rhythmic gymnastics, which has gone through several name changes, and the Berczik Sára Alapítvány (Sára Berczik Foundation) foundation organize a commemorative competition hallmarked with Sára Berczik's name every year, paying respect to the master, who became a symbolic figure for both the sport and the aesthetic movement. In addition to cultivating her achievements in sports and dance pedagogy, the Még 1 Mozdulatszínház (1 More Movement Theater) theater is the only one that has introduced Sára Berczik's work as a choreographer to the general public, reconstructing her works, to which I will return later.

The biographical chapter of the dissertation draws attention to countless unknown facts, truths, real events, data in the life of Sára Berczik. I only list the most important ones, tangentially, as results of my research. We get an insight into Sára Berczik's past as a performer from written press materials of the time, as well as from confessions given during interviews. Critics praised her talent, considered her technique mature, and found her sense of rhythm remarkable. They praise her musical intelligence and dance culture, which makes her dedicated to interpret and present not already known interpretations, but individual choreographies, and steer her rare talent towards the absolute dance, to a dance independent of all academic rules and its expressive power<sup>3</sup> – seeking the new, as she puts it: “thinking boldly on modern topics.”<sup>4</sup> Sára Berczik described the experimental, modern creative vision of her choreography titled *Tűzvárás* (trans.: *Fire magic*) as follows: the theme gave her a wonderful opportunity. With the movement of the arm – with which she expressed the flames – she experimented with igniting the incipient embers, illustrating their bursts and flaring

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<sup>2</sup> op. cit. - Assmann, 43.

<sup>3</sup> Júlia Lenkei, 1993, *Mozdulatművészet* (trans.: *Movement art*), Budapest, Magvető – T-Wins Publisher, 30.

<sup>4</sup> s.n., 1922, „Scala-hangversenyek” (trans.: “Scala-concerts”), *Színházi Élet* (*Theater Life*), (43), 49.

up. All this on a five-meter podium, which was covered with a black carpet.<sup>5</sup> All this with a red Grecian shirt and long, undone hair, which added to the effect as it fluttered around her. The trunk movement, its dynamic movements, the use of different degrees of the dynamic scale already formed the basis of a modern choreographic concept. History and many events that took place in her life often put her at a crossroads. The World War, the banning of movement art, the displacement, the early loss of her husband, and the sight of her destroyed apartment made her uncertain whether to continue her work. However, her students sought her out and followed her, “for them, Sára Berczik meant creation, the art itself, they felt that nothing could be done without her.”<sup>6</sup> Her students formed the Berczik group, in which Sára Berczik did not dance, but participated only as a choreographer. Her dance group achieved many successes, not only by presenting themselves as movement artist and with choreographies in this style, but also on the revue stages. As part of this has Sára Berczik joined the choreographers of the revue, along with Gyula Harangozó and Hedvig Hidas, which can also be confirmed by contemporary posters found in the Theater History Archive of the Országos Széchenyi Könyvtár (National Széchenyi Library) library. Partly, the fact that the Berczik group was present as participant in the performances, and partly, that Sára Berczik worked as a choreographer. The appendix of the doctoral dissertation contains these remaining posters created in 1950-51. I am listing the titles of the performances that can be found based on the posters, separating those in which only the dance group was featured, and those in which Sára Berczik was listed as a choreographer, next to the Berczik Dance Group. The *Botrány az állatkertben* (*Scandal at the Zoo*) and the *Békehajó* (*Peace Ship*) posters feature only the Berczik Dance Group among the contributors, while the posters for the performances *Májusfa* (*May tree*), *Sziget rózsái* (*The island's roses*), *Jó reggelt, Budapest* (*Good morning, Budapest*), *7 vidám nap* (*7 merry days*) show Sára Berczik as choreographer, as well. The research carried out in the archives of the Liszt Ferenc Zeneművészeti Egyetem (Liszt Ferenc University of Music) university gave me the opportunity to explore the background and connections of Sára Berczik's musical studies. I have searched for the much-talked-about piano artist diploma, but I couldn't find a record of

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<sup>5</sup>Ágnes Szöllősi, 2002, *Berczik Sára Mozdulatművészeti módszere* (trans.: *Sára Berczik's Method in the Art of Movement*), in: Fenyves Márk (ed.), *Movement Arts Archives of the Magyar Mozdulatkultúra Egyesület* (Hungarian Movement Culture Association), Joint Secretariat of Movement Arts of the Hungarian Movement Culture Association, 7.

<sup>6</sup>István Kutas, 1970, „Így lett művészi torna” (trans.: “That's how the artistic gymnastics arose”, *Képes Sport* (*Sport Illustrated*), XVII. (19), 26.

it anywhere. The existence of the diploma is confirmed only by Sára Berczik's statement in an interview that she received her piano diploma from Zoltán Kodály himself and took the exam as a private student.<sup>7</sup> However, the Liszt Ferenc Zeneművészeti Főiskola (Liszt Ferenc College of Music) school's 1931/1932. registry book, as last record of Sára Berczik – under the name Sári Perczel – can be read only that on the 13th of June 1931, she received a voice teacher's certificate approved by the Országos Magyar Királyi Zenetanár-vizsgáló Bizottság (National Hungarian Royal Music Teacher Examining Committee) committee.<sup>8</sup> Sára Berczik has never worked as a music teacher. Known by critics as a talented dancer, Sára Berczik had to give up her stage career after the death of her foster mother – in order to make a living. She exchanged the stage with the dance hall and the performing arts with teaching. From Erzsébet Bogácsi's article<sup>9</sup> we find out that: she believed that the positive reviews, her success as a performer and her studies entitled her to open her own school. Although the family assumed that she would continue to run a the academic ballet school in Debrecen, she chose to open a movement art school, with the help of Lili Kállai. Lili Kállai's school certified her completed studies in movement art, which was a prerequisite for opening her school. A program booklet about her school's exam performance at the Academy of Music has survived, which can be found in the appendix of the doctoral thesis. The various content units in the program booklet provide a comprehensive insight into certain parts of Sára Berczik's pedagogical approach. The first part of *Gyermekvilág (The world of children)* pointed out how important she thought it was to display topics suitable for the age group. In the second part, she highlighted the importance of the morphological connection between music and dance (canon, rondo, fugue, sonata). In the third part, she drew attention to the diversity of genres (lyric, comedy, drama) and their use. In the fourth part, she referred to the central role of technical style variations (rotating, swaying, jumping, swinging) by maintaining the movement form. She becomes a teacher of the dance specialization being established at the Testnevelési Főiskola (College of Physical Education), alongside Olga Szentpál, Miklós Rábay and Éva Géczi. Lacking a developed curriculum, her movement material became the basis of the curriculum, but they didn't want to include in the didactic

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<sup>7</sup>Tamás Vitray, 1989, *Töltsön velem egy órát (trans.: Spend an hour with me)*, M3 Anno, ID:1958156, Nemzeti Audiovizuális Archívum (National Audiovisual Archive)

<sup>8</sup>Liszt Ferenc Zeneművészeti Egyetem (Liszt Ferenc University of Music) Archives, research permit number: KH-170/1/2018

<sup>9</sup>Erzsébet Bogácsi, 1997, „A kor megérleli az embert” (trans.: „The age hardens the man”), *Népszabadság (People's freedom)*, LV. (297), 9.

material the affective kinesiological part of her methodological theory, which she considered to be the most important. “Based on those disclosed by Sára Berczik, in her great offense, when asked what should be the name of that which she was going to teach, she entrusted the answer to the secretary who was present there, thus the name became artistic gymnastics, which she later, after further reconsideration, she renamed as aesthetic physical education. (This practice material covers most of the first two chapters in the Berczik Method, excluding the mentioned third.)”<sup>10</sup> However, the position stating that dance cannot be included as part of everyday physical education without elaborate plans changed Sára Berczik's situation. Miklós Rábay was commissioned to develop a proposal for a solution, as a result of which folk dance education came to the fore as a dance style and morphological language as part of the everyday physical education program. Much later – in 1992 – he was asked again to help organize sports activities as part of school and kindergarten education. The proposal includes the topics of all gymnastic exercises that primarily serve to prevent and rehabilitate frequently occurring posture errors. In 1995, the National Core Curriculum required girls to be taught the basic gymnastics system of rhythmic sports gymnastics within the framework of development and requirements.<sup>11</sup>

Going back to the previous years, after the banning of movement art schools, Sára Berczik integrated her methodology in sports, thus creating a new sport, the artistic gymnastics – still at the College of Physical Education. In the meantime, they were displaced because of her husband's law enforcement services. After returning home, – as a result of the inquiries of former students – the Berczik Dance Group was formed for the first time. Later, on the Mészáros utca in district I., she opened a Dance Art Work Community with Éva Kovács, not accepting the call back from the College of Physical Education.<sup>12</sup> However, she accepted Jenőné Nagy's invitation and, in addition to her work community activities, she helped the national gymnastics team for more than twenty years.<sup>13</sup> Thanks to the work of Sára Berczik, the national team achieved many international results. She has created a flag exercise for Olga Tass for the 1954 World Championships in Rome, which brought victory to the athlete,

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<sup>10</sup>Júlia Lenkei, 2007, Volt egyszer egy táncnevelési szak (trans.: There was once a dance education specialization), *Színháztudományi szemle (Theater Studies Review)* 37, OSZM, Budapest, 181.

<sup>11</sup>Pál Hamar, „A testnevelés tartalmi korszerűsítésének nemzetközi trendjei a közoktatásban” (trans.: “International trends in the content modernization of physical education in public education”) 2009. Available at the URL address: [ofi.oh.gov.hu/tudastar/testnevelés-tartalmi](http://ofi.oh.gov.hu/tudastar/testnevelés-tartalmi), download date: 05.04.2021.

<sup>12</sup> op. cit. – István Kutas, *Képes Sport (Sport Illustrated)*, XVII. (19), 26.

<sup>13</sup> Lídia Sákoviczné Dömölky, 1988, *A nő harmóniája, Torna Berczik Sára módra (trans.: Harmony of the woman, Sport in the style of Sára Berczik)*, Budapest, Hungária Sport Reklám és Marketing Vállalat (Hungary Sport Advertising and Marketing Company), 159.



and also in 1955, at the World Championships held in Rome, the group exercise with hand apparatus was awarded a gold medal. However, the biggest success in this sport was the first place awarded for the group ribbon exercise at the Melbourne Olympics in 1956. Meanwhile, in 1956, Sára Berczik was asked – with Éva Kovács' participation – to develop the first mandatory exercise of artistic gymnastics. In the following years, her name hallmarked the establishment of the new sport, artistic gymnastics, in Hungary. From the 1960s, she also taught in parallel at the Színművészi Főiskola (College of Performing Arts). From 1965, the Buda Dance Club became one of her institutional bases, where she taught until the end of his life, and where she was joined by Klára Hajós, her former student, who worked with her from the beginning and was also a member of the Berczik Dance Group. From 1970, she parted ways with Éva Kovács, but they remained friends. Until 1978, she was the head coach – under her name at the time – of the rhythmic sports gymnastics national team, but between 1978–1983 she was the head coach of the Szolgáltató Építő Spartacus (Spartacus Services and Constructions) team. Since 1995, she has been the founder and aesthetic physical education teacher of the post-graduate movement art teacher training course, in cooperation with the Department of Physiotherapy of the Haynal Imre Egészségtudományi Egyetem (Haynal Imre University of Health Sciences) university.<sup>14</sup>

In addition to the well-known books about movement pedagogy, it was not yet mentioned – what I think is the most important methodological handbook of Sára Berczik – the handbook entitled *Mozdulatszintézis*<sup>15</sup> (*trans.: Movement Synthesis*), whose editing and drafting is attributed to her student, Ágnes Szöllősi.<sup>16</sup> The specialized literary materials written by her and Lídia Sákovicsné Dömölky only partially illustrate her methodological concept. Changing the name of artistic gymnastics to rhythmic gymnastics compelled me – due to the similarity in the names of different methodologies – to look for connections between Sára Berczik's musical-pedagogic work and Jacques Dalcroze's work, since both named their system *rhythmic gymnastics*. First of all, it was established that Sára Berczik could be familiar with Jacques Dalcroze's thematic: Sára Berczik, who worked closely with Lili Kállai and studied at her school, could have had an insight into Dalcroze's thematic, given that Lili

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<sup>14</sup>Tamás Vitray, *Emlékezzen 2/2 (Remember 2/2)*, M3 Anno, ID:1831054, 2014, Nemzeti Audiovizuális Archívum (National Audiovisual Archive)

<sup>15</sup> The handbook of the movement art teacher training course of the Magyar Mozdulatkultúra Egyesület (Hungarian Movement Culture Association) association.

<sup>16</sup> op. cit. – Ágnes Szöllősi, *Berczik Sára mozdulatművészeti módszere (trans.: Sára Berczik's Method in the Art of Movement)*

Kállai studied at the Dalcroze Institute in Hellerau, and Klára Hajós also graduated from the Dalcroze School, and it was confirmed that she later became Sára Berczik's student and was also her colleague for decades. Last but not least, in her handbook entitled *Berczik Sára Mozdulatművészete* (trans.: Sára Berczik's Movement Art), Ágnes Szöllősi clearly writes that during her travels she also took enrolled in the training of the Laxenburg School (Hellerau), but the writing does not reveal to the reader in what form or for how long she studied the Dalcroze method. I was interested in whether this could have been a deliberate name change, or whether the similar name of the thematic unit was a coincidence – even if temporary. I found a connection in rhythm development: Sára Berczik applied her music pedagogy ideas and incorporated them into her movement pedagogy because her students could not keep the tempo and did not hear the rhythmic changes. Jacques Dalcroze, on the other hand, did so because his students could not keep the pace and rhythm of the musical piece they played. Due to the divisibility of sounds and movements, both of them asked their students to change their movements in order to change the rhythm. Both methods allowed improvisation and changes in the rhythmic components of the movements. The goal is partly the same, and it lies in the fact that both of them believed that movements – even polyphonic ones – are created along the displacement of different spatial planes, spatial directions and spatial levels, in a predetermined way. Sára Berczik – contrary to Émile Jacques Dalcroze's concept – also aimed to develop coordination abilities, changing the complexity of the different forms of movement accordingly. Sára Berczik prioritized the interpretation of music instead of transposing music into movement. The use of her musical studies was proven in the way she used hand tools (for example: ball, hoop, disc, rope, scarf, stick, ribbon, veil). She developed the students' sense of rhythm through movement processes using hand tools. In order to build up the value of the musical note, the writing of the tempo and the dynamics of the movement, the way the muscle tone changes was also shaped and helped by the interpretation of the musical expressions. When defining the various compositions and movement units, she used the morphological units learned during her music training, such as motif, period, etude. The structure of the Berczik exercises makes it possible to use and vary different cadences within the sequence of movements. Remembering what I learned in Sára Berczik's classes, I have developed a set of tasks, also as a result of the analysis, using the hand tools used in artistic gymnastics/rhythmic gymnastics. The essence of her exercises is for the students to be able to interpret the application of rhythm formulas, the polyphony and the role of the independence of different

body parts in it, the length of note values, the expression of tempo. All this by using different rhythmic and dynamic formulas, by breaking up the principle of symmetry, by using cross channels, with shifts in accentuation in terms of the main and secondary accents, but in any case keeping the order of uniform harmony. If I discount the use of instruments handled as part of the stage performance – *Koncert etűd fátyollal*<sup>17</sup> (trans.: *Concert etude with a veil*) – , I obtain the following results, testing the exercises on my own body: development of different skill areas (motion control, movement adjustment, independence of parts of the trunk and fine motor development, differentiated muscle function, balanced thinking, spatial orientation, balance, quick coordination, development of rhythm effect and speed of reaction, observation, concentration, spatial awareness, rhythmic understanding and safety, memory) takes place as part of the conditional, coordinating and cognitive, direct perception, sensing and attention, as well as indirect memory, imagination and thinking, cognitive process. The result of this – which is taken into account during the compilation of the tasks – is the consistently structured composition along different degrees of difficulty (from easy to very difficult), which triggers the development of movement skills and, as a result, brings about a quantitative and qualitative change in the movement toolbox. As a case study, I analyzed Sára Berczik's *Ötszólamú fuga* (trans.: *Five-part fugue*), subtitled: *Forma a táncban* (trans.: *Form in Dance*). Its reconstruction is attributed to Ágnes Szöllősi, and its presentation under theatrical conditions can be linked to the name of the Még 1 Mozdulatszínház (1 More Movement Theater). I analyzed the work by reading the score and watching the archive recording of the performance simultaneously. As a result of the analysis, it can be said that Sára Berczik created the choreography using her musical training. She identified with the parts of the score, with the music sheet, and she expressed it within the body, within the system of the connections between the body parts, as well within the system of relations between the music sheet and the five dancers. By this I'm referring to the visualization of the music, given that the created composition follows the temporal divisions of the music, the form of movement arrangement matches the morphological units of the music. It also subordinates the mode of force to express the use of crescendo and piano in music. She illustrates the changes in the melody in his movements – in terms of their

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<sup>17</sup> Its reconstruction with the participation of Ágnes Szöllősi – who was a student of Sára Berczik – was also performed one night by the Még 1 Mozdulatszínház (1 More Movement Theater) group, with the compositions *Ötszólamú fuga* (trans.: *Five-part Fugue*) and *Halál és a leányka* (trans.: *Death and the Maiden*).

direction of movement, by raising the knees, raising the arms, squatting, contracting, arched postures, arm and body circles, open and closed body positions. Increasing the tempo is completed in the step material, which often corresponds to the number of notes. With this composition, Sára Berczik demonstrates the use of her classical music studies. We could even consider this a breakthrough, like George Balanchine's symphonic ballets. In any case, it points to modern thinking, to a willingness to experiment, to the discovery, the search of the new, the different, and at the same time to a high degree of musical competence. The overview of Sára Berczik's professional methodology is perhaps the most important chapter of my doctoral thesis, and I continue the summary of my thesis with the ideas and results this textbook's review.

Sára Berczik relied on three pedagogical pillars: the affective, intellectual and actual kinesiology.<sup>18</sup> The affective kinesiology reflects the results of the coefficients of the mode of expression. It gives answers to the impulses triggered by thoughts, emotions and music, and discovers the connection systems triggered by the response in the body. The performance gains meaning through their interpretation. "If we transpose the emotions strongly enough into movement, the expression will be more effective and will gain meaning in the movement, thus the root of the form-creating mood is the emotion, the root of the expression is the experience, i.e. the pouring of the emotion into the movement."<sup>19</sup> Wilhelm Wundt's theory of emotion greatly influenced her pedagogy which facilitates the interpretation of the power of expression. "According to Wundt, three pairs of emotions – pleasure–pain, excitement–calm, tension–release – and their dynamics are present in all people, but to a greater extent in artists."<sup>20</sup> She used her guided improvisation exercises to elicit different emotions, which he called the *emotional complex*. I call them guided, as she defined the subject, style and technique alike. She adapted the designing method of her various compositions to the content, and determined its technical style accordingly. The content includes many images and imaginations, such as an emotional state, a thought, an event, a situation. However – in Sára Berczik's opinion –, an indispensable condition for this

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid - Ágnes Szöllősi, *Berczik Sára Mozdulatművészeti módszere (trans.: Sára Berczik's Method in the Art of Movement)*, 22.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid - Szöllősi, 33.

<sup>20</sup> According to Wundt, every emotion is the result of an affective (impulsive) process, which can end in two ways: it triggers a will or it fades away without results. The prerequisite for any willful action/deed is a thought, to which I react with ideas and feelings, and this will become the motive of my subjective action. The more complex emotional impact a thought causes, the greater the emotional complexity experienced as a result of the impulses that reach me, the more everything else is subordinated to my will. Ibid: Szöllősi 33.

is that the student should have adequate body awareness, to be aware of their body's movement possibilities, structure, different ways of exerting force, and to be able to explore its dynamic and rhythmic diversity. In the case of the classical style, Sára Berczik returned to the morphological units of the music and adapted them to the movement. She was defined by clean lines and a world of harmony, but a rhythmic and dynamic freedom, without breaking the aesthetic order. In the case of the romantic style, the emphasis is on breaking the principle of symmetry, the proportions of harmonies are shifted. The modern style was characterized by positioning the members into possibly disproportionate shapes, but even with the exaggerated lines, by their exceeding similarity or the dominating power of the multidirectional line break that can be analyzed.<sup>21</sup> She experimented and took advantage of the polyphonic possibilities arising from the structure of the body, which included various rhythmic, dynamic and spatial relationships. In the case of morphological styles, Sára Berczik could not imagine learning them without an aesthetic order. She defined the aspects that determine the value quality of the aesthetic order: it requires the realization of the experience caused by emotions, thoughts, and moods, the personality and inner impulse of the creator associated with this, and the experience created in the receiving viewer, the morphological stylistic rule. The optimal cooperation of all of these elements results in the creation of an aesthetic order and an artistic language of movement. To ensure this, she explored the space-time-force relationships. “In accordance to this, every movement – even the everyday one – is a space-time-force relationship; but it becomes aesthetic only if the movement is formed by regular space, regular time, and a regular relationship of forces.”<sup>22</sup> In order to demonstrate the practical implementation of this, I analyzed as a case study – with the help of the reconstruction of Ágnes Szöllősi – a highlighted part of Berczik's etude entitled *Halál és a leányka* (trans.: *Death and the Maiden*) presented by the theater Még 1 Mozdulatszínház (1 More Movement Theater). The composition is a visualization of a possible emotional crisis on the way to death and of the final reconciliation, during which – apart from the scenic solutions presented – the dynamic and rhythmic regularities of the music and movement language complement each other and strengthen the changes occurring in the plot, and the character and reactions of the participating persons, characters. The spatial arrangement and the use of spatial levels also make clear the subordinate and superordinate relationship between death and the maiden, which is a specific shifting

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<sup>21</sup> op. cit. – Szöllősi 36.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid - Szöllősi, 11.

reflection, view. To me, the interpretation of death shows a duality: inhumanity, the merciless fact of passing away outside of our control, a man sometimes still endowed with human feelings who wants the girl to stay with him voluntarily, like a girl would with a young man she has chosen. The creator depicts the duality of body and mind, of body and soul. Even watching the piece without music, the theme becomes understandable through the movements alone.

The second major thematic unit of Sára Berczik's pedagogy is the intellectual kinesiology. As a part of the intellectual kinesiology, she describes her pedagogical position and offers a solution to the problem of how to arouse and maintain the students' attention regarding the exercises. Sára Berczik designed a pyramid, outlining always the desired quality result<sup>23</sup>: the base of the pyramid is the conscious movement and transfer of knowledge through sense-developing exercises, on the second level the movement problems of the exercises on the first level are envisioned, with imagination, and they are set into the right movement, and on the third level we can find the student's criticism of others or of their own exercises. "When a student is able to analyze the problems and possibilities of space, time and force of movement and movement sequences alike, they already possess all the external technical requirements that can be applied to finalize a dance."<sup>24</sup> The third thematic unit of her pedagogy is the actual kinesiology. In essence, the actual movement theory was the basis of Sára Berczik's methodology, the methodology of body training techniques based on anatomical knowledge. The methodology is aimed at the development of different body parts taking into account the anatomical features, and emphasizes the technique of separation/isolation in addition to the different rhythmic, dynamic (changing the use of muscle tone) changes in position and location in space, with an economical use of energy. Following the pattern of classical ballet, it also includes exercises to be performed at the handrail, which are not the same as the exercises of the academic ballet. Analyzing the exercises and methodology of Sára Berczik, I looked for connections, which guiding principles help the instructor to achieve a better performance while applying an educational process, conscious knowledge. Analyzing the knowledge brought to light in the doctoral dissertation, and recalling Berczik's exercises in the years I spent with her, I briefly summarize her system below.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid - Szöllősi, 28.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid - Szöllősi, 32.

First of all, one of the most important aspects is: mastering the basic knowledge of functional anatomy, which helps the instructor to understand and exploit the muscle work within the various movement processes and movement mobilization divergent as to the types of joints. The students are also expected to learn the movements according to the anatomical criteria system, through internal observation. The optimal ratio of the rapport between the part and the whole ensures the effectiveness of the quality of movement – during targeted movement. During separation, the exercises are always appropriate for the age and level of knowledge, thereby ensuring the efficacy of the synthesizing process. The principle of multilateral impact ensures maintaining the interest of the students, the avoidance of monotony and the associated negative consequences, and is also a solution – in order to maintain muscle balance – to avoid uneven loading, thereby guaranteeing the avoidance of injuries, creating an optimal cooperation of the impact exerted by the muscles together and on each other. In my doctoral dissertation I analyzed this in detail through the description of a movement process. The principle of symmetry ensures an equal load on both sides of the body, improves the functioning of the cross channels, and prevents the muscle imbalance. In this case, the principle of symmetry does not mean that different parts of the body work symmetrically, but rather that each muscle group – on the right and left side of the body's midline – is developed to the same extent by the different exercises, which helps to develop muscle balance. The student will be able to ensure the optimal cooperation of the muscles on the ideal movement path, which is one of the basic conditions for economical movement. The theoretical and practical recognition of the body center's role the exercises for its development are eerily similar to the exercises of Martha Graham. This could even be a coincidence, since it is possible that they formulated the same method, even though they did not know each other's work. I looked at this possibility as well, but during my research I did not manage to ascertain whether Sára Berczik knew or studied Martha Graham's methodology. The centralized strength of the trunk is responsible for the freedom of leg work, the maintenance of balance, and the precise mastering of abdominal muscle tasks, which avoids overloading the spine. The last aspect of the result of the analysis: it is necessary to see the mistakes that can be harmful for health and to notice what makes the movement not plastic. Attention must be paid to the mobilization of the scapula, which has an impact on the free movement of the arms, the posture of the shoulders, the harmonious cooperation of the knee and hip joints, and on the breathing technique. The essence of Sára Berczik's educational system with a pyramidal structure is the following: the simplified

process, which can be controlled by the student, is the change of the basic body position, during which one must also rely on inner feeling – cf. application and implementation of movements of two or more body parts (still simple in coordination), then mastering exercises more complex in coordination, first by changing position and then place. The exercises had to be performed first in an unloaded position, in the middle, with body weight, next to a handrail, in a partial balance position, and simultaneously the work was carried out in a standing position in the middle. Parallel to the full balance exercises carried out next to the handrail, partial balance, then full balance and position-changing exercises followed in the middle. The exercises also underwent the following modifications, in chronological order: spatial direction, spatial level, rhythm, dynamic changes; variation of movement along different spatial planes and axes, as well as the use of tools and props. Within each separate unit, even the simplest basic movement processes were carried out, in all forms. In this systemic approach lies the essence of Sára Berczik's methodology, which is consistently based on the principle of gradation. In the dissertation, I presented different versions of a basic exercise to present the pyramid system, in order to better understand it, in writing and in graphic notation, illustrating how a different quality of movement can be achieved following the principle of gradation. I examined the possible use of her method in dance and theater, and as part of prevention and rehabilitation in old age. Sára Berczik considered the concept of modern pedagogy based on general aesthetic laws to be indispensable in dance education as well.<sup>25</sup> In my opinion, the interpretation of aesthetic legalities in dance is a principle barrier. On the one hand, we should talk about a spontaneous, creative activity, which gains its final form through a movement process, in a consistent and neutral, coherent, unified aesthetic narrative and interpretation. On the other hand, if the subjectivity of the dancer prevails and dominates, then we are faced with serious theoretical and methodological questions regarding the possibility of teaching dance, since a dance teacher rightly feels that it is their task to correct a movement that they considers to be incorrect, there this results in an authoritarian type of education operating on a guided principle – not necessarily only focusing on creativity and instinct. In regard to the person performing the dance, the aesthetic experience is primarily produced in the kinesthetic, muscular and vestibular aspects of their own movement sensations. The balanced movement of the

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<sup>25</sup> Sarolta Berczik, 1960, „*A gyermek táncművészeti nevelése*” (trans.: “*Children's dance education*”), In: Gedeon Dienes and Péter Morvay (ed.), *Táncudományi tanulmányok* (Scientific Dance Studies), Budapest, Akadémia Kiadó Publisher, 143.



muscles, tendons and joints ensuing in harmony within the body provides the dancer the primary somatic aesthetic experience. Sára Berczik's thesis published in *Táncstudományi tanulmányok* (Scientific Dance Studies) states that “the terminology in the field of dance culture is not uniform, so in the following we will define all professional concepts of dance education in the sense in which they are applied.”<sup>26</sup> Sára Berczik's method is still taught today as preparatory gymnastics and aesthetic gymnastics in some specializations of elementary art schools, precisely defining the thematic units, listing practical examples, and exercises based on her methodology. For the introduction of the new national core curriculum – by creating the aesthetic gymnastics system for the fashion dance specialty of primary art education, and passing on Sára Berczik's systemic approach – I have developed an aesthetic gymnastics didactic material appropriate for the age group, for the two grades of the preparatory and elementary level. As a way of helping, I created a task bank, giving examples on how to develop different skills. The methodological direction envisioned by Sára Berczik fully meets today's expectations in course and elementary art school education, without supplementing the teaching of other techniques. As skill development – it can also be used in professional training, but in addition to new systems and theories based on functional anatomy – certain tasks must be modified or can be used as additional techniques, as part of the renewal process. However, the systemic approach I have briefly formulated is still fully accepted and acceptable, in comparison with and drawing a parallel between it and the knowledge of other, more modern, new trends. Organizing the archives of the Színház- és Filmművészeti Egyetem (University of Theater and Film Arts) university was a major breakthrough in writing the chapter entitled Applying her method in the performing arts. Sára Berczik's available documents were systematized, which meant the compiling of her personal file. Until then, only newspaper articles and the testimony of actresses who attended her classes provided an approximate clue as to how many years she taught within the walls of the Színház- és Filmművészeti Főiskola (Theater and Film College) , now a university-level institution. The material includes employment contracts and individual mandates. Between 1965 and 1984, and after a one-year break, between 1986 and 1997, she taught classes in different grades. Among these she taught operetta, musical, and prosaic acting, within certain specific year frames, and not in every academic year, but in accordance with the current year's curriculum thematic and structure. From the statements of the actresses

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<sup>26</sup> op. cit. – Berczik Sarolta, “Children's.... 143.

who attended the acting classes held at the Buda Dance Club – summarizing the content aspects of the interviews – it can be said that the system of requirements does not differ from the methodology already described, it is only tailored to the physical abilities of the people attending the classes, and the level of difficulty is set according to their level of training. All the subjects interviewed in newspaper articles, who made statements, agreed that Sára Berczik was dedicated to her work, creative, professionally knowledgeable, capable, and her pedagogical sense was outstanding. It is absolutely clear that in operetta and musical courses, where body-conscious movement is an advantage when learning a new sequence of movements and choreography, learning the Berczik method is an advantage. Not to mention that the movement sequences and elements requested by the choreographer are performed at a different quality level as a result of applying the method. In the words of Sára Berczik, the pedagogical and artistic goal of acting training is to “educate a harmoniously moving person who, having the technical and emotional knowledge, the strength, is able to express on an artistic level what the dance has to say.”<sup>27</sup> A much more exciting question is what kind of advantage prosaic actors can gain from knowing, using, and learning the Berczik method. The character is created by the actor in their own body in a performative way, in which the use of language not only directs the action, but carries it within themselves, they are the action itself. The context, a subject, evokes energy, which can manifest itself in body movement, but has much more meaning than just representation. This is the transformation of the director's vision and dramaturgical basis. The body-conscious movement helps the actor, as part of any interaction and creative process – to experience the body as one's own and to know the limits of the body – to enable the identification with the body (embodiment), the bodily manifestation, the event created by the context. Sára Berczik's method for developing body awareness plays a role in improving the quality of tone changes in the different muscles of the body, triggered by the somatic processes taking place in the body, and it can help the actor in displaying and embodying the figure to be played, or even in carrying out the action process of a situation. Through the method of Sára Berczik, the actor discovers the possibilities of their body, the importance of the energy flow, and through practice, their joint mobility increases, they learn to manage the increase in muscle tone, which enables them to use their body in a wider spectrum. The body image, the subjective experience of a person's body, an event that has been experienced several times, even if it is

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<sup>27</sup>Veronika Devecseri, Berczik Sára egyetemes táncművész (trans.: Sára Berczik, a universal dance artist), *Táncstudományi tanulmányok (Scientific Dance Studies) 1996-1997*, 52., In: Kővágó Zsuzsa (ed.)

created in a different way and is not experienced with the same intensity, can still bring to the surface a kinesthetic experience. The body remembers, movement perception is activated by assigning the appropriate energy, and the actor – knowing their body's abilities – can activate the appropriate muscle groups, with the appropriate amount of energy, in any direction and level of space. Based on what they learned in the Berczik classes – given that they participated in group work and learned it during the movements for changing position and location –, they are able to relate to the position of the other body in space, assess its future path and speed, and they are able to shape their own accordingly. In addition, they become capable to move their body with the right energies and muscle tones for the appropriate emotional impulse, and the expression of the emotion is not only noticeable on their face, but their whole body conveys it. My statement above could even be a summary of Sára Berczik's classes, which is confirmed by the testimonies of the actors (participating in the master's classes). Her work was also recognized by the administration of the Színház- és Filmművészeti Főiskola (College of Theater and Film) college. This is proven by the document issued by László Vadász dated May 31st, 1969, which praises her outstanding work, disciplined conduct, and exemplary accuracy. It recognizes that during her education she achieved significant results for the development of the movement culture of acting students. In 1992, her methodology was published within the framework of public education as well, as recommended literature for physical education teachers and kindergarten teachers. This type of methodology was first introduced as a result of the modernization of the central curriculum. It was then when she wrote again the methodology of her movement development and gymnastics system, edited and helped by Lídia Sákoviczné Dömölky, which became part of the School physical education sports booklets series, as its 14th issue. The booklet is recommended for the age group of 3-10 years, which contains rather easy-to-learn exercises that were partly written with a preventive purpose, and partly aimed at making people love movement through versatile exercises. By 1995 the National Basic Curriculum defined the development requirement in detail and rhythmic sports gymnastics was recommended for female students. The composition of the exercises does not diverge from the goal I have already described, only in the regard that it has been designed and adapted to the level of development of the age group. Berczik exercises can also show significant results in prevention and rehabilitation in old age. For prevention, the beneficial effect of body-conscious movement, while for rehabilitation, the goal is to regain lost movement functions. The narrowing of the range of motion and a decrease in the flexibility

and performance of muscle groups can lead to health problems. For prevention, the goal is to apply Sára Berczik's consistently structured system, including exercises with an age-appropriate level of difficulty, correctly executed regularly. Sára Berczik recommends doing her exercises 2-3 times a week for 30 minutes. The book *A nő harmóniája* című könyve<sup>28</sup> (trans.: *Harmony of the Woman*) contains these exercises, illustrated with pictures. Instructions: a sequence of exercises must be completed over a week in order for it to be mastered accurately. Each lesson must be started with exercises that promote and develop awareness of the center, and their execution is always necessary. The exercises must be compiled in such a way as to mobilize and develop the muscles of the person in a versatile way, as well as to evaluate and monitor the progress of the exerciser always compared to themselves. It is therefore no coincidence that the principle of prophylaxis prevails in all her studies, and that the consideration of health aspects and prevention are of paramount importance in the compilation of the curriculum and lesson materials. As an example of the beneficial effect of these exercises in rehabilitation, I will analyze one of the typical problems of old age, its effect on standing and walking issues. During the rehabilitation, the recognition of location in space, the perception of the limbs, the determination of the position of the head in relation to space, and the perception of different body parts in relation to each other improve. A rolling movement takes place in footwork, thereby improving tactile perception, the reaction time decreases, and the muscles become stronger. The achieved results and improvements in movement increase the feeling of security, which results in a diminished feeling of falling and fear. It is therefore no coincidence that in 1996, recognizing the beneficial effect of Sára Berczik's gymnastics system, the training program of the Physiotherapy Department of HIETE<sup>29</sup> [Haynal Imre Egészségtudományi Egyetem (trans.: Haynal Imre Health University)] was accredited by the Hungarian Accreditation Committee. "Taking into account the international experiences, some disciplines have been introduced that are the same as the curriculum of study programs abroad courses."<sup>30</sup> Among these, we find Berczik's philosophy and methodology as a foundation subject, which the students have

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<sup>28</sup> id. műv. Berczik Sarolta, összeállította: Sákoviczné Dömölky Lidia, *A nő harmóniája, Torna Berczik Sára módra*,

<sup>29</sup> The legal predecessor of the Faculty of Health Sciences of the Semmelweis University between 1956–1999, after which the Faculty of Health Sciences was separated, but the Faculty of the Health College remained part of the university. s.n., s.a. Available URL address: <https://semmelweis.hu/>, download date: 22.04.2021.

<sup>30</sup> s.n., Semmelweis University Yearbook, 2001–2002, Semmelweis Egyetem Egészségügyi Főiskolai kar (Faculty of Health Sciences of the Semmelweis University) (EFK), s.l., 331.

mastered at both a theoretical and practical level, thus enabling them apply them in the field of prevention, therapy and rehabilitation alike. At the age of seventy-eight, she left the national team of rhythmic gymnastics (1984) and taught here continuously until her death. In my doctoral thesis, it occurred to me several times, which I do not deem as a negative, that Sára Berczik constantly observed the training thematic of her time – if she had the opportunity, also in an international context –, supplementing it with her own ideas and methods, in order to set up a training system that, in the long term, can hold its own in numerous field (art education, public education, healthcare). This gave rise to my curiosity as to how much Sára Berczik was influenced by the thematic of the defining movement art schools of her time, whether or not she included any part of them – or just their approach – in her system at any level. I have selected three important movement artists and made a comparative analysis. Towards this goal, I set up different systems of criteria and began to analyze the approach and teaching method of the movement artists. The other three movement artists I chose are: dr. Valéria Dienes, Lili Kállai, Olga Szentpál. My main criteria were the following: examining the approach of the education method, their implementation, and the experiences that fit into the concept of impact assessment of the achieved results and their expression, their comparison, and the search for parallels between them. In addition, I give an insight into the achievements of the schools and their art. I made the subject of my investigation whether there was an exchange of experience between them, in order to increase the effectiveness of their independent teaching method. Taking their musical education under scrutiny and in reference only to Sára Berczik, I came to the following findings: 1. Valéria Dienes studied music for fun and did not incorporate what she learned into her system; 2. Lili Kállai and Olga Szentpál integrated into their system the thematic created by Jacques Dalcroze from Hellerau, which they learned there, while the master, Sára Berczik (3.) converted what she learned in music into movement methodology, movement development, with and without the use of hand instruments, which is similar in some respects to those taught by Lili Kállai and Olga Szentpál, but it differs in that, even during the creation of the composition, she started from musical forms, and for her, the emphasis was on the presentation and perception of music. She also chose music closely related to the presentation of the theme she chose, whose sound world helped her as a choreographer, and also gave the theme its basic atmosphere. Since all four movement artists labored to create a new artistic form language and belonged to the avantgarde movement, I was interested in how much they broke from the academic, traditional, classical ballet style and technique –

if they did learn it. Valéria Dienes started from the foundations of a completely different culture, the Greek culture, from what she learned at the Raymond Duncan school, and that was the base of her system. This did not play an important role in Lili Kállai's life. It is interesting that this also applies to Olga Szentpál, but later, when she attended the classes of a Russian master (Klaydia Armasevskaia) as an observer, but taking notes, she recognized the consistently structured thematic and felt it was necessary to include it, but not the exercises, only the necessity of consistency as a fact. She used the exercises year after year, building on each other, for all age groups and skill levels. Sára Berczik also discovered the positive inherent in classical ballet in a similar way, agreeing with the principle of gradation and the development of a level of knowledge appropriate to the age group, as well as with the use of the handrail, which she also introduced in her classes, but by teaching completely different exercises, helping to develop the balance position. All four movement artists, albeit in different capacities, believed in the importance of the body–soul connection. Unlike the others, Olga Szentpál considers that the importance of the soul prevails over that of the body. “Not the healthy body creates a healthy soul, but a healthy soul creates a healthy body for itself.”<sup>31</sup> The task and goal is to illustrate spiritual experiences by making the body suitable for this, which requires mastering the appropriate technical requirements. Valéria Dienes argued that orchestration (dance art, movement art) is the arena of the soul: “If movement is the key to all our physical and mental self-control, then the discipline of movements is the first step in character building”<sup>32</sup>, whose fulfillment she saw it to be in her natural movement system based on physical laws. “Being that the human body discovers itself”, the learned movement is not created under the influence of compulsion, but “it's executed as a joyful success and brings boundless pleasure.”<sup>33</sup> I have never come across a definition of natural movement with such content. Under the term of natural movement, both in methodological works and in the public consciousness, everyone understands the movements developed during the process of growing into a human, generally available to everyone, which are of course genetically coded, but develop at different quality levels regardless of education. I cannot call the motosphere created by a phantom movement, i.e. the specifically defined

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<sup>31</sup>Olga Szentpál and Marius Rabinovszky dr., 1928, *Tánc- és mozgásművészet könyve (trans.: The book of dance and movement art)*, with the recording of Angelo Hugo Erfurth (Dresden) and Máté Olga, Budapest, Általános Nyomda, Könyv- és Lapkiadó R.-T. Publisher, 13.

<sup>32</sup> Országos Színháztörténeti Múzeum és Intézet (National Theater History Museum and Institute), Dance Archive, Valéria Dienes legacy, 2010.2.1.6. 33.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid - 33.

system of movement material, natural. It's another question whether, if I adopt this system, if it becomes a part of the body consciousness, do I enjoy the movement performed according to the systemic approach or not, and if so, does it help me discover anything in myself. Lili Kállai's formulation included much more practical ideas regarding the relationship between body and soul: the education of a person in accordance with the requirements of physical culture, which requires, as she puts it, "that the body, like an instrument, becomes perfectly suitable to express, to interpret external and internal impulses, emotions, moods, thoughts."<sup>34</sup> The definition of Sára Berczik's goal is close to this idea, according to which she felt that the power of the soul is important in the relationship system of expressive power, as the effect of any event surfaced during imagination on the soul, which helps the interpretation of movement, modifying the level of energy flow in the body at any level, thereby affecting the artistic effect. But this is only one part of her methodical system, as it was more important for her to develop the body culture at a level that would be suitable both at a hobby and professional level, becoming part of the everyday life, and for this purpose she aimed to develop different abilities, which included body awareness, artistic effect, maintaining motivation in the long term. The motivations of the four movement artists were inherently different, despite the fact that Olga Szentpál and Lili Kállai both started their pedagogical careers by teaching Jacques Dalcroze's method. Later on, however, quite a lot of similarities could be discovered in the establishment of the independent gymnastics systems of Sára Berczik, Olga Szentpál and Lili Kállai. Both of them considered the anatomy, knowledge of the structure of the body and its study during the implementation of movements to be important. It was no coincidence that both took into account the anatomical features of the body when planning the exercises. This is also evidenced by the booklet *Izomtan*<sup>35</sup> (trans.: Myology) found in the Kállai Lili legacy, which presents the structure of the musculoskeletal system<sup>36</sup>, and within this the structure and characteristic properties of the muscles. The foundations of anatomy education were laid down not only in the training system of Sára Berczik and Lili Kállai, but presumably also in the school of Olga Szentpál, as her legacy

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<sup>34</sup> Lili Kállai, 1982, *Mozgásművészeti rendszerem I. (trans.: My movement art system I.)*, László Maác (ed.), *Táncművészeti Dokumentumok (Dance Art Documents)*, Budapest, Magyar Táncművészek Szövetsége (Association of Hungarian Dance Artists), 198.

<sup>35</sup> Országos Színháztörténeli Múzeum és Intézet (National Theater History Museum and Institute), Dance Archive, Kállai legacy Fond 3/50. 1–4

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid* - Fond 3/50, 4-8.

contains a booklet,<sup>37</sup> which attests this fact. In Valéria Dienes's interpretation, the anatomy prioritizes the internal observation of the body, which ignores the planes, axes, and lines connected to space, which she briefly formulated in her book titled *A plasztika profil tagozata*<sup>38</sup> (trans.: *A profile section of plasticity*). This is essentially true, but if we consider as a basis the fact that, with the knowledge of the musculoskeletal system, the angles that can be created between the different bones in the relative system – by the joints – determine the formation of the different geometric lines along the different axes and planes, or by connecting them, then on the other hand, anatomy does not ignore the lines and contours related to space. On the contrary: its knowledge helps the analysis, reconstruction, or the creation of the new, the novum. What they agreed on was the importance of the role of breathing, even though they talked about different types of breathing. The work of Sára Berczik and Lili Kállai can also be considered a social shaping program, in which working women, men and children were included as well. The role of improvisation in their work was also interpreted differently. The idea of improvisation in group work also appears in the teaching of Valéria Dienes and Olga Szentpál. For Valéria Dienes, improvisation was an individually created set of symbolic movements in the interpretation of a specific choreography.<sup>39</sup> Olga Szentpál allowed the students to implement their ideas based on improvisation, in addition to the group of individuals breathing together.<sup>40</sup> In a more modern approach, Sára Berczik's basic idea was defined by imagination – the elicitation of emotional scales with the help of images –, but only as a supplement to her classes, not as part of group work, and not as an independent session. The most modern approach was represented by Lili Kállai with her intuition exercises and the creation of a separate improvisation class, in which she incorporated what she had learned at Rudolf Lábán's summer courses, which, unlike the Dalcroze school, did not originate with the music.<sup>41</sup> As we saw with Sára Berczik, Lili Kállai also considered it important to study as many methodologies as possible. If, after interpreting it, she agreed with the basic idea of the given methodology, or only a part of it, then she used and incorporated the part she agreed with into her own methodology. Movement artists

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<sup>37</sup> Országos Színháztörténeti Múzeum és Intézet (National Theater History Museum and Institute), Dance Archive, Olga Szentpál legacy 32.2013.11.18.36.

<sup>38</sup> Dr. Dienes Valéria, 2000, *A plasztika profil tagozata* (trans.: *A profile section of plasticity*), (Dr. Dienes Gedeon, Fenyves Márk, Pálos István, ed.), Budapest, Orkesztika Alapítvány (Orchestra Foundation), 23. 12.

<sup>39</sup> Valéria Dienes (1879-1978), Nemzeti Audiovizuális Archívum (National Audiovisual Archive) (, M2, ID: 334134, date of broadcast: 04.04.2007.

<sup>40</sup> op. cit. – Olga Szentpál and Márius Rabinovszky dr., *Tánc. A mozgásművészet könyve* (trans.: *Dance. The Book of Movement Art*), 31.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid - 191.



thought in 3 dimensions based on direction, axes, and planes. Regarding the name, a particular term was coined: Olga Szentpál and Valéria Dienes called their spatial system *spatial plasticity*. Valéria Dienes focused on the plasticity of the phases of the body.<sup>42</sup> She distinguished three phases: 1. statics: she mapped the poses and body line positions along the planes and axes. 2. relative kinetics: she analyzed changes in position, the relationship between the body and its environment. 3. absolute kinetics: she mapped the displacement that changes the position. Olga Szentpál devoted her attention to the plastic definition of the 6 spatial directions<sup>43</sup>: 1. boundary direction: in terms of body positions, she examined the spatial direction, which coincided with the classical ballet foot position, and within this she distinguished air positions: main and secondary directions (right, left, forward, backward, transversal, up, down). 2. development direction: this referred to the direction of advancing and start off. 3. axial direction: which was decided by the orientation of the pelvic basin. The methodologies of Olga Szentpál, Lili Kállai and Sára Berczik also include a content element belonging to the conceptual system of the sense of space: the relationship between the body and space. We can say that all four movement artists (Dienes, Szentpál, Kállai, Berczik) defined the smallest unit between the displacement of two body parts as measuring 45 degrees, which can be easily perceived even with the naked eye, just like the degree of displacement of the spatial stairs relative to the normal body position, in clock direction. Sára Berczik marked the value of displacement at 45 degrees, not only in the case of changes in direction, but also in the case of changes in height and depth. In addition, Sára Berczik and Lili Kállai defined ways of using space other than the type of movement, such as: straight, angular, curved, slanted, spiral ways. As an addition, Lili Kállai noted that in the case of a circular stage, when creating the composition, care should be taken to imagine the movement starting from the center of the body, according to the angle of vision. It is necessary to keep in mind the bound and unbound possibilities of the space.<sup>44</sup> The theories of Olga Szentpál, Lili Kállai and Sára Berczik concurred in defining the movement processes in temporal order. They all dealt with the elements of simultaneous and sequential movements, all three were based on the temporal laws of music, meter (recurring emphasis at regular intervals), rhythm (the length of periods that are shorter, longer or supplemented

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<sup>42</sup> op. cit. - M2 Anno, the explanation of Mária Mirkovszky.

<sup>43</sup> Idem - Szentpál legacy 32, 2013.11.8., 11.

<sup>44</sup> Lili Kállai, 1983, *Mozgásművészeti rendszerem II. (My movement art system II.)*, In: Dr. Edit Kaposi, *Táncművészeti Dokumentumok (Dance Art Documents)*, Budapest, Magyar Táncművészek Szövetsége (Association of Hungarian Dance Artists), 98.

with pauses) and tempo (fast or slow , i.e. determining the speed of the time scale of the piece of music). Nevertheless, Olga Szentpál focused on the language of movement, while Sára Berczik and Lili Kállai focused on skill development. In the case of Sára Berczik, I would highlight the use of instruments in the development of polyrhythms. Differing from them, Valéria Dienes created her rhythmic time sentences on the model of metrical foot taken from literature.<sup>45</sup> Quoting Valéria Dienes: “rhythmics as a division of time distinguishes the patterning of movement, musical and linguistic time.”<sup>46</sup> Her basic idea is the same as that of her contemporaries: “rhythm is important, it is in everything”<sup>47</sup>, rhythm is created, when I jump, move, shift, I create rhythm. They all found that force distribution within the movement is of key importance. They also agreed that this happens along a scale (Lili Kállai<sup>48</sup>, Sára Berczik<sup>49</sup>). Sára Berczik developed the polydynamics of movement in terms of force distribution, characterized by the different use of force between body parts.<sup>50</sup> It is interesting that Valéria Dienes goes back to her musical studies only in this particular case, so for her the scale between crescendo/acceleration and piano/deceleration determined the way of applying force. It can be said that the morphological concepts of the Berczik, Kállai and Szentpál schools are identical: the examination of the structure of artistic movement, the exploration of the course of movement itself, and the art of expression, which discusses the problems of the dance performance, are all given. Valéria Dienes examined the importance of movement studies (orchestics) – for her, rather than the practice of movement, its role in human development was more important. Lili Kállai named skill development within her system<sup>51</sup>, which is confirmed by the program about the exam found in her legacy, in which a special section was devoted to the presentation of skill development exercises during the exam performance. Although both Sára Berczik and Olga Szentpál constructed their own terminology in such a way that they included many types of skill development, they were not grouped together or emphasized as separate chapters. The IV. chapter of the doctoral dissertation also testifies to the fact that Sára Berczik's education system aids the

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<sup>45</sup> op. cit. - M3 Anno

<sup>46</sup> Ibid - M3 Anno

<sup>47</sup> Ibid - M3 Anno

<sup>48</sup> op. cit. – Lili Kállai, *Mozgásművészeti rendszerem II.* (trans.: My movement art system II.), 100.

<sup>49</sup> op. cit. Sákoviczné, *A nő harmóniája* (trans.: Harmony of the woman), 23.

<sup>50</sup> Sára P. Berczik, *Művészi nevelés, Mozdulatszintézis I. rész* (trans.: *Artistic Education, Movement Synthesis Part I.*) Booklet of the Movement Artist Teacher Training Course at the Magyar Mozdulatkultúra Egyesület (Hungarian Movement Culture Association), Budapest, 1995. 33.

<sup>51</sup> op. cit. – Lili Kállai legacy, Fond 3/28.

development of skills. Lili Kállai focused on the topic and, unlike her contemporaries, also defined its purpose: “to raise awareness of human abilities and talents, to eliminate inhibitions, to liberate the body and soul by correcting movement errors, and to develop expressiveness.”<sup>52</sup> Sára Berczik believes that the three elements of her system: the affective, intellectual and actual kinesiology are capable of developing movement skills only together and – in parallel – liberating the soul through inspiration. Interpreting the visions of all four movement artists, despite the differences, it can be said that they considered the separation of body parts to be necessary. However, unlike Valéria Dienes, who explained the role of independence in the creation of phantom movements in relation to the motosphere, Lili Kállai, Sára Berczik and Olga Szentpál felt the need to analyze the body, and considered it important to examine the movement possibilities of the joints. On the one hand, because of the body part's independent ability to adapt and express itself, and on the other hand, because they believed that isolation can also determine the intensity of the overall movement. What their positions also have in common is the sensitivity to defining the meaning content of the female role and the importance of taking it into account, as well as a vocational call and a consistent pedagogical approach. Furthermore, they also have in common the exercise of self-criticism, self-acceptance – not only as a person, but also as a creator and teacher, as well as the common goal of the movement art movement: becoming a part of the overall culture. All four movement artists sought the possibility of applying their themes and teaching methods in a wide spectrum, their right to exist as part of the artistic stage dance and mass physical education. The movement artists were looking for answers to a complex set of problems, which, in turn, caused many pedagogical disturbances. A unified pedagogical position did not develop among the movement artists of the era that I analyzed, and because of this, it became unsuitable for its wide spread in schools, as part of the school education. Even today, it can be observed that those physical activities that are available as a unit of public education, included in the school class schedule, and not as an element of after-school activities, are able to create a larger mass base. According to my assumption, if movement art had appeared in school cultural education, it would have been able to establish its right to exist, and perhaps it would not have been susceptible to the support reliant on the connection system of the always timely, actual political situation. Each movement art school followed a different path, despite the fact that I found similarities and overlaps in certain

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<sup>52</sup> op. cit. – Lili Kállai, *Mozgásművészeti rendszerem II.* (trans.: *My movement art system II.*), 95.

areas of education that I presented. The only point of view they agreed on was the opposition to the formalist world of ballet. The schools believed that they were capable of creating a new movement world and style, taking into account the movement world of the tradition, partly as a reason for the desire to escape from reality. In my opinion, the structure of Sára Berczik's body training system survived this era because she realized that it is only possible to build from the mistakes of the past, taking into account the progressive tradition, but that too has to start from the beginning. Movement art had a different meaning content before – and partly after – the “liberation”. Based on the data discovered from the period before the “liberation”, it became clear to me that Lili Kállai, Olga Szentpál and Valéria Dienes had gained experience in schools found abroad, and “bringing back” something from the studies they completed there, they started to establish and build their own independent education system, and to fill in its content, by which I am referring to the introduction of the subjects taught. Although Sára Berczik was admitted to and participated in the classes of many masters during her study trips in Vienna, this knowledge was by no means as deeply grounded as in the case of her contemporaries: due to the nature of the course, by which I mean its short duration, it did not ensure a comprehensive knowledge of a style. She therefore did not build her independent education system based on the thematic of a school that is already established and recognized internationally. It is a fact that the visits to Vienna shaped her way of thinking, could give confirmation to her ideas, whether she was on the right path or not, and also shaped her view of the educational system. Discovering newer, more modern approaches appropriate to the times prompted Sára Berczik to continuously revise her system, which she worked on until her death. Olga Szentpál writes in one of her studies that there was no cooperation between the schools due to professional jealousy.<sup>53</sup> Lili Kállai, Olga Szentpál and Valéria Dienes were members of the Mozdulatkultúra Egyesület (Movement Culture Association)<sup>54</sup> – one would assume that a common interest and goal would bring the schools together. However, one aspect in Sára Berczik's life that is in no way negligible was that Lili Kállai rushed to help her obtain her diploma, thus ensuring her school's recognition and its right to exist. Not a single written document that I discovered revealed whether Sára Berczik was a member of the Mozdulatkultúra Egyesület (Movement Culture Association), or not. Lili Kállai, after the closure of the movement arts schools by decree, refused to make a compromise – in order to preserve her right to exist – by retraining

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<sup>53</sup> op. cit. Olga Szentpál legacy, 32.2013.2.2.13.6.

<sup>54</sup> op. cit. Olga Szentpál legacy, 32.2013.2.5.15.

herself. She declared that “what she believed in and what she had done all her life, what she knew was good, she was not going to throw away.”<sup>55</sup> Olga Szentpál had a different perspective, she aimed to develop a comprehensive institutional system, she integrated the ideas already construed in the movement art and their results, and by synthesizing them into the stylistic morphological languages important to her, she created a new curriculum that she tailored to the expectations of the given performance art style. Valéria Dienes, like Lili Kállai, also did not continue the teaching of her system: she wrote philosophical studies, where she found accomplishment, for example, she wrote her Theory of Evology and her memoirs about Mihály Babits and Ervin Szabó. After the banning of movement art schools, Sára Berczik continued to teach in a dance work community as part of a possible movement education system, naturally according to a thematic matching the principles of management – which only defined the main guidelines under the heading of ballroom dance and ballet –, and she taught artistic gymnastics and classical ballet. Artistic gymnastics was recommended in the curriculum under additional techniques.<sup>56</sup> The goal was common, but the path was different: the search for a new form language opposed to the academic, bound movement, building a system based on natural movement, creating a new style. There was a common goal definition, even if the preliminary studies were the same, the construction of a new pedagogical system aiming to put to use the new style creation was formulated in a different way, taking into account, however, the scientific and pedagogical educational results of the past and the present. All four movement artists formed a dance group, but they did not have a permanent place to perform. The functioning of their school was covered by the tuition fees of the more affluent students, they did not receive support, as their operation was surrounded by political suspicion. All of them constantly held self-assessments, avowed their mission, were characterized by a sense of professionalism and a consistent pedagogical approach – both in creation and pedagogy –, staying true to the approach they believed in, which conversely showed completely different results, something that was already explained in the thesis. Among the four movement artists, Sára Berczik is the only one whose systemic approach is still taught today, and the exercises published in her books are used in the

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<sup>55</sup> Livia Fuchs, 1990, Beszélgetés Fáy Máriával (trans.: A conversation with Mária Fáy), *Táncművészet* (trans.: *The Art of Dance*), XV. (12), 22.

<sup>56</sup> Országos Színháztörténeti Múzeum és Intézet (National Theater History Museum and Institute), Dance Archive [In the Kállai legacy 6. Fond 30–71. box: Fond 3/63. I discovered a document related to the dance work communities (letter of Dr. György Haán from the head of the council department to the Public Education Department of the Budapesti Városi Tanács (Budapest City Council) – September 30, 1954.)]

elementary art education system. As a master professor at the Magyar Táncművészeti Egyetem (Hungarian University of Dance) university, I carry on the preparatory gymnastics and aesthetic physical training discipline in the higher education system, either as a master course, either as a discipline of skill development, and within the framework of university education, I introduce the students to Sára Berczik's approach and the essence of her pedagogy – supplemented with the results of current new methodological research. In my opinion, Sára Berczik managed to achieve this by keeping her movement pedagogy thematic alive in artistic gymnastics – the establishment of a new sport that has gone through so many name changes – which, when supplemented with other skill-developing, movement-based techniques, is able to ensure, not only at a hobby level, but at a professional level as well, the development of students who want to dance or who want to dance professionally.

I will end my summary with Sára Berczik's thoughts:

“In memory of my foster parents, Auntie Karolina and Uncle Gyuri; I feel like I paid head: Sári.”<sup>57</sup> The reason I chose this thought is because I feel like it is the same between me, as Sára Berczik's student, and the master, and it faithfully reflects the relationship between us:

***In memory of Sára Berczik; I feel like I paid head: Gabriella Kézér.***

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<sup>57</sup> op. cit. – Sákoviczné, A nő harmóniája (trans.: Harmony of the woman), 2.

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## **V. Publications on the topic**

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2018 UNI-V-ARTS Consortium, Facilitating the development of students' skills in public education institutions, EOP-3.2.6-16-0201600001, 30-hour accredited further training thematic material fashion dance (Sára Berczik's aesthetic gymnastics in skill development, according to the thematic of different dance styles of show dance (jazz, contemporary, contact improvisation) and further training, as well as conducting professionally the entire further training program

2020 Co-author of the book FASHION DANCE, a methodological presentation with thematic plans for primary art schools (preparatory/aesthetic gymnastics, creative children's dance, show dance (jazz, contemporary) technique)

Gabriella Kézér, 2022, Sára Berczik's life path, In: Árpád Kékesi Kun (chief editor), Theatron Színháztudományi periodika (Theatron Journal in Performance Studies), Budapest, Theatron Műhely Alapítvány (Theatron Workshop Foundation), XVI.(2), 47-60.