

A TEACHING METHODOLOGY OF FÉLÓLÁHOS ("HALF-WALLACHIAN") FROM GYIMES¹

by

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Féloláhos is the name of a solo man dance performed in the Gyimes region. It belongs to a larger Hungarian dance type, the *ugrós* dances (Martin 1970). In the following it is intended to present a methodology of teaching this dance, where the method uses the means of Labanotation in an integrated way.

The greatest difference between the Transylvanian and Transdanubian or Great Plain *ugrós* dances is in the length of the dance (the Féloláhos dances are much shorter than the others), in the applied movement sequences and elements – which are very similar to that of other *ugrós* dances –, and in the relation of the movement sequences to the musical main beats.

We have to make clear, that in this dance many slaps and claps can be found in really stabilized forms. Then we have to know the *structure* of Féloláhos, and we have to find typical movements and movement associations, supports and gestures, which are fundamental in this dance material.

For this a teaching strategy can be the following:

- understanding the music beats and sections (kolomeyka type with 4/8 metric structure and eight measure long music sections)
- finding the support rhythms and possibilities in even quarter na or even eights dd corresponding to the music
- finding the last two measures of a musical period with the characteristic rhythms of ddvdav or ddvaav
- connecting the separately identified motives (movement sequences) into one related section with the usual dd rhythms and closing the section with an augmented aa rhythm motive (which also consists the same movements)
- separating the leg motives and slap-clap motives from each other
- building an 8-10 measure long dance section, alternating leg and slap-clap figures.

¹ Gyimes is the name of a region in the East-Carpathian Mountains, inhabited by Hungarian population.

In Féloláhos the most important is to understand the possibilities of the support rhythms. The first dance step, what we can practice is one of the easiest forms. It is, when we jump from two to two legs with the rhythm of even quaters *aa*. If we intend to make this sequence a little bit more difficult, we can open and close the legs in the alternating supports – see Fig.1. If we change to the normal performance of this motive in even eights *dd* (Fig. 2.) we can see and also feel, much harder to change the first and second positions immediately one after the other. This is why the Gyimes dancers are doing a little variation in this motive. They slide on eighth point – Fig. 3. – and this form is much closer to the original movement style.

The form can be complete if we include more possibilities spatially, with the same movements: for example we can turn – see Fig. 4. We can also move on a straight path forward (Fig. 5.), backward (Fig. 6.) or on a circular path (Fig. 7.)

Another important support possibility can be found in the springs, e.g. if we hop from one leg to the same, and next time from one to the other – Fig. 8. This is a very important movement sequence, because we can find this motive in every *ugrós* dances, with a great variety in speed. Generally in the jumping dances this motive is in even quater *aa* but in this dance all the time is in even eights *dd*. A possibility of the teaching and learning methodology is to combine these two rhythmical forms in one – Fig. 9.

If we complete the support movements with gestures, we will meet another problem – Fig. 10. The music is too fast for performing these directions without modification. Almost impossible springing without sliding, especially if we want to show that progressing character of the dance (moving all directions in space, just like we did it with the motives before: Fig. 4-7.). We can modify the support directions to help easier dancing. If we slide–step into cross directions (diagonals – third positions), it helps to dance faster and easier because the initiating leg gestures can be performed with smaller deviations. This performance also helps change location – Fig. 11-12.

In this dance no matter how the support is related to the musical main beat. The motive of Fig 12. can be performed also as Fig. 13., where the movement sequence is started with the step instead of the slide.

Another point in understanding the dance structure is the correlation between the sections of the music and that of dance. The music has eight-measure phrases, and the dance tries to follow this structure, with a special possibility of augmentation. For example a rhythmical form of *dd vaav* musical closing is mirrored in the dance such as Fig. 14/a and 14/b. The two variations also show the possible difference in changing the sequence of step–slide. In the last measure of Fig. 14/b the clap and the slap helps to the make clearer and more understandable the augmented rhythm *aa*.

Slaps and claps can appear in other interesting movement associations in this dance. These elements are not stuck to the one or two measure structures, because it is not important in this dance. What is important is to correspond a musical phrase mainly to the leg figures and another to slap-clap figures.

Let's see, how we can understand the basic elements, and how we can build up the main slap-clap motives in this dance. The easiest way to try to follow the music beats in 4/8, if we do clap and slap on every beat – see Fig. 15. The next possibility to change the rhythmical form, without changing the main support and gesture forms in e.g. Fig 16. We can see there is one more slap between two music beats: it gives ornament, and it starts to give even eight to this basic rhythm form.

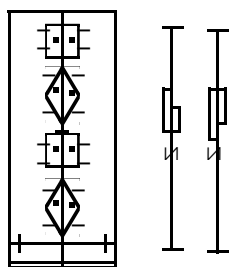
If we leave out one support (the closing in beat two) between two leg slap – see Fig. 17. – the connection of forward and side leg gestures becomes more direct, which gives an effect of “pressing” movement forms to each other. To approach the final character of the dance, a further modification is needed with a spring from both legs to the left – see Fig. 18. To develop further the dance technique springs are included at each slap at the free leg, as in Fig. 19. A special condensation into a new shorter rhythmical form of $_$ is also possible according to the notation of Fig. 20. It is resulted by leaving out the hold of support in the third beat.

Since the dance reflects an even eights acoustic character, the only chance to make shorter the rhythm form, and a to continuous eights is to transform the last quarter into an eighth such as in Fig. 21. This 5/8 form contains all of the main support and gesture and slap-clap forms what can be found in all of the man dances in Transylvania in 8/8 form.

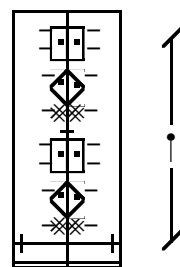
Another interesting feature in this complete form, that the support legs are performing the same as in Fig. 11-13. but with a different rhythm, so it is another good reason, why we have to learn deeply the basic support possibilities.

In the last form in Gyimes dance we can see one kind of 8/8 form but only in acoustics. This form is usually just for the closing form of slap-clap movement associations parallel with the end of the music sections of Fig. 21., but this is very important to understand correlation of support rhythm *aavaav* and clap rhythm *[y [yv[y av* because this form is the base of the slap-clap combination of lad's dances in Transylvania.

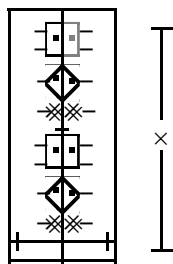
The complete dance material of "Labanotation in the Dance Teaching Methodology" presented by János Fügedi and Péter Lévai on ICKL conference 29. July 2001. part:#1



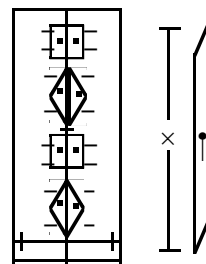
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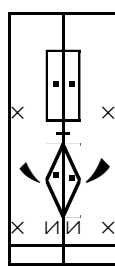
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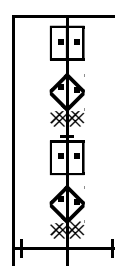
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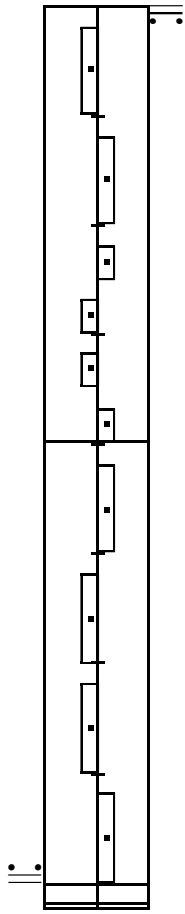


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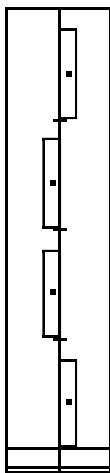


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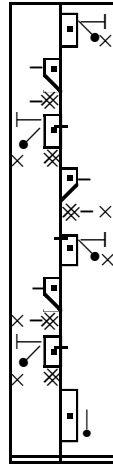
The complete dance material. #2



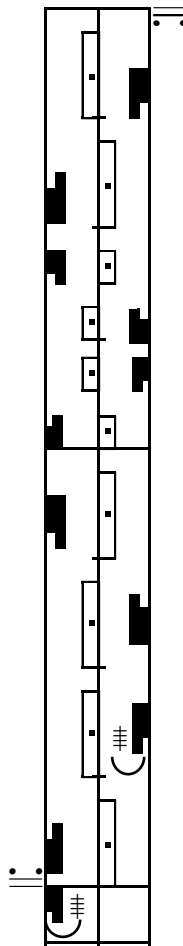
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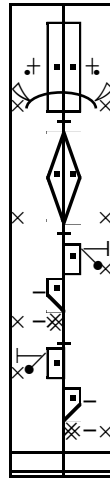
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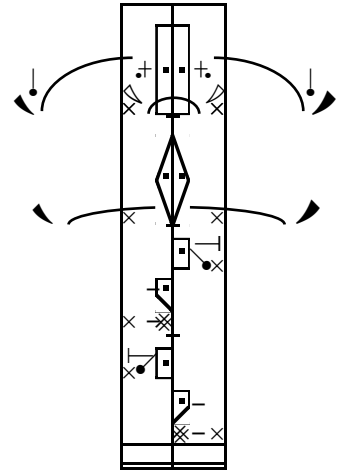
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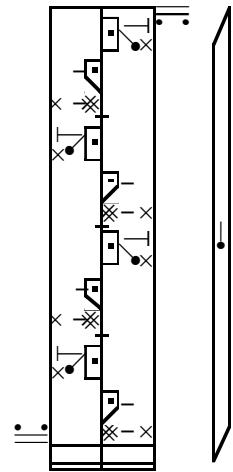
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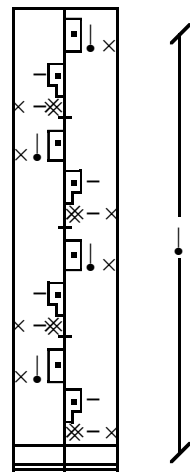
14/a.



14/b.

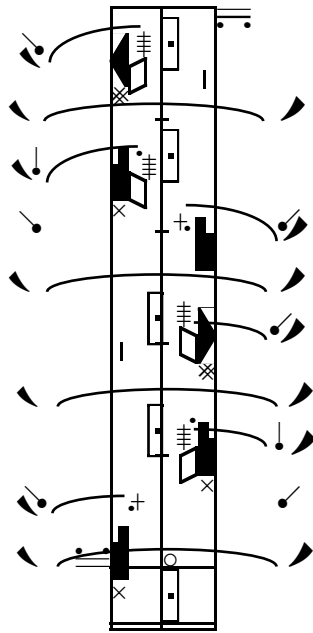


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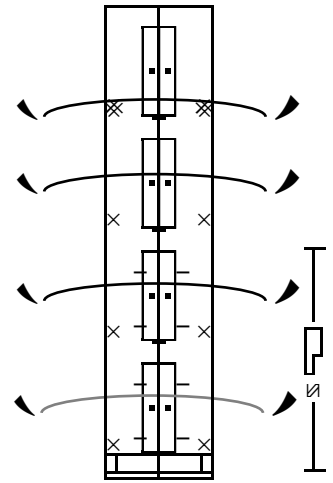


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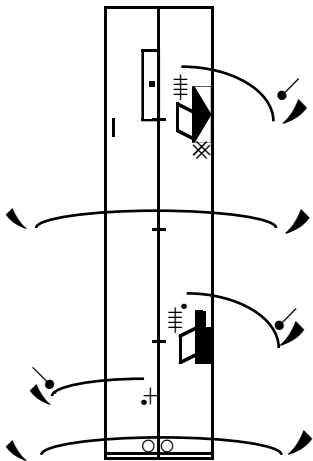
The complete dance material. #3



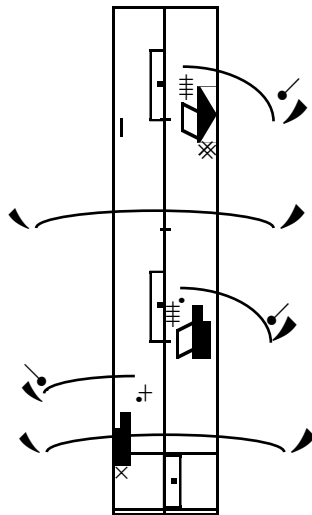
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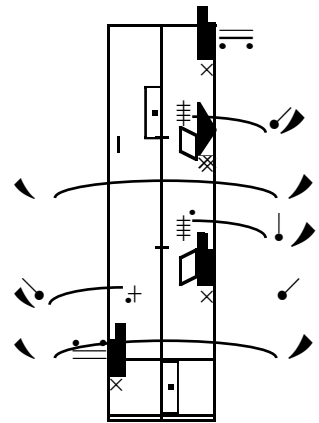
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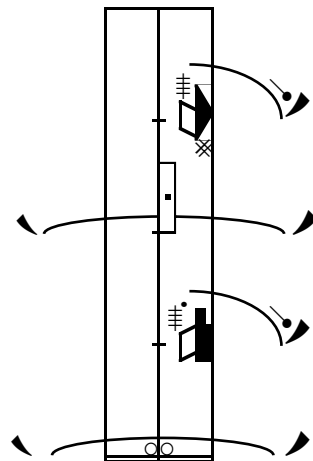
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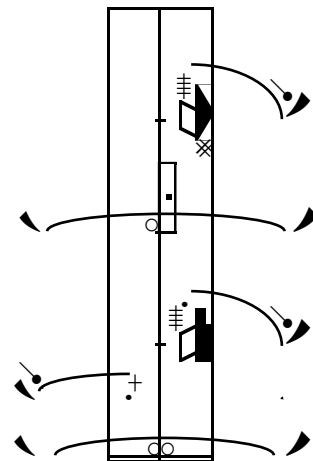
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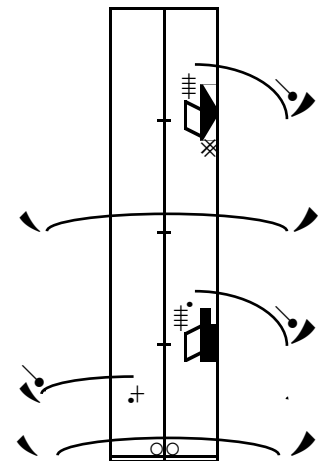
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15.



16.



17.