

**Laban-Aristotle: Ζών (Zoon) in Theatre Πράξις (Praxis);  
Towards a Methodology for Movement Training for the  
Actor and in Acting**

**Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of Royal Central School  
of Speech and Drama and University of London, for the degree of**

**Doctor of Philosophy**

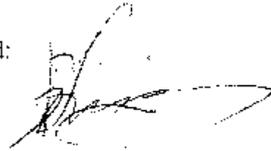
**March 2013**

**By**

**Vasiliki Selioni**

I, Vasiliki Selioni, understand the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama definition of plagiarism and declare that the submission presented here is my own work. Information derived from published or unpublished work of others has been formally acknowledged.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Vasiliki Selioni', written over a faint dotted line.

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**DVD**

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## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my parents  
Michalis and Alik Selioni

## Abstract

The focus of this research rests on an investigation into the links between Laban and Aristotle with the view to propose a new approach to movement training for the actor. I will argue that in contrast to the standard Platonic reading, Laban's development is best understood through the conceptual framework of Aristotle. This provides not only a more secure theoretical approach, but also a practical one, which establishes the art of movement as a *science*. In short this investigation intends to establish Laban's philosophical foundation upon a reading of Aristotle's *Poetics* and, in particular, on the reading of the *Poetics* by the contemporary Greek philosopher Stelios Ramfos in his book *Μίμησις Ἐναντίον Μορφῆς (Mimesis versus Form)* (1991-1992). What is significant about Stelios Ramfos's interpretation is that he attempts an analysis and interpretation of the concepts of the *Poetics* in terms of theatre performance. It is this emphasis on performance that make possible the task I have embarked upon of locating Laban's theory and practice in the conceptual framework of Aristotelian *poetic science*. The discussion will serve as a critical framework from which to propose a new way of applying Laban's movement concepts practically to the movement training for actors. The research methodology is also practical. It will therefore also develop and present a performance that attempts to apply Laban's terms, as they are discussed, in relation to Aristotle, and (in Chapter 4) in relation to the new methodology as well as a syllabus of practical classes addressing actor movement training both in kinesthesia and characterization. The ultimate goal of the research is to contribute an approach that can inform the way Laban's concepts are taught and provide suggestions for the structuring of technical movement classes for actors.

## Introduction

The application of Laban's method in actor training has a long history that extends beyond his work in dance and it is in on this area that the research is focussed. Although Laban himself applied his method to the training of actors, it was left mainly to his followers to develop, often erratically – or such is the proposal of this thesis – Laban's insights. Practitioners such as Jean Newlove, Yat Malmgren, Geraldine Stephenson, Brigit Panet and so on have all continued to develop his work - each have offered movement classes for actors based on Laban's principles. Each of these individuals has developed a specific method for actors based upon Laban's principles. It is worthy of note that these methods do not differ essentially from one another, and it is significant that all of them agree in principle that the philosophical foundation of Laban's theory and practice is to be interpreted according to platonic precepts. In this PhD, I argue that it is this Platonic foundation that underscores each of the above practitioners own development and notwithstanding differences between them, it is Platonism that unifies all according to a common philosophical approach.

This Platonic interpretation originates with Laban's Rosicrucian period when Laban explored the directions of the human body in terms of the Platonic icosahedron<sup>1</sup>. It was an investigation that brought the art of dancing to a new era by breaking with the *stability* of the dancer and instead introducing the concept of *lability* or *instability*. In this way Laban replaced the two dimensional conception of the space in dance by a 'Platonic' icosaedrical perspective. Until this point the dancer was located in a cube and his directions were limited to front/behind, up/down, left/right. Laban's icosaedron opens up new possibilities in movement because it expands the boundaries of the body's directions employing the full dimensions of space. This innovation led Laban to be celebrated in the field of dance as the father of the contemporary dance. The platonic influence on Laban's theory and practice was explicitly established in Curl's *Philosophical Foundations* originally written as a series of articles in 1966-1967 published in *Laban Art of Movement Guild Magazine*. In these

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<sup>1</sup> Plato in *Timaeus* states that the creation of cosmos is based on five solids; each of them represents the elements of nature: cube for earth, tetrahedron for fire, octahedron for air, dodecahedron for cosmos as a whole, and icosahedrons for water. See also Newlove's book *Laban for All* where she is referring to Laban and his connection with platonic ideas.

articles, the relation between Laban and his followers, and their pursuit of a philosophical foundation was discussed. Ullmann, Laban's principal collaborator during the last period of his life, explains: 'serious study of this kind requires a philosophical foundation' (Ullmann as cited in Curl 1966: 7). Moreover, two other factors would dramatically influence the descendants of Laban in developing teaching movement for actors: Laban's background in expressionist ideas and the connection of his theory and practice to the work of Stanislavsky. Later the present research will discuss how these factors influenced their teaching methods in ways that may be considered to be working against Laban's aims.

The research is divided as follows:

Chapter one examines the 'roots of the problem', identifying the location of the research within current issues regarding movement for actors, particularly those stemming from the 'Laban heritage'. In order to examine the main problems in this heritage, the first chapter concentrates on readings of Laban that rely on a platonic philosophical foundation, the expressionistic tones of his work and the connection with Stanislavsky's method of acting. Since it requires a reevaluation of the philosophical foundations of such approaches, the chapter will also focus on *mimesis* in philosophy from Plato, Aristotle, and Post-Aristotelian approaches, in an attempt to redefine the philosophical foundations underlying Laban's work. With regards to the concept of *mimesis* I adopt and adapt Stelios Ramfos' approach. One significant intervention here is the way Ramfos introduced an explanation of the notion of *mimesis* as a vital presentation (*ζῶον*) rather than as is standard in translations of the notion *representation*. The chapter uses Ramfos' argument, then, as a framework in which to locate the comparative analysis between Laban and Aristotle.

Chapter two proposes four important links between Aristotle and Laban and establishes a new philosophical background against which Laban's movement principles can be understood. This will then serve as a theoretical framework for my own practice insofar as it seeks to renew the methodological grounds of Laban-based movement training for actors. The research proposes that the links between Laban and Aristotle are stronger than those between Laban and Plato as it has been conventionally assumed. This review of Laban's philosophical foundations has a direct impact on the re-evaluation of Laban's theory-practice. The four links I will examine are the Aristotelian principles or concepts that bear a direct relation to Laban which will help to redefine our understanding of *mimesis*: (1) *The creation of a world per se* (*έννας κόσμος αυτός καθ'αυτός*), (2) *Art as Science-The Poetic*

*science*, (3) *Artist as Demiourgos*<sup>2</sup>, and (4) *The notion of indestructible time-indestructible dynamics in relation to the notion of presence and corporeality (kinesthetic experience and ζῶον)*. Chapter three pursues this line of thought by critiquing the work of the main practitioners who have continued the legacy of Laban's principles in the training of movement for actors, and the way in which they connect Laban's approach to Stanislavsky's method of acting. Reference is made to more recent contemporary approaches in teaching movement for actors influenced by Laban principles in order to show to what extent they have also based their work on the connection between Laban and Stanislavsky. In Chapter four a new practical methodology that is underpinned by this new revised theoretical approach to Laban is introduced for the movement training of actors; including a series of exercises on a DVD, intended to meet the requirements of the contemporary movement training of actors. Finally, the last chapter five seeks to critically reflect on my methodological recommendations and evaluate the principal claims of the thesis in light of my practical experiments in the studio.

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<sup>2</sup> *Creator*. A notion discussed in Plato's *Timaeus*.

# Chapter One

## Introduction

The focus of this research is the theoretical and practical enquiry into the proposition that there is a strong link between Laban's theory of movement and Aristotle's *Poetics*. Specifically, it proposes that Laban's analysis of human movement is inextricably related to Aristotle's concept of *mimesis* conceived as a *zōon* (*living organism*). Until now the discussion of Laban's philosophical foundations has concentrated on the supposition of a Platonic influence (Curl 1966: 7-15). Rather, this study suggests that Laban's concepts are more in tune with the Aristotelian concept of *zoon* (*ζῷον*). I will use this argument to underpin the proposal of a new methodology for the teaching of movement for actors. Moreover, the research will argue that contrary to conventional approaches that align Laban's concepts to Stanislavski (e.g. Newlove (1993), Mirodan (1997) and Mildenderg (2009)), these concepts are in fact in direct opposition to Stanislavski, both in terms of their aesthetic/philosophical and practical approach, and in their attitude towards psychological implications concerning character development. Furthermore, the critical analysis of Laban and Aristotle will serve as a framework to support the proposal of a new series of classes, based on Laban's theory and practice. Bearing in mind constantly that Aristotelian *mimesis* is to be understood in the sense of the notion of *zoon* (*ζῷον*) – life – and that only on this basis can it be used in relation to the training of the actor's body for the art of the theatre. Moreover, the classes will be constructed on a framework that seeks to address both theoretical and practical issues in terms of scientific methodological demands. In other words the structure of the classes should follow a *logical order*, as Aristotle suggests when he talks about *science* (*first principles, middle terms* etc); that is, the methodological basis of proceeding from the first simple action to a more complex one.

This investigation therefore intends to establish Laban's philosophical foundation upon Aristotle's philosophy and mainly as it is developed in his famous treatise on theatre – the *Poetics*. The research will re-examine the conceptual basis of their mutual philosophical systems in order to establish similarities between Aristotle's and Laban's understanding of *human praxis* (in theatre). Significantly, the research will propose that they share a common understanding of the role of the performer's kinesthetic experience in theatre and that this experience is to be understood as possessing no psychological implications. The research

will discuss how, for both Laban and Aristotle, the process of art-making is one of intentionally creating a *world per se*. Namely, the creation of a new poetic reality, which does not exist in this world. This idea is the foundation for their understanding of *mimesis* which is based on a process of *poetic science* – the aim of which is for the performer to live in a *constant presence* on the stage. In other words, the performer is able to be constantly attentive to her/his body's ever changing rhythms, in present time, and thus is able, during the performance, to continually experience what we might call, following Aristotle, an *aesthetic time* and not merely a *physical sense of time*. This presupposes a well-trained body – that the performer works under the condition that his or her training develops bodily awareness both in movement and in voice and addresses, holistically, the needs of the dramatic art. In cases where the performer lacks that ability his/her presentation stands as a schematic presence that reveals its inartistic character. Aristotle calls this constant presence *zoon* (greek ζῶον = *living thing*), whereas Laban defines it as *kinesthetic experience*. By relating these two concepts I propose to show how close Laban's conceptual framework is to that of Aristotle's. Moreover, by connecting Aristotle and Laban the research provides the opportunity to elaborate not only a theoretical approach, but also a practical one, establishing the art of movement as *science*. Laban's descendants have often been dismissed the idea of a scientific approach in movement, as they have emphasized first and foremost the emotional and expressionistic character of the method, whereas *science* focuses on logical elaboration and a conscious intention, developed through the structure of a character.

In order to suggest a new theoretical and practical training for actors the research incorporates Stelios Ramfos's theoretical approach to Aristotelian *mimesis* as ζῶον (living thing). According to Ramfos in *mimesis* as *zoon* (ζῶον) the actor lives in a state of constant presence on the stage, but also – that the 'aesthetic' the beauty of ζῶον lies in the logical development of the actions such that they constitute a unity, that is to say, the unity of one *praxis* (action). Ramfos argues<sup>3</sup>:

Time in the case of the work of art and its pleasure is all in its duration, from the beginning to the end and not some moments that require the participation of the spectator's soul...indeed the poetic *synkinisis* (affect) is not produced by the assembling of the external parts of the work of art, but is extracted from its

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<sup>3</sup> All translations from the original Greek text to English by author

existential perfection, namely its function as the energy of a living whole (Ramfos 1991: 201).

Insofar as it accomplishes this, the body lives the time as a constant *Nun* (now) transforming abstract *physical time* into the *indestructible time of living presence*. Actually, the *now* has been transformed into aesthetic time ‘free from every day world of our sufferance and gaieties’ (Laban 1950: 5). Laban recognizes that a body lives its effort rhythms in a constant ‘now,’ pressing into a certain space and time, interrupting physical time and replacing it with the experience and fullness of the somatic energy of the body. Thus, there is a period of time that happens in physical time that becomes a moment of *Katharsis*, since man sets aside external reality and lives the pleasure of his existence through his/her or movement, i.e, he experiences time as embodied.

The research will establish links between *indestructible time* and Laban’s approach to movement as *kinesthetic experience* specifically in his *Effort Theory*. One problem that the research aims to address is how this framework can propose a new way of applying Laban’s movement concepts to the movement training for actors. Namely, the research establishes that Laban proposes a way of “living on stage” not only in *indestructible time*, but by introducing *Effort*. Aristotle introduces the notion of ζῶον and its living time as the cathartic duration of a unity, but actually in this way he also provides an ontological theory for the text and its plot, as an organic unity. It is important to acknowledge that in Aristotle’s time the semiotics of speech was understood in terms of rhythms that were capable of transferring emotions; for this reason, Aristotle offered the principles of the dramatic art directly at the level of speech. Aristotle with the notion of ζῶον implies the movement of the body, but on a second level – that of speech. Laban living in a different period, in which words are symbols that when viewed on their own mean nothing, realizes that the body is more capable to conveying meaning and thus presents vast nuances for the contemporary theatre. Laban replaces the code of language rhythms with the body’s movement rhythms (including voice), and like Aristotle steers the dramatic art away from all psychological implications, during the training of the actors. In short, when developing kinaesthetic awareness, actors do not need to identify with any character, nor do they need to experience ‘emotions’. The exercises that this research proposes are constructed to give attention to actions and their Effort qualities, to promote interaction between body and mind.

On this basis, Laban offers a mode of training that could function as the support to every method of acting, since he establishes a practical guide for a new poetic science: *The Art (and its Mastery) of the Movement on the Stage*. In 1950 Laban stated that ‘the elements of movement when arranged in sequences constitute *rhythms*’ (Laban 1950: 130) and from this developed *Eukinetics* which is the study of dynamics of movement and rhythm. What Laban calls *effort* are the visible movements of the human body, which are the result of its inner attitude. His *effort* analysis ‘enables us to define our attitudes towards the factors of movement (weight, space, time, flow) on the background of the general flux of movement in proportional arrangements’ (Lange 1970: 5) Finally, this research can be seen as a practical explication of the manner in which the Aristotelian *ζῶον* moves, thereby contributing to Aristotle’s ontological and poetic theory by developing a practical training for the actor in the kinesthetic experience of *ζῶον*. The result of this analysis will be presented in chapter four in the form of a syllabus of practical classes addressing actors’ movement training. The ultimate goal of the research is to contribute a new approach that can inform the way Laban’s concepts are taught and provide suggestions for the structuring of technical movement classes for actors in an attempt to offer a complete methodology of Laban theory and practice focusing exclusively on characterization and not on Laban studies for dance.

### **1.1 The Roots of the Problem and the Case for New Knowledge**

In 1966 Liza Ullmann argued for the necessity of establishing Laban’s philosophical foundations as a means to understand his legacy:

At a time increasing demands are made on us for study in depth, it is indeed fortunate, that through Laban’s investigation, through his defining and propounding the area of movement, we have an enormous treasure of material and knowledge, upon which to base these studies. But, it must not be forgotten, that serious study of this kind requires a philosophical foundation (Ullmann cited in Curl 1966: 7)

Curl’s *Philosophical Foundations*, and Foster’s *The Influences of Laban* are a first attempt at proposing links between Laban’s concepts and key aspects of Platonic and Pythagorean philosophy. Curl, connects Laban with ‘Plato and mystic metaphysics’ (Foster, 1977: 166) and through that connection he establishes Laban’s platonic philosophical foundation. Foster locates the influences behind Laban’s concepts and undertakes an investigation into

the possible connection, not only with Plato and the Pythagoreans, which Curl had already suggested, but also to every possible connection with other philosophers such as Fichte, Nietzsche, Rousseau, Froebel, Aristotle, Heidegger, Kierkegaard, Hegel, Dewey and Russell. Foster finally concludes that the link between Laban and Plato (or the Pythagoreans) does not exist; for that matter, he is not suggesting a specific philosophical approach, although he concedes that it is very clear from Laban's words that there is a connection with ancient Greek philosophy (Foster 1977: 39-69). Despite Foster's findings, Laban's descendants persisted in pursuing the idea that Laban's philosophical foundation was based on Platonic philosophy. For instance, after Laban's death, his close collaborators and students (Ullmann, Newlove, Preston-Dunlop, Stephenson) connected Laban with Plato, based on Laban's research on the Platonic icosaedron as a perspective for man's personal space, which he calls *kinesphere*, during his Rosicrucian period<sup>4</sup>. It is also this connection that led further researchers to base their teaching in practice on expressionistic movement<sup>5</sup> (See Evans, p. 33). Gordon (1975) describes the expressionistic movement as: 'muscular posturing', 'intensity', 'huge and pathetic gestures', 'grotesque gestures', 'pauses', 'primitive expressiveness', 'overwhelming pressure in movement' (Gordon 1975: 35-39). Moreover, in the application of Laban to the field of actor training, Laban's concepts were also connected with Stanislavsky's method of acting (Newlove, Stephenson, Malmgreen, Panet, Andrian). This connection started with Yat Malmgreen and Jean Newlove, and continued with the new generation of their descendants like Barbara Andrian, Brigit Panet, etc.

Key questions arise here: First, why is Laban connected with Platonic philosophy given that for Plato art is a mirroring of the *Ideal World* and Laban states at the preface of his book *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* that the stage is a mirror of man's physical, mental and spiritual existence? Second, why did Laban in his two last books *Modern Educational Dance* (1948), *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* (1950) exclude the icosaedrical perception of space and replace it with cube-based directions making no reference to his early research? Is there not, in these omissions, a strong indication that he has moved away

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<sup>4</sup> Laban was member of Rosicrucian brethren at the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> AD when he was studied at Écoles des Beaux Arts in Paris. Rosicrucians studied Hermes, Plato, Gurjieff, ancient Egyptian religious of Amon and Osiris, agnostic writings, Christian and Muslim texts (Preston-Dunlop 1998: 12).

<sup>5</sup> When referring to expressionistic movement I am using the term to define the historical aesthetic of expressionism in theatre and dance commonly applied in writings such as Gordon (1975).

from his former platonic influence? As far as the later book, *Choreutics*, is concerned, it is interesting to note that it refers mainly to Laban's analysis of space in an icosaedrical perspective, although it is this book that has provided until now the evidence of Laban's connection to Plato. It is essential to mention, in connection to this, that Ullmann herself published the book in 1966, eight years after Laban's death, naming Laban as its author. Ullmann mentions in the preface that the book consists of his students' manuscripts of notes from Laban classes during his German period. Thirdly, if Laban's philosophical foundation rests on platonic philosophy, why do his descendants teach his method under expressionism, given that Plato is generally considered to be a Formalist? Fourth and finally, there is the question concerning the connection of Laban with Stanislavsky's method of acting: how can platonic philosophy be connected with Stanislavsky, since a Platonic approach would appear to be antithetical to any psychological implication in theatre?

In fact the research undertaken here takes its initiative from Laban's own words in his last original book, published in 1950 *Mastery of Movement on Stage*. Laban in the preface explains that the logical explanation of movement it is not a mechanistic approach but an understanding of the order of 'ever-flowing change' (Laban 1959: v) of movement, which is a result of the inner life of human existence. According to Laban, 'man moves in order to satisfy a need' (Laban 1950: 1) and the body's movement is an analogue to his/her inner life. It is precisely the recovery of the principles which underpin that analogy, which allow the deep understanding of human movement in an attempt to apply them to the mastery of movement on the stage. For Laban the stage is 'the mirror of man's physical, mental, and spiritual life' (Laban 1950: v) and 'has nothing to do with the world of ideas' (Laban 1950: vi). This statement situates Laban firmly on Aristotelian ground and not on Platonic territory recalling that the "big quarrel" between Aristotle and Plato, about dramatic art is that Plato believes that drama is a 'mirror' – however badly reflective – of the Ideal World' whereas Aristotle believes that drama is a 'mirror of everyday life'.

Laban in his book *The Mastery of Movement on Stage* makes a very interesting statement when he closes its preface. He mentions and acknowledges his friends and pupils, during his research period, and at the same time, he takes a curious distance from them:

This book embodies the practical studies and experience of a lifetime, but I could not have written it without close exchange of opinions with my friends and pupils...My thanks are therefore due to all those who have shared my work

on the stage and my researchers into the art of movement...But all those my coadjutors were present with me in thought as I wrote, and so I gratefully dedicate what I have written to all of them. In this guide to stage (and incidentally to factory) practice I have been obliged to work to my own special pattern. Why this was necessary, study of the text will disclose (Laban 1950: vi).

My suggestion is that with this statement Laban clearly dissociates himself from what his collaborators and students believe about his theory and practice. Another important issue is that in the original edition of the text Laban makes no reference to his research on the Icosahedral perspective of space and his analysis for space is restricted to Aristotle's approach on the issue of *personal space*, an issue that will be discussed later in this research. Moreover, the same conception for space can also be noticed in his book *Modern Educational Dance* in 1948, in which Laban included only the graph of the cube and dynamosphere in his reference to space, something which, according to my analysis, strongly indicates that Laban during his English period is shifting to a different approach.

The problem becomes more complicated when Laban's method is connected with Stanislavsky and his method of acting. This connection started when Laban's collaborator Bill Carpenter -who was interested in psychology- proposed to Laban to research the links between the *Four Motion Factors of Effort: Space, Weight, Time and Flow* and Jung's ideas on psychological functions of *Thinking, Sensing, Intuiting and Feeling*. Laban continued this research after Carpenter's death with Yat Malmgreen. However, Laban stopped his collaboration with Malmgreen, which lasted for only a short time. In fact, it was Malmgreen who connected Laban analysis with the Stanislavsky method of acting (a further discussion follows in chapter three). Laban himself never mentions anything on psychological implications of acting in his last book; on the contrary he states:

All this has little to do with psychology as generally understood. The study of human striving reaches beyond psychological analysis. Performance in movement is a synthesis, culminating in the understanding of personality caught up in the ever-changing flow of movement (Laban 1950: 109).

Moreover, it is Ullmann who adds in the new revised edition at 1980 of Laban's *Mastery of Movement on Stage*, Stanislavsky's questions Where, When, What and How, to Laban's Space, Time, Weight and Flow (See p. 115 of her revised edition). It is notable that Laban starts his analysis by stating these four questions and giving their answers. Laban writes:

It is possible to determine and to describe any bodily action by answering four questions: (1) which part of the body moves? (2) How much time does the movement require? (3) What degree of muscular energy is spent on the movement? (4) In which direction of space is the movement exerted? (Laban 1950: 25).

He gives an example in answer to the above questions: it 'is the right leg', 'the movement is quick', 'strong', and 'is directing forward'. What is to be understood from these questions and answers is that Laban is more interested in the functional approach to the body's experience and rather less interested in analyzing character in the manner advocated by Stanislavsky. Ullmann retains the paragraph in which Laban himself in *Mastery of Movement on the Stage* excludes Stanislavsky's main concept of the 'Magic if' stating:

To perform movements "as if" chopping wood, or "as if" embracing or threatening someone, has little to do with the real symbolism of movement. Such imitations of everyday acts may be significant, but they are not symbolic (Laban 1950: 97).

Moreover, Laban continues referring to that kind of acting as "borrowing naturalism" which creates an "imitation of life", because according to him, it is only a description of single movements, that conveys the 'mood' and the feelings in a superficial manner. For Laban, *symbolic actions* are not mere 'imitations' or 'representation' of everyday life actions but '*silent living movements*' in which actions are not the description of what we consider as real life. For him, the observation of a man's movements in everyday life reveals that there is a poetic meaning in every day actions 'pregnant with emotions' which he calls *movement sentences* or *movement sequences* that render them significant. *Movement sentences* have as their main characteristic a specific order structured by an 'unusual combination of movement' and through them convey a 'coherent flow of movement' (Laban 1950: 97-104). Laban continues:

The question now arises whether any comprehensive order can be found in this emanation of silent world, and if so, whether this knowledge of orderly principles would be of advantage to the actor-dancer, and the general standard of dynamic art on the stage (Laban 1950: 98).

Taking into consideration Laban's own words and statements my research not only re-evaluates Laban's philosophical foundation on Aristotle's philosophical ground it thus shifts his theory and practice away from Stanislavsky's method of acting, to an attempt to

establish the art of the movement for actor training as an autonomous discipline, a method, that I suggest is both teachable but also is capable of providing a supporting study for all the theatre approaches and forms of acting including acting on screen.

In order to provide a new methodology for movement training in contemporary acting, the research also takes also into consideration Mark Evans' book *Movement Training for the Modern Actor* (2009). Mark Evans comments that actors resist scientific understanding of the body; a commonplace attitude among dancers and sports people (Evans 2009: 145). The acquisitions of complex movement skills (which tend to be based on an instrumental or mechanistic approach to the body) are seen to work against actors' desire for their craft to retain a certain degree of mystery and magic:

The body as instrument or machine (even in the temporary basis) removes it as a site for physical pleasure, mystery, magic and delight. Somehow actors seem to require that some aspect of their art remains ineffable, beyond the reach of conscious rational intellect. This begs the question: What is lost if the transformative process of the actor is made conscious, rational or formulaic? (Evans 2009: 145).

In offering a response to Evans, the research adopts an Aristotelian perspective and proposes that knowledge, which is the main issue in both *episteme* (science) and art, is gained through training, and that training requires a conscious and rational approach. It is interesting to note that for Ramfos (2008) 'Aristotelian knowledge is a complete existing fact, not only an intellectual activity'; that is to say for him knowledge is always a dynamic enquiry and not a *stasis* (fixed point) (Ramfos: 2008). It is connected with *memory* and it is always in constant development. Ramfos explains in this way that Aristotle's explanation of time as a *continuous now* is connected with *Nous* (mind) and its ability of storing, analyzing and combining the information received:

Knowledge is the ability of man to produce [the] future. The idea of producing [the] future is the idea of the rejection of instinct. For instinct is based on the past and it is the persistent return to the past. (Ramfos: 2008).

This idea of producing art through knowledge is a crucial point, for it has to begin by considering what it is that we mean when we refer to 'knowledge' or 'theory' in art and their relation with practice. Indeed, this research attempts to bridge the gap between theory and practice in the way in which Laban and Aristotle define art as science, offering a re-

evaluation of Laban analysis and practice that provides a means to overcome the actors' argument that rational explanation of movement leads to a static and formulaic outcome. Laban is aware of that and starts his book explaining the difference:

The reader may be acquainted with the famous Chinese story of the centipede which, becoming immobilized, died of starvation because it was ordered always to move first with its seventy-eighth foot, and then to use its other legs in a particular numerical order. This story is often quoted as a warning against the presumption of attempting a rational explanation of movement. But, clearly, the unfortunate animal was the victim of purely mechanical regulations, and that has little to do with the free-flowing art of movement (Laban 1950: v).

Furthermore, the current research argues that the notion of science (*episteme*) within theatre should be regarded as defined by Aristotle: *Poetic Episteme* is a *know-how* of the productive capacity of the art of the theatre.<sup>6</sup> Laban's book *Mastery of Movement on the Stage* (1950) coincides with this epistemological imperative both in its title and in its resounding invitation for the actors to engage in a complex understanding of the body in motion as a way to acquire essential movement skills. In order for *Poetic Episteme* to evolve, a logical elaboration and the establishment of a specific order are demanded. Ramfos explains: 'Logic is not a rational process, but a mechanism of transformation' (Sta Akra 2008) whereas its *order* is not a technical process which moves in a certain direction. On the contrary, logic moves in all directions and with multivalent, expansive combinations. Each possible combination is structured by a certain order. These words [I would suggest] echo Laban's attitude that exhorts practitioners to adopt a rational approach to movement training as a productive capacity: 'a movement makes sense only if it progresses organically and this means that phases which follow each other in a natural succession must be chosen' (Laban 1966: 4). In his preface mentioned above Laban refers to the story of a centipede opening the rational explanation of movement and the principles of movement.

Evans questions the efficacy of approaches towards the body's 'spontaneity' and 'play' without training the 'physical resources' (Evans 2009: 85):

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<sup>6</sup> Episteme (science) has its root in the verb *epistamai* which means to have a deep understanding of something, to master it.

a function of movement training [for actors] is, through the efficient alignment of the actor's physical resources, to enable and release the imagination and assist in the integration of their faculties ( Evans 2009: 85).

Evans highlights the demands that contemporary theatre places upon the actor to develop the efficiency of the body in order to meet the standards of the profession (Evans 2009: 14-16). Evans (2009) suggests that:

Thus the actor understandably desires a body ready for work, able to generate varied, multiple and fluid meanings; in effect a body which within the parameters of theatrical taste at any particular time, can perform as 'natural' and able to engage in an uninhibited manner with their environment [neutral body] so as to create the illusion of 'naturalness' (Evans 2009: 69).

The research demonstrates that Laban's concepts provide the possibility for the body to be *neutral* by "enriching" its effort ability, and *natural* by choosing the right order of actions and the right effort qualities similar to those of everyday life. Likewise, Aristotle provides the constituent parts of what he calls *Mimesis*, which is a *likeness* to everyday life. Moreover, the main issue with regards to the natural/neutral body is that of *indestructible time*, which Ramfos raises when he discusses *presence* on stage. Laban provides the exercises in order to train the performer body's kinesthetic experience *here and now*, a notion which was first introduced by Aristotle. Laban and Aristotle agree what the actor lives on the stage is his/her *indestructible dynamics, here and now*. Namely s/he lives his/her existential energy, outside the context of the mundane, with all his/her existence. The emphasis is placed on the experience of the present time through the praxis for both actors and audience. It is a moment of *catharsis*, since there is the possibility of experiencing in full the existence in an aesthetic time that produces pleasant emotions. This is the Aristotelian *idoni (pleasure)*, a state that Laban identified as important to his work but was unable to concretise. Laban, as cited in Curl, says:

What does one describe as the view of the dancer? Above all his infinite reverence of all dancing and the dedication to the core of all being, the well-ordered movement, the dance. This dedication is so exclusive that everything else fades away... (Curl 1967: 16).

According to Foster, this view of Laban's – also expressed in phrases such as 'dance is a divine power'- led Curl in his article *Philosophical Foundation* to argue for an intimate connection between Laban and Plato and Pythagoreans, indicating that there is a kind of mysticism in Laban's work (Foster 1977: 47-50). In contrast to this perspective, I argue that

Laban, understood on Aristotelian grounds – and specifically, in light of Ramfos’s proposals of mimesis in synthesis and performance (the idea of presence on stage as *indestructible time* – a notion I shall argue is developed by Laban in his theory-practice of effort) provides not a mystical but a logical rationale that validates scientifically Laban’s approach to presence on stage.

Ramfos approach which is also discussed in DiLeo’s (2007) presentation with the title *Continuity and the Now in Aristotle’s Social Theory* explains that with the concept of the *Nun*: ‘Aristotle describes a type of human activity that is concerned with the effects of its consequences on the achievement of human flourishing’ (DiLeo 2007). Also in his another lecture, given in Chicago in 2007, with the title *The Temporal Context of Aristotle’s Biological, Ethical and Political Thought* DiLeo explains:

Aristotle’s general description of time and his references to issues related to it in reference to living things provide a backdrop for an understanding of human happiness and governance that exhorts us to attend seriously to the events, people and things that we encounter in all their particularity because our deliberations and choices do make a difference (DiLeo 2007).

This line of thought, which rejects mysticism, will allow us to reposition Laban in symphony with Aristotle’s philosophy, providing scientific validity, and philosophical foundation to Laban’s movement analysis<sup>7</sup>.

Both Aristotle and Laban place particular emphasis on another characteristic: synthesis in art. They insist that there must exist a very certain way of order in speech and movement similar to the way that dance art works. This order is necessary so that a certain meaning is communicable to the audience, any change in the order affecting the final meaning: ‘the most natural is the best organised’ Ramfos (2008, lecture, 31-01-08). In this way, order leads to a synthesis which Aristotle denominates *Praxis* (which is perfect and important) (Ramfos 1991: 151). According to Ramfos it is the actions of the character which eventually reveal his/her character. Ramfos indicates Theophrastus’ book *Characters*

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<sup>7</sup> The very word metaphysics, ‘metaphysical’ came from Aristotle, although he did not attribute this meaning to his work. Nevertheless, Aristotle’s name has been associated with metaphysics for 2000 or so years!

(Theophrastus was Aristotle's student) in order to give an example of what Aristotle means by *praxis*.

he will remove a morsel of wool from his patron's coat; or, if a speck of chaff has been laid on the other's hair by the wind, he will pick it off; He will take the cushions from the slave in the theatre, and spread them on the seat with his own hands (Theophrastus 1902 in [http://www.archive.org/stream/charactersoftheo00theouoft/charactersoftheo00theouoft\\_djvu.txt](http://www.archive.org/stream/charactersoftheo00theouoft/charactersoftheo00theouoft_djvu.txt) ).

The main goal of *praxis* is *Peripeteia* (*anastrophe, reversal*). Thus, for Aristotle a *praxis* is not informed by necessity (which would make it determined) but by *probability*, suggesting some measure of unexpectedness and contingency, both in speech and movement. Similarly, Laban gives the example of playing the role of Eve at the moment of picking the apple implying that there are a lot of ways to execute that action. This action in terms of necessity is that simply picks the apple; in probability, this action must be embodied in a way that must be found from among a spectrum of different ways of picking the fruit. This activity for the actor is not a trick in order to charm the spectators, it is an artistic activity. Actually, what happens in reality is a vast number of combinations of picking an apple. Laban is in agreement with Aristotle when he declares that *asymmetry* is more exciting and interesting than *symmetry*.

Following this line of thought, *praxis* must be structured in contra-distinction to the conventional approach to acting that until recently calls for 'natural' action. What I mean with 'natural action' is the action that stems of *necessity* and not *probability*. Usually that action is produced – not from carefully chosen action – but from the spontaneous reaction of the actor to given circumstances. Aristotle stands opposed to this type of 'naturalism', in the sense, for three reasons: first because it is produced by spontaneity that relies on a non – artistic capacity second it relies on psychological implication and thirdly, it does not produce a new reality. What is proposed by Aristotle as an alternative is that the structure of an action must not be spontaneous but 'logical' – for the actor, understanding the logic of action is the main requirement. This differentiation is important as *Praxis* is normally translated in English generally as action, a term which does not allow for a more refined understanding of the concept.

What this research proposes then, is a new way of approaching movement training for actors in the 21st Century, following Aristotle and Laban, which significantly avoids

psychological implications and regards the art of acting as inextricable from the art of dancing: namely, requiring strict precision and clarity of performance. The argument rests on the suggestion that by better understanding the meaning of action, as a logical form, we can then grasp what is at stake for Laban. What is essential to this proposal is the idea of creating action by *probability* – that is to say, according to a logical process – has to be considered within the movement training for classical acting. Therefore, the preparation of the actor, breaks with the question ‘what if I lived in the ascribed circumstances’. Rather, the question is now: ‘what if I structure a completely new character in specific circumstances as a result of the combination of body’s actions, including voice’. In other words, the logical structure of action results in terms of the development and applications of the principles of a *poetic science*. This discussion will continue in detail in chapter two.

This research also responds to Evan’s assertion that movement training must ‘enable and release the *imagination*’ (Evans, 2009: 85). This statement requires a careful consideration of the concept of *imagination* because, as Evans points out, actors are reluctant to rationalize their approach to movement. In terms of this research, Plato and Aristotle consider *imagination* in a double sense. First, *imagination* is something which has metaphysical connotations. Plato believes that the soul exists in the upper world and that in the process of birth man depresses the *Mnemes* (memories) of this upper world. Through knowledge we can recall those memories, which he calls *anamneses* (*recollections*). This recollection is *phantasia*, roughly translated as *imagination*. On the other hand, Aristotle suggests that memories are only stored depictions from our experiences in the world, which become *mnemes* (*memories*). Laban’s approach to *imagination* shares the same essence as that of as Aristotle. This will be further elaborated in Chapter 2. For Ramfos ‘*Fantasia* (*imagination*) is an intellectual activity because if it was a psychic phenomenon it would be a delirium’ and that *fantasia* is of ‘infinite consequences’ (Ramfos 2008). So, what precisely do we mean when we say that an actor must train his/her imagination? What elements come into this process? How is it connected to text work? What kind of *imagination* can we expand and how? Therefore, are we referring to *fantasia* in the way that Aristotle suggests or to the psychological understanding of the notion of *imagination* embedded in the philosophy of 19<sup>th</sup> AD?

Another issue that Evans raises in his critique of Laban’s work is that of the expressive movement:

Though Laban perceived the value of an integrated and holistic approach to posture and movement, he preferred to focus his energies and attentions on the expressive functions of movement rather than on developing a vision of the interaction between mind and body, which might allow for the successful re-education of inefficient body use (Evans 2009: 34).

This statement has some validity, of course. Due to a misreading of Platonic philosophy, and to the fact that the heritage of Laban studies has been tainted with overly expressionistic overtones, something completely contradictory, Laban's work has been neglected in contemporary theatre practice in acting and is seen as outdated in part due to what Evans sees as a lack of 'a vision of the interaction of body and mind'. Evans seems, however, unaware of Laban's own statement which would suggest that he was in fact well aware of the problem:

It is the happy combination of mind and body developing alongside each other, without inhibition of the one or over-development of the other, for which the teacher should work (Laban 1948: 22).

Nevertheless, this study will propose a methodology that will explicitly address Evan's statement of the need to review Laban's work and demonstrate the manner in which it can lead to the interaction of 'the body and the mind' in ways that will allow for the "successful education of inefficient body use" (Evans 2009: 34). What the research proposes is a reevaluation of Laban's theory and practice –taking on board the fact that Laban offered no specific training for actors, but provided fundamental principles theoretically and practically. I will propose movement training for actors in structuring, rehearsing and performing, applicable to multiple theatrical approaches (classical drama, performance, devising theatre). The research fills a current gap in the provision of a systematic method of movement training that treats the body as an entity with all its aspects (emotional, physical, logical, sexual etc) in order to meet the demands made upon the contemporary acting body.

## **1.2 The Concept of Mimesis in Philosophy**

In order for this research to support its argument – namely, that there is a direct connection between Laban and Aristotle – an investigation needs to be carried out regarding the concept of *mimesis* in the theatre. What is at stake here is an understanding of *mimesis* in terms of a poetic science and specifically in terms of how one understands key concepts such as action and reversal. Aristotle provides the first attempt to explain, beyond Plato, the phenomenon in his book the *Poetics*. A vast number of translations and interpretations have

been written on *Poetics*. However, as I have already said, the present research will focus on contemporary Greek philosopher Stelios Ramfos's review of the concept of Mimesis in his book *Mimesis against Form* (1991). The work has remained unequalled in its re-reading of Plato and Aristotle (Bakounakis 1996). *Mimesis against Form*, lays the foundations for a subsequent publication *Fate and Ambiguity in Oedipus the King* (2004), where the discussion of mimesis is extended to consider narrative structures in Ancient Greek tragedy. In *Mimesis against Form* (1991), Ramfos attempts a *deuteron plous* – a 'second sailing' of the notion of *mimesis* from Plato and Aristotle, as a means of redefining and clarifying the concept.

The notion of *mimesis* is usually translated as *representation* or *imitation*. This is the result of the mistranslation of the term into Latin by writers who transferred the notion *mimesis* into *imitatio*. Ramfos explains that neither Plato nor Aristotle refer to representation or imitation, which is an *exoteric* (external) form, a scheme, but to a *mimesis*, which is the creation of a world that has its own life.

In mimesis, the work of art has an aggregate existence, and its form is its own life, while in representation it occurs exactly in the opposite manner; it transforms its object into something overtly conceivable, and the sense of its reality is its schematic form (Ramfos 1991: 48).

Ramfos defined the Greek word ζῶον (/zoon/, a living thing) as a bodily, constant presence, living in a different time, which he calls *indestructible* time. This is not historical time (an art work lasting centuries). It is the way of living the present time which Aristotle calls *Nun* (*now*) – for instance, it is the kind of the time we live in moments of 'bliss' (like love, extreme passion, ecstasies, for example) when we habituate a different time and not the 'physical time'. The research focuses on Ramfos interpretation and comments on Aristotle's *mimesis*, because this analysis is closer, or so I argue, to what theatre means for Laban. Laban seems to make the same distinction between *representation* and *mimesis* as Ramfos does when he writes in *The Mastery of Movement on Stage*:

On the whole it can be said that these two contrasting viewpoints apply movement to two different aims: on the one hand, to the representation of the more external features of life, and on the other, to the mirroring of the hidden processes of the inner being (Laban 1950: 7).

Moreover Ramfos expresses a similar viewpoint to Laban when he states that 'we expect affirmation of life from mimesis, not its reflected image (Ramfos 2004: 8). Laban at another

point says that dramatic actions ‘are certainly not just imitations or representations of the ordinary actions of everyday life’ (Laban 1950: 97).

This section of the chapter traces the concept of *mimesis* in philosophy from Plato up to the present in an attempt to clarify the concept not for the purpose of resolving a philosophical dispute, but in order to provide a philosophical basis for the repositioning of Laban away from Platonic assumptions. Through the use of the original sources in Greek, the first section of this introduction examines the introduction of the notion of *mimesis* as firstly defined by Plato in *Republic* (1989), and its reexamination of it in his dialogue *Phaedrus*, by explicating what Plato means and what he considers as a good *mimesis*.

The second section focuses on the Aristotelian approach of *mimesis*, by contrasting and comparing it to Plato’s original proposal.

The third section traces the evolution of the concept after Aristotle, introducing the most important references from philosophers as Plotinus, Lucian, Proclus, up to the translation of the word from Latin writers into *imitatio*. This general survey will set the ground to introduce Ramfos’s contemporary applications of the concept, whereby he proposes a new reading of Plato and Aristotle as a means to differentiate *representation* from *mimesis*.

### 1.2.1 Plato

The notion of *mimesis* is one of the most fundamental issues in the history of philosophy. The notion has its roots in Plato. Plato opens up the debate in his book *Cratylus*; while examining the issue of language, he begins also to offer a critique of representational arts due to their use of *likeness*. Halliwell explains what *likeness* is for Plato:

[Plato] Using ‘likeness’ a defining property of all *mimesis*, these [representational] arts ‘show’ (deleoun) and ‘signify’ (semainein) a sensory perceptible world, but they do not address the ‘essence’, the true reality, of things, in the way that language –as- naming supposedly does (Halliwell 2002: 44).

For Plato, *mimesis* has two dimensions: First, *mimesis* as a mirroring of reality, and second, *mimesis* as the process of creating a world per se or forms, modeled on the ‘upper world’ the world of ideas (Beardsley 1966: 36). As it is well-known Plato attacks the art of poetics and poets (artists generally) in his tenth book of *Republic*. For Plato the artist has to possess a total knowledge of the world in order to be able to *mimesthai* (to make a faithful copy of)

it. However, this proves impossible as, according to Plato, this knowledge is reserved to God alone. Therefore, for Plato, *mimetes'* action is one of pretense and deceit and argues that artists *mimountai* (present) external forms, as the work engages in appearances and not in truth. On this basis for Plato, the artist must be construed as a forger and not an inspired creator (Plato 1989: 655).

Furthermore, in *Apology* Socrates comments that he has met some great poets none of whom were able to explain 'what they were saying' and 'what they meant' by their works, although sometimes they say 'many fine things' (Halliwell 2002: 39). Thus, poets create their works through inspiration, and the 'powerful emotions' which they undoubtedly evoke but not through the pursuit of knowledge, (*Ion* 535). These emotions with no recourse to knowledge are dangerous for society.

Soc: Well Ion, and are we say of a man who at a sacrifice or festival, when he is dressed in holiday attire and has golden crowns upon his head, of which nobody has robbed him, appears sweeping or panic- stricken in the presence of more than twenty thousand friendly faces, when there is no one despoiling or wronging him- is he in his right mind or is he not? Ion: No indeed, Socrates, I must say that, strictly speaking, he is not in his right mind. Soc: And are you aware that you produce similar effects on most spectators? (Plato, <http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/ion.html>)

Inspiration is connected with imagination and for Plato this connection is opposed to the urge for the knowledge of truth. Thus, such a dichotomy between knowledge and *imagination* is a key issue, since Plato believes that there is no *imagination* but only memories of the previous life. The soul pre-exists in the upper world and has the ability to see the ideal forms (of beauty) which he calls *absolute beauty*. *Beauty* is absolute because it is not seen by the eyes (partial grasping) but by the mind. He believes that 'in the process of birth, the soul which beholds the Ideal Forms from all the qualities, directly represses this memory' (Beardsley 1966: 40).

However, he states that we have the ability to recall this memory, for example at the moment of artistic inspiration. However, artists must have 'a knowledge of the nature, rather than a knowledge of the correctness of the copy and a knowledge of the excellence with which the copy is executed' (Beardsley 1966: 46). Plato describes in the tenth book of the *Republic* how every quality has a corresponding *Ideal Form*. Forms that try to *mimethoun* *Ideal Forms* are only copies. These forms can *mimountai* the *Ideal Form* but

never perfectly. Thus, a copy is never as good as its model because it is not an exact reproduction. Plato gives an example of the Form of an object, choosing to examine a bed. This can be described as existing on three levels: First: The *Ideal Form*, made by God; (Plato says: ‘one existing in nature; which is made by God, as I think that we may say’. For Plato Nature means the primary, the basic principle, the stable (Plato 1989: 654). The second level is: The object produced by a carpenter, the final level is the copy of a bed made by a painter. The carpenter's bed is inferior to the *Ideal Form*, and the painter's bed is inferior to that of the carpenter's. Thus, the painter's bed is more inferior to the *Ideal Form* than the carpenter's bed (Sheppard 1987: 5). For Plato, art is inferior to the *Ideal Forms* and their true reality. Plato says that all mimetic arts “deloun” show and “semainein” signify to the world of senses and the idea of a sensory reality and do not show the essence (ousia) of the things which is the absolute truth of their being (Halliwell 2002: 44). According to Plato, the tangible world has an ontological dependence upon the world of ideal forms of which they are a mere reflection. Art *mimetai* these reflections, and as a consequence its products are the *mimesis* of a *mimesis* (During 1991: 274).

However in his book *Sophist* Plato distinguishes two ways of seeing *mimesis*; this *imitative art* has to adhere to one of the following two criteria in order to succeed in its *mimesis*: firstly, the *mimetes* may *mimetai* exactly the model, its measurements, proportions and colors, and thus create a *realistic likeness*, an *eidolon* (mirroring). Secondly, the *mimetes* may copy the way the object looks as seen from a specific point of view. On this occasion he creates an *apparent likeness*, a *phantasma* (Beardsley 1966: 36).

Plato elaborates the concept of *mimesis* in his later book *Phaedrus*. In this writing, mimetic creation is elevated to a metaphysical level and the artist achieves the status of a philosopher. He proposes that true art must overcome the boundaries of this world and unite with the absolute *epekeina*, the attainment of absolute understanding of all beings, and it is the philosopher's objective to attain absolute truth; the ‘philosopher stands between knowledge and ignorance, a fact that creates desire for true wisdom: the man who is not a philosopher lives in ignorance’ (Nikoloudi 1993: 30). This philosopher-artist is, according to Plato, a *Demiourgos* (Creator), a concept elaborated in *Timeaus*. A *Demiourgos* creates a world *per se* which has order, harmony, meter and precision and his works should be based on logical elaboration. The *Demiourgos* follows a procedure bound by certain rules: the true creator acts on purpose and he is intent on a constructive plan. His action is the exact

opposite of accident. He seeks to give form to his creation following his specific vision or pattern. He collects and assembles already existing material. The creation depends on the artist's ability to assemble and harmonize the constituent parts. In this way order is imposed on the creation and it becomes a world *per se* (Plato 1995: 149). The artist should aspire to be a *Demiourgos* and not a mere *mimetes* of the real world. For Plato (1995) the artist seems to be transformed into *Demiourgos* because both share the same characteristics and follows the same procedure. He believes *tekhnê* is a high constructive ability that requires high skills in order to reach to a certain goal.

### 1.2.2 Aristotle

Aristotle opposed the Platonic view that truth is derived from the *World of Ideas*. Aristotle suggests that knowledge should be based on what is already known and generally accepted. His process of reasoning generally followed three stages: firstly he defined what was already known about a particular subject matter; secondly he discussed the difficulties involved by such knowledge, reviewing the generally accepted views on the subject and the suggestions of preceding writers. Finally he presented his own arguments and conclusions. Aristotle's main philosophy is that 'the upper-world (the world of the stars) is unalterable, while the world under the moon (the Earth) is always in motion and change. The dominant process of the latter world is this *natural order*: 'Birth-Inception-Completion-Divide-Wear' (Düring 1991: 78). Every living being has to realize its potential following this natural process. For Aristotle, 'completion is the moment of biological culmination', which he calls *entelecheia* (entelechy) (Düring 1991: 78).

Aristotle's *Poetics* seems to be written as an answer to Plato's words in the tenth book of *Republic*:

And we may further grant to those of her defenders who are lovers of poetry and yet not poets the permission to speak in prose on her behalf; let them show not only that she is pleasant but also useful to States and to human life, and we will listen in a kindly spirit; for if this can be proved we shall be gainers (Plato 1989: 679).

In *Poetics* Aristotle tried to refute Plato's view of *mimetic arts* using in his discussion some of Plato's own ideas (Düring 1991: 267). Like Plato, Aristotle defines art as *mimesis*. However, Aristotle adapted Platonic rules in order to define whom he considers an artist. In order to do this, he consequently introduced the concept of *tekhnê* as a productive capacity

springing from an understanding of its intrinsic rationale. Aristotle in his book *Nicomachean Ethics* states:

Art is identical with a state of capacity to make, involving a true course of reasoning. All art is concerned with coming into being, i.e., with contriving and considering how something may come into being which is capable of either being or not being, and whose origin is in the maker and not in the thing made. (Aristotle 1993: 77)

Both agree that artists must be well educated as a means to acquire technical skills in order to produce *tekhnê*. This process is one based on scientific knowledge. Aristotle believed that man has the ability to apprehend through his *Nous*, which is an *infallible mental faculty*, the divine element within human beings. Aristotle refutes Plato's idea that men have memories of the upper world when they are born. Knowledge is acquired through the senses which form the first basic impressions, and which are stored in memory as depictions because 'from the repetition of the depictions general notions are derived' (Düring 1991: 79). These general notions are the subjects of the knowledge. For Aristotle 'this knowledge is *potential knowledge*, since man may know something as *a*, but only theoretically. However, when man encounters *a* then his knowledge is activated and this is always objective knowledge' (Düring 1991: 80). For Aristotle that objective knowledge is science. Sikoutris (1995) explains:

Science examines a question in its universal, tries to find and to control general rules, which regulate each phenomenon. The recovery of the general rules is achieved through logical method and the application of absolute logical patterns (Sikoutris 1995: 23)

In *Posterior Analytics* Aristotle defines what is *episteme* (science):

(1) S knows that [Pi] is the explanation of P, and

S knows that P cannot be otherwise (Murat, 1998, p. 14)

Murat (1998) later on says that:

S syllogistically derives P from a [Pi] such that

(1) S knows that [Pi] are true,

(2) S knows that [Pi] are principles, and

(3) S knows that [Pi] contains the appropriate middle terms that reveal the reason why of P. (P: a certain principle, S: the subject who has the nous of P) (Murat, 1998, p. 22).

Aristotle then states that in order to have the explanation of P it is adequate to have the appropriate demonstration of P through a deductive process, which he calls scientific syllogism. The premises that are true, primitive and immediate, derive the *episteme* of P syllogistically, "better known than, prior to, and explanatory of their conclusion" (Murat, 1998, p. 15). These premises must have the first principles as their starting point. Aristotle describes the process of reaching these first principles:

[1] S noei (knows) that P---P is true

[2] S epistatai (understands) that P----P is true (p. 10).

Aristotle did not agree with the notion that phenomena are always true, but he argued that in order to arrive at scientific knowledge, an explanation is required to establish that phenomena are natural consequences of the principles (Murat 1998: 25).

Aristotle distinguishes three types of science: *Theoretical Sciences*, which try to find out why something is what it is. Their starting point is that things exist and they are concerned with the qualities of the things, either trying to declare what the scientist has observed, or seeking theoretical argumentation to clarify the issues. In every case their priority is the elucidation and clarification of things (Düring 1991: 203); *Practical Sciences*, which are concerned with the knowledge of moral rules. These sciences examine the practices of human behavior in society and try to define which actions are correct and what is the *perfect* (aristos) *moral life*. According to Aristotle human beings act with purpose and 'this purpose is twofold: the purpose that is the ultimate goal of people and the purpose that serves as a means for the attainment of a higher goal', for instance, a gymnastic exercise is the purpose of Gymnastics, 'which is simultaneously a medium for the acquisition of good health'; *Poetic sciences* which are the 'know how' in all professions that have to do with productive creation. This productive creation is completed in the product and not in the producer. What are examined are only the product and the way of its production (Nikoloudi, 1993: 32). *Tekhnê* belongs to *Poetic sciences* since for ancient Greeks *tekhnê* is not artistic creation, but technical skill. It has to do with certain dexterities, which bear scientific validity and are based on knowledge (Ramfos 1993: 43).

Aristotle believed that if an artist wishes to create a work of art, he should collect all available material on the subject and present them in a specific form. Thus, he starts from his general procedure when he examines a phenomenon; he first examines the reasons that produce a result. However, Aristotle considered that it was more important to conceive a specific form than to actually create it. Aristotle was mainly concerned with the universal and he believed that in art the Universal is the *act of becoming* and the productive process that transubstantiates the informal into formal (Sikoutris 1995: 59). Aristotelian *tekhnê*, must be understood as based solidly on reason and therefore, it is necessary to possess knowledge of the use of its materials (Ramfos 1993: 46) According to Aristotle, the artist does not act through his uncontrolled inspiration, or esoteric impulse. On the contrary, the artist introduces order and objective laws, creating a world *per se* (Sikoutris 1995: 67).

Aristotle considered that a *Demiourgos* is interested in the scientific approach to artistic creation through a systematic explanation. However, when he referred to artistic creation, he said that there are two kinds of creators, the *genius* and the *madman*. He comments:

This is why the art of poetry belongs to people who are naturally gifted (genius) or mad; of these, the former are adaptable, and the latter are not in their right mind (Aristotle 1996: 28).

However, Aristotle's thesis is not absolute and he accepts that sometimes *tekhnê* is the work of a madman. Plato says that poets are possessed by divine fury, something that Aristotle takes under consideration. However, since Aristotle believed that an uneducated person could not become a great artist and since art is a science, he does not conclude this further in *Poetics* (Sikoutris 1991: 25). He argued that geniuses have creative imagination and they distance themselves from the characters they present, while *madmen* are in ecstasy and in a condition of hysteria. Therefore, they become identified with the characters they present. According to Aristotle, a *genius* is gifted by nature and approaches art scientifically, while a *madman* has an extremely sensitive nervous system and he experiences emotions intensely. Therefore he devours his/her logic and gets identified with the character he/she presents.

It is quite evident that in *Poetics* Aristotle is concerned only with *genius*, which he considers not a mere artist but a *Demiourgos*. (Sikoutris 1995: 144) For Aristotle *Demiourgos* does not express his own emotions and feelings; namely his concern is the presentation of circumstances that are familiar to the human soul and therefore have objective and universal significance. Kosman (1992) in his article *Acting: Drama as the*

*Mimesis of Praxis* asserts that for Aristotle ‘mimesis and mimeisthai can clearly bear the meaning of a nonfictional impersonation, as well as the more standard sense of artistic impersonation’ (Kosman 1992: 61). His work is successful when it meets a certain degree of objectivity and leads the spectators' interest in the content of the work of art and not in its producer (Sikoutris 1995: 110). According to Aristotle, this objectivity that coincides with the idea of the universal should be the main concern of *Demiourgos* because ‘this and only this can be the subject of scientific approach’ (Sikoutris 1995: 111)

Sikoutris in his commentary on the *Poetics* argues that *mimesis* is the presentation of reality through the senses. In a sense, *mimesis* is an inherent characteristic of human nature; therefore it has its roots in the impulses of the human soul. However, it does not work in an arbitrary manner, but follows certain rules and methods consciously. It selects its object and then subjects it to logical elaboration in order to create a work of art that is whole and complete (Sikoutris 1995: 53). Therefore the object of art is *becoming* and *making* not in an arbitrary way, but through *probability or necessity*. (Dromazos 1982: 58) The artist presents the things in three ways: ‘things as they were or are, things as they are said or thought to be, or things as they ought to be’ (Sikoutris 1995: 4). According to During this means that the artist has three sources from which to derive his material: from reality, from tradition and from his own point of view (During 1991: 294).

In *Politics* Aristotle used the word *likeness* in order to cover all aspects of *mimesis*. He maintained that the notion *likeness* describes the artist's ability to present the real world through empirical observation. In *Physics* Aristotle explains the notion of likeness stating that *tekhnê* is a *mimesis* of nature. The artist presents the real world, but he/she does not describe external reality in a mechanistic way but he/she only depicts human convention. The artist does not merely recreate the events, but creates them in a way that is defined by the universal. (Ramfos 1993: 48) The artist does not see reality as it is, but as something that is formulated through logical elaboration. For Aristotle the artist seeks *poetic truth*, which is devoid of trivialities, and is interested only in the universals (*katholou*). What is presented then, is not simply ‘reality’ but as Sikoutris points out ‘*the important reality*’ (Sikoutris 1995: 59).

### **1.2.3 Post-Aristotelian approaches to mimesis**

After Aristotle, Stoic philosophers developed a great interest in *mimesis*, and indeed their basic dogma was that wisdom is a ‘*mimema* and *apeikonisma* of *physein*’ (nature). They

use the word *mimesis* in their original texts in the same way Plato and Aristotle did. For them (for example, Posidonius and Strabo, who wrote expressly about *mimesis*) *mimesis* has as its subject matter only “important truths” (Strabo) and “the truth of contemplation of the divine” (Posidonius) (Halliwell 2002: 268-269). For Epicurean philosophers, the word still remains *mimesis*, and is regarded as a false way of seeing world, and therefore deleterious for education (*olethron muthon delear*). (Halliwell 2002: 277). Both philosophical schools treat *mimesis* from a Platonic point of view.

Lucian (Greek philosopher who was born about 120 AD) was influenced by his era’s return to Classical Greece. In his work *Peri Orchiseos* he wrote an encomiastic treatise, set in the frame of a dialogue. He uses the word *mimesis* and examines the art of dance accepting both Platonic and Aristotelean approaches. He defends the “*mimetic dance*” which he calls it *mimetike episteme* (*mimetic science*). (Lucian 1994: 181)

During the Roman Empire the Latin writers translated the word *mimesis* as: *imitatio*. In that sense the notion of *mimesis* is transformed into *imitation of role models* – a shift in meaning that had profound consequences on the history of art Western in to the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Century. At that time art masterpieces from the past became the ideal models for classical artists. The *imitation of role models* is not exactly a copy of artworks of the past but the way of seeing them as “guidance” for ‘something new out of old traditions. For nature is too “raw” and “wild” to be a model. (Potolsky 2006: 50) This means that the artist must ‘follow the best human role models and imitating trusted conventions’ (Potolsky 2006: 51). Important accounts for the notion of *imitatio* are extracted by the orator Horace, who was influenced by the Greek poet Pindar, who explains *imitatio* as *transformation* of the model which “demands all the imitator’s literary skill and judgment” (Potolsky 2006: 56). Like Horace, the Greek orator Dionysius of Halicarnassus (first century BCE) and Latin orator Quintilian (second century BCE) argue that *imitatio* is closer to emulation than to copying (Potolsky 2006: 56).

*Mimesis* is also the main subject of *On the Sublime* attributed to Longinus (second century BCE). *Mimesis* is “imagination drawn from the truth” and has nature as its model. The quality of the *sublime* is something which is created when human thought meets reality. ‘The *sublime*, whenever it occurs, is like a force of nature rather than a product of skill, it is destined to please all men, everywhere and at all times’ (Jasper 1995: 408). Roman philosopher Seneca (4 century BCE) asserts that the good imitator imitates not only one

model but more and creates a new one by selecting and arranging what is valuable, recalling again Plato. For him *imitation* is not a “slavish devotion” but a “resemblance of a model out of admiration”(Potolsky 2006: 59).

Plotinus, the most important Neo-Platonist philosopher, further evolves Plato’s theory of ideas by offering his own interpretation. There are scarce references on the mimetic arts in *Enneads*, although Plotinus discusses the issue of mimetic art in depth. Plotinus harmonizes Plato’s idealistic view on mimesis as it is examined in *Phaedrus* with Aristotle’s realistic interpretation in the *Poetics*. For Plotinus an artist sees the ideal model in his soul and tries to express his esoteric vision forced by his intensive feelings which this vision creates. This form of art may be close to expressionism, since Plotinus considers beauty to lie in the expression of the artist’s strength of emotion and feeling (Ramfos 2003: 323).

In the Renaissance the term *imitation* is synonymous with the term of *representation* in Latin and English literary theorists of the early modern period (Gorolamo Fracastoro and Sir Philip Sidney refer in their works to the notion of *representation* instead of *imitation*) (Halliwell 2002: 348). Romanticism shows *mimesis* as a revival of platonic and neoplatonic (Plotinus) ideas using the words *imitation* and *representation* (Halliwell 2002: 364). In England, the leading figure of romanticism, Coleridge, in his book *On Poesy or Art* (1817) discusses the nature of artistic *imitation* and *mimesis* arguing that art does not copy the nature (*natura naturata*) but lies in ‘perceiving its essence’ (*natura naturans*) (Jasper 1992: 74).

#### **1.2.4 Ramfos Stelios: *Mimesis* versus *imitation* and *representation***

It is the light of this tradition, then, that Stelios Ramfos, a Greek philosopher, reexamines the term *mimesis* in his book *Μίμησις εναντίον Μορφής* (*Mimesis against Form*) (1991-1992). He begins his analysis with Plato arguing that even in his last books when he retracts his critique of mimesis, he will accept only a-mimetic art. For Plato as Ramfos indicates, this amimetic form of art has as its direct model the ideal world. Its main characteristic is that there is no time. Ramfos labels it *ekploxis*, a Greek word which signifies an attack from afar, and which causes horror or wonder (Ramfos 2008: 31-01-08). Platonic art pertains to moments of bliss (like love, extreme passion) which inhabit a different reality, not the real world, without time. Raimfos tries to define this ‘no time’ on atemporal condition of Platonic philosophy, by considering it in relation to Aristotle’s concept of temporality. It is in Aristotle that art lives in *nun* (now) time which is *indestructible time* – on in

indestructible time, or so Ramfos argues, can art reach *absolute beauty* and aspire to the condition of its very artful-ness (*Agathon*) (Ramfos 1991: 217).

If mimesis lives in this *indestructible time*, the *mimesis* is no longer considered a mirroring of the external reality, reflecting the lesser appearance of the things through their external characteristics. On the contrary, in creating indestructible time, art creates a new world which does not exist in reality but is created by (the subsuming of) its components. Thus its model does not exist in this world but it is extracted from it, offering a new angle of reality. In this sense Ramfos explains that Aristotle is against the idea of art as mirroring as well as Plato but he suggests that a creation of a new world based on reality and our sense, which is recognizable, is created by the senses and its creation is based on the artist' phantasia (imagination through experiences and knowledge). Laban would seem to be in agreement here, saying that 'The model of the actor is frequently imaginary [through phantasia], but its characteristic traits can be extracted only from the observation of reality' (Laban 1950: 100). Ramfos explains that this mimesis has its model in the principles that constitute reality, but does not necessarily produce only realistic situations, since he accepts that abstract lines, for example, or colors are part of natural creations. Thus, for Ramfos, Aristotle's version of *mimesis* concerns both amimetic and mimetic art. It is in this context that Aristotle offers his famous definition that Tragedy is *mimesis of Praxis* which is *important* and *perfect*. Examining Plato's and Aristotle's approaches to mimesis, Halliwell in his book *Mimesis* (2002), seems to be in accord with Ramfos, when he concludes that there are two interpretations of *mimesis*:

On the first of these interpretations, mimesis incorporates a response to a reality (whether particular or general) that is believed to exist outside and independently of art. It engages with this reality, or at the very least with other experiences and perceptions of it [Aristotle]. On the second interpretation mimesis is the production of a 'heterocosm' (Baumgarten's term again), an imaginary world-in-itself, which may resemble or remind us of the real world in certain respects...[Plato] (Halliwell 2002: 23).

Moreover, Ramfos (1992) insists that the words *imitation* and *representation* do not offer a right translation of the notion of *mimesis*. 'Imitation' always conveys something inferior, which is not the case with mimesis.

In mimesis the work of art has an aggregate existence and its form is its own life, while in representation occurs exactly the opposite it transforms its object

into something overtly conceivable and the sense of its reality is its schematic form. (Ramfos 1992: 48).

Aristotle wants tragedy to convey only the important aspects of *praxis*, avoiding trivialities. In fact for Aristotle realism is a *dynamic* which must exist in the same *indestructible time* on stage as in the audience. This phenomenon he calls *ζῶον*. (Ramfos 1991: 216) The result is a *Praxis* and not an *Action* because there is always a *anatropi* (*reversal, unexpected*) of the facts. For Ramfos it is *reversal* which provides the *Synginisis* (commotion). Also this notion introduces the spectators bodily reaction to the theatrical events. According to Ramfos, *Praxis* occurs only in *indestructible time*. Thus, for Aristotle, realism must live the same *indestructible time* on stage as well as in the audience. However, since there is bodily participation and reaction both on stage and spectators -that produces *Synginisis*- then Laban's analysis of the other factors of weight, space and flow stands crucial to understand practically the notion of embodiment in Aristotle's notion of *ζῶον*.

Therefore, *Zῶon* is a living thing with no psychological implications, but a somatic experience such as that one finds, in the most exemplary way, in dance. In that way Laban states that dancing and acting are connected, through effort experience on the stage.

Ramfos (2004) summarizes:

Representation [al] form appears dependent, while mimesis possesses innate power. Representation makes an intellectual impression on the senses; mimesis is spiritual life. For the exterior or interior world, form is always representational, while mimesis works miraculously – it is fecund. We expect affirmation of life from mimesis, not its reflected image (Ramfos 2004: 8).

Kosman discussing the nature of *appearance* in Plato and Aristotle makes the same distinction with Ramfos. According to him Plato's idea of *appearance* is the *image* and the *imaged*, whereas for Aristotle, the concern 'is [for] the *latent* and the *manifest*', with power and its corresponding actualizing activity ( Kosman 1992: 60).

Ramfos concludes:

The Aristotelian principle whereby art imitate nature becomes clear: both art and nature give birth to living existences, real beings, each with its own end. Mimetic unity does not harmonize the internal with the external, but is a living existential energy" (Ramfos 2004: 10).

In the following chapter, I will draw on Ramfos' interpretation of Aristotelian mimesis in order to examine in detail four important notions that connect Aristotle's *mimesis* with Laban's theory. These will provide the foundation for the proposed methodology that addresses actor's movement training both in kinesthesia and characterization.

## Chapter two: Aristotle-Laban: The links

### Introduction

In the previous chapter I examined Laban's philosophical foundations before turning to survey the notion of mimesis in an attempt to clarify which philosophical background is closer to his theory and practice for actor's movement. What I have attempted to suggest in the first chapter is that the traditional approach that connects Laban to Plato, especially in relation to the training of actors, must be seen as incompatible with many of the assertions made by Laban – particularly from the 1950s onwards. Moreover, Laban states:

It is but a half-truth to say that life is reality and stage performances just make-believe. If make believe means that the actor tries to create in the mind of the spectator some kind of belief in the deeper meaning of life hidden beneath external appearances, the statement is true. But one could not agree that it is an actor's business to induce the spectator to believe that his performance is just a faked copy of the events of everyday life. This, fortunately, is impossible because events, as well as movements, have to be carefully selected and composed into a whole, if an effective work of stagecraft is to be built up (Laban 1950: 156-157).

This statement reveals once more that Laban not only does not agree with Plato's objection about theatre art but also disapproves of it; and indeed the sentiment echoes Aristotle's conception of dramatic art as a 'conscious productive capacity' whose structure is made up of order, unity and wholeness.

In the following chapter, four links between Aristotle and Laban are examined, informed by commentators of Aristotle's work and especially by Ramfos' recent review of Aristotle's *Poetics*, in an attempt to establish a new set of philosophical implications embedded in Laban's work, which shall be used to establish a new practical elaboration of Laban for actors.

The first section focuses on the notion of **mimesis** in an attempt to clarify Laban's definition of *mimesis as mirroring of reality* (Laban 1988: 5). The manner in which Laban defined *mimesis* chimes directly with Aristotle's definition of *mimesis*. Within Aristotle's conception of mimesis hides the creation / construction of a poetic reality and this aim is

exactly what differentiates him from Plato. This ‘reality’ (the term will be expanded forthwith) distances Laban’s position from Platonic or Pythagorean approaches with which he is usually associated and aligns Laban with Aristotle’s idea of *mimesis* as the **creation of a world per se**.

The second section compares and contrasts Aristotle’s and Laban’s conceptions of *logic* and *science*, in relation to art: **Art as Science-The Poetic Science- Logic in art**.

The third section focuses on the performer’s action. Both agree that the remarkable artist acts purposefully and intends on developing a plan in which the ‘action’ is constructed. In this way the artist structures an artwork in a manner similar to the Creator that is, by creating a reality that has never existed before. The third aspect to be considered, then, is **the intentionality of art –in Aristotelian terms, the relation of Prothesis and Demiourgos**.

The fourth and final section, examines Laban’s concept of *Effort* in relation to the Aristotelian concept of **ζῶον**. As we have seen, this concept is elaborated in a different approach Stelios Ramfos’ in his book *Mimesis against Form*. According to Ramfos, what is missing from the standard interpretation of Aristotelian *mimesis* is an understanding of the living thing (**ζῶον** in the original text). For Ramfos this indicates that which lives in a cathartic way in **indestructible time** (constant *now*) and this is the key issue in Aristotle’s *Poetics*. Laban’s notion of *effort* is proposed as **indestructible dynamics** and is central to the generic concepts of: **presence-corporeality (ζῶον-kinaesthetic experience)**.

I will examine these four aspects in turn in order to thoroughly argue how Laban is connected with Aristotle in the question of dramatic art.

## **2.1 Mimesis: The creation of a world per se**

In *Mastery of Movement*, Laban suggests that the stage is a mirror of the real world which reflects more than the everyday world, ‘inspiring the experience of a reality transcending that of everyday fears and satisfactions’ (Laban 1950: 6). As we noticed in the section 1.1.3, Aristotle argues that *mimesis* does not copy reality as it is not concerned with ‘representing’ something that already exists. On the contrary, the mimetic aim is to create consciously, a

completely new world that has not been existed before. This new world has its autonomy from the ‘real’ world – it is a *world per se*. This poetic reality is free from unimportant incidents since its focus is on important facts and actions – moments of consequence – which are filled with meanings and that lead to an ‘important praxis’. Laban agrees with Aristotle then, when he says that:

Life as lived and as mirrored on the stage consists of a chain of happenings. Some links in the chain-specific situations or actions- are more important than others. Dramatists and choreographers select the situations and acts, which they judge to be most necessary to their themes (Laban 1950: 108).

It is interesting to note that in this way, Aristotle claims that *mimesis* has an educational character since it allows the spectators to live the experience of a remarkable reality. At the same time, Laban also discerns the educational character of theatre, describing it as a “learning land” where significant values show up. Laban writes: “The spectator hides the need to make up his mind about the values that the man strives for in specific situations (Laban 1950: 108). This approach is far from Plato’s view of *mimesis*. As mentioned in chapter 1.1.2 platonic theory rejects ‘realism’ in theatre in the sense that it mirrors the phenomena and their schematic form. This means that the spectators are captured by the sensible appearance of things and not by the “truth”, which is ideal and suprasensory. For Plato, the artist *imitates* the appearance (*eikona*, *eidolon*) of things in the real world because he is not interested in their *ideal truth* which belongs to the *Ideal World*. *Mimesis* is not connected with the *Ideal World*, therefore whatever the artist images is false and dangerous, since he considers *mimesis* to be a matter of knowledge and not simply an aesthetic affect.

Plato distinguished the art (*techne*) as *χρησομένη* (meaning beneficial in the sense that it is based on scientific knowledge and promotes education), *ποιήσουσα* (craftsman’s productive activity based on empirical knowledge that is beneficial for “constructive use”) and *μιμούμενη* (poetic, as a reproduction of *eidolons* (images) whose aim is merely enchantment) (Ramfos 1991: 25). Aristotle, and consequently Laban, in Platonic terms, treat dramatic art as *χρησομένη*, since all their arguments seeks to position the dramatic art as a science. The first strong link, then, between Aristotle and Laban (1950) is established in the way Laban considers *mimesis*:

The resemblance of his [the actor’s] acts of movement to those of the personality [character] represented can differ in exactitude as any other kind of portrait or description may differ. A portrait is never identical with its model.

The model of the actor is frequently imaginary, but its characteristic traits can be extracted only from the observation of reality (Laban 1950: 100).

Laban's approach is very similar to the idea of *mimesis* as [the creation of] *a world per se* and has as its object *becoming* [as opposed to being] in *probability* or *necessity*. Subsequently he states that the theatre is a mirror of human life which 'consists of a chain of happenings' (Laban 1950: 108). This chain is developing in a continuous flow, meaning that its structure is not static but rather it should be understood as a dynamic procedure. According to Laban, the artist selects the 'appropriate consequence of these events in a necessary and logical order' (Laban, 1950: 96). Aristotle held the opinion that the spectators take delight in seeing images which present reality, since their emotions are aroused by the *recognition* of the emotions presented on the stage and the realization that what happens on the stage is similar to real life. The portrayal of these emotions is based on a logical order of the facts, in the sense that fact *b* is a result of fact *a*, and that sometimes things other than fact *b* may occur from fact *a*. In the first case the presentation of the facts is a *necessity* and they are *recognizable*. In the second case the presentation of the facts is a *probability* and they are also recognizable but have an unexpected result that keeps the spectators interest undiminished.

Laban concurs with Aristotle in this regard. He believed that the presentation of the facts in a performance follows a *logical order* and should be easily *recognizable* for the spectators (Laban 1966: 4). Aristotle states that this organic unity connects the beginning with the end, encompassing the action in between [in a logical sequence]. For him, the sections of the events should be connected in a way that would create the sense of unity and wholeness. He explains: 'the structure of the various sections of the events must be such that the transposition or removal of any section dislocates and changes the whole' (Aristotle 1996: 15). Therefore there is a *logical order* of the sections, which constitute the wholeness of the action. In other words, what both Aristotle and Laban suggest is that *logical order* does not follow an expected narration of the facts but based on real life is a combination of both expected and unexpected narrations of them.

Laban, like Aristotle, believed that the presentation of the facts must be guided by *necessity*, as much as by the artist suggesting 'certain directions' which must be *recognizable* to the spectators. However, he also maintains that *necessity* does not determine the

communication between stage and spectators. That is why he adds *probability* as an important factor [which both destabilizes the symmetry of the action and] that makes possible the *reversal* of the facts. Aristotle uses the word *Περιπέτεια* (*peripeteia*, adventure) regarding the plot. *Περιπέτεια* means the *unexpected*. The word is extracted from the word *πίπτω* which means that something falls suddenly. Thus, the word means that something happens unexpectedly. Aristotle argues that *reversal*, an adverse change of action which is unexpected by the spectators, can consequently provoke pleasant emotion through the enigmas which demand to be comprehended and answered at the end of the drama. For Laban, ‘it is just the unusual combination of movements which catches [the] public’s attention’ (Laban 1950: 98). Laban renames ‘unusual combination of movements’ as *symbolic actions*, explaining practically what Aristotle means theoretically by *mimesis as a world per se*. Laban goes into details concerning the meaning of *symbolic actions* and their significance in drama in *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* in chapter two titled *The Significance of Movement*. According to Laban, *Symbolic actions* are developed by a careful observation of reality. In reality an activity – such as carrying something – is not just one movement, but a combination of movements in fact. In particular, the actor during the main action may be busy doing something else at the same time revealing in that way the character’s implicit thoughts and feelings. Supposing that the character has to carry something, he can scratch his leg simultaneously or make faces and gestures that bring out the character’s feelings at a certain moment. Laban says: ‘It is the task of a fine but lucid characterization to bring out not only typical movement-habits, but those latent capacities whence a definite change of personal development can originate’ (Laban 1950: 100).

Therefore, *symbolic actions* constitute a combination of actions that transfer the deeper feelings and thoughts of the character in drama to the spectators. Laban calls drama ‘*the world of silence*’. He states that ‘the exclusive use of movements with determined meaning will never result in a work of stagecraft’ (Laban 1950: 98). What he suggests is a combination of *conventional actions* and *symbolic ones*. However, the importance of *symbolic actions* lies in the fact that they ‘perform strange movements which appear meaningless, or at any rate inexplicable’ (Laban 1950: 97). Laban seems to translate *symbolic actions* in terms of movement while Aristotle’s statement focuses on the use of *non-standard words, metaphor, ornament* in the text in order to capture the spectators attention. Aristotle in *Poetics* (1458a, b and 1459a) writes:

So, what is needed is some kind of mixture of these two things: one of them will make the diction out of the ordinary and avoid a loss of dignity (i.e. non-standard words, metaphor, ornament and the other categories I mentioned earlier), while current usage will contribute clarity (Aristotle 1996: 36).

In other words, the *symbolic actions* provide the vast combination of characteristics of a theatrical figure and in combination with *conventional actions* ensure also the naturalness of the presented character. Thus, *mimesis* borrowing the laws of reality -*conventional actions* and *symbolic actions* according to Laban- becomes a *world per se*.

Both Aristotle and Laban propose that the most important element is that the spectator's recognition of what happens on the stage does not occur because the spectator *interprets* the events presented on the stage. 'Instead of being interpreted, facts become immediately accessible to the senses whilst the appearance and sound of words fire the poetry' (Ramfos 2004: 35). Actually, as Ramfos explains it is an exchange of existential energy, which "moves" (Greek, *syn-kinei*) the audience. Ramfos explains further Aristotle's discussion about the text in the *Poetics*; words of ancient Greek language, including the syntax and the vocal rhythms, convey certain meanings. Therefore, the poet had to find the precise word in order to express a character's feelings. Ramfos claims that contemporary verbal communication does not have that ability anymore - words have lost precise meanings, attention is no longer given to syntactical rules, resulting in un-clear communication. (Ramfos 1982). In light of this, Laban's statement 'Movement can say more, for all its shortness, than pages of verbal description' (Laban 1950: 98) gains significance with regards to theatre work. Laban realizes that what ensures communication between actors and spectators in contemporary theatre is based on body movements and dynamic quality, including voice, that movement ever – changing confirming the vividness of the presentation. Laban says: 'Experience of the symbolic content and its significance must be relied on person's comprehension, the one who watches the movement' (Laban, 1950: 96). At the same time movement conveys the meaning, since the spectators are aware of the meaning of the action through its embodied form (body and voice movement). He states:

The average actor will admit reluctantly that the enjoyment of his art by the public is based upon a subconscious analysis of his movement. Yet the fact is that spectator derives his experiences from the artist's movement. (Laban 1950: 98).

Laban describes the actor who believes that speech and its dynamic are alone adequate to convey the meaning of the story presented as an ‘average actor’ since he ignores the power of movements to convey meaning. Laban identifies the significance of movement communication between the performers and the audience and calls it ‘a bipolar magnetic current’ (Laban 1950: 7). Moreover, Laban indicates that this magnetic power has been produced by the fact that theatre is ‘the mirror of man’s physical, mental and spiritual existence’ (Laban 1950: v). According to Ramfos, Aristotle’s *mimesis* mirrors the human praxis, which is why people identify with it and feel *pity* for the characters that suffer while they are afraid of the possibility to face the same suffering if they made the mistakes that characters had made. (Ramfos 2010). As I mentioned before, Laban believes that theatre is a mirror of life but not an arena for ‘moral judgment’. He writes: ‘The value of the theatre consists not in proclaiming rules for human behaviour, but in its ability to awaken, through this mirroring of life, personal responsibility and freedom of action (Laban 1950: 110)

## **2.2 The art as Science-The Poetic science-Logic in art**

The second link between Aristotle and Laban is that they consider art a *poetic science*. Laban uses the word *Choreology* in his movement analysis. The word derives from Greek *chore* (dance) and *-ology* (science or knowledge). It is Laban himself who names the art of movement ‘the poetry of the movement’ (Laban 1950: 6). Laban’s scientific approach to art resembles Aristotle’s perspective in the sense that poetic science is different from what the contemporary world calls science. As noted in chapter 1.2.2, Aristotle distinguishes between *Theoretical*, *Practical* and *Poetic Sciences*. *Mimesis* belongs in *Poetic Sciences*, the presentation of human conventions in a poetic way in which its principal feature is highlighting what is important in reality. While in science a phenomenon in its explanation usually has a certain process as a necessity, in poetic science there is a vast number of possible processes. This is what Aristotle calls *probability*, whereas (natural) science always seeks what is *necessary*. What is consequently revealed is that for Aristotle *poetic science* is the productive capacity of the artist that creates [through their performance a] new reality. *Poetic science* is a combination of certain logical principles and the artist’s *imagination* (Greek, *phantasia*). This is also what Laban also intends by saying:

But a synthesis of scientific and artistic movement observation is highly desirable, for other-wise the movement-research of the artist is likely to become as specialised in one direction as that of the scientist in the other (Laban 1950: 107

According to Aristotle the theatre is a craft that demands both theoretical and practical skills. In ancient Greece craftsman and artist are identical. As we noted in the previous section 1. 2. 2. Aristotle classifies art in terms of Poetic Sciences and this is useful knowledge to every profession. Laban also expresses the same opinion in *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage*:

The artist's work does not differ a lot from any other human activity. A working man's job has to do with material and for that reason it is essential to know how to work on it. Working man might use bare hands, or a set of tools while the actor works without tools other than his body (Laban 1950: 99).

Furthermore, both Laban and Aristotle discuss the matter of *poetic science* as a poetic way of seeing reality. Laban says: 'The miracle of recovering these values, which have been forever lost in ordinary everyday life, is possible on the stage' (Laban 1950: 9). Aristotle argues that dramatic plot is devoid of trivialities and interested in *katholou (universals)*. Aristotle claims that the plot of the tragedy must be structured by remarkable events and not indifferent incidents. The dramatic actions should be "weaved" from a sequence of significant actions in order to keep the spectators' interest.

The word *Choreology* embeds the 'hidden order of dance' according to Laban. Preston-Dunlop in her book *Rudolf Laban An Extraordinary Life* (1998) defines Choreology as: 'The science of dance or the logic of dance; the study of the hidden rules in movement that makes it expressive and functional rather than arbitrary and nonsensical' (Preston-Dunlop (1998: 27). In order to discover these 'hidden rules' Laban follows a process similar to that of Aristotle: 'through experiencing the physical doing of dance, through comprehending its facts, and through crossing into the world of feelings which dance gives' (Preston-Dunlop 1998: 20). It is not the dance steps that he considers important, but the body as a whole. Thus, like Aristotle, he devises a method to analyse the *universal* aspects of the body (in motion), through a systematic observation of the phenomenon of human movement. Moreover, Aristotle in *Poetics* describes analytically, the qualitative and quantitative parts of the structure of mimesis as well as its synthesis. Aristotle writes:

Let us discuss the poetry on the whole and divided into its species- every poetic species can find the correct way to construct plots - if the quality of its composition is upgraded - as well as the number and the nature of its component parts can or any other questions that may arise within the same field of enquiry (Aristotle 1996: 3).

According to Ramfos, Aristotle discusses the component parts first because he believes that

mimesis is a constructive capability that provides a 'high quality' artwork. (Ramfos 2010 lecture). In this way, Laban analyses the possibility of quality and quantity in relation to movement, based on the ordinary laws of physics, that is to say, the way space and time can be objectively observed as well as the rules that govern the theatrical synthesis. Newlove says:

It is important to understand that when Laban was searching for a foundation on which to build his theory of the art of movement, he turned to the cosmic laws, seeing them a relationship with human movement at every level: mental, physical and spiritual (Newlove 1973: 29).

In keeping with a philosophical method Laban uncovers the *first principles* of movement, its ontology (Laban, 1988: 93). Lange (1970) suggests that Laban establishes an objective approach to human movement, which forms the basis for increasing our knowledge of dance in order to be able 'to compare it with other human sciences' (Lange 1970: 1). Laban's analysis 'answers the old question *what is dance?* by examining 'the most important element of dance, the human movement' (Lange 1970: 2). Laban's observation and analysis is based on the fact that human movement is 'subject to the ordinary laws of the Physics, and through rational statements he demonstrates its *first principles*' (Lange 1970: 5). For Laban there are two main action-shapes: scooping from the periphery to the centre and scattering from the centre to periphery (Laban 1950: 92).

Laban analyses the *first principles* of movement and seems to follow an inductive demonstration that arrives at scientific knowledge. Laban accepts that an artist's work is a synthesis, which follows a unification process. This process is characterized by its logical coherence and specific form, which provides a certain *order*, thus conveying a clear meaning: 'It is the arrangement of the efforts of everyday life into logical yet revealing sequences and rhythms which gives a theatrical performance its special character' (Laban 1950: 97). And elsewhere, he says 'A movement makes sense only if it progresses organically and this means that phases which follow each other in a natural succession must be chosen'. (Laban 1966: 4) This natural succession is what he calls *choreological order*. This *choreological order* is, according to Laban, necessary in the theatrical art when it seeks to convey a certain meaning: 'we must try to find its [movement's] real structure and the choreological order within it through which movement becomes penetrable, meaningful and understandable' (Laban 1966: viii).

Aristotle argues that order creates an *organic unity*, which in turn creates a certain *rhythm*, producing a qualitative dimension of the time of the performance. What Aristotle means by *rhythm* is the physical *rhythm* of the action and not a rhythmical structure of time. For him, the sections of the events should be connected in a way that would create the sense of completeness. He explains: “the structural of the various sections of the events must be such that the transposition or removal of any section dislocates and changes the whole” (Aristotle 1996: 15). Therefore, there is a logical *order* of the sections, which constitutes wholeness, in order to transfer the meaning to the audience. Similarly, Laban states that ‘the elements of movement when arranged in sequences constitute *rhythms*’ (Laban 1988: 120) and this is where *Eukinetics*, Laban’s study of dynamics of movement and rhythm, originated from. Laban defines *effort* as a natural sign of human thinking and feelings. His *effort* analysis ‘enables us to define our attitudes towards the factors of movement (weight, space, time, flow) on the background of the general flux of movement in proportional arrangements’ (Lange 1970: 5) Each individual behaves in a unique way and this can be seen as a specific use of time, weight, spatial patterning and flow. According to Laban, effort is always present in any bodily movement ‘otherwise they could not be perceived by others, or become effectual in the external surroundings of the moving person’ (Laban 1988: 21). Laban asserted that ‘there is no movement which does not evolve in space as well as time, bringing the weight of the body into flow’ (Laban in Redfern 1973: 101). In this way, I would suggest that Laban’s notion of *effort* and its four factors seem to be related to what Aristotle calls the *first principles* of movement.

Aristotle in *Posterior Analytics* says that the *first principles* ‘contain the appropriate middle terms that reveal the reason’ of a certain principle. What is in consequence revealed is the structure of a certain principle. Laban states: ‘One factor is paramount, viz, the discovery of the elements of movement which are invariably the same, no matter to what purpose the movement is put whether in work or art’ (Laban 1950: 104). Examining the phenomenon of movement by way of analysing the *first principles* of it (weight, space, time, flow), as well as revealing their structure that contains the appropriate middle terms (light/strong, flexible/direct, sudden/sustained, and bound/free), is precisely what Laban does.

Aristotle argues in his analysis that in order to derive scientific knowledge from the *first principles* a deductive process, which should contain the appropriate *middle terms*, is necessary.

Likewise, Laban defines the *first principles* of *effort* first, and then further proceeds to define the quantitative and qualitative polarities of their four factors. The four motion factors of *effort*, weight, time, space and flow, are analysed by opposing two contrasting elements: weight as strong/light, time as sudden/sustained, space as direct/flexible and flow as bound/free. Based on the three factors of weight, space and time Laban introduces the eight basic effort actions, which include a possible combination of their opposite elements: strong, sudden and direct are described as *thrusting* while light, sustained and flexible are described as *floating*. Moreover, light, sudden and direct are reported as *dabbing*, whereas strong, sustained and direct are reported as *pressing*. Strong, sudden and flexible are described as *slashing* while strong, sustained and flexible are described as *wringing*. At the same time, light, flexible and direct are given as *flicking* whereas light, sustained and direct are given as *gliding* (Laban 1950: 17-18). Laban also introduces the terms of Effort theory as symbols of practical experience of movement, because according to him the movement must be named in order to be described. In other words, because of his attempt to upgrade the art of movement by transforming it into science, Laban creates its terminology, borrowing names from everyday language, though based on geometry, physics and mathematics. However, Laban admits that ‘there have been a maze of combinations which cannot be demonstrated in a few words. It becomes necessary, therefore, to make a systematic survey of the main types of body actions’ (Laban 1950: 21). One more time Laban echoes Aristotle, who defines the words as symbols of our “stored impressions”:

Aristotle considers that words are symbols of the stored impressions of human mind and their handwriting is the means to symbolise them. As it is impossible for the things to be expressed on their own, we substitute them for their names...While the names and the sentences are numbered, things can not be counted. That is why a sentence or a word most of the times have more than one explanation (*αναγκαίων οὖν πλείω τον αὐτόν λόγον και τούνομα το έν σημαίνει*)<sup>8</sup> (Ramfos 1991: 64-65)

Ullmann in her analysis of the elements of effort argues that each element has two components: one is ‘operative and objectively measurable, and the other, personal and classifiable’ (Laban 1988: 73). Redfern (1973) agrees with Ullmann adding: ‘the concept of Effort unifies the actual, physical, quantitative, and measurable properties of movement with the virtual, perceivable, qualitative, and classifiable qualities of movement and dance’ (Redfern 1973: 101).

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<sup>8</sup> ‘Inevitably, then, the same formulae, and a single name, have a number of meanings’ Translated by A. Pickard. [http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/sophist\\_refut.1.1.html](http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/sophist_refut.1.1.html)

Laban in *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage*, in chapter one develops a series of 300 functional exercises based on his analysis which aim at the kinaesthetic awareness of actors and dancers. Laban believes that through training the human body is able to understand its kinetic behaviour and to proceed further, by extending its boundaries to kinetic experiences for the first time. Laban states that: 'Rhythmic deficiency of any kind can be corrected by training, e.g., by accustoming oneself to repetitive exercise in order to accomplish those forms of rhythm which at first seem to be unachievable' (Laban 1950: 135). Moreover, he promotes the space analysis that concerns the possible direction of human movement in the form of a cube. This is extracted from the human's body awareness of directions – which are front/back, up/down and left/right. This fact comes in accordance with Aristotle's analysis of space in his book *Physics* (which will be discussed further later).

Laban analysis of space is also presented in *Choreutics*, a concept of the study of the spatial form of movement. Laban defines *Choreutics* as 'the study of the spatial organization of the kinesphere, the personal space around the body and the way in which the logical forms are therefore materialized in movements of the body (Preston-Dunlop 1979: 133). According to Maletic (1998), Laban observed that the structure of all forms in nature (including the plants, crystals and animals) is subject to *spatial laws*, which share a lot of similarities with the *harmonious laws* that rule the human movement (Maletic 1998: 99). Maletic (1987) states:

Laban's view of human movement as a continuous creation of fragments of crystalline forms was also supported by the ancient knowledge of dynamic crystallization, which brought Plato to classify the five regular solids (cube, octahedron, tetrahedron, icosahedron, and dodecahedron') (Maletic 1987: 99).

Laban believed that human movement is organized in a way comparable to the 'building of crystalline forms' (Laban in Maletic, 1998). According to Maletic Laban based his theory of space on the principle of directional orientation in space related to the three dimensions (height, width and depth) (Maletic 1987: 58). For this reason, he builds movement sequences within the octahedron, cube and icosahedron (Maletic 1998: 99). Laban's kinesphere -an icosahedral perspective- is created through an imaginary linking of the extreme reach points of the limbs, while in cube form the constant cross of the body, front/back, up/down and right left. In the analysis of *effort* and *space* Laban offers rules that govern human movement providing at the same time the tools for a synthesis in the art of movement.

Aristotle in the *Poetics* provides the rules and principles of the art of poetics concerning the synthesis of the text (rhythms, metaphors, words). This is because explained, as mentioned earlier in the section 2.2, ancient Greek language was a code in which each word had a certain meaning and the way of pronouncing it also determined emotional meaning. Moreover, in the drama text the rhythms of the text's lines are codified in such a way that they convey certain moods and emotional states of the characters presented. Laban in *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* is aware of the fact that ancient Greek poetry in tragedy conveys meaning through rhythms:

The oldest rhythms of which we have knowledge are those of the ancient Greece and these in the main are related to poetry. From a purely historical point of view it is interesting to realize that the notation and interpretation of effort-rhythms had already been attempted thousands of years ago. The Greeks have attributed to rhythms a definite significance, mostly expressed by an emotional mood (Laban 1950: 132).

Laban in chapter three in part one titled 'The Study of Movement Expression', dealing with the effort rhythms of space, time and weight, makes an extended reference to the six ancient Greek fundamental rhythms: *Trochee, Iambus, Dactylus, Anapestus, Peon and Ionian*. Laban suggests that theatre in contemporary society conveys meaning through body effort rhythms, including voice. Thus, performance to him is a synthesis of effort rhythms that presents the emotional state and the thoughts of the character. Although he states in the beginning of his book that we have to find the principles that govern the connection between inner life and the body's action, he realizes that there is no definite symbolization in movement, and characterization in acting is the synthesis of the combination of movement and voice following a certain text.

Whilst Laban analyses movement and provides exercises for kinaesthetic awareness addressing the actor's and dancer's body efficiency, at the same time in *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* he proposes some principles for characterization. For him, the synthesis of the character is an artistic activity and what he provides the actor with are its fundamental principles. Laban states: 'The student must realize that there exist no right or wrong forms of interpretation. It is for the artistic temperament and taste to find out which interpretation is preferred (Laban 1950: 135). He starts the book in the prologue giving the story of Eve picking the apple in paradise as an example, and he exposes the main principles of movement synthesis in characterization. Laban states that there are many

'forms of action' for picking the apple, whereas each of them reveals different moods. The actor's body is like an 'orchestra' and its body parts work like 'the members of a group', executing different actions and effort qualities simultaneously. The 'movement sentences' can convey a certain mood, not a simple action, and provide also indications of the character's personality (Laban 1950: 1-3). Laban explains:

So movement evidently reveals many different things. It is the result of the striving after an object deemed valuable, or a state of mind. In its shape and rhythm it shows a special attitude to meet the situation in which the action takes place. It can characterize the momentary mood, or the personality of the moving person (Laban 1950: 2).

Character movement is also influenced by 'milieu', since different historical periods or different countries are distinguished by special behaviorisms and by his/her age. For characterization Laban puts to the actor three presuppositions that must be answered in synthesis: '(1) The characters of the persons represented, (2) The sort of values they strive for, (3) The situation developed out of this striving (Laban 1950: 111). Laban considers it essential for the structure of character to find the habitual effort and actions. He believes it is possible to find the right effort and actions of a specific character among a vast combination of them through his effort analysis; for structuring characters, in terms of movement, is not a 'fact-finding device' but an 'artistic activity' (Laban 1950: 100). The asymmetrical and symmetrical movement sentences co-exist, however the first one is more significant than the second, because in real life asymmetry dominates. The two main action-shapes are scattering (the movement that starts from the centre of the body to the periphery) and scooping (movements that starts from the periphery of the body to the centre). For Laban the first indicates gestures of repulsion and the second gestures of possession (Laban 1950: 92-95).

The combination of conventional and *symbolic actions* ensure naturalness and interest in acting, structuring in a continuous flow of energy, a 'process' in which there is no stop. Laban admits in his prologue that there are no interruptions in the performance except from one or two stops. Since for him stop is a pause that belongs to *incomplete effort* actions, the energy is not interrupted at all. In *incomplete effort* one or two factors are missing; for example in pause the factors of *space* and *time* are missing, whereas the weight and flow are present. What also determines the structure, are *shadow movements* that belong to symbolic actions and are *incomplete efforts*. People's actions are intentional and unintentional.

*Shadow movements* are the unintentional movement such as ‘twitches and jerks of the hand’ (Laban 1950: 12). On the stage these movements become intentional and they are of high ‘expressive value’ because they reveal the nuances of the inner state of the character. Moreover, a significant part of the synthesis consists of *objective movements*, actions that are in a way automatic and do not reveal the emotional state of the character. For example, washing plates, teeth, opening a book et.) Laban explains:

It is obvious that these different changes of body-carriages, such as objective, shadow, or subjective actions, and any additional movements having a conventional meaning, are mixed in a person’s behaviour in a most complex manner. They might appear in any kind of sequence, and sometimes several kinds of movements or actions might appear simultaneously (Laban 1950: 120).

For Laban, everything is to be understood in terms of the actions of the body. The use of objects on the stage is nothing but movement’s *accessories* (Laban 1950: 99). Moreover actions determine the group scenes that reveal the relationships between them by way of location of the bodies onstage and their combinations (Laban 1950: 149). Concerning voice, Laban explains that it shares the same principles with movement actions; ‘Sounds and words are formed by movements of the speech-organs, and these are rooted in the same basic actions’ (Laban 1950: 105). The accents produced by eight basic actions of speech organs ‘express the inner mood of the speaker’ (Laban 1950: 106). Laban summarizes: ‘The discovery of the elements of movement identical in work and expression sheds a new light on the significance of visible and audible movement on the stage’ (Laban 1950: 106). Ramfos explains that ‘the general principles in theory, of course, must have practical application in the specific, otherwise they will remain ambiguous’ (Ramfos 2012).

### **2.3 The intentionality of art – Demiourgos and Prothesis**

The third link is the notion of *Demiourgos*. As previously discussed in chapter one, Aristotle accepts the Platonic view regarding the profile of an artist who is transformed into a *Demiourgos* in the sense that he/she produces *tekhnê*. According to Plato's perspective, ‘the true creator (*Demiourgos*) acts on purpose and he is intent (Greek, *protithetai*) on a constructive plan” (Plato 1995: 149). Aristotle accepts that *tekhnê* does not work in an arbitrary manner, but works consciously according to certain rules and methods. *Tekhnê* relies on the selective consideration of artistic purpose, and the action of *prothesis* (the word is different to intention because it means not spontaneous action, but acting under serious

and deep consideration) and subjects it to a logical process (Greek, *sylogism*) in order to create a work of art that is whole and complete. Laban shares such a view when he says:

Man expresses on the stage by carefully chosen effort his inner attitude of mind and he performs a kind of corporate ritual in the presentation of conflicts arising from the differences in these inner attitudes (Laban 1950: 15).

For Laban, as for Aristotle, the choice of the configurations of effort does not occur in an arbitrary manner, but 'is done by selection and formulation of appropriate effort qualities' (Laban 1988: 9). He explains that: "Youth, ingenuousness, harmlessness, beauty, charm, gracefulness are dependent on inner attitudes and these the actor can consciously reproduce' (Laban 1950: 10). In other words for Laban the actor's reproduction is a matter of portraying the bodily actions that indicate the inner attitudes. He continues: 'This seems a paradox, but not so on stage, where values and the efforts by which they are reached have not to be possessed but to be pictured' (Laban 1950: 9). For Laban, the idea of producing a new reality -not referring to a mere mirroring of cosmos- has as a starting point the capacity of the artist (*demiourgos*) to synthesize actions into a comprehensible and logical whole, by using his/her *imagination*. His word of advice to the artist is to collect his materials from reality through unceasing observation. For Aristotle, likewise, *imagination* is not a metaphysical intuition, a random elaboration of the artist's mind. On the contrary, it is the capacity of an artist's mind to rearrange in a new order already stored depictions. This rearrangement is achieved by syllogism. It is the same idea that we find Laban when he writes:

Each movement originates from an inner excitement of the nerves, caused either by an immediate sense impression, or by a complicated chain of formerly experienced sense impressions stored in the memory (Laban 1950: 21).

The Greek word for *Imagination* is *Phantasia*. *Phantasia* is derived by the words *phainomai*, *phenomenon*, *phaneros*, which indicate something which we can see and observe (Ramfos 2008). The word *Idea* is extracted by the verb *Idein* which means to see. According to Ramfos (Lecture 6, 2008) in the eighteen century the word *Idea* was interpreted as a conception only, as a thought. However the word means 'the perfection of a thing, a strong tendency for completeness' (Ramfos 2008). According to Ramfos, Aristotle was the first one who introduced the idea that *fantasia* is also an intellectual activity beyond the images from the physical word. This intellectual activity legitimates, as Aristotle suggest in the *Poetics*, the idea that poets invent new myths rather than new version of old ones (Ramfos 2000). For Ramfos '*Fantasia* is the infinite consequences' (Ramfos 2008

lecture). Laban did not believe that the artist is an imitator of reality, something that would imply that the artist is a forger. On the contrary, like Aristotle, he suggested that the artist should use his/her *imagination* in order to build something completely new. However, his idea of *imagination* is closer to *fantasia*, since he believes that *imagination* is something that can be trained and enriched only by experience and practice:

Invent short movement-sequences, or mime-scenes, in which the movements described occur. This is a means of training movement-*imagination*, and of finding the immediate connection with the practical application of bodily exertion in terms of artistic expression (Laban 1950: 25).

According to Laban, the feelings and thoughts of human beings are revealed through body and voice movement, and this is the medium for communication between the actors and the audience. As we discussed in section 2.1, *mimesis* is a presentation of a completely new reality; *a world per se*. ‘Demiourgos, according to Ramfos, creates the circumstances, does not repeat them. The unsaid it is what makes him a demiourgos’ Ramfos 2012 lecture 3). Meaning, a creator does not merely represent preexisting circumstances, but has to fashion precise new creative conditions for the work to emerge, the exploratory ‘*what if*’ central to theatre creativity. The artist according to Laban possesses the power of observing and producing symbolic actions and not only conventional ones, since – as we have already seen – it is only symbolic actions that can transfer the nuances of the inner state of a character. Symbolic action is a principle of everyday life and for Laban the observation of reality must be detailed. Laban says: ‘Movement can, however, be named and described, and those who are able to read such descriptions and reproduce them might get the feel of the moods expressed by them’ (Laban 1950: 98). The idea of this detailed description of action is to be found also in Aristotle’s notion of *ενάργεια* (*energeia*):

When constructing plots and working them [in original text ‘*συναπεργάζεσθαι*’ means to elaborate] out complete with their linguistic expression, one should so far as possible visualize [in the original text Aristotle writes that one should have the facts before his/her eyes ‘*προ ομμάτων τιθέμενον*’] what is happening. By envisaging things very vividly in this way, as if one were actually present at the events themselves, [in original text ‘*ούτω γαρ αν εναργέστατα ορών*’] one can find out what is appropriate, and inconsistencies are least likely to be overlooked (Aristotle 1996: 27).

For Aristotle a good artist must be able to elaborate the facts eye-witnessing what is happening in detail. This is a conscious ability of the artist that works as if he/she was

present and in a way attends events and is the first spectator. For Aristotle the artist creates that vividness through speech. Ramfos explains that Aristotle demands a certain structure of the phrase, able to visualize the facts (Ramfos 1993: 365). Laban also demands the elaboration of movement sequences, including voice, and suggests a systematic observation of human behavior. In order to succeed in this, the artist is able to classify, describe and name the movement through movement study. This elaboration- Aristotle names it ‘*συναπεργάζεσθαι*’ happens in the artist’s *nous* (mind) through *syllogism*.

*Syllogism* during the creation sustains the ephemeral time of the performance creating as Ramfos says a *latent time* and this is how the artist is transformed into a demiourgos since she/he creates space and time, producing a new world. This means that demiourgos stands above the structure of the performance and possesses the absolute mastery of its creation. In other words she/he masters time and space. This is the first time that man can create time and space and not solely live inside them.

The structure of a performance uses time and space in a different way than in real life<sup>9</sup> since she/he can travel from present to past or future through her/his mind. In the stage of *latent time nous* is a work in finding the correct arrangement for the structure of movement or action (this can explain Aristotle’s idea about perfect creation being in *nous* and not in its realization). Thought has this peculiar ability to move between times, between past, present and future, and it is what Laban calls *thinking in terms of movement*. This might better explain why Laban raises questions about improvisation. Laban, suggesting the way of creating a scene, explains that it is better to work on short movement sequences than improvisation (Laban 1950: 130). In improvisation, movement work remains ephemeral and it is very hard for a performer to memorize and repeat the sequence in all its aspects (action, space, dynamics). In dance, improvisation might work since there is no a definite story to be presented. In drama however there is a certain story that must be presented, therefore a detailed structure is needed, particularly since it must be repeated every day. Laban prefers the creation of a short movement sequence for drama which is easy to memorize, repeat and change; hence easier to control, to master (in the sense of Aristotle’s *epistamai*) in action, space and dynamics. Summarizing, structure in drama is created through *Prothesis*. That means that the artist makes a certain decision through *syllogism*. This certain decision is

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<sup>9</sup> This notion is congruent to contemporary definitions of performance for example in Schechner’s *Performance Theory* (2003).

*Prothesis* that works, according to Plato, Aristotle and Laban, against spontaneous action. Aristotle seems to answer to Plato's demand about *demiourgos* and she/his *prothesis* through his syllogism (See 1.2.1).

There is yet another quality Plato demands from *demiourgos*: 'He collects and assembles already existing material. The creation depends on the artist's ability to assemble and harmonize the constituent parts' (See 1.2.1). The question here is: what is the 'existing material' and how is *demiourgos* aware of it? According to Plato the Creator possesses it from the beginning of the cosmos, while *demiourgos* possesses it from her/his previous life and through knowledge. For Aristotle *demiourgos* acquires it through science (know-how in the case of *tekhnê*) during his life. Although Aristotle provides certain general principles, he does not give any information on how to possess knowledge. On the contrary Laban provides the movement material for the actor through his analysis and training of the body, and offers at the same time the possibility of collecting, assembling and structuring (synthesis). For Laban, Aristotle's *Prothesis-time of thinking-* is no more merely a *nous* procedure, but introducing the 'thinking in terms of movement' he adds practical application to Aristotle's theoretical approach.

Aristotle made clear in his *Poetics* that *tekhnê* is a productive capacity of a person who is the absolute master of the tools of his art. What he actually meant is that the artist is an expert in his field. Laban (1988, p. 6) on the other hand believed that there are two types of artists: the artist who is a *virtuoso*, and the artist 'who acts through his impulses'. According to Laban, the virtuoso is interested in the mechanical perfection of the performance, since he/she has exercised his/her skill a lot and has as a result attained a great level of perfection in his/her performance. The artist who is not a virtuoso concentrates on the actualization of his/her inner processes and is more erratic and impulsive than the virtuoso. The former is more interested in the external features of life, while the other is focused on the hidden processes of the inner thoughts and feelings of the character she/he presents. He writes:

On the whole it can be said that these contrasting viewpoints apply movement to two differing aims: on the one hand, to the representation of the more external features of life, and on the other, to the mirroring of the hidden processes of the inner being (Laban 1950: 7).

In my opinion, Laban's work on the actor provides a concrete example of what Aristotle

meant by *ephees* (genius). Laban and Aristotle share a common ground when they define what makes a good artist. According to them, a good artist is an expert in his/her field. They seem to divide artists into those who accomplish mastery of their art through education and those whose work is driven by sheer impulse. However, since they both believe that there is always an intention behind the creative process, it becomes obvious that they prefer the artists who are conscious about their *intention*; in other words, who enact *prothesis through syllogism*.

## **2.5 The notion of indestructible time-indestructible dynamics in relation to the notion of presence and corporeality (kinesthetic experience and ζῶον)**

The significance of Laban's analysis lies in the manner that his concepts go further than Aristotle (and Plato) in his understanding of the fourth and most crucial link, that of the notion of *indestructible time*. Laban, in *Mastery of Movement of the Stage*, always addresses his analysis to the term describing the performer: "actor-dancer". The dash can be interpreted not as a reference to two different artist categories, but as a reference to one artist, which is similar to Aristotle's *Demiourgos*. Aristotle clearly mentions referring to dance:

dance uses rhythm by itself and without melody (since dancers too imitate ['memountai' in original text] character, emotion and action [*praxis* in original text]) by means expressed in movement [*rhythms shapes* in original text] (Aristotle 1996: 4).

Laban also did not make use of music, since he wanted to give autonomy to the art of movement thus releasing the performer's body from its dependence on music. Aristotle himself indicates that Dancing and Acting share the same common principle, that of *indestructible time*. Karen Bradley (2009) speaking of this commonality between dance and acting writes:

Laban saw theatre and dance as not-altogether separate spokes on the same wheel: artistic performance. In the book, *Mastery of Movement*, he did not differentiate much between character development for theatre and rich, clear dance performance (Bradley 2009: 41).

Aristotle in *Physics* explains the notion and existence of *time*. Motion, according to Aristotle, is every *alteration* in *space*. *Time* for him is  $\nu\tilde{\nu}$  (now), it is a part of *Motion* and counted by way of *Motion*. It is connected with the three dimensions of *Motion* -*local*, *qualitative* and *quantitative* (Aristotle 1997: 335).

The *local* concerns the directions of motion in locality according the natural laws (up-down, right-left, front-back). The quantitative concerns the living things and the qualitative concerns the perceptible qualities (motion is carried out through the transition of one opposite to the other). (Aristotle 1997: 317)

In this way, Aristotle treats movement both as an ontological and phenomenological issue. He considers a *phenomenon* in physics to be examined not only as an objective reality but also for its intellectual content, what he calls *endoxa* (opinions) (Aristotle 1992: 399). The connection of time with psyche is a phenomenological issue. Time is not created by *Psyche* but is recognized by it; he claims that psyche can count time (Aristotle 1992: 343). There is one  $\tilde{v\tilde{v}}$ , one present time as an energetic entity, yet its dynamics are differentiated through constant change. Consequently, different moments of time correspond with the different faces of movement (Aristotle 1992: 337), a fact that is theoretically and practically explained by Laban as different Effort qualities that are undergoing perpetual change.

Aristotelian time is not static, but instead has a dynamic character through a dynamic emergence characterized by *continuity*: ‘Movement ensures that *continuity* through the space’ (Aristotle 1992: 345). The notion of *continuity* is introduced by Aristotle and accepted by contemporary analysts like Düring and Bostock (Aristotle 1992: 348). The field of its application is movement (space-time) and its principal feature is progression (succession) (Aristotle 1992: 353). ‘The empirical certainty that two bodies move with the same movement but in different speed, indicates the continuity of space and time’ (Aristotle 1992: 355). For Aristotle, movement occurs in a certain space and has a dynamic at once qualitative and quantitative. The same approach, I would suggest, can be found in Laban’s theory and practice. In *Choreutics* (1966), Laban defines the concept of space as ‘a locality in which changes take place’ (Laban 1966: 4). In fact, by using the words *locality*, and *changes*, he is in perfect agreement with Aristotle. Laban’s analysis of space in cube, octahedron and icosaedron defines the *locality* in which body’s effort actions are in constant change.

For Aristotle, movement happens *here and now*, and presupposes *Space* and *Time*. *Space* for Aristotle is an important concept. He repeatedly uses the example of the “pot” in order to illustrate his definition of space. He claims that the “pot” is filled with some content, and what is important is its locality. The question is not where a thing is located, but where it is contained. Thus, he uses the word *τόπος* (space) in order to define it. *Space* is, as reported

by him, divided in: *Κοινός Χώρος* (Infinitive Space- General Space), *Φυσικός Τόπος* (Physical Space-Personal Space). All the things move within their *Τόπος* following a natural tendency, ‘the light up and the heavy down’ (Aristotle 1997: 327-328 ). Similarly, Laban based his theory of space on the principle of directional orientation in space related to the three dimensions (height, width, and depth) and their connection with dynamic qualities just as Aristotle does. Laban distinguishes three modalities of space: *general*, *infinite* and *personal space* in *Choreutics*. *Personal space* is defined as *Kinesphere*. The term *kinesphere* is coined from the Greek word *kinesis*, which means movement, and *sphaira* that means sphere, according to the rotatory movement of the body’s limbs (Maletic 1987: 59).

Laban defines the kinesphere as:

The kinesphere is the sphere around the body whose periphery can be reached by easily extended limbs without stepping away from that place which is the point of support when standing on one foot, which we shall call the ‘stance’ (Laban 1966: 10)

The *kinesphere* can be seen as the *first principle* of *personal space*.

The simplest way to describe a person is to determine the placement of the ends of the limbs in relation to the center of gravity of the body. We say: the head is carried upright, right arm tends somewhat towards right-forward, the left arm left-deep, the right leg... The actual directional energy irradiates from the center of the body, approximately the body's center gravity, toward the corners of a tetrahedron [created through an imaginary linking of the reach points of the limbs] (Laban 1966: 5)

The association of kinesphere with effort qualities is further examined in the light of what he calls *dynamosphere*. In *Dynamosphere*, strong movement is connected with downward movement in space, light with upward movement, etc. Laban seems to follow the Aristotelian concept of motion in its *Φυσικός Τόπος* (Physical Space-Personal Space) and its natural tendencies. For human movement, according to Aristotle, is connected more with locality and its specific place than with general space. The space beyond the kinesphere is the general space (Laban 1966: 10).

Laban’s kinesphere as defined during his ‘German’ period, is an icosahedron created through an imaginary linking of the reach points of the limbs. It forms scales that balance *stability* and *lability* (Preston-Dunlop 1998: 276). The arrangement of these scales is based on logical sequences of movements in three-dimensional variants. These sequences follow

the harmonic balance of the three symmetries of movement: up - down, open - across, backwards – forwards (See image 2). The Icosaedrical perception of space is better understood in the art of contemporary dance since Laban's introduction of the *lability* opens up the possibilities of exploring different movement directions.

Laban's book *Choreutics* was published by Lisa Ullmann (Laban's student and close collaborator during his last years) in 1966, eight years after Laban's death. As she admits in the preface of the book, its content is part of Laban's manuscripts at Dartington Hall in 1939-1940, as well as part of his former assistant Gertrud Snell Friedburg's notes from his classes during his German period (Laban 1966: ix-x). However, Laban himself does not refer to the icosaedrical perspective of the directions of movement at all in either of his original books, written when he was alive, *Modern Educational Dance* in 1948 and *The Mastery of Movement on stage* in 1950. On the contrary, he returns to his analysis of space based on the cube and includes a draft of the cube within the text (Laban 1948: 36).

Aristotle associates time with his theory about alteration in Nature (Aristotle 1997: 335). As mentioned in the section 2.1, change in Nature bears the natural process of 'Birth-Inception-Completion-Divide-Wear' (Düring 1991, p. 78) - it is a temporal process. Laban shares the same opinion about nature. Newlove, his close collaborator, says:

His choice, recognised after many years as a dancer and dance teacher, was 'based on inherent laws of natural movement'. He saw in nature the constant growth and decay of matter, the building up and breaking down of mass and the constant motion of fluids (Newlove 1973: 29).

According to Ramfos, Aristotle discusses in *Poetics* the *magnitude* (duration) of tragedy and suggests that it takes *one period of sun* (one year). This seems obscure, since Aristotle in the twenty-fourth chapter states that tragedy is completed in just one episode, because the spectators must be able to focus on it. Aristotle, according to Ramfos, defines the *magnitude* of an action as a certain duration of the performance, for example two hours, whereas the facts might last for a year. This happens in Sophocles' play *Antigone*. It is the density of the dramatic actions that define time in dramatic art, providing an aesthetic time that is dependent on the weaving of the actions (Ramfos 2010). Ramfos explains:

The joining of the acts of the plot presupposes a conception of time that is equally esoteric and exoteric. For I have to experience events that last two years in one day. This means that it [tragedy] is not presented in physical time. This is what Aristotle means with the phrase 'one period of sun' (Ramfos 2010  
[http://steliosramfosgr.wordpress.com/category/ διαλεξεις](http://steliosramfosgr.wordpress.com/category/διαλεξεις))

For Aristotle, it is in the theatrical space that spectators can experience aesthetic time. The issue here is that Aristotle unites the specified space of scene with a certain duration of dramatic actions (*praxis*). From Ramfos' viewpoint, Aristotle uniting space and time in the plot conceives something very important; time in the theatre is characterised by certainty, while in life by vagueness. The synthesis in dramatic art is characterised by a definite action taking place with a definite duration towards a definite end (Ramfos 2010). Namely, the density of events creates the poetic reality, a *world per se*, that allows the experience of aesthetic time.

Moreover, Aristotle's *time* in *Poetics* does not follow the natural order of *physical time*; on the contrary, *poetic time* works counter to that order, which is the reason why *time* becomes *indestructible*. It is principally characterized by a present continuous tense in which we inhabit a different chronological dimension, not 'actual time' (Ramfos 1991: 217). While in *physical time* the process results in Decay, in *poetic time* the exact opposite is true; its process results in *Birth* (Ramfos 1991: 217). This leads to the Aristotelian idea of *Oikeia Idoni* (familiar pleasure) that leads to *catharsis*. Ramfos says: 'Time in theatre is not passive thanks to a continuous energetic action. We create time since we create movement. Dramatic art creates the opening of time' (Ramfos 2008).

Aristotle claims that *mimesis* in theatre is a *ζῶον* (living thing). Aristotle examines the notion of *ζῶον* from its biological perspective. He examines, in other words, how a living creature grows and what is its final cause. Aristotle discusses *mimesis* in the same way regardless of whether he is discussing a man, an animal or a plant. His aim is to examine how an artist can organize material in order to create a living reality whose final cause is *οικεία ἡδονή* (*oikeia idoni*, pleasure) (Ramfos 2010). Aristotle develops a theory about the ontology of the work of art in theatre; the materialisation of ideas in terms of the real world (Ramfos 1991: 179). Laban's analysis of movement in theatre considers also the art of the movement for actors from an ontological point of view; the materialisation of thinking in terms of movement into a practice of movement experience. Additionally, Laban shares the same conviction about the goal of *mimesis*:

The new dance-training fosters the development of a clear and precise feel of man's attitude towards his efforts and the movement resulting from them

guaranteeing the appreciation and enjoyment of any, even the simplest, action movement (Laban 1948: 9).

*Time* in movement can, according to Laban, be seen as duration and speed (including acceleration and deceleration) (Laban 1950: 27). In his effort analysis of human movement, Laban considers that the factor of time is experienced first as speed and second as duration of the actions. On the other hand Aristotle, as commented by Ramfos, regards *time* through the notion of *magnitude* as duration of the actions. Consequently, Aristotle's magnitude depends on the duration of actions from the beginning to the end.

Laban provides time with yet another quality, that of speed that is a determined factor for the living being. The difference lies in the fact that Aristotle discusses tragedy more as text and its sound, whereas Laban examines kinaesthetic experience during performance. In other words, ζῶον is to Laban the movement of the human being in terms of effort qualities that includes four motion factors and their elements (weight, space, flow). In this manner, Aristotle's philosophical notion of ζῶον, addressed to text and the way it is delivered, becomes a *human movement – an organic unity* moving in the same experience of time as that of *indestructible time* in its duration. However, its main kinaesthetic experience is *Indestructible Dynamics*, as I shall be calling them from now on. Ζῶον moves in its Τόπος (*space*) – *Kinesphere*, and constitutes an *organic unity* capable of conveying a meaning leading to a *praxis*. According to Ramfos (1991), it is not the exoteric form of the organic unity which conveys the meaning, but '*its living existential energy*', because 'the exoteric life of a living thing is to Aristotle not a pattern but an energetic result of its esoteric life' (Ramfos 1991: 95). Laban's analysis of effort echoes Aristotle; the four motion factors of the dynamics of movement are not an external description of actions, but the result of the inner life of a human being that moves in the magnitude of experiencing actions as *Indestructible Dynamics*. Laban provides us with a practical way of understanding Aristotle's philosophical and poetic text – specifically, in its application to contemporary performance practices that are based on body and voice movement synthesis. If Aristotle tried to develop an ontological theory for dramatic art, Laban offers its practical realization.

Additionally, this Aristotelian *organic unity* is directly related to what I call *Indestructible Dynamics*, a fact that elucidates the notion of *embodiment*. Namely, in dramatic art the notion of *embodiment* is synonymous to ζῶον in terms of living the *Indestructible Dynamics* of actions. Hansen (2003) defines embodiment:

*To Embody* is to put into a body an idea or spirit, to give a concrete form to or to express (principles, thoughts, or intentions) within art, action, word combinations, or institutions. Thus, an *embodiment* of an idea or principle is its physical form, realization or expression, or the incarnation of that idea (Hansen 2003).

*Embodiment* could be better understood in relation to what Ramfos explains in his analysis of *indestructible time*. Ramfos (as previously discussed in 1.4) says that the notion of *indestructible time* is a way of living “*here and now*”, something that Plato and Aristotle also suggest with their philosophy. Ramfos (2009) strongly suggests that ‘in order to live in the ‘*here and now*’ a body must be always aware of its movement experience’ (Ramfos 2009). He recognizes that it is movement that allows the body to become conscious of ‘present time’. According to Laban, to embody a character in acting is to find the right combination of the body’s actions and effort qualities (both in body and voice) that ‘depict’ (see page 111 in *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage*) or ‘picture’ the character presented. Laban writes:

Youth, ingeniousness, beauty, charm, gracefulness—all the natural gifts of youth and innocence—are dependent on inner attitudes, and these the actor can consciously reproduce. This seems a paradox, but not so on the stage, where values they are reached have not to be possessed but to be pictured (Laban 1950: 10).

Consequently, what the actor experiences onstage is not constructed according to a psychological interpretation of the character, but rather on the basis of what the actor experiences in terms of his or her *effort*, in space (theatrical place and the duration of the performance) and time (“*in his/her indestructible dynamics, in his/her topos*”). The body lives its always changing kinaesthetic experience through actions and their effort rhythms that produce the space and time of the work of art. In other words the body lives its *indestructible dynamics in its topos*; which is to say, it is the ζῶον .

The same approach is also to be found in Diderot’s Treatise *The Paradox of Acting*. Diderot is opposed to psychological implication and consciously introduces the actor to a precise structure of the character he presents. Diderot’s actor is interested in presenting the meaning to the audience through his/her actions both in body and voice. Diderot writes:

On the other hand, the actor who plays from thought, from study of human

nature, from constant imitation of some ideal type, from imagination, from memory, will be one and the same at all performances, will be always at his best mark; he has considered, combined, learnt and arranged the whole thing in his head; his diction is neither monotonous nor dissonant. His passion has a definite course- it has bursts, and it has reactions; it has a beginning, a middle and an end. The accents are the same, the positions are the same, the movements are the same... ( Diderot 1883: 9).

Rhonda Blair (2008), in her book *The Actor, Image and Action; Acting and Cognitive Neuroscience* explains that the research for a way of acting must go back to Plato and to Aristotle's *mimesis* and to Diderot's *The Paradox of Acting* (Blair 2008: 14). The question 'what does the actor feel' on the stage becomes for Blair 'what is the actor doing'. She writes:

because the character becomes a set of choices and behaviors- a process, rather a discrete entity, a motivated movement, rather a gloss of feeling-, supported by what the actor brings to the role. That is, a character becomes a dance performed by the only discrete entity there is-the actor (Blair : 83).

Nikos Zakopoulos, a Greek Physician and playwright, in his book *The Psychology of the Actor and the Theatrical Performance* (1990), explains that in an intense emotional condition the human being acts from the parasympathetic autonomous neurological system. This means that there is no intentional control. In scenes of strong emotion it is impossible for the actor to be psychologically overinvolved because if he were he would be unable to remember the right words and actions (Zakopoulos 1990: 72). Zakopoulos says about the actor: 'On the contrary an actor acts intentionally, according to logic and consciousness without real emotion, but with symbolic substitutes that allows emotional response in the spectator' (Zakopoulos 1990: 72). For Zakopoulos, the emotional intertwining of the actor with the character's emotions 'is biologically impossible' (Zakopoulos 1990: p.73).

In *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* there are many examples that refer to acting as a kinaesthetic experience similar to dance giving weight to Laban's proposal for a kinaesthetic training for both the actor and the dancer. Similarly, ζῶον in Aristotle refers to both dramatic art and dance. Notwithstanding the style of artistic creation and its precise aesthetic form, the notion of ζῶον is the kinaesthesia of body and voice in certain duration and is present in every form of art on the stage: from abstraction to realism. Laban states: 'One factor is paramount, the discovery of the elements of movement which are invariably

the same, no matter to what purpose the movement is put whether in work or art' (Laban 1950: 104). The body experiences present time, the 'nows', through the continuous changing actions and their effort qualities in both body and voice, during the specific duration of the performance. In order to do that, the actor must memorize certain actions with their effort qualities. The actor's emotional state is not the psychological implication with the character, but the pleasure of living during the execution, a cathartic time, that draws him/her away from his/her restraints of everyday life.

As we saw in section 2.2 above, Ramfos explains that there was no psychological implication in dramatic art in Ancient Greece because the structure of the text and the way it was delivered through certain rhythms and intonations convey the meaning. The actors performance bears no psychological implications since their presence and speech declare what they want to communicate. They stand as full semiotic devices, however they experience the *nows* of the duration of the performance, hence supporting Ramfos' statement that *mimesis* is not *representation*. Furthermore, Ramfos explains that with the notion of *mimesis*, Aristotle does not only cover the sequences of realism but every form of dramatic art. *Mimesis* is ζῶον, a *living thing*, which is kinaesthetic experience -since the whole body is present and its voice is also movement, movement that can be heard.

If we try to elucidate Aristotle's *mimesis* in terms of Laban analysis, we will realize that Laban explains the application practically. As far as the body is concerned, even in the case of standing or doing very conventional movement only to support their voices, the actor experiences kinesthesia, since the effort qualities are the result of all movements, including standing. In the case of standing the effort quality is incomplete; two factors are missing: space and time. However the dynamics of movement continue with the other factors, weight and flow. The body holds its energy in certain duration. Laban replaces the rules of the language with body's movement analysis, particularly in regard to effort rhythms. Both cases require training first in the medium and secondly, training in the synthesis.

Laban seems to realize that there is a common factor - that of body's movement procedures- beyond the particular structures of a performance in theatre. From abstraction to realism, the common ground is the body's movement structure from the beginning to the end in a way that can ensure the unity of the performance. What constantly keeps this unity is a continuous ever changing flow of movement, including voice, a structuring by 'carefully

chosen effort rhythms'. Therefore, the theoretical notion of ζῶον, seems to be explained by Laban in terms of movement, not only with regard to its ingredients, but also to its goal; pleasure (idoni). He says:

It cannot be said too often, and it is a unique conception to be stressed repeatedly and to be remembered: movement, the path in our surroundings, the path as a sign, a symbol of the complex path of the universe,- it is to this that today we are directed, and from which we await the enlightenment, which hitherto we have not yet had, and from which we expect a certain degree of deliverance and inspiration in order to throw off restraints and live vividly henceforward (Curl 1967: 33).

In this way, the term *Eukinetics* that Laban introduced in his early writings during his German period, is preferable to that of *Effort*, a term that appears as part of the more instrumental/functional approach towards efficient movement developed by Lawrence (1948) in the UK within the context of the 'war effort' and assembly work in factories. The word *Eukinetics* is a Greek compound word consisting of the prefix *Eu-*, which bears easiness, plurality and blissful connotations, and *kinetics* which means logic of movement. *Eukinetics* in terms of the training of movement for actors, including voice, provides a more precise term for Laban theory and practice than the English word *Effort*.

The next chapter examines the main individuals who are considered to represent Laban's legacy in teaching movement for actors, including Laban himself. What is examined is Laban's method as presented principally in his book *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage*, and how those who developed his thinking sought to transfer these principles in their teaching. What I will examine is the manner in which these contributions either continue and extent or divert from Laban's thinking.

## **Chapter Three: Overview of the Tradition of Laban Movement for Actors**

### **Introduction**

Laban's work with actor training typically is considered to originate from his writing of the book *Modern Educational Dance* in 1948 and, most important, *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* in 1950. The book was written, as Preston-Dunlop explains, after Laban's experience as a teacher for actors at Bradford Civic Theatre School in England (Preston-Dunlop 1998: 253). However, this research argues the fact that Laban's students although they were teaching actors for some period with great success, did not offer any further research to Laban's theory and practice and its application to characterization. In short, they did not provide a methodology for teaching movement to actors based on Laban – at least capable of meeting the demands of contemporary theatre and practice.

This chapter examines first *The Mastery of Movement on Stage*, the main source of Laban's theory and practice addressed to actors, and the principles established that provide the ground both for a method for teaching movement to actors' bodies, for improving their body's kinesthesia and their movement in characterization. The second section investigates how the first generation in teaching Laban method for actors, including Litz Pisk, Yat Malmgren, Geraldine Stevenson, and Jean Newlove, continued Laban's principles. Litz Pisk wrote a manual for movement training of actors where she is referring to movement terms that have some similarities with Laban's movement analysis, but does not mention at any point her connection with him. Yat Malmgren, another of Laban's students, had been a teacher of acting and was the person who developed a method for acting, supported by Laban's theory of effort. He was also the first to advocate a connection between Stanislavsky's system and Laban's method. Geraldine Stevenson was one of Laban's students and collaborators who worked with actors – as did Jean Newlove. They both continued the Laban's legacy and they are both considered as the main exponents of the method for teaching movement to actors.

The third section traces two main representatives of the contemporary approaches: Brigit Panet from England and Barbara Andrian from USA. What is discussed here is their connection with Laban and his next generation, and specifically, I address what they add or

miss in their teaching of Laban method and practice to actors. Finally a fourth section that opens the possibility of providing a new way of teaching Laban movement theory and practice to contemporary actors based on the interpretation of Laban that I have advanced in the first two chapters.

### **3.1 Laban: *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage***

Laban's interest in theatre becomes more profound after his collaboration with Laurence in researching movement in industry, and they wrote the book *Effort* in 1947. During that period he had the opportunity to explore in depth the human movement, as Dick McCaw comments in his book *Laban Sourcebook* (2001). Laban, as cited in Mac Caw, explains:

The growing realism of the theatre of those days led me to a thorough investigation of working movement in agricultural and industry...My interest in the theatre has never entirely faded, but my movement observation became more acute during all these years and also gained a broader significance (McCaw 2011: WVIII-XIX).

After that Laban wrote his book *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* where he exposes a logical and functional approach to human movement, illustrating how man moves in everyday life, having as his main goal to support his ontological theory and practice for the training of movement especially of actors. He claims from the first page, in the preface of the book, that theatre is 'a mirror of physical, mental and spiritual existence' a fact that locates him in the Aristotelian philosophical tradition and especially *Poetics* as I have argued in chapter two. Laban claims also three important things that are derived from his book *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage*: first, that it is everyday life and experiences that provide all the tools for the art of theatre. Second, that dance and acting have as a common ground the actions of the body and the 'character'. And third, that he does not distinguish between actor and dancer since for him both share the same kinesthetic experience during the performance. This serves as a better explanation as to why he prefers the term 'actor-dancer'. In his book *Modern Educational Dance* in 1948 he states clearly that:

The basic idea of the new dance training is that actions in all kinds of human activities and therefore also in dance, consist of movement-sequences in which a definite effort of the moving person underlies each movement. (Laban 1948: 8).

The prologue of the book and the theoretical part of the first chapter is dedicated to characterization more than to dance. Although this part of *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* is largely addressed to actors, the series of 306 exercises concern dancers and mimes as well, because at this point in the book the training is focused on the body's kinesthesia. Laban is neither an actor nor a director, but being an observer and analyst of the actor's movement, he recognizes that common ground of pure dance and acting is that of shared kinesthetic experience. Introducing these exercises he attempts to answer the four questions that he imposes before starting the practical part:

It is possible to determine and to describe any bodily action by answering four questions: (1) Which part of the body moves? (2) How much time does the movement require? (3) What degree of muscular energy is spent on the movement? (4) in which direction or directions of space is the movement exerted? (Laban 1950: 25).

All the exercises in the first part are simple executions of steps and actions using every surface of each body part, towards every possible direction, consuming every possible effort rhythms while in the second part one can find variations of the body actions and correlations of movement with objects and persons, relationships between persons on stage (touching, spatial relations), and correlation with *Eight Basic Effort Actions* (Laban 1950: 25-90). The *Eight Basic Effort Actions* are the eight possible combinations of the opposite elements of weight, time and space: strong, sudden and direct described as *thrusting*; light, sustained and flexible as *floating*; light, sudden and direct as *dabbing*; strong, sustained and direct as *pressing*; strong, sudden and flexible as *slashing*; strong, sustained and flexible as *wringing*; light, flexible and direct as *flicking*; and light, sustained and direct as *gliding* (Laban 1950: 17-18). This part of the book, then, addresses the functional training of the body for both dancers and actors providing them with the training for kinesthetic awareness. Laban adds important instructions with regard to the difference between actor and dancer that lies i.e., in the way they use movement. In the dancer's case he recommends 'dance like' expressive movements, while for actors he recommends a very short scene or action 'in which the move in question must be applied'. All the exercises must be repeated in order for a student to achieve fluency in the movement (Laban 1950: 27-28). Laban believes that by training the performer a heightened awareness is acquired and thus control over of what is basic for human embodied experience.

Laban focuses on the practice of effort starting from three motion factors, following a certain order: time quality (quick/slow), the amount of muscular energy needed (strong/weak) as well as direction in space (forward/backward etc). He presents us with several possible combinations of the above and only in the end does he provide exercises based on the *eight basic effort actions*. Laban always stresses the fact that there are a vast number of combinations apart from the *eight effort actions* which constitute the basics of movement. Moreover he does not insist on them since the fourth important factor is missing; the one of *flow*.

Laban explains that *Flow* 'is the control of the movements of the part of the body' and its opposing elements are *free/bound*. In the element *free* movement is flowing freely while in *bound* movements are controlled. Paradoxically enough, Laban does not provide the reader with certain exercises for the *flow* factor, although he refers extensively to it in the beginning of chapter one (Laban 1950: 20-22). Laban starts from the *time factor* because it is at once the easiest part to be understood and the most difficult to be experienced. Laban explains the process of training the kinesthesia of the body and highlights two major obstructions that exist during the whole process: 'The physical and the mental inhibition' (Laban 1950: 130). For the first, the exercises provided in the first chapter offer the solution and establish the ground on which the character can be built. It is in light of this that the research enquiry argues against Evans criticism that Laban does not combine mind and body (see Chapter One p.18). Moreover, Laban states that: 'The realities of the inner life can only be depicted by art in which reason and emotion are compounded, and not by intellect or feeling in isolation' (Laban 1950: 125).

The analysis of character during the rehearsal is the product of a mental, logical processing of emotions, which are visible through the body and voice. For Laban, kinesthesia is both a mental and physical activity, whereas characterization is the result of mental activity that is conveyed by physical activity. Emotions remain simply a logical process of thoughts. We are reminded at this point of Aristotle and his argument that the conception of art is mainly an intellectual activity; consequently, the geniuses are the real creators of art. Laban's method provides a functional approach to the understanding of movement awareness, based on logical elaboration, where there is a cooperation of mental processes physical actions. In the case of structuring a character during the rehearsals, there is an elaboration of how the emotions become actions; In other words, how the inner life (or hidden values) become manifest in the body's actions through logical intellectual activity or what Aristotle names

*syllogism* (see Chapter Two, p 18). At this point Laban's statement that theatre is the mirror of man's physical, mental, and spiritual existence becomes clearer. It is life that has all these aspects, not theatre.

The chapters *The Significance of Movement*, *The Roots of the Mime* and *The Study of Movement- Expression*, focus on the problem of characterization, while in the last part of Chapter three Laban provides examples applying his theory and practice to acting, dance and mime. In the chapter *The Significance of Movement* (91-107) he gives instructions for both dance and acting and offers a classification of the art of movement: All movements 'are determined by two main action-shapes' those of *scooping* and *scattering*. *Scooping* is connected with the gesture of *possession* and *scattering* with the gesture of *repulsion*. The stratum of the world of movement according to Laban is distinguished in: (1) *Ordinary actions of everyday life* (including movements taken from industry workers), (2) *gestures* 'in intercourse and by speech' (conventional movements), (3) *poetic movement* (harmonious expressions of effort), (4) *dream-state* (like ballet) and (5) *surrealistic* (movement as in our dreams) (Laban 1950: 92-95).

As previously discussed, the meaning of the movement is revealed through the *sequences of movement* and all these are 'based on the realistic grounds of man's behavior in space and time, that our waking lives are full as our dreams of *symbolic actions*' (Laban 1950: 96). *Symbolic actions* are a way to present the movements on the stage which, including the movements of the voice organ, are related more with the issue of *probability* than that of *necessity* (*the unexpected/reversal/ Περιπέτεια*) (See Chapter Two). Symbolic actions are a combination of actions that convey the hidden values of the character. For Laban, man has an inner life that always changes in a continuous flow which is obvious in body movements. The creation of the character in specific circumstances must be depicted in movements that externalize inner life, so that theatre is a mirror of reality, as Aristotle believes. Laban argues that man moves as an 'orchestra' in a very complicated way that follows his inner life and in that way he reacts to the environment. His inner life is present in every single and small movement in a continuous flow. Moreover, he stresses that there is no definite symbolism in movement therefore certain psychological states do not refer to particular body reactions. On the contrary, it is the aim of theatre to create 'a new world', though still recognizable, that achieves in keeping the spectators' interest undiminished. Ramfos argues:

Each symbol has infinite meanings, it is not just a thing that points to something else. The combination with other elements would give at the end some direction. It's a field that everyone can identify himself and give his own interpretation (Ramfos 2012).

Laban (1950) states using the example of chopping a tree:

The movements made in chopping would consist of repeated hits, using the forearm. The same movements are made as the result of an inner excitement-of course without hatchet and wood to signify a desire to hit out at the cause of the excitement, as one would hit out at an adversary (Laban 1950: 105).

It is interesting also to note here that Laban makes an implied criticism of Stanislavsky by rejecting the 'as if' by calling it 'borrowing naturalism', the improvisation for structuring the character and the 'recalling of emotion memory'. Laban provides as an alternative the classification of movement, and the symbolic actions opening up a vast combination of effort rhythms that work against effort action habits. He prefers *simple movement-scenes*, (later referred to as studies, from the term *etudes*) rather than improvisation, for the training of the synthesis of a character. He believes kinesthetic awareness to be achieved with the exact repetition of actions, something that is impossible through improvisation, since movement cannot be memorized. In addition, improvisation does not allow for analyzing, enriching, and practicing the actions. Moreover, in characterization there are *specific circumstances*, not *given circumstances* as Stanislavsky argues.

The main difference lies on the fact that for Laban an artist creates the circumstances around the specific character and the story and he is thinking in terms of concrete movement (including voice) while Stanislavsky creates the character from the emotional state of the actor in given circumstances. In the first case, the artist creates through symbolic actions and creates specific circumstances of a new world, while in the second he creates through his emotional involvement, spontaneous reactions of a general image of his habits. Ramfos explains: 'Generally, feelings lead to generalizations and logical thoughts to the specific' (Ramfos 2012).

In addition the use of the symbolic actions takes into consideration the spectators; they have to recognize their lives, the improvisation concerns more the artistic interpretation. This may explain better the *magnetic current* which Laban tries to establish in the communication between the actions on stage and the audience. He explains that using the improvisation the actor will perform the general actions of chopping the tree under given circumstances, for

example in a forest while he is angry for his wife for financial problems. He will try to improvise that he (the actor) is angry while is chopping the tree with sudden strong hits, and at the end he will find a certain combination that he decides can show what he intended to demonstrate. Laban instead states that the artist must create step by step all the symbolic actions of the character that are implied in the text; an intellectual and physical activity based on logical elaboration.

Laban rejects any kind of psychological implication during the execution of dance or acting, and the answer to the issue of presence on the stage, concerning both actors and dancers is, according to him, only the kinesthetic experience of effort. Laban explains: '[man] performs a kind of corporate ritual in the presentation of conflicts arising from the differences in these inner attitudes' (Laban 1950: 15). He has also expressed at some point his opposition to the idea that only the undergoing of an emotional experience can enable an actor to transfer emotions on the stage, asserting that an actor does not need to possess any value but only to picture and present it (Laban 1950: 10). For Laban, performance is only a matter of certain actions and rhythms of effort in spatial patterns, including intonation in both movement and voice, following the content of the text. He explains: 'However, the main thing will be endeavour to catch the mood of each passage and to find the appropriate movement according to personal taste' (Laban 1950: 173).

Concerning the space used while moving Laban says that 'indications of space-patterns are also contained in the text' (Laban 1950: 173). In chapter two part one Laban adds an important exercise that combines different pronunciations of the word 'no' with eight basic effort actions, integrating in this way his method regarding the training of actors.

The next section of the same chapter *The Roots of Mime* as well as the third chapter *The Study of Movement-Expression* are also dedicated to *characterization*. The actor, according to Laban, must focus on the character presented, the historical period she/he lives in, his/her values, and the situations around him/her. Laban gives examples of characters in specific circumstances and tries to demonstrate possible actions through effort analysis. He suggests:

The reader is advised to perform the movements described in this and the following chapters. It is only by bodily experience (exercises in which actions are repeatedly tried out) that mastery of movement can be achieved. It is not necessary to use objects or properties since these can be imagined. The main stress is always on bodily action. (Laban 1950: 105)

Laban's book *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* is addressed mainly to actors. Preston-Dunlop (1998) in her book *Rudolf Laban: An Extraordinary Life* confirmed that Laban wrote this book for actors rather than for dancers (Preston-Dunlop 1998: 253). There are two strong indications to confirm this: First, Laban does not refer at all to the space analysis of *icosaedron* and uses only the cubic orientation in space. He realizes through observation and experience that the perception of space that a human being has is closer to what Aristotle calls *Topos*, namely the connection of the body with movement directions front, back, up, down, left, right and its diagonals (*cube*); 'The spheric form of our kinesphere is simplified by our cubic conception of space' (Laban 1966: 18). These space analyses concerns the actors' *stability*, while icosaedrical perception of space concerns the dancers' *lability*. Second, he discards *Kinetography* admitting that it is very complicated for the training for actors and he suggests abbreviations of the directions, due to the actor's lack of familiarity to such a complicated dance notation.

A problematic issue in this book (and this may stem from the fact that he was writing in a foreign language) is that while developing his aesthetic theory about theatre, he strongly attacks the traditional concept *representation* as the presentation of external characteristics, with a series of arguments in support of the notion of *vital presentation* that its main characteristic is the vividness of the presentation. The problem is that he makes repeated use of the words *representation/represents* in order to describe what he calls *vital presentation* – the confusion is that *vital presentation*, according to Laban, is the exact opposite to *representation*.

While he insists on the idea of reviving the study of the relationship of inner and outer life 'a relationship between inner motivation and the function of the body; ...knowledge and application of the common principles of impulse and function' (Laban 1950: v) he misses the question: What kind of action do the parts of the body execute? In his motif writings, in *Kinetography*, Laban classifies the actions of the body parts as travelling, jumping, extending, falling, inclining, etc. He mentions the names of some of the actions when he offers the exercises, but he omits referring to his classification of actions as they occur in the section on motif in his *Kinetography*: pause, travelling, falling, turning, twisting, gesture, inclining, transferring of weight etc. This omission is the main problem of the book that led to misunderstandings that were then perpetuated by individuals that continued Laban's legacy in movement training for actors. For in acting, actions play the most important role and they are used as a code even in a simple way for the communication

between director and actor during rehearsals. Moreover, what is required for acting is first to define the action and then its effort quality including its intonation.

Another question that arises is: How can one find the relationship between inner life and the function of the body when at the same time he insists that there is no definite symbol uniting them? What are their principles? Which are the principles regarding the connection of the content of the text to movement? What about the functional training of speech? Laban does not offer any explanation regarding these important queries of actors, but shows us a path through his writings every now and then that will allow us to fill in the gaps in his methodology.

The *Mastery of the Movement on Stage* was printed in a revised edition in 1960 after Laban's death, by his close collaborator Lisa Ullmann. After Laban's death Lisa Ullmann took on the role of developing his work and its legacy. She admits in the preface, that she bears responsibility for additions and expansions:

He [Laban] had intended revising the text before the reprint and had discussed with me what improvements he would like to make. It was, however, not granted to him to undertake any changes himself: The task fell upon me (Laban 1988: vii).

One of the most significant editorial decision she makes, is to remove the words '*on the stage*' from the original title. Ullmann removed them because she believed that the book is addressed to all people that are interested in the art of the movement, since Laban himself mentions that the art of the movement concerns everyone in the sense that it is a high important factor for a better life. In the preface of that later edition of *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage*, Ullman wanted the book to be addressed to everyone interested in movement. The word *art* gives movement not its real approach but something more than that: 'it is the sense of the poetry of movement' (Laban 1948: 6). For him it is only through the art of movement on stage that one can see and experience a better reality 'transcending that of our everyday fears and satisfactions' (Laban 1950: p 6). However, the subtraction of the last words *on the stage* from the original title does not correspond to the intent of the book. The original book addresses mainly the mastery of movement in theatre and dance; it is not a book for the mastery of movement in life.

This research proposes that this has a significant effect on the way Laban's work was to be developed thereafter. There is no reference in the original book *The Mastery of Movement*

*on the Stage* implying that it is intended for everyone. On the contrary Laban clarifies in his *preface* that the book ‘deals with stage’ and is a complicated study that ‘raises many problems’ (Laban 1950: v). Mirodan Vladimir (1997) writes about this issue:

Thus, although Laban’s main book was originally titled “The Mastery of Movement for the Stage” after Laban’s death, his editor dropped “ for the stage” from the title of later editions. Theatrical applications were driven out to the pockets of enthusiasts: Partly to people working at Joan Littlewoods “Theatre Workshop” and partly to Yat Malmgren’s Studio (Mirodan 1997: 32).

Moreover, Preston- Dunlop, Laban’s student and close assistant for many years, in her book *Rudolf Laban: An Extraordinary Life* in 1998 says: ‘With this book Laban stated clearly his current interest in movement as theatre’ (Preston-Dunlop 1998: 253), and she also mentions that Laban changed the notation system of the book for the sake of actors, replacing his Kinetography with letters (Preston-Dunlop 1998: 253).

Ullmann revised the book again in 1971, the last edition was published in 1980. She expanded some sections of the original book – the section on *Effort* in particular, and offered some corrections in the chapter of *Movement and the Body* and in *Roots of Mime*, and replaced the abbreviators with Kinetography. In addition, she included Labanotation exercises in the 1980 edition, while in the last edition in 1988 she recovers an appendix titled *Some Fundamental Aspects of the Structure of Effort* which was taken from Laban’s unpublished manuscript titled ‘*Rhythmic Control of Man’s Activities in Work and Play*’ written before the first edition of 1950s (Laban 1988: ix). In that appendix there are expounded more efforts in a classification based on how the elements are ranked in terms of stress, the four grades of intensity defined by the use of the symbols ( ++ ) for increasing and ( - - ) for decreasing, shadow movements and their graphs (Laban 1980: 169-179).

She kept the same functional approach to the section of practice but reduces the number of exercises from 306 to 103. Actually, she managed to reduce the number by incorporating more than one exercises in one. She tried to expand his work by giving more detailed explanations in *Effort*. However, where she refers to the word *effort* she adds the word *configurations*, revealing her connection of the movement to the shapes and postures of dance at that period, something which seems to be contradictory given Laban’s idea of *Effort* as ‘a mirror of everyday life’. She also added a whole section referring to psychological typology in chapter five, *the Roots of Mime*. Ullmann thereby restores Laban’s initial research with his collaborator William Carpenter, associating Jung’s idea

about the functions of *Thinking, Sensing, Intuiting* and *Feeling* with Laban's *Four Motion Factors of Effort, Space, Weight, Time* and *Flow*. As we saw previously in 1952, after William Carpenter's suggestion, Laban began to investigate the links between Jung's four types of psyche in relation to Laban's *effort* analysis, a research he continued with Yat Malmgren (something I shall return to later). However, Laban makes no mention of a connection between acting and psychology in *Mastery of Movement on the Stage*. Instead he categorically states that 'all this has little to do with psychology as generally understood' (Laban 1950: 109). Despite the fact that the later revised editions of the book may not belong to Laban himself and make it more problematic, Ullmann's objective to provide every detail from her collaboration and discussion with Laban, his co-workers and students, offers an extended repository of information and discussion about Laban's theory and practice. Ullmann in the last edition explains in the preface:

In doing this I hope to meet the many demands from students of movement for an outline of basic considerations which are relevant to the practice of Effort observation, assessment and notation (Laban 1980: ix)

### **3.2 Laban's legacy in actor's movement training: the next generation**

The main figures whose teaching of movement for actors was significantly influenced by Laban were: Litz Pisk, Geraldine Stephenson, Yat Malmgren and Jean Newlove. Litz Pisk's method for movement for actors is well established and is supported by a long standing teaching career at the R.A.D.A, the Old Vic Theatre School and at the Central School of Speech and Drama. Her book *The Actor and his Body* (1975) is a step – by – step practical manual for the training of the actor's body. Normally her work is not explicitly placed within the Laban tradition. However, Preston-Dunlop draws significant links with Laban (Preston-Dunlop 1998: 257). Pisk's book, a manual written in a simple form, reveals definite similarities with Laban's philosophy and practice. Her manual seems to be a concise version of *Mastery of Movement on the Stage*, despite the fact that she does not mention Laban by name.

Like Laban, she states that movement exposes personality and that man has the capacity to control her/his energy. Concerning the actor, she agrees with Laban when she says that 'He [the actor] moves out of abundance and need' (Pisk 1975: 9). She almost uses more or less the same vocabulary 'heaviness and lightness', 'size of movement', 'slowness and

quickness', 'free', etc (Pisk 1975: 10). Her thoughts on space are similar to those expressed by Laban's *kinesphere*: 'The body is three dimensional and is meaningful in every part and in all directions. Movement emanates from your centre to your periphery and beyond and shares itself out in space' (Pisk 1975: 10).

Her book is divided in seven brief sections (*Awareness, The spine, Non-Resistance, Tuning and Resilience, Length and Breadth, Confluence and Empathy*). She provides the reader with a type of notation of the exercises presented in the book, using sketches of the human body describing each of the exercises and daily actions. Pisk echoes Laban's way of thinking on movement not only in her vocabulary but also in her general approach. She starts from the function of breath with simple exercises and the anatomy of the spine. Exercises on rolling and unrolling the spine, feeling the weight with fall and rebound, the experience of swinging movement and its different qualities, using the entire length and breadth of the skeletal muscles (all of the above exercises take the entire body from neck to toe), variations of walking, running, jumping, turning and leaving the body 'into another nature and embody it' (Pisk 1975: 78). Her practice is functional and logical and she addresses the actor's fitness and bodily awareness, 'here and now', in specific space, yet in an empirical way. Akin to Laban, *Empathy* for Pisk, the actor has always the mastery of the execution of his/her performance and s/he does not get transformed into the character presented (Pisk 1975: 11-87). She suggests:

You command as much as you liberate. You employ your freedom of body and movement, imagination, invention and fantasy to counter-balance with control. In the sequence of the play you convince the audience that your action and reactions happen for the first time though you are moving and speaking at a specific time and in a specific space every night of the show (Pisk 1975: 87).

In the last pages of the final section she cites several fragments of plays and poems and suggests that the reader practice the exercises given while reciting the texts. She recommends a daily training of 15, 30, 60 minutes, which is a summary of the above discipline.

Pisk writes an interesting and easy-to-read handbook, whose main purpose is the training of the performer's kinesthetic sense. She offers exercises in a simple and practical way addressing practitioners, covering the needs for their everyday body training. This does not mean that her simplicity lacks important content, although if one follows Preston-Dunlop's

claim that she belongs within the Laban tradition and if one then compares her work with Laban's research on the body's movement and its detailed analysis of actors' movement, the inefficiency of her book is exposed. While there is a lot of similarities with Laban, her work is too reductive, lacks a scientific basis both in theory and practice. One significant problem is that Pisk presents the principles of movement kinesthesia in a chaotic way and she does not follow a logical process, moving from one principle to the next one, explaining in the meantime the aim of the process. Adding to this the fact that she does not mention the principles of the synthesis of character as Laban does, her exercises probably address dancers rather than actors. She, unlike Laban, does not seem to consider the complicated issue of presenting a character on the stage, the movement underscoring dialogues between two or more characters, their environment and the circumstances surrounding them. Most important, perhaps, her work leaves out the use of the dynamics of the voice, its connection with the dynamics of movement and its connection with text content, rendering her method incomplete. Finally, the use of an undoubtedly simplified way of notating movement in comparison to the more detailed *Labanotation* leads to a very elementary manual for movement kinesthetic training in acting.

Another important figure in the Laban tradition is Geraldine Stephenson, a close collaborator of Laban and Lisa Ullmann. Stephenson studied dance at Bedford College between 1943 and 1946 and afterwards with Laban in the Art of Movement Studio 1946. In 1948 she took over Laban's teaching (due to his illness) at the Northern Theatre School in Bradford, and continued as Laban's assistant until 1953. She then worked as a choreographer and performer in England, while at the same time she worked for films and stage productions. Her career as a choreographer included her work for stage, TV and films, as well as collaborations with figures such as Stanley Kubrick on *Barry Lyndon* (1975) (McCaw 2009: 2). Stephenson's teaching is based on Laban's basic principles and his approach to the body as a whole, with a principal emphasis on 'Bend, Stretch and Twist':

I was taught by Laban and Lisa Ullmann, in Manchester, when amongst the other aspects of movement we all 'did the efforts'...wringing; slash; dab; flick; etc..press-glide-float...float-glide-press...and countless combinations of all these involving aspects of time/space/weight/flow. **THEY HAVE NEVER FAILED ME.** They are my 'antennae'. They feed my creativity. **THEY ARE THE TOOLS OF MY CRAFT** (McCaw 2009: 2).

Her work has not been compiled in a single volume but has been continued by former students including Dick McCaw, actor and director, who studied movement with her for six

years. Their cooperation is presented by Dick McCaw, in a documentary film titled *Lessons after Laban* in 2007 that usefully contains one of Stephenson's lectures on her studies and collaboration with Laban.

Her lessons begin with *flopping* and an exploration of each *body part* first in simple exercises for improving the awareness and the plasticity of the body and gradually the development of each part in space. She also incorporates a sequence of exercises for the body's functional training by Rosalia Chladek (1905-1995) based on Dalcroze system of Eurhythmics (a body training system that is based on the embodiment of the basic rhythms of music). These exercises are executed 'in elevation' and 'lying, sitting and at the bare'. She continues with *Sideways Successive* movement, an exercise that creates a successive movement from the 'spine to the upper trunk, to the elbow, to wrist, to hand', in order to train the body's *flow* from the centre to periphery. The next exercise is the *Wave*, a successive movement like a 'wave' in *wheel* and *sagittal* plane. All these exercises are repeated with a changing of space, speed, position (seated or standing), and at different points in the *kinesphere*.

The exercises she considers most important are the ones concerning the *eight basic effort actions* (See 3.1). Stephenson's teaching for the training of actors, according to her own words, is based on what she learned from Laban and Ullmann. She teaches *effort's actions* in 'countless combinations' as 'different possibilities' of movement, as a vocabulary, and particularly as an important tool for actor and director, repeating Laban's approach and words ceaselessly. She approaches effort, like Laban, not as a 'prescriptive device' but as an 'heuristic' one, exposing 'how the character moves'. Her teaching approach is in a way useful to actors when it comes to the training of their kinaesthetic awareness. The problem is, although it condenses key aspects of Laban in a useful and efficient way, ultimately it does nothing to extend the analysis to cover the principal problems that confront movement for the actor. The consequence, she fails to differentiate adequately between dancer / actor. All her demonstrations in this film explore various dance effort rhythms, an emphasis we should attribute to her dance background. The interpretation of Evans, and his claim that the method of Laban is taught with expressionistic tones are evident in the *Lessons after Laban* where she teaches the student's effort.

Stephenson's teaching is based on dance-like movement with harmony and symmetry, with over-expressionistic tones, postures and mimic sequences. She worked with actors

principally as a choreographer in theatrical productions and she also admitted that she choreographed stylistic dance pieces for theatre and non – realistic movement. As McCaw explains, according to him her work for actors addresses physical theatre rather than characterization. The focus of her teaching is too narrow in its concerns to fully meet the demand for the actors’ artistic and professional training. In fact, it is not fair to criticize her as a movement teacher for actors, since she never denies her background in dance. However, this is not the case with Yat Malmgren, a significantly important figure in the ‘Laban tradition of actor training’.

Malmgren was born in Gävle (Sweden) in 1916. A dancer, choreographer, acting and movement teacher and director, he also studied at the Art of Movement Studio in the period of 1954-55 with Laban. He became Laban’s collaborator following the death of William Carpenter. Laban had begun relating movement to psychological intention with Carpenter, but after Carpenter’s death, Malmgren continued research into establishing links between Laban’s movement analysis and Jung’s psychoanalysis. Due to unknown reasons Malmgren’s collaboration with Laban stopped at the end of 1955. The research was left unfinished, and while Carpenter was interested in the therapeutic effect of that research, it was Malmgren who related this to Laban’s teaching of actors (Mirodan 1997: 32).

It must be stressed, therefore, that neither “Conflict and Harmony” nor the “Glossary” [Laban’s and Carpenter’s research mentioned above] contain any applications to character analysis for the theatre. It was left to Yat Malmgren, working with and for actors to develop these hints into a coherent, usable whole. (Mirodan 1997: 35).

He continued his research focusing on the structure of dramatic character in acting and became a teacher in acting at several drama schools: RADA, Central School of Speech and Drama, Drama Centre (Mirodan 1997: 12 ). He had written a typescript titled *the Book*, that was widely circulated amongst his students, containing a list of Laban’s main concepts and their definitions. His method is thoroughly examined in Vladimir Mirodan’s thesis *The Way of Transformation (The Laban-Malmgren System of Dramatic Character Analysis)* in 1997. (Holloway College, University of London) and further commented on Mildenberg in her M.Phil thesis (2009).

It is in Malmgren’s work that one can find a fundamentally new direction in that he connects Stanislavsky to Jung and Laban (Mirodan 1997: 36). He associates them with Stanislavsky’s notion of *objectives* and *action*, and creates a system that examines two

simple things: Analysis of a character's psychological state and its physical realization on stage. It is not a 'step by step' technique, but one allowing each actor to approach the creation of a character in his/her own way, answering to the question 'what is a role' (Mirodan 1997: 93). The main point in Malmgren's method is the six *Inner Attitudes: Near, Mobile, Dream, Stable, Awake, Remote*.

The physicalisation of motivation, with a corresponding emphasis on the sensate body, is at the Heart of [Yat system] as might be expected from a Laban influenced process. The actor analyzes character in terms of physical, movement-based images, which become icons of action (movement images) that the actor can back-reference in order to inform performance (Connor in Evans 2009: 57).

Malmgren's system is influenced by Laban's movement analysis, based on the creation of a dramatic character following Laban's six *Inner Attitudes*. As Malmgren says, 'inner attitude is the psychological essence of the character - it is the character' (Mirodan 1997: 98).

The working process starts with the facts and objectives in the text as given. Then, the actor tries to find answers to the questions of 'what about she/his attitude to certain circumstances', using her/his own imagination. Next, the actor starts physically shaping the character, making use of stored memories from real persons she/he knows, or from a combination of persons (they may also use images from paintings, cartoons etc.). Thus she/he creates a *Character model*. The actor applies that *Character model* to six *Inner Attitudes* in order to find which one better suits the character. Finally a refinement of the nuances of effort qualities is made in order for their *tempo* to be found, until the character is structured in detail (Mirodan 1997: 99-105). While he starts with Laban's suggestions for forming a character, he continues by stating that we create a *character model* from a certain person, by borrowing their behavior, their way of speaking and moving. On the other hand Laban talks about 'a synthesis, culminating of personality caught up in ever-changing flow of life' that do not imitate the movement behavior of any certain person, but creates a new one (Laban 1950: 109).

Malmgren differs from Laban in the sense that he is interested merely in the dramatic structure of a character, whereas Laban's interest lies in the art of movement as a complete analysis of all possible human movement and this is his point of departure for the synthesis of a dramatic character. Thus, Laban goes further than Malmgren, not only by offering the principles for the structuring of a character -since he is always referring to how a character

is formed (although he gives only theoretical information on this matter)- but also by providing the means for functionally training the body to enable it to act naturally on the stage. Malmgren's system examines the 'laws of expressive movement' in theatre, and according to Mirodan it does not provide 'its realization in exercises' (Mirodan 1997: 14). Whereas Malmgren gives little attention to the process of the structuring of a body (leaving his actors to work only with their natural affinities), Laban always focuses on the significance of the body's training. Their main difference lies in the psychological implication characterizing Malmgren's system. Laban himself was also trying to find a connection of movement analysis to psychology, yet in the heart of his main argument for an actor's training he excludes all psychological implication. There is a large number of arguments against psychological interpretations of the actor in all his writings, a lot of them to be found in the second chapter of *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* where Laban uses the words 'depict' or 'picture' when referring to the actor's connection with the character s/he performs. Laban states:

All this has little to do with psychology as generally understood. The study of human striving reaches beyond psychological analysis. Performance in movement is a synthesis, culminating in the understanding of personality caught up in the ever-changing flow of movement (Laban 1950: 109).

Another important point is that Malmgren does not introduce a step-by-step technique for the body's functional training, nor does he provide the tools for human movement in order to enrich the actor's use of *fantasy*. This is the reason he suggests that the actors should extract images stored in memory. In spite of the fact that he uses the word *fantasy*, what he actually means is closer to the notion of *imagination*. By contrast, Laban stresses the training of the *fantasy* and offers the appropriate tools through his scientific and logical approach. Yet another principal difference between them lies in Malmgren's belief that there is a direct correspondence between certain psychological and physical functions which lead to the interpretation of certain physical actions as certain emotional conditions.

This idea stems from Laban himself in the preface of his book *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* when he discusses the demand of finding the connection between 'the inner motivation of the movement and the functions of the body' in everyday life (Laban 1950: v). However, the difference is that Laban's answer to this question lies in the fact that he does not refer to certain physical actions as a result of certain emotional states, but that in his scientific approach, tries to find 'the common principles of impulse and function'

(Laban 1950: v). Moreover, Laban declares that ‘In principle, a symbol does not mean anything definite’ a statement that makes the case against Malmgren’s stance that certain emotions create certain physical actions (Laban 1950: 95). Moreover, it is Malmgren who is responsible for establishing a link between Laban’s work and the ‘emotional implication’ with the character, an aim that had not been part of Laban’s original work. Mirodan (1997) points out that there is no reference to Jungian terms in Laban’s work (Mirodan 1997: 29). Laban in his book *Effort* declares:

The psychological interpretation is of little direct value for effort assessment. Nothing can be expressed in psychological terms until the attitude towards the motion factors Weight, Space, Time and Flow has been determined (Laban 1947: 64).

Perhaps in Malmgren’s method, it is the absence of scientific validity and argumentation with regards to his assertion that there is a connection between the idea that certain emotion produces and certain physical actions (Mirodan 1997: 91).

Malmgren was essentially a teacher of acting and not a teacher of movement, in contrast to Jean Newlove who was a pupil of Laban and also a close collaborator. She is a movement teacher at various drama schools, as well as at Joan Littlewood’s Theatre Workshop company. Her book *Laban for Actors and Dancers* (1993), subtitled ‘putting Laban’s Movement Theory into Practice: a Step-by-Step Guide’, addresses actors’ and dancers’ movement training based on Laban’s principles. Like Laban’s *Mastery of Movement on the Stage* and its later revised edition by Ullmann, she maintains the same kind of unified approach to movement (body and mind) and the connection between the actors’ and dancers’ training (Newlove 1993: 22). She believes that actors and dancers must overcome their physical habits and be able to choose from the vast possibilities of movement behaviour in order to create a character. For Newlove it is Laban’s method that gives this opportunity to the modern actor, since it is the only discipline providing the way of the body’s training and the synthesis of character at the same time. (Newlove 1993: 13).

Her book consists of twenty chapters, each one of them either addressing a particular principle of Laban’s or her own personal views concerning movement training. There is a certain order followed in each chapter, containing a brief theoretical section, a practical one which is a series of two to four exercises derived from this theory, a section called *Mobility and Attention to Detail* giving instructions on the execution and the problems that may possibly arise from the exercises, a section named *Further Exploration* and suggests some

further exploration of the exercises given, a section called *Improvisation*, in which she asks for improvising upon certain given circumstances for example locomotion actions, object, voice, texts and finally a section called *Reminder*, that summarizes the chapter and comments on it. She explains: 'Given circumstances should be kept simple, movements curtailed to normal, everyday working actions and when using the voice, start with gibberish. Tools and props are helpful' (Newlove 1973: 63).

Although much of the text and its exercises derive from Laban's teaching, by adding improvisation, Newlove ends up in fact with results that deviate significantly from Laban's intentions. This poses a problem not least because, on the one hand, it flagrantly misinterprets Laban; and on the other hand because fails to address the key problems that remain in Laban's analysis (as identified in the section 1.1). This raises the main problem of memory in the training of kinaesthesia that requires repetition in order for complicated actions to be stored and to be repeated with sufficient dexterity (Vanter, Sherman, Luciano 2001: 459). Newlove writes:

Man may choose to overcome inherited [for Laban they are stored memories] tendencies if he wishes...This ability to select one's movement behaviour is, indeed, fertile ground for the actor or dancer. It enables him to explore many possibilities when searching for his stage character in a given situation. Action and reaction lead to conflict, the dynamic common to all drama (Newlove 1993: 12).

Newlove stems from Plato's heritage and in her book *Laban for All* (2004) in the section *Why Plato?* she repeats the same arguments first used by Curl's in his *Philosophical Foundations* regarding Laban's links with Platonic philosophy (See section 1.1). She says:

And Laban, like Plato before him, relying on his intuition and supreme vision, rather [than] scientific proof, devised a series of connections between the mathematical crystal shape and the human body on which he based a solid foundation for the practise of movement and dance (Newlove & Dabby 2004: 25).

She starts, like Laban and Ullmann, in the first chapter from exercises which are titled: '*Exploring our Movement Potential*'. These exercises refer to the exploration of body parts and the performer's awareness, the body's symmetry and asymmetry. These exercises cover both limited and expanding movements, different kinds of traveling, different weight, space and time qualities and explore all the potential of bodily movement in all its possible combinations. At this point she suggests for each student to create a *solo movement*

*improvisation* based on the instructions given in the previous exercises, to stabilize it until it is given a concrete form and to execute it in the presence of a partner who has to observe and analyze it. She emphasizes that awareness, observation and analysis of movement must be continued in everyday activities, in noticing for example ‘how did you put your shoes on?’ The presentation of Solo movement improvisation and a partner’s observation and analysis is repeated in every chapter, for she believes that this is a way to train the kinesthetic memory and at the same time the ability to observe and to analyse movement. Concerning the training of observation and analysis, Newlove is in accord with Laban, because the training of observation takes place in a specific movement sequence. However, Newlove seems to take distance from Laban in his being against improvisation, at least in the case of training the body’s awareness, as it is exposed in the sections 3.1. This happens because Newlove, as she explains, connects the method with Stanislavsky’s method of acting, where improvisation is a key point in order to create the actions on the stage. At the end of the chapter she stresses that this kind of training is strictly personal and depends on each person’s limitations, returning again to Laban’s main idea that the training of each body is personal. This discussion will be repeated later in detail in the proposed methodology where I will give specific examples of how the training becomes personal while working with others.

*Kinesphere*, *Logical Spatial Form*, and *Space Harmony (Choreutics)* occupy the second stage of her text. First she investigates the notion of *Kinesphere* which is the personal space surrounding the body, and the logical spatial form which refers to the way in which the human body perceives its *dimensions* in a ‘natural’ way, namely, in terms of the dimensions of the cube: *up/down*, *left/right* and *forward/backward*. These exercises consist of a simple inclining of the body, balancing towards all the directions in space. At this point she gives an exercise in which she asks the student to react in an imagined frightening situation not as one naturally expected, for example bending his chest, but doing exactly the opposite, by extending the chest forward.

Although she tries to give an idea of what are symbolic actions and the unexpected in the order of actions, which Laban repeatedly and intensively calls for in the art of characterization, she ends up in a position quite antithetical to that of Laban: a reaction that is executed by only one action in a given circumstance that culminates in ‘borrowing naturalism’, while Laban requires a complicated and unusual combination of actions in order to produce symbolic actions. Moreover, what is misunderstood here, in Laban’s

terms, is what she calls a natural reaction - is the expected in naturalism; what Laban calls 'borrowing'. For Laban there is no definite symbol, therefore in both reality and art nothing can be seen as a natural reaction. This idea was extensively discussed in Chapter Two when the concept of mimesis was discussed and in the beginning of this chapter where Laban's principles were discussed. Furthermore, the same issue is presented in practice in the proposed methodology that follows in the next chapter.

In chapter three she introduces the two movement scales from Laban's *Choreutics*, the *Dimensional Scale (stabile)* and the *Diagonal Scale (labile)*. She also uses notation from Labanotation, influenced by Ullmann's edition, in order to show the levels of directions (*high, medium and deep*). The *Dimensional Scale* works in stable position and is connected to the cube and has two pathways, for the right side and for the left side. She gives simple functional exercises for both sides moving in sequence with crossing steps starting with the right leg and then with the left leg. She then suggests improvisations for acting by giving instructions such as adding of a dialogue, objects, or imaginary situations. The *Diagonal Scale* on the contrary works off-balance and has eight pathways: the combination between the cube's directions and the three levels. She provides simple exercises in these pathways, following Laban and Ullmann's method and then suggests improvisations with what she calls given circumstances, by which she means natural reactions; simple conventional action that conveys the meaning schematically (Newlove 1973: 22-45). She explains: given circumstances should be kept simple, movements curtailed to normal, everyday working actions and when using the voice, start with gibberish. Tools and props are useful' (Newlove 1973: 63).

After these exercises are completed, Newlove then returns to the *eight basic effort actions*. She suggests certain functional exercises that require the experiencing of the quality of each effort factor and then adding to these, as Laban himself does, movement in combination with voice. The exercises consist in executing *each effort action* working with every body part and moving in every possible direction, leading to an exploration of the *Dynamosphere*, and the kinship between dynamic qualities and *Dimensional Scale* suggesting exercises that explore all the possible combinations. Further exercises involve all the possible rhythmic combinations of two or more efforts, and introduce to these the use of the voice.

She explores Greek Rhythms as a *time-weight* emphasis. She analyses the fundamental rhythms: *Trochee, Iambus, Dactylus, Anapestus, Peon, Ionian* like Laban and Ullmann. The

exercises she gives are simple executions of the rhythms, then improvisations in group movement, the connection of rhythms with mood, voice, song etc.

What Newlove seems to miss out, however, is Laban's *symbolic actions* and their importance to *vital presentation*. On the contrary, she usually interprets a reaction to an action in the light of what she perceives to be what is 'natural'.

The natural reaction of the trunk is to retreat quickly backwards in danger and, when danger is passed to explore more cautiously forwards. That is not to say that we can only move quickly backwards or slowly forwards. I am discussing a natural reaction (Newlove 1973: 32).

Treating actors' movement training from 'natural reaction' would unfortunately, appear to be a misunderstanding of what Laban actually means when he said that 'theatre is more than a mirror of everyday life'. As we saw in the previous chapters, for Laban, there is no *natural reaction* to a certain action but rather an infinite number of possible reactions to it, and the main question for an actor is not 'what do I have to do?' but 'what is the right movement that I should choose from the vast possibilities of movement?'.

A further problem is that Newlove examines the links between *mental effort* and *motion factors: Space with Attention, Weight with Intention, Time with Decision* and *Flow with Precision or Progression*. In this way she connects them with Stanislavsky's approach to acting, who believed that man's activity is a composition of *attention, reflection* and *rest* (Newlove 1996: 116). Newlove, like Malmgren, believes that Stanislavsky's *rest* and *reflection* are equivalent to what Laban named *intention, decision* and *progression*. Newlove, makes only a brief reference to Stanislavsky's connection to Laban, in comparison to the extensive analysis Malmgren conducted. She actually repeats the information she received by Ullmann's later revised editions and she seems to ignore Laban's words that there is no psychological implication in characterization and that it is only a matter of actions and their effort's rhythms. Newlove says in her book *Laban for All* - in the section *For those who act* about the actor's emotional state – in a straightforward reference to Stanislavsky's *Emotion Memory*:

Likewise, he [the actor] needs to know how his feelings and emotion can be affected by happiness, misery, ecstasy, grief, hatred, love, jealousy, anger, hysteria, from either joy or grief and many other similar influences. Having done this, he should be able to recreate any of these states and project it to an audience (Newlove & Dulby 2004: 210).

Thereupon she provides a short survey concerning dance drama and the need of that kind of dance to explore movement through effort analysis of character, and continues the issue of effort by providing the psychosomatic experience and the connection between the sensation of movement and the *eight basic actions*: *Suspended* with *Floating*, *Dropping* with *Thrusting*, *Elated* with *Gliding*, *Collapsing* with *Slashing*, *Stimulated* with *Dabbing*, *Relaxed* with *Wringing*, *Excited* with *Flicking*, *Sinking* with *Pressing*. The *flow* motion factor has *the free element* which is characterized by the sensation of *fluid*, and the *bound element* which has the sensation of *pausing*. Newlove suggests functional exercises for all the possibilities in space and voice. The eighteenth chapter studies the *Four Drives*, each one of them being a combination of three *motion factors*: *Action Drive* combines *Weight, Time, Space*, *Vision Drive* combines *Flow, Time, Space*, *Spell Drive* combines *Weight, Flow*, while *Space and Passion Drive* combines *Weight, Flow, Time*. She suggests functional exercises for all *Drives* and their combinations (Newlove: 64-142).

At the end of the book Newlove illustrates a combination of steps that are useful to actors when learning dances. She provides simple exercises of steps in different directions, different levels, simultaneously adding more movements to more than one body part with their notations. Concluding, she adds a section called *In Search of the Character*, where she offers two examples of application of Laban's principles: Lorca's play *The love of Perlimplin and Belisa in the Garden* and *The Flying Doctor* by Ewan MacColl (an adaptation of Molière's *Le Médecin malgré lui*). According to her, the reading of the plays provides all the information needed on the characters' behaviour. She translates this textual information into effort analysis in order to construct the characters' movement patterns, provided that the actors have trained their body's effort and voice adequately by avoiding their 'personal movement habits'. She closes with a brief suggestion:

Initially, the actor-dancer will have an intuitive approach to the role and will not consciously choose specific sequences of effort combinations. It is only when he gets "into the part" and feels at one with the character that can consciously select movement rhythms, spatial patterns and effort combinations, specifically 'honing' his interpretation of the character (Newlove 1993: 154).

The suggestion to actors regarding their approach to the role, by using the word "intuitive", however, marks in Newlove another radical point of departure from Laban and Malmgren. They, quite to the opposite, believe that actors approach the character in their specific circumstances. Moreover, Laban does not make any reference to an actor feeling 'at one

with the character’, but one ‘pictures’ the actions of the character instead. Their points of departure disclose serious misunderstandings – precisely because each author has failed to grasp the deeper unity of Laban’s thought, and in relation to Aristotelian poetic principles.

Despite all these objections, her book is an attempt to create exercises for both actors and dancers using Laban and Ullmann’s path and it does echo Laban’s work much more closely than Pisk, Stephenson and Malmgren with regards to body awareness. While the book gives exercises that are important for the training of both dancer’s and actor’s body kinesthesia, she overlooked the main principles given by Laban both in theory and practice in the art of characterization. Newlove’s interpretation of Laban leaves open the questions identified above: Plato’s and Stanislavsky’s connection with Laban theory and Practice. Therefore, the issues of imagination, ‘natural reaction’ in acting, are so far away from Laban method, in a way that makes it seem that she never took into account his last book. In a recent conference at RADA (March 2008 on Laban’s method for actors) Newlove in a practice context described a short mime scene about a young princess that was kidnapped by thieves in the forest and given her freedom from a young prince. The work relied on conventional improvisation and over expressionistic movement -similar to that witnessed in the demonstration by Geraldine Stephenson as is presented by Dick McCaw, in a documentary film titled *Lessons after Laban* in 2007. The movement approach presents similarities with German Expressionist. Gordon (1975) explains: ‘Expressionist actor would have to exhibit, through physical unmasking and submission, his own internal-cosmic-anxieties’ (Gordon 1975: 36). Whereas Stevenson remained a choreographer and she has never connected her work with Plato’s philosophy directly and Stanislavsky, Newlove identifies with the idea of man’s connections with cosmos through crystals as we explained above and puts Laban’s icosaedrical perception of the space under Platonic philosophy of *the Ideal World* in the way the German Expressionist did. Kasimir Edschmid one of the main representatives of German expressionism, *On Poetic Expressionism* in 1917 declares:

The New Man possesses even greater, more direct feelings. He stands there grasping his heart. And from the surge welling up in his blood, he is in an absolutely impulsive state. It is as if he would wear his heart painted onto his chest. Now he is not an image anymore-he is actually MAN. Completely entangled in the Cosmos, but with cosmic perceptions. Not counterfeit thoughts, but his emotions alone lead him and guide him. Only then can he advance and

approach absolute Rapture, where the tremendous ecstasies soar from his soul. (Kasimir Edschmid as cited in Gordon 1975: 34).

Newlove seems to ignore the fact that Laban in his later period returns to the analysis of space as a cube and not as an icosaedron, reminding us here that in Plato's analysis of the solid, the cube is earth; and that analysis is closer to Aristotle's conception of space viewed as cube as we explored in detail in section 2.2.

Therefore, Evan's accusation against both teachers appears well founded. Laban is far away from both since he states about the way of acting in an 'expressionistic' way:

We go to the theatre and the cinema in order to see human life in a leisurely contemplation and, as it were, through a magnified glass. This magnifying activity is, however, not a simple intensification of the movement of expression. Such exaggeration of intensity is called 'overacting', which should be avoided. The precision and the clarity of the movement are more important than the intensity of performance (Laban 1950: 108).

In fact, Newlove's and Stephenson's approach has nothing to do with Laban's method for actors. This will be demonstrated in detail in the proposed methodology in chapter four.

The next section addresses contemporary approaches to movement training for actors and focuses mainly on the most important written approaches in England and in the United States, that of Brigit Panet's book *Essential Acting* and Barbara Andrian's book *Actor Training The Laban Way: An integrated Approach to Voice, Speech and Movement*.

### **3.3 Contemporary Approaches: Brigit Panet-Barbara Andrian**

Panet is a director and acting teacher at several drama schools including LAMDA and RADA. Initially she studied dance but at the age of sixteen turned to theatre studies in attending the Central School of Speech and Drama (1954-1957) (Panet 2009: xvii). She was acquainted with the Laban system by Maxwell Shaw, a member of Joan Littlewood's Theatre Workshop company -in which Jean Newlove was sent by Laban himself to teach his movement system to the company and became their movement teacher and choreographer for many years (see also at the end of section 3.2 about Jean Newlove). In some respects Panet comes from the tradition of Newlove, although she is closer to Malmgren's approach since her book *Essential Acting* (2009) combines the teachings of

Stanislavski's acting method and Laban's movement system, like Malmgren. Besides, she is also an acting teacher, like Malmgren, who uses Laban. As she explains in the introduction, she uses the *Method of Physical Action*, an approach from Stanislavsky's late phase of his work in acting, as her foundation. While Stanislavsky had originally based his method for acting on the character's emotional state and the actor's ability to feel the same emotion in order for them to be convincing to the audience, during his last period he changes his method to a 'practical method' based on the role's *physical actions*. According to the later Stanislavsky, *Physical Actions* come first with related emotions arising afterwards, since the body's movement reveals and physically illustrates the emotional state of the actors. In response to the question 'What is acting' Stanislavsky answers that 'Acting is behaving as if', where 'behaving' is *Physical actions*, and 'as if' is the 'imagined situation' (Panet 2009: xv-xvi). Panet explains:

It is the direct experience that you are having as the imagined character in the imagined situation. Your job is to allow that situation, in those Given Circumstances to matter as much to you at the moment as it would to the character (Panet 2009: xvii).

What the actor feels is that she/he is 'solving this problem' and at the same time she/he 'lives' the 'imagined situation'. In other words, the actor experiences 'two levels of consciousness' and the main 'difficult task' for an actor is 'of behaving naturally in public as an imagined character in an imagined situation' (Panet 2009: xvii).

Panet believes that Laban's system analysis of action rhythm is what Stanislavsky was searching for 'in vain' in order to support his *Method of Physical Action*. For Panet, an heir to Malmgren like Newlove, Laban's analysis of *effort action rhythms* and their immediate connection with emotional state (Laban's *inner attitude*) have a strong connection to Stanislavsky's approach to acting. Moreover, Laban's system according to her provides actors with the necessary tools of 'understanding', 'developing' and 'controlling' the body and its 'accurate kinesthetic sense', including voice, in a 'clear', 'practical', and easy way. Moreover, she believes that it 'gives him [the actor] a vocabulary of action', for observing, practicing and notating movement, nearly quoting Laban's own words on his system. Panet tries to support Stanislavsky's *Method of Physical Action* with Laban's movement principles, recognizing that what is missing from an acting method is the training of the body's kinesthetic experience and a movement vocabulary as a necessary tool for the art of acting.

Panet's book is divided into six parts. The first five regard acting training in a series of exercises concerning acting drills, acting behaving, the rehearsing process, tips and techniques and an introduction to playing Shakespeare. The last part entitled 'Workshop in Laban movement for actors', mainly deals with *Effort* analysis and its *eight basic actions*. Although she focuses mostly on *effort* training, like all the Laban descendants mentioned above, and she admits that an actor's body must be trained before approaching acting on a long term basis, she only presents effort training as a brief section in the end of the book. One could argue that this way of presenting the exercises of the body's kinesthetic training actually reduces the significance of movement training. She teaches each *motion factor* first and their *opposite elements* separately, suggesting that the exercises should begin with the extremes of each element in order to use their nuances. She starts with the factor of *flow* and its opposite elements of *free* and *bound* while flow is the most difficult factor to be understood kinesthetically, because it is determined by the control of the body – a fact that needs time to be achieved (it will be discussed in detail in the four chapter at the exposition of my methodology). Moreover, she misses the principles of movement derived by the analysis of Aristotle and Laban as related *body parts* and their infinite number of combination, for example, of *actions, kinesphere* etc. *Flow* is a matter of balance to her: In *bound* quality the body tries to keep the balance, while in *free* state the body is in imbalance. Here there is attested a different aspect of treating flow quality, since Laban defines it as the control of movement, and body's ability to stop or to give flow to it. For Laban balance is the action of inclining, the last balance before falling and concerns the body in standing position, whereas flow for him is present always in every movement.

Panet divides the exercise on flow into three different stages. The focus of these is the 'experiencing of contrasting *Flows*' (Panet 2009: 202). These exercises are performed by pairs, with one person moving with a *free* quality and the other with a *bound* one, using normal behavioral action. At this first stage the aim of the student is to alter his/her partner's quality trying to persuade him/her to adopt his/her quality of *flow*. Later on, one of the partners moves with a *free flow* leaving his/her body to gravity, feeling the extreme of the quality of freedom, whereas the other moves with a *bound flow*. The above exercises are repeated with a reversal of roles. Finally there is an improvisation exercise requiring that the actor find a space for resting in the snow after saving his/her partner, while all movement must have a *free flow* (Panet 2009: 197-206). The objective of this exercise is for training the body's kinesthetic awareness in order to use this movement quality in given circumstances.

Panet treats *space* as the *motion factor of effort*, which has two *opposite elements direct and flexible*, while she deals with *personal space* not in Laban's *kinesphere* but using what she calls the *six main directions*. These directions are extracted by the *Three dimensions* and are the extension of the body in *High, Low, Back, Forward, Right, Left* and their *diagonals*. Panet (2009) also divides the space "consumed" by the body in *Three extensions: Near* (Actions near the body), *Middle* (Actions in the surrounding space), and *Far* (Extending Actions). She connects them to acting: *Near* with 'small inner movements of feeling and thoughts, memory', *Middle* with "attainable or customary" like walking, and *Far*, which 'is linked to the extreme actions or beliefs of a character, his confidence, aggression and the peaks of his experience' that are presented by stretching movements. (Panet 2009: 209).

She also offers an explanation of Laban's concepts of *gathering* (closing, contracting) as a moment of the character's defense, holding or protecting something etc, and *scattering* (opening, expanding) as a moment of the character's generosity, curiosity, attack etc. She suggests three exercises concerning *gathering* and *scattering*: The first is 'Meeting people open and closed', with middle extension actions, with near extension actions and far extension actions. The second is 'conscious control of energy into space' which requires two people, one holding the other's elbows and exploring projection (or the absence of it) of movement, for both. The third is 'Simultaneous and Successive Movement' which refers to an exercise where the whole body moves at once, either simultaneously or successively, either while folding or while unfolding. What then follows are her 'six exercises with space'. The first exercise is 'working alone with an object', the second is 'working alone with an object using speech', the third is 'improvisation in pairs or in a group, played silently, the fourth is 'movement alone', the fifth is 'movement with a partner' and eventually the sixth is 'improvisation using speech, in pairs or in a group'. After these exercises there is a section called 'the Space Scale' in which she introduces a way of 'counting' directness and flexibility on a scale from zero to five for both direct and flexible elements, in an attempt to define practical work or observation with greater precision. At the end of this section there is an exercise called 'exercise in spatial pathways, for a group of men and women' that referring to the group scene that deal with *direct* and *flexible elements* in movement and space pathways using pure movement or given circumstances and the use of speech (Panet 2009: 207-220).

The next section, Panet deals with *Time*, and specifically, its two *opposite elements*, the *sudden* and the *sustaining* and its two parameters *Speed* and *Duration* (their contrasting

aspects are, according to her, *Fast and Slow* and *Brief and Longterm*). Following this, she suggests exercises concerning the exploration of *Time* and combined with *Space* (*flexible* and *direct*) in the section *The six exercises applied to space and time*: ‘Working alone with an object’, ‘As one, but with spoken thoughts’, ‘Improvisation’, ‘Pure movement alone’, ‘Movement with a partner’, ‘Improvisation using talking in a group’. She repeats the same scale from zero to five for counting time as she did with space, in both directions (*slow* to *fast*) and calls it *Time Scale*. After these exercises she introduces two new interpretations of the terms *Pause* and *Stop*. *Pause* is to her an interruption of movement and is connected to the *free flow*, while *Stop* is a ‘complete break’, an ‘end’ of movement and it is associated with the *bound flow*. She gives a group exercise with *Pauses* and *Stops* in walking or running. At the end of this section she introduces an ‘informal’ way of notating movement sentences. For *Pauses* the indication is a comma, for *Stops* it is a full stop, for *direct* it is straight lines while for *flexible* it is flexible lines. She also uses long lines to show *long duration* and short lines for *brief*, while speed is indicated with the letters F (*fast*) or S (*slow*) (Panet 2009: 221-233) However, she points out:

The danger here is that you will learn ‘choreographically’, which is not useful learning for an actor, that is, that you will repeat a pattern of movement in which each element will be represented by a gesture, so that the sequence soon becomes meaningless (Panet 2009: 231).

Panet in the above citation seems to be in complete disagreement to Laban’s suggestions against improvisations and his preference for movement sequences that train the long term memory, a highly important issue for actors. Laban treats the actors’ actions on the stage similar to dancers’ actions and their performance as a ‘choreography’. The statement that choreography is a sequence of gestures whereby repetition makes movements meaningless shows very little understanding of the nature of choreographic work. Laban makes clear that repetition in movement does not transform it into an automatic execution. On the contrary every time it is a *new* time that creates the *indestructible time*, a notion that discussed in detail in chapter 2.4. That important antithesis arises from the fact that Panet introduces Laban through the prism of Stanislavskian, a fact that is contradictory to Laban’s method.

Although Panet introduces the Effort training in a similar manner to that proposed in this research -examining each factors one by one and not as eight basic actions- she approaches them in a different way. For example the factor of *Force*, is a term that was labeled *Weight* by Laban. In contrast Panet proposes that *Force* is a better way to describe the quality and

its continuum between the contrasting elements *Strong* and *Light*. Laban on the other hand uses the word 'weight' allowing both strong and light movements as well as their fluctuations. Panet's word *force* suggests mainly the strong element of movement. According to her there are three aspects of *Force* for actors: The *pull of gravity* (the force of gravity), the *kinetic force* (the power of movement) and the *external force* (for example the energy for pulling a heavy or light object).

The first exercise she is 'Lifting a chair'. It is a simple exercise which requires lifting a chair from five in the scale of *light* to five in the scale of *strong*. She also suggests the six exercises for *force*: 'Working alone with an object', 'As exercise one, with spoken words', 'Improvisations', 'Movement alone', 'Movement with a partner', without speech and 'Improvisation with a partner or a group' in the same direction as in the previous sections. She introduces once more a simple notation of heavy lines for *strong* and light lines for *light* ( Panet 2009: 234-240 ). This series of exercises addresses the body's kinesthetic awareness of force quality of movement in different circumstances, using improvisation as the main tool. Once more Panet uses Laban's principles but continues in her own way having always in her mind that Laban's method can support Stanislavsky's method of acting.

The last section gives an introduction to Laban's *eight effort actions*. Again, Panet provides a simple notation of symbols for each *effort action* and suggests the *six exercises* mentioned in previous sections for each *effort action*. Then she discusses how the *effort action rhythms* applied to acting performance:

In opening a door I might push the key into the lock with a sharp *Punch*, turn it with a *Wring* if the lock is stiff, then push the door open gently with a *Gliding Effort*. Picking up a broken glass from the floor I could perform the task *Directly*, *Quickly* and *Lightly* ( *Dab* ) ....The *Effort* or *rhythm*, would depend on my situation, which is to say my 'character' at the moment. My need is to pick up the glass but my strategy for how I do that varies according to the situation I am in ( Panet 2009: 242 ).

Once again she gives her own explanation as to why Laban's analysis of movement is helpful to Stanislavsky's *Method of Physical Action* and moves on to speak more generally about Stanislavsky in order to connect Laban's work with Stanislavsky's latest period, which, according to Panet as well as Malmgren, is closer to Laban's intentions, since it provides the actor with a way of choosing and remembering the right movement rhythms both in rehearsal and performance. She suggests an exploration of *effort action* in a certain

sequence using pure movement, suggesting that the experience of effort rhythm 'can provide the appropriate organic emotion' needed for 'truthful acting' (Panet 2009: 244). She proceeds to discuss Laban's *Effort factors* and their connection to *Attention, Decision, Intention* and *Precision (Space, Time, Force, Flow)* ( Panet 2009: 243-245). At the end of Laban's section, she combines effort movement qualities with voice. From Panet's point of view, certain texts are related with certain effort qualities of voice and speech. For example Othello's text uses words, such as, 'strive, pull, push' that are associated with press.

Panet provides an interesting approach to Laban's method for actors connecting it with Stanislavsky's Method of Physical Actions as a supporting study for her teaching in the area of kinesthetic training. She elaborates Laban's principles in an innovative way and tries to make them functional for her teaching of acting. She adds a simple and very easy way of notation which may be more helpful than the complicated Labanotation, yet she oversimplifies movement symbolization. She realizes the importance of Laban's movement analysis for acting, however she misses significant aspects of Laban's key concepts and exercises (which she readily admits): accents, space analysis, stability/ lability, symbolic movements, and so forth that are of paramount importance for actor training. Panet, as a teacher of acting, specialized in Stanislavky's method of acting, uses Laban method as a supporting tool in her practice, realizing the importance of rhythm in structuring a character, the classification of movement and the notation both in training and characterization. However, while she is seeking actions as the key issue in acting, she misinterprets Laban method and she concentrates actually on the question of how the body moves omitting the important question which comes first: What is the body doing? This is the question which my proposed methodology considers to be the cornerstone in movement for actors, as we shall see in the next chapter.

Panet then seems to take a different approach of Laban: first because she teaches Stanislavky's method, where improvisation treats actions as a spontaneous activity flowing by the inner thoughts and emotions of the actor, since it is the actor himself that gives the status to the character presented – and the idea that the proposed methodology will present in detail in the next chapter, rejects in accordance to Laban method. Moreover, another possible explanation is that she never studied Laban from his original writings but she was taught his method by a student of Newlove as she suggests in her book (Panet 2009: 198). Panet also explains that she is using only some of the basic Laban principles, those that she considers supportive of her own teaching. However, aim of the research here is to argue instead that

Laban's method is comprehensive. Therefore it is difficult to ascertain the validity Panet's pick-and-choose approach at the expense of degenerating the original proposals insofar as there is little understanding of the effect of transposing Laban's principles to a Stanislavskian methodology. This is also an issue that the proposed methodology seeks to address: the training of the actor's body requires a thorough study long in duration that seeks methodological integrity. Panet's main contribution lies, rather, in the simple notation that she has developed for those interested in wider application of Labanotation.

The American interpretation of Laban starts with Irmgard Bartenieff (1900-81), a dancer, physical therapist, movement therapist, notator, and dance ethnologist who studied movement with Laban himself in 1925 and with Warren Lamb (Laban's assistant and collaborator) and again (for a short period) with Laban in 1950. Bartenieff introduces Laban's principles in the United States for the first time in the 30's and in 1978 she founds the Laban/Bartenieff Institute of Movement Studies (Andrian 2008: 6). Bartenieff developed a system of 'body's re-education' which is based on *Nine Principles: Breath Support, Core support, Spatial Intent, Weight Shift, Dynamic Alignment, Initiation and Sequencing, Developmental Patterning, Rotary factor, and Effort Intent*

Barbara Andrian, comes from the Bartenieff tradition, is an American teacher of movement, speech and voice for actors at Marymount Manhattan College as well as in television, film and theatre productions. She studied acting, speech (based on phonologist W. A. Aiken) and Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) at Laban/Bartenieff Institute of Movement Studies. She incorporates Laban movement analysis with Bartenieff Fundamentals (BF) in her work. She wrote a book titled *Actor Training the Laban Way: An Integrated Approach to Voice, Speech and Movement* in which she combines movement, voice and speech in an attempt to provide a complete training for the art of acting. Despite the title of the book, the content has little to do with Laban's theory and practice. Her main point comes from Bartenieff's idea of the significance of breath: As reported by Andrian, 'breath is the deepest exchange between our inner and outer environment' and 'breath keeps us present in the 'now' (Andrian 2009: 24). The book's functional exercises derive from Bartenieff's body training fundamentals that regard physiology and muscular awareness, suggesting exercises like *Cat-Caw, Child's Pose, Monkey Pose* (Andrian 2009: 59-61). This very practical terminology bears no resemblance to Laban's eagerness to elevate the status of theatre to that of science and its scientific vocabulary. There is a brief link with Stanislavsky with regard to action, reminiscent of Newlove, but without any arguments to support it (Andrian 2009: 150).

Andrian does not follow Laban's order of functional training for the awareness of the body, but has an entirely different approach. Nearly the whole of the rest of the book focuses mainly on voice and speech, providing only some simple movements, always connected to voice. She makes a reference to *Effort* analysis, but again the focus is on the connection to voice and its pronunciation (Andrian 2009: 115-137). She also makes an attempt to associate *Space* analysis with the function of voice and speech through imagination.

For Andrian, 'the hallmarks of an excellent actor is the ability to *act on impulse*' and 'the skill of acting requires less censorship than real life and, therefore, acting on impulse is desired', an approach far from Laban's principles and his preference to the intentional artist and the scientific approach in acting. While Andrian believes that 'acting is after all pretend and not real life' (Andrian 2009: 24-25), an assumption that is close to Plato's argument against the actor's as a forger of reality, Laban following Aristotle's thoughts, elevates the status of acting to something superior to that of real life. Here there is again the same distinction between the two understandings of *mimesis*, an issue that we discussed more fully in chapters one and two, and again a misinterpretation of Laban's theory and practice that continues to the present day.

Andrian's book is chiefly concerned with voice and speech and much less with movement. She uses Laban's name in a book which does not correspond to Laban's ideas for the following reasons: it is not grounded on his understanding of the principles of scientific poetics; it considers voice and speech as the cornerstone of acting, whereas for Laban the body's movements are what are essential, and it ignores the exercises that he provides in his book as well as the principles that govern the art of characterization. The book may be a very interesting research in voice and speech functions, but it is far removed from Laban's movement theory and practice concerning actors.

Another very recent approach associating Laban with Stanislavsky with regard to the training for actors is the M Phil. thesis of V.J. Mildenberg (2009) titled: *Living the Experience: A joint pedagogy of voice, movement, perezhivanie and effort for dance and text-based theatre cross-over performance*. This research is one more attempt to connect Laban with Stanislavsky, like Malmgren, Newlove, Panet and Andrian based on the 'interdependence' between inner and outer state. Laban admits that there is 'interdependence' between inner and outer state but only in the real world. He denies that function in the *kinaesthetic experience* of the *living body here and now* on the stage. The stage – as was explained in the previous section – is an

arena for mental and physical activity. Considering Laban's repeated categorical statements rejecting psychological implication in almost all his written work, as mentioned above, it is a mystery why one should insist on connecting these two very obviously different approaches. Mildenberg states:

Justification in the Lived Body creates psychological justification as an implicit natural response and thereby enables Stanislavski's desired psychological truth. Bodily justification in the Lived body cannot exist without the organism responding psychologically, for there exists 'an interdependence of body mind and spirit' (Mildenberg 2009: 152).

### **3.4 Towards a new Laban's Methodology in Teaching Movement to Actors**

This chapter investigates Laban's tradition for actors' movement training. The teachers examined have been or continue to be the principal representatives in their field, from which the new generations of movement teachers are dramatically influenced as continuers of Laban's legacy in the field of theatre. It is necessary to mention that all of them try to convey Laban's thoughts and at the same time offer their approach, providing interesting developments to teaching for acting. However, as many individuals assert (Mirodan, Evans), Laban's research on actor's movement remains undeveloped and the lack of a clear methodology for theatre is a gap that must be investigated in a new light in order to meet the needs of contemporary theatre.

Starting from Laban himself, his exposition, mainly in his book *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage*, of the principles of actor movement is recognized here to be of paramount importance. His analysis both of the body's kinesthetic experience and of the use of synthesis in acting offers an integrated method, teachable and grounded upon a systematic and scientific poetic approach, as set out originally by Aristotle. However, due to the late start of this serious study during the last years of Laban's life, as well as due to the circumstances of that period, misinterpretations and misconceptions still overshadow his work. This results from the fact that Laban fails to provide a definitive philosophical foundation for the work – if there is one it remains unthought-through. In addition he fails to fully address the problem of the actor- he is on the right tracks, to be sure, but the work is incomplete, opening up further ambiguities. Despite Ullmann's good intentions and the rare

material she provides from Laban's research, her revised editions with additions of her own after Laban's death, ultimately compounded the problem.

Geraldine Stephenson, Yat Malmgren and Jean Newlove, all of them Laban's students and collaborators, actually began the application of Laban's principles to movement training for theatre. Geraldine Stephenson, a very famous, respectable teacher and choreographer in theatre, works mainly in the dance field but also with actors; still her teaching method is more focused on kinesthetic experience using dance movement, which makes it more appropriate for dancers. Yat Malmgren works with actors and has created a method exploring the principles of expressive movement, researching a very interesting area that combines three different approaches: Laban-Jung-Stanislavsky. However, the method fails to offer fully grounded physical exercises and remains a theoretical investigation in the teaching of acting. Newlove on the contrary, seems to be closer to Laban, since her book is a more practical explanation of the revised editions of *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage*. Yet she also fails to dig out the essence of Laban's words, supporting his connection with Plato and Stanislavsky and so her guide remains at the level of a practical manual that treats Laban's profound analysis for actor's movement training superficially. The same applies to the teaching method developed by Litz Pisk whose book shares the same notions and ideas with Laban, although she says nothing about him. The contemporary approaches, those of Brigit Panet in Britain and Barbara Andrian in the U.S.A attempt to achieve a contemporary approach to actor's training through their methods, and continue Laban's analysis focusing primarily on *Effort*. Panet, an acting teacher, uses it as a support to Stanislavsky's method of acting and Andrian in conjunction with Bartenieff's exercises.

The issues concerning Laban's method applied to actors remain unexplored, as Mirodan unambiguously states and despite Evans recognition of Laban's approach having 'perceived the value of an integrated and holistic approach to posture and movement' (Evans 2009: 34). This thesis reflects on Laban's own words and rereading them, making a second sailing (*second plous*) of Laban's principal book *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage*. What I have attempted to do is to reevaluate Laban's method, analyzing both its philosophical foundation and its practical application to actor's movement training. The aim, in short, is to provide a methodology of 'The Art of Movement', that establishes it as an autonomous discipline. On this basis, the thesis argues that Laban was the only one who was working in movement in characterization and that following him no-one continued his work in this field. The next chapter is an attempt to provide the practical application of the training of

movement for actors based on Laban's principles repositioned on a clarified based on Aristotelian *mimesis*.

## Chapter 4: Proposed Methodology

### Introduction

As we saw in the beginning of this study in section 1.1 *The Roots of the Problem*, there are specific problems in teaching the Laban's method to the actors. These problems are summarized in the criticism by Evans in his book *The Movement training of the Modern Actor*. His review focuses on the fact that there are two main problems: First that Laban's method, although treating the body with a scientific and rational approach, fails to bring balance in body and mind, and secondly, it alerts us to the fact that the expressionistic tone in its teaching seems out of touch with contemporary performance techniques, so appears redundant in the training of the actors. As discussed in section 1.1, this criticism is due to the fact that the heirs of Laban succumbed to a series of misunderstandings and contradictions – principally because they did not pay enough attention to the development of Laban's thought in his last books and in particular to *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage*. As I have argued, the problem derives from the fact that Laban's method, according to those who followed him, has its philosophical background in Plato, on the one hand, and on the other that when applied to the teaching of actors it is connected with the Stanislavskian method of acting.

These problems have been discussed extensively in chapters one and three. In chapter one the concept of *mimesis* was discussed in order to delineate the field in order to allow the repositioning of the philosophical background of Laban's method. Given that he clearly declares from the very first page 'that the theater is a mirror of man's physical, mental and spiritual existence', it would seem possible, at least, to associate the philosophical basis of Laban's method, not with Platonic thought, but in Aristotelian philosophy (Laban 1950: v). In addition, Laban asserts that 'to think in terms of movement has nothing to do with the world of ideas' (Laban 1950: vi), which makes it almost inconceivable how one might reconcile this thought with the idealism at the centre of Platonic philosophy. The argument that Laban's position profoundly changed by the 1950s would explain why he no longer makes reference to his previous investigations involving the analysis of space as an icosahedron, which connected him directly to Plato. In my analysis, it is imperative that we

clarify the philosophical basis of the method because it determines largely the way it should be applied in practice. For example, if the method is based on the Platonic philosophy that supports the non-mimetic art, then its application might be better suited to the art of dance. But if the method is based on the Aristotelian philosophy, with its emphasis on mimetic arts, then its application to practice must follow according to its specific rules. This is precisely the basis for this present investigation: to discover the philosophical foundation of the method, something I have suggested no one has yet systematically investigated, and then to review the implementation of the method in this light. Chapter two examined these claims and argued for the extensive repositioning of Laban on the foundations of Aristotelian thought.

This research, however, is not a philosophical treatise; it advocates interrogating the practical application of Laban's method for actors – a method which has many representatives, who are systematically examined in chapter three. As was revealed in chapter three what all seem to share in common is a desire to connect Laban method with the Stanislavsky method of acting, based on an investigation launched by Laban and his collaborator Malmgreen, involving the relationship between psychology and movement and its basic principles. Laban stopped this research, but Malmgreen continued alone – having a dramatic influence on the heirs of Laban who were involved in the training of movement for actors (not least because he directly connected acting with Laban method, even on a theoretical basis). In the section 3.1 Laban's book is carefully considered in terms of his advice for movement training of actors, we observed that he attacks the three basic points of the Stanislavsky Method – these are, the 'as if', 'psychological implication' and 'improvisation' as a tool in order to find the character and its actions. However Laban makes clear that his views are quite antithetical to Stanislavsky's 'naturalism' in the following passage:

It is not so long ago that that the fashion in acting suddenly changed from pompous gesticulations to a naturalism devoid of any movement expression at all.....and turned to the imitation of everyday life on the stage. But they were unable to appreciate the almost invisible finer movement tensions between the people conversing in every day life...' (Laban 1950: 103).

Instead, Laban proposes the *symbolic actions* identified after careful selection (prothesis), where there is no involvement of emotions, and according to which, the form includes the message. Because of all these misconceptions and the fact that Laban was associated with the

era of German Expressionism, the method continues to be taught with expressionist tones. This echoes the problem that exists in teaching methods in actors as demonstrated by Evans – and deriving from the teaching of Geraldine Stephenson and Jean Newlove, who – according to Evans – are the main followers in the field of movement for actors, an issue discussed in detail in section 3.2. (Evans 2009: 56). However, Laban explores the human capacity to move and to express ideas and values through movement and for him it is not the expressionistic tone that reflects his approach, but that movement expresses a determinate content or meaning. He presents his thesis stating clearly that he is not dealing with expressionistic tone in movement – on the contrary: ‘expressive movement, is movement in wider sense – movement of the body and movement of the mind’ (Laban 1950: 111).

As seen in chapter two, a contrastive analysis of Laban and Aristotle points to the conceptual foundations from which a systematic method of training movement for actors is to be established. As the discussion of Ramfos attempted to show, Aristotle provides the theoretical foundations from which constituent parts of reality can be logically analysed, as well as how a new world *per se* can be extracted from it. This world *per se* is for Aristotle, theatrical reality, namely a praxis. For Aristotle praxis is a *dynamic reality* which becomes a ζῶον (a living thing). This research has demonstrated how Laban’s principles on movement analysis (interpreted via Aristotelian principles) provides a method, both theoretically and practically, that is capable of understanding the components of human movement and its state of ζῶον (kinesthetic experience) on stage; moreover, it has been my contention that the Aristotelian ζῶον provides a way of understanding Laban’s attempt to outline an indestructible dynamics. The concept of mimesis that Aristotle develops, suggests a broader communication than a specific or particular representation and that its content must have a universal character. For Laban in contemporary theatre, it is the movement of the body and the movement of the voice that are universal, particularly through *symbolic actions* that are more than words, are communicable and recognisable since they are shared by all human beings in a common world. This Aristotelian approach to Laban, with its particular focus on the universality of movement, provides the basis for a method for actors that I will outline in the following chapter- and specifically by looking at the concrete exercises and techniques I have developed throughout the course of my studies while working with students.

What I suggest through the prism of Aristotle’s *Poetics* is a re-evaluation of Laban’s theory and practice, since Laban himself provides no specific training program for actors but only offers a theoretical and practical analysis of the fundamental principles of movement. The

main problematic issues that I have confronted are twofold: (a) That Laban did not systematically develop a philosophical basis for his work, leading to the ambiguities identified in the previous chapter, and (b) that Laban did not sufficiently think through the problem of the actor. It is this latter problem which opened the way for Laban practitioners, who needed to find a solution to this aporia, and that led them to conflate his work with Stanislavsky.

In this chapter I shall support my argument that Aristotle's principles (as interpreted by Ramfos) provide the philosophical foundation hitherto lacking in Laban's studies. I shall do so providing a movement training programme for actors in structuring, rehearsing and performing, concerning all theatrical approaches (classical drama, performance, devising theatre) – thus responding to the second field in which Laban's own work remained incomplete. The method introduced in support to this thesis is primarily concerned with the training of movement for actors; it is not an attempt to develop an acting method like that of Yat Malmgreen's, or Panet's. Rather, this research examines the movement of the actors in characterization which none of Laban's descendants have done so far, as we saw in chapter three. This answers to both of the issues concerning the actor – that is movement training in the actor's body kinesthesia and movement training in characterization. In Chapter 3.1 it was discussed, to recall, that Laban not only deals with the issue of the training of the body's kinesthetic sense, but also simultaneously offers the basic principles governing the development of characterization. After Laban, none of his followers who taught body awareness and training through exercises ever addressed the issue of characterization. This research will therefore also outline the practical method of Laban in terms of the creation of characters – developing the instructions given by Laban in *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* in order to suggest ways in which these guidelines can be folded into an integrated method.

In other words, my intention is to re-evaluate Laban's principles in order to offer a methodology that could support every acting method - Stanislavsky, Brecht, Adler and so on. The training programme which I outline below will provide the practical correlate of my argument that Laban offers a poetic science in the spirit of Aristotle. A poetic science is 'a priori' in that it is what is presupposed by every method of acting as its ground. As a science, it provides the solution to the misreading outlined in previous chapters, made by many of Laban's followers, which was to conflate the distinction between poetic science and method. I am aware, however, that some may question the validity of a scientific

approach to art, which I have been advocating, as mentioned in the first chapter. In response, let me suggest the following as a sufficient working assumption: Poetic science provides the theoretical basis for the practical method supporting the activity of performance; it is not to be confused with the creation of an artwork.

Laban continues to argue and explain practical issues set by Aristotle in his treatise *Poetics* and seems to follow the same path followed by Aristotle. He begins to analyze a problem that has been discussed before, and he starts ‘a second sailing’ but in terms of performance, and the fact that he connects dance with drama, as Aristotle did before him, makes his method integrated and enables it to cover any performance on stage. Also what is shown, in the way of teaching movement for actors, but also the movement in acting, is that Laban’s method can meet the professional demands of the actor in the contemporary theater in all its forms.

Now given this general theoretical attempt to recontextualise Laban within an Aristotelian framework let us turn to how this might be seen to contribute to actor’s movement training in practice. I would suggest it does so in the following way through a re-evaluation of Laban method that provides:

- a. a practice addressed exclusively to the actor’s movement training and to movement in characterization.
- b. a practice that it is not conflated with any acting method.
- c. a methodology that grounded in the philosophy of Aristotle’s *Poetics* which follows a certain order having its practical application in everyday movement, avoiding any kind of expressionistic inflection of the actions and their dynamics.
- d. a new way of teaching effort to actors.
- e. the use of space understood as a cube and not as icosaedron.
- f. a way of understanding voice as a dynamic quality in an extended vocal training, offering the application of the method as voice effort (integrated method) and combining it with movement dynamics, i.e, an incorporated method addressed to all the performance practices (Devised theatre, Classical acting, Acting for screen).
- g. a means for understanding the practical relationship between speech as content and movement- something that is extremely important for movement in acting, in so far as the

method I am advocating goes further and offers for the first time a fully incorporated method of the main principles.

This work was developed in order to begin to provide a unified basis for actor training, within the curriculum of drama schools. Another reason was to respond to the need I had identified for a scientific approach based on Laban's method structured upon the first principles of movement. However, while the focus has been on actor training, the method suggested here is by no means restricted to training student actors: it can be used in other forms of education outside of drama and conservatoire institutions- for instance, in the rehearsal process. Finally, in order for this approach to be universally accepted, it has to respond to the needs of contemporary theatre, and these needs consist of a physically well-trained body which is at the same time capable of meeting the standards of the acting profession discussed in section 1.1. Furthermore, it has to be based on logical elaboration, be easy to understand and ensure the actor's physical and emotional health.

#### **4.1 The ground of methodology**

My methodology starts then from the first principles of the phenomenon of human movement, that of actions. It follows a logical and inductive process, adding the other factors step by step to the basic movement - those of effort, space towards realising the complicated structure of a character, the relationship to the other characters, as well as including voice and speech in connection with (speech) content of the playtext. The methodology is divided in two sections: (1) Exercises for the functional training of the body and voice, and (2) exercises for mastering the fundamental principles in synthesis-movement as well as and the content of the text that is addressed to characterization.

The practice is grounded in an understanding of Laban's principles and instructions as a poetic science reevaluating his method in an attempt to address them exclusively to the contemporary actor's movement training. The nine points below suggest the steps for applying these principles in my practice:

1. As in dance movements are abstract, until the specific circumstances are defined by the place, the scenery, the costumes and the story through speech. As I've already suggested Aristotle, like Laban, sees no difference between dance and acting.
2. The actor plays with movement rhythms like an orchestra, using different body parts at the same time in concert.

3. It is the unusual and unexpected combination of movement in a sequence that is of interest to the audience.
4. The dynamic of theatre is, according to both Laban and Aristotle, a continuous flow of energy, a 'process' in which there are no stops (see section 2.4)
5. What actors experience on the stage are their actions and their effort qualities; namely they are living their body's continuous flow of energy.
6. Voice is also a dynamic movement and therefore it has effort dynamic qualities that can be trained through effort exercises like the rest of the body.
7. Space is experienced in the form of a cube in the body's kinaesthetic training, including its relations with the effort qualities, the dynamosphere. Laban himself during the last period of his life addressed the training of movement and based his analysis on the Aristotelian concept of space as a cube- and it is interesting to note that he makes no reference to his earlier icosahedral analysis that had earlier connected him to Plato.
8. The dramatic content in theatre starts when more than one person is on the stage. Their relationships are determined from the correlation of their actions, their effort qualities, their respective location in space and their conflicts with each other.
9. To construct movement sequences, the actor has the ability to choose between alternative effort rhythms. A sequence is not bound by natural or environmental contingencies; this ability to choose is one of the key features that allow us to differentiate human from animal modes of existence. (Aristotle's explanation regarding this special characteristic of mimesis, that is to say, *choice* indicates that we can enrich and train our effort qualities through mimesis). Mimesis is the key point for both Aristotle and Laban since through mimetic activity man can obtain self-knowledge. For the actor's movement training it is the repetitive exercise of effort combinations other than his natural habitual tendencies that allows him to act different and distinct characters. Laban says:

Rhythmic deficiency of any kind can be corrected by training, for example, by accustoming oneself through repetitive exercise to produce those forms of rhythm which at first are found difficult' (Laban 1950: 135).

In Aristotle's poetics actions are grounded on an understanding that they are 'in and of themselves' abstract and that they only become recognizable by way of being placed in

realistic circumstances. Seen outside of that context they remain non realistic. This notion of contextualised and concrete action is exactly what Laban has in mind when he describes on the first page of his original book *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* (1950), the possibilities of the actor playing Eve's character in the story of the original sin. Eve's character will only be recognizable if there is an obvious objective aim, contained within a certain space and time, and without which the same movements executed by the actor will remain abstract and non-figurative. Moreover, more than one movement is needed in order to reveal a character or a state of mind. What is required, in fact is a series of movements performed simultaneously by different body parts, in a certain order, with a certain quality in space; it is this combination of elements, which allows the character to be recognizable. And what unifies these elements, and makes it possible for the audience/spectator to recognise a character, is that the movement must demonstrate an intention: intentionality must be embodied in that movement, so that it is more than the mere presentation of a set of ad hoc moves. What unifies movement is its unity under a meaning which the action embodies. In this way, for Laban and for Aristotle, action becomes the cornerstone of both the arts of acting and dancing. This principle is stated theoretically by Aristotle in his *Poetics* but it is demonstrated by Laban in his practice. Hence, it is important when teaching movement to actors to start from combinations that consist of abstract movements, while building up the characteristics and features of everyday movement that must occur later on. The reasons for this are twofold: First, because it is necessary to heighten the actor's awareness of the kinaesthetic and proprioceptive basis of embodiment and for this it is better to make use of abstract 'dance' movement and not scenes or mime movements; non-figurative movement has a sufficient level of abstraction, whereas mime is always connected with the task of representing something- and as Laban himself explains: 'Dance movements are basically the same as those used in everyday activities' (Laban 1948: 26). Secondly and more fundamentally, dance provides the actor with a means to understand the problem of efforts- again, as Laban puts it: 'Thorough effort training can be achieved only through dancing (Laban 1948: 24). This statement of Laban may be an answer to the fact that the descendants of Laban misunderstood the way he proposes to teach movement for actors, both in actions and their efforts qualities, as we examined in section 3.2 called 'Laban's Legacy in Actor's Movement Training: the Next Generation'. This misunderstanding is very evident in the two most representative descendants of Laban and his close associates, Geraldine Stephenson and Jean Newlove, and how they teach movement for actors using expressionistic tones.

However, in *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* Laban also suggests to the actor that they must invent actions and not dance movement. Although this may seem contradictory, what Laban suggests here is that actions are the same in all the forms of movement. His classification of actions in *Labanotation* refers both to dance and acting. If we use these actions and their combinations as actions themselves, rather than thinking of them as 'dance' then the result will be an *abstract* movement sequence, similar to a dance movement sequence- in fact, such an abstracted sequence is essentially equivalent to the movement sequence of dance. One might also, in this way, understand through Laban, how Aristotle weaves (on Plato's own ground) his answer to Plato's objection to theatre. For theatre does not mirror this world but rather creates through the conscious intentionality of movement the concrete form of a new world. It is extremely important to note that it is only movement and voice that convey the meaning to the audience- an idea parallel to Aristotle's contention in the *Poetics* that the form of the text contains its meaning.

I would like to now to demonstrate this by turning to the example of the show based on an excerpt from Schiller's *Mary Stuart* in the scene where she meets Queen Elisabeth. Here we observe that the piece is repeated four times. In the first version there is no text, no specific site, or objects that define specific circumstances. At this point it would be useful for you to watch the excerpt from DVD section part *Mary Stuart - Theatre Performance* from beginning- 2.32 min. The only clue of the character is the dress that suggests a different era or a formal dress that could even be contemporary. The piece was created using everyday actions consciously chosen so as not to be improvisational, which do not rely on a particular story; thus the actions seem abstract. The body is moving as a unified entity, performing and there are more than one action at the same time, thus making the body act like an orchestra. These actions are linked together by a continuous flow of energy that is actually the effort qualities, and that never stops following Laban's principle that there can be no stillness in the course of the performance. The actions performed do not follow a logical order, an anticipated sequence of movements. On the contrary, they follow a sequence of unexpected movements, which should, however, in the end, result in identifiable acts. The music score is on the other hand, randomly chosen to indicate that music does not largely determine the dance piece, but the kinetic structure is the element that is particularly important in the art of dance. In this way, i.e. using everyday movements, Laban introduced a method of construction of dance that can be created and executed by all people interested in dance. In the second version the same movement piece is repeated

without music, keeping also the same effort rhythms and the same space, but with the addition of a patchwork of dialogue of Mary Stuart with Elizabeth in the garden, a scene from the work of Schiller's *Mary Stuart*. This dialogue is heard using a recording in English (see photo 1). This time, because of the text, the piece becomes a devised theatre performance without having to change anything something in the movement and its rhythms.( Please now turn to DVD section Mary Stuart- Theatre Performance from min 2. 33-..5.52.min.). In the third part, the movement is again repeated but this time it is placed in the specific circumstances that of a real garden. The actress (in the role of Mary) is in a garden and plays the scene as though it were part of a TV series or movie. The camera represents the role of another character, in this case, that of Elizabeth. Please now look at DVD part Mary Stuart on Screen. in the second example, the text in German is heard using a recorded version. In this case we have a recognizable dramatic scene on the screen, in the style of a TV series or movie (See also figure 1). The final version performed live on stage repeats the same movement piece as in the first and second examples, but this time the text is now actually spoken by the actor, in the Greek language. What is presented on the stage is an acting scene, as one finds in conventional theatre. Please look at DVD section Mary Stuart- Theatre Performance from ..minutes 9.08 to the end).



**Figure 1. Mary Stuart (on screen)**

This show attempts to follow the instructions given by Laban in *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* in the preface, in the example of Eve in paradise, in which he discusses the fundamentals of theater and tries to turn them into practice synthetically, the method that I develop and advocate. It gives evidence of the kinds of performance that result of the application of the poetic science. The example here aims to substantiate the preceding argument in which Laban is repositioned in terms of Aristotle's poetics science and the claim that dance and drama are founded on a common basis; that of the actions. Moreover, Laban holds that under certain circumstances, such as space, sets, costumes, the same movement piece can be converted into different performance forms. This example of Mary Stuart demonstrated in practice that the method of Laban can be indentified with the fundamental substance of Aristotle's *Poetics*, that acting and dance share the same basis in the construction of actions, and that exactly the same kinesthetic experience is recreated during the execution of the performance on stage or on screen – that is to say, the execution of *mimesis*. In developing the performance the order of actions, outlined above, was then carefully and systematically followed in attempting to implement Laban's recommendation that is an unusual combination of the actions, their dynamics and their orientations in space, that make a performance successful.

The space patterns were used in exactly the same way in all four versions, even in the example of the third version, which takes place in another space, outside of theatre. The changes in the directions of the movement were based to the greatest extent on actions; for example changes in the directions occurred as a result of the action of turning or twisting. The sequence of actions, space and dynamics was unexpected, yet managed to qualify as logical, and in this way, that put into practice what Aristotle considers to be the effective or 'active' element in the text and which he calls *reversal*.

The use of voice, although determined by the content of the text, also followed the rules governing the movement, again following Laban's recommendation. The differentiation of dynamics, tension and accents was based on the same basic principles that Laban's method requires, but the text was spoken in such a way as to make clear the narration of the story. The text was spoken according to my personal taste, and here following the directive of Laban that every sentence is to be interpreted according to the personal taste of the artist. At this point it is useful to be reminded that the rhythm of the text was analyzed in ancient Greece as a code that carried every time a particular message; this idea allowed Laban, as he explains, to apply the same rules associated with the body's movement to the voice, and

therefore to a movement that is heard, which he terms voice. Another important point in this demonstration was that of witnessing the universality of the movement in deeper ways than those which use everyday movements. In other words the use of three different languages, but employing the same movement, demonstrates the concept of universality, which both Laban and Aristotle insist upon; in other words, that body movement and dynamic voice, convey the message in the theater, while language plays the role of simple communication. Again by placing human movement as the principle element in performance, and as the example of Mary Stuart would seem to confirm both Laban and Aristotle's claim that the significance of the stenographic context is of less importance in the construction of the theatrical meaning than that of the sequence of actions- and that the set design, in terms of a poetic science at least, is as an auxiliary element for theater.

As regards the participation of emotional state during the performance, the performance follows the directive of Laban that there is no psychological involvement, but only a deep dedication the precise execution of physical and verbal movements. This phenomenon which characterizes the presence of the actor during the show coincides in both the arts of acting and dancing and what is experienced by the performer as the pleasure of executing. The spectator on the other hand experiences no more than the artist's movement (Laban 1950: 98). The answer given by Laban through the method consists of establishing two very important parameters for the performer. First, that each performance carries the message in the form that it takes in this case the combination of body movement and voice; and second that the synthesis performed and experienced physically in present time is a continuous flow from the beginning of the performance to its end. Now it becomes quite obvious that the living creature and vivid presentation is one and the same thing, since they share the same present time. This is achieved by the full concentration on the corporeal movement during the execution. For Laban this dedication to movement in every single moment ensures a way of living and a kind of pleasure. The answer to Aristotelian *catharsis* takes another form that can be made more understandable, and can be explained in logical terms, while correlatively Laban's method may be released from the metaphysical explanations that create misconceptions in its understanding and application.

What this performance attempts to do is to demonstrate in practice the first of Laban's general approaches to acting which we saw with the example of the story of Eve, and which he presents in the preface of his book *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage*. The underlying principle elaborated there is that movement in acting is choreographed, and

conforms to a series of principles, examined above in detail, that are the same in dance. But according to Laban, to play a role an actor must move to the rhythm of effort that is required by the role, each time having to be changed in accordance with the requirements of the character. Through the innate ability of mankind for mimesis and memory, first analysed by Aristotle, Laban says, that man can train his body and is able to gain the ability to differentiate his movement in order to avoid his natural habits and be able to act different characters. He will give a clear instruction about the training of this man's capacity for *mimesis*, addressing both the dancer and the actor, but he always in the end addresses himself mainly to the actor:

The artist must realise that his own movement make-up is the ground on which he has to build. The control of development of his personal movement-habits will provide him with the key to the mystery of the significance of movement (Laban 1950: 100).

For Laban the steps that must be followed are two: the first step is understand the body in terms of the principles and actions of its effort qualities, but always bearing in mind the art of acting, in terms of natural habits; the next step is to enrich the effort qualities, in order to neutralize the body. This is the crucial step for Laban and it is due to this consideration that he provides the exercises in the first chapter of his book. Taking this into account, in the next section I will try a 'second sailing' of Laban's method in an attempt to re-evaluate it.

The exercises in the next section follow this particular order, in accordance with Laban 'poetic science', as I am calling it, but they also will provide an answer to the first question asked by all those involved in acting: What is the actor doing? As we have said previously, although Laban did not include this question when considering the education of kinesthetic awareness of the actor's body, nevertheless, the question is implied in it, since in the presentation of his exercises he devotes the larger part of them to actions. Laban himself explains that one must start training the body from the simplest movements and move to more complex combinations (Laban 1950: 30). Furthermore, the proposed methodology follows the same order with Laban in effort, due to the fact that this order is easier and more understandable when teaching movement. Roughly the order is as follows: First, time in speed; second, space as the line direction of motion; third, weight as strength and fourth flow of energy as a control.

However, the proposed methodology suggests following the same logical order, but it specifies its application for the art of acting and tries to explain every step - even in the

section that will concern the training of kinesthetic awareness – in terms of the conditions for developing an understanding of characterization. It examines the ways in which actions are involved in the construction of character, and at the same time it builds the dynamics of motion, the elements of the speed of time, sudden and sustained. The choice of starting with time factor was made mainly, because of the notion of experiencing time during the performance, as a time lived through the change of dynamics, as we saw in section 2.5. Moreover, this one of the principal areas in which Aristotle agrees with Laban, when discussing the time lived in mimesis. Following the exercises of actions, the next section is addressed to effort, again following the order of Laban's exposition, but with the difference that while Laban considers effort theoretically as the most important issue in characterization, effort exercises occupy a comparatively limited space as we saw in section 3.1. since Laban spends most of the exercises in actions as this methodology suggests. The great difference between Laban's proposal for the teaching of effort (Laban 1950: 88-90), and those who followed him, with respect to the proposed methodology is that it teaches effort not as the eight basic effort actions, but actions correlated one by one, with each of the factors. Then, it adds to the extracted sequence the following factors of space, then the factor of weight, including that of the flow and accents, building the dynamic awareness following a more comprehensive structure of teaching dynamics for the first time. Thereby, a kind of training in the dynamics of the body is obtained in an easier way, after the body focuses on one factor each time. The factor of flow is examined as a part of the effort, as Laban repeatedly insists following the principle that every movement affects all four factors, although it is not included in his analysis of eight basic effort actions. Furthermore, the accents define the rhythm discussed as part of the effort, because Laban himself refers to rhythms and accents, but he will not include them in his analysis. In this process, effort training is more integrated, expanded and not restricted to a small number of dynamics.

Furthermore, what this methodology aims to do is to restore what Laban taught as the concept of space rather than the analysis of space as icosahedron. Here movement directions are experienced as part of the dynamics that depend largely on the actions with respect to the axes of the body. As was explained in section 2.5, the same analysis of space in relation to the body can be found in Laban, where he deploys the cube as a graph, in his book *Modern Educational Dance* written in 1948. Space is examined immediately after *Effort* in order to explain the analysis of space with the body's insertion into the cube in order to support the previous exercises. Moreover space is examined as a place where a performance

takes place, as well as for the communication during the process of training and that of rehearsal.

The penultimate section considers placing the human body in space and relationships that can potentially arise when there are more than one individual on the stage. In fact what is discussed in the methodology proposed in this section is the creation of group scenes where Laban refers extensively to how they are constructed. But while Laban focuses more on movement- themes and their moods for creating groups scenes, the proposed methodology focuses on how bodies can be placed on stage based on their location's basic principles. This option is designed to cover the possibilities of embodied relations between actors, in a functional way, based on actions and the determinate locations of the bodies on stage. Then, changing the dynamics or speed, we can create fight, crowd, dance and chorus scenes.

The last section is an attempt to find the basic principles governing the content of speech and movement, an attempt that was initiated by Laban, but remained incomplete. While Laban presented some of these basic principles in acting scenes in given circumstances involving certain moods, this research focuses primarily on the basic principles, extending Laban's research on this issue; following the example of Laban, it will expose the basic principles that connects the body's movement with the content of speech using photos from the performance of Mary Stuart.

Having outlined the basic concepts of the method, it is now time to turn to the key exercises of the proposed Methodology.

## **4.2 The Units of Actions: The analysis of the units of actions and their significance in acting**

Laban in his book *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* raises four questions in the beginning of the section that addresses the training of kinesthetic experience:

It is possible to determine and to describe any bodily action by answering four questions: (1) Which part of the body moves? (2) How much time does the movement require? (3) What degree of muscular energy is spent on the movement? (4) in which direction or directions of space is the movement exerted? (Laban 1950: 25).

However, another very important question follows logically from the first, although he classifies the actions in his notation and he mentions them in the exercises that he develops from it, he does not ask: What kind of action is the actor doing? This question is of high importance especially for the actor. Rhonda Blair (2007) in her book *The Actor, Image and Action: Acting and Cognitive Neuroscience* discusses the issue of what the actor is doing on the stage as a matter of the body's action:

There is no character in any fixed point or pre-set sense; as in life, there is only the progress of a particular individual moving through a particular context, changing with any moment. What the actor is doing becomes simply-and complexly- that: what the actor is doing (Rhonda Blair 2007: 83).

Laban, in his motif writing in Labanotation, classifies the actions in twelve units. Preston-Dunlop (1979) in her book *Dance Is a Language? Isn't It?* presents the Units of actions in an order that is very functional in practice: unspecified movement, pause, travelling, jumping, turning, twisting, transferring of weight, isolated movement-gesture, bending, extending, falling and inclining. As we noted in the first chapter of the section 'The Roots of the Problem', Evans in his book *Movement Training for the Modern Actor* when examining Laban's method, states that although it is a scientific approach, its expressionistic tone is highly problematic for the actor's training. Laban on the other hand suggests that:

the classification of the movements made in the dynamic arts on the stage can very well be based on the realistic grounds of man's behaviour in space and time, or expressed differently, on the investigation of the rhythmic content of his movements.... It is the arrangement of the effort of everyday life into logical yet revealing sequences and rhythms which gives a theatrical performance its special character (Laban 1950: 96-97).

It is in a direct response to this that my exercises are designed to offer a new way of treating the execution of actions not in an expressionistic style, but in terms of everyday movements that are stemming from, as I have been arguing, Laban's Aristotelian philosophical foundation. What I proposed in this methodology is that the training of actions and their effort qualities must be taught in terms of everyday movements, when they are addressed to actors. For achieving this the research attempts an analysis of actions in terms of everyday movement first and foremost, as the basis on which the exercises described below are founded. First, however, I will offer a quick analysis of the component units of actions.

**Unspecified movement:** breath, shivers, vibrations, cough, sneezing, hiccup et.

**Pause:** Pause is a body design that holds the dynamics of movement (effort) in a specific duration of time. Laban says:

The actors' lines and the dancers' movements are all in a continuous dynamical flux which is interrupted only by short pauses until it finally ceases at the end of the performance (Laban 1950: 8).

Actually, there is no pause at all because the movement flow never stops. Pause in terms of effort analysis is incomplete because only the factors of weight and flow are materialized (strong or light and free or bound), and not the factor of space (direct or flexible) and time (sudden or sustain). It is the specific duration of pause that defines time. In characterization, pauses are not simply a body design; it is the character's habitual pauses that reveal the elements of character and his/her reactions to certain circumstances. Namely, each character has his own pauses, which characterize him.

There are two main kinds of pauses in characterization: Pauses in immobility stance and pauses during motion. What is significant in a pause is the effort qualities of movement before and after it. There are vast variations of efforts, how the character while moving goes into a pause and from the pause, how he proceeds to the next movement. For example, the character goes to a pause using sudden quality in his action and proceeds to the next movement using a sustain action.

**Travelling:** Walking, crawling, running etc. This unit is of high importance in characterization, because each character has a specific manner of walking and it is often the first question that has to be answered by an actor: How does the character walk? Lawrence Olivier in his book *On Acting* (1986), for example, explains how he started to work in his role of Othello:

A walk...I needed a walk. I must relax my feet. Get the right balance, not too taut, not too loose. Walk with poise. It wasn't working. I couldn't make it work. The rhythm that I needed wasn't there.....I took off my shoes and then my socks. Barefooted, the movement came (Olivier 1986: 99).

**Jumping:** Jumping is defined by Laban in *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* explains as follows: 'The elevation with both legs off the floor is a jump in the air' (Laban 1950: 46). He gives exercises for the five basic possibilities of jumping: Jump from one leg to another, jump from one leg to both, jump from both legs to one, jump from both legs on both and

jump to one leg. However, there are also combinations of jumping that use the other parts of the body, such as from legs to arms, because jumping is the ability of the human body to leave the ground for while.

**Turning:** The actor turns around the axis of the body to face a new direction.

**Twisting:** A twist involves the turning of one body part, while the rest of the body does not move.

**Transferring of weight:** Transferring of weight is the change from one body part that functions as the point of support for another.

**Gesturing:** Gestures are usually movements of the upper part of the body, but Laban uses the same term for the whole body. In gesturing, there belong nods, greetings, handshakes, finger movements and, more generally, every localized movement. In this category are included all the facial expressions. *Subjective actions* refer, in Laban, to cases in which the actor uses 'habitual' gestures for the purposes of characterization. This unit is also, like travelling and pause, of high importance for structuring a character.

**Bending:** This unit of action can be understood as the ability of the body to bend its joints. For example: A bend of the arm or leg, a fist, head bending etc. This action might be confused with Laban's term scooping, but scooping fits more with movement for dance since it is an action shape that traces a curved movement from the body's periphery to its centre; In acting it is preferable to see its function in everyday movements, such as bending.

**Extending:** Extending or opening is the opposite action to that of bending. It is the opening of the body's joints. For example, the opening up of a bending leg or arm or a fist. This action might also be confused with Laban's term scattering, which is the opposite of scooping. Scattering refers, to a curved movement for the centre to the periphery. This action is also better understood for the actor as extending, to be examined in terms of everyday movements.

**Falling:** Every action that involves the actor falling to the ground.

**Inclining:** Keeping the balance, maintaining one's equilibrium before falling.

The next section elaborates the repositioning of Laban's method, in the form of a step by step practical guide, based on the fundamental element of Actions. Although the word

exercise appears frequently in the following presentation of practice, what these exercises outline are the basic principles of movement in the order that should be practiced. In application teachers would be encouraged to adapt and make use of this practical guide according to their own choices, practical experience and preferences – here, I simply wish to lay out the fundamental sequence of exercises that constitute the core of a practical curriculum based on the poetic science as derived from Laban/Aristotle. However because the following section is in the form of a curriculum, I have included notes to teachers as a guide to how I envisage these exercises being implemented in class, based on my own experience of using them.

### **4.3 Fundamental Exercises in Units of Actions**

**Step 1:** Create a short movement sequence choosing only one unit in the order they appear in the actions above: unspecified, pause, travelling, jumping, turning, twisting, transferring of weight, gesture, bending, extending, falling, inclining. You have to create a certain movement sequence, so as to be able to remember it, and repeat it, when you are asked to do so. This instruction applies to all the exercises that follow, because as we argued in chapter two, *mimesis*, for Aristotle and Laban, is based on memory in the human brain. Movement sequences must be performed accurately, since exact repetition is the necessary means to achieve any skill that requires mastery (Laban 1950: 130). Try to avoid dance-like movements or mime; use only everyday actions, as Laban suggests for actors. Do not try to tell a story through movement and do not use any psychological motivations. The task is to concentrate on the body while moving, what it is doing and how. Always think in terms of movement, following Laban's general suggestion. Then repeat the sequence changing from effort, the elements of time; sustained and sudden, one of the four motion factors. (An example of this exercise can be found in DVD Part 2, Twelve Units of Action and Twelve Units of Action + sudden/sustained). Here you will see the application of the basic principle of movement, that of actions addressed to the training of kinetic memory and the kinesthetic awareness of the speed in movement. This is the cornerstone of acting, since the actor is obliged when rehearsing to memorize a sequence of everyday actions with different speeds in order to repeat it in every performance.

**Advice for teachers (tutors):** You will notice that during the first attempt it is very difficult to keep the order of the sequence without doing more than one action at the same time. Be careful not to execute a pause after each action. Let the students observe each other's sequences and then ask them to make corrections, or remarks on what the body is actually doing, not in terms of what they understand as its content. Some time it is easier for the student to reverse the last two actions, so that the fall will be the last, because it is more organic. This movement sequence might be executed by more than one student at the same time. You will need to ask the permission of the students for recording every movement sequence in order to create an archive of the classes. This provides important documentation allowing students to revisit their development to see the process as a whole.

**Step 2:** Create a short movement sequence, with actions in any order you may choose, using different actions by different body parts occurring simultaneously, keeping different time qualities from the previous exercise. This exercise is based on an important suggestion made by Laban: that the body moves like an orchestra, namely that it is able to move using different actions in different body parts. (See DVD Part 2 Different body actions in different body parts. Here you can observe that there are two or three actions occurring simultaneously in different body parts. The student achieved this movement in a very short time, as an orchestra because she was able to name her actions and to add more actions in different body parts and because the sequence is very short, she was able to execute it very easy. Moreover, she realised that this is the way in which the human body moves in everyday life and that this is one of the basic principles of the way in which every character moves).

Now create a new short movement sequence of actions that does not follow an expected order. For example, if you are doing a step with the left leg, the expected action that follows will be a step with the right leg. However, if you are performing an action of stepping with the left leg and the following action is the extension of the head, then the result will be an unexpected action. This exercise stems from Aristotle's notion of *reversal* that it is defined in Laban notion as *Asymmetry*, that which determines the way of creating the *symbolic actions* that we examined in detail in chapter two. Please see DVD part 2 Unexpected in Actions. In this sample exercise you will notice that the student at that very early stage is capable of moving in a more complicated way, creating the *unexpected* in her sequence of

actions. This is also another basic principle of the everyday movement necessary for the creation of every character.

Now create a new sequence as before and then repeat it in a continuous flow of actions without pauses that creates a continuous movement sequence, and then repeat it using pauses and then creating an interrupted movement sequence – an example of this can be found in DVD part 2 Continuity and Interrupted. Here you will notice that the student is able to control his body, moving without pause and to repeat the same piece afterwards adding pauses now and then easily. This happens because he has memorized the movement sequence so as to execute it with fluency, thus being able to retain the flow or to interrupt it. At this point the student has gained a certain degree of body control as well as of his mind. All the aforementioned exercises of this section, as well as all the following program of the methodology suggested is designed to train the actor's body and mind interaction when moving, an idea that Laban seeks to apply in his practice and is one of the main points in actor's profession.

**Advice for teachers (tutors):** It is useful to ask students to repeat the sequence and not to count on improvisation, in order to ensure that the student has created a repeatable and clearly defined movement sequence. As mentioned and discussed above, Laban argues against improvisation since it does not improve a sense of embodied memory, an essential element for the actor who needs to remember and to repeat the movements and the texts of the characters he presents (Laban 1950: 130). Memory is required for mimesis, since it is the source of imagination as discussed in section 2.4. You can ask all the students to execute the movement simultaneously. Place them on the stage and put on a music or sound piece. Ask them to remain in their last position in a pause, until the final student completes their movement. If you believe that they have created a satisfying movement sequence, record it and show it to the students.

**Step 3. Exercises for actions that are important in characterization:** Create a movement sequence using mainly the action of **travelling by placing the emphasis on walking**. Create different kinds of walking at different speeds and add more actions in different body parts simultaneously. The action of travelling always has as its supporting action the transferring of weight. This exercise is very important, since each character has his own specific way of walking. Use different ways of travelling, such as crawling on the floor, or

travelling with jumps. Repeat the resulting movement sequence and add the action of **Gesture**. As in the previous exercises use different speeds. Usually the action of gesture is treated as of the upper part of the body such as arms and head nods. However, when we are referring to the action of gesture, we refer also to the legs. Do not forget the fingers and the toes. Laban gave great importance to the training of fingers, because he considered it of great importance to characterization, since the whole body needs to be active and present while acting, so as to create what he names *vivid presentation* and Aristotle ζῶον. At that stage you could use facial expressions, including eyes movements, eyelids and eyebrows, because facial expression belongs to the action of gestures.

**Important Note: Every action has a certain range of movement depending on the body's physical abilities. The size of Movement is also important; Preston-Dunlop refers to its main classifications in her book *Dance is a Language isn't it?* : Small, medium, Large. Laban paid great attention to the very small actions, referring to them as *shadow movements*. What provides vividness to the acting is *shadow movements* (Laban 1950: 119).**

**Step 3:** Create a short movement sequence and then change the size of the actions. Start using medium size, then large size and then small. Small size goes last, since it needs greater control of the body. Do not forget the gestures, including facial expressions, the eyes, eyelids, eyebrow, fingers and toes. Laban suggests that we should 'pay special attention' to them, because they ensure both the complete awareness of the body's movement and the vividness of the execution. Create a short movement sequence using only very small size movements, or **shadow movements**. Use different time qualities, durations, accelerations and decelerations. This exercise is of high importance for acting and specially for acting on screen, since almost all facial expressions can be classified as 'shadow movements' Keep the same movement sequence of the previous exercise and execute it by adding the action of **extending** and **stretching**. This exercise is very useful not only for body's flexibility, (but also for an expressionistic form of acting).

**Advice for teachers (tutors):** Record this exercise using close-up shots for investigating different facial expressions.

## 4.4 Effort /Eukinetics: The actor's kinesthetic awareness and his presence on stage

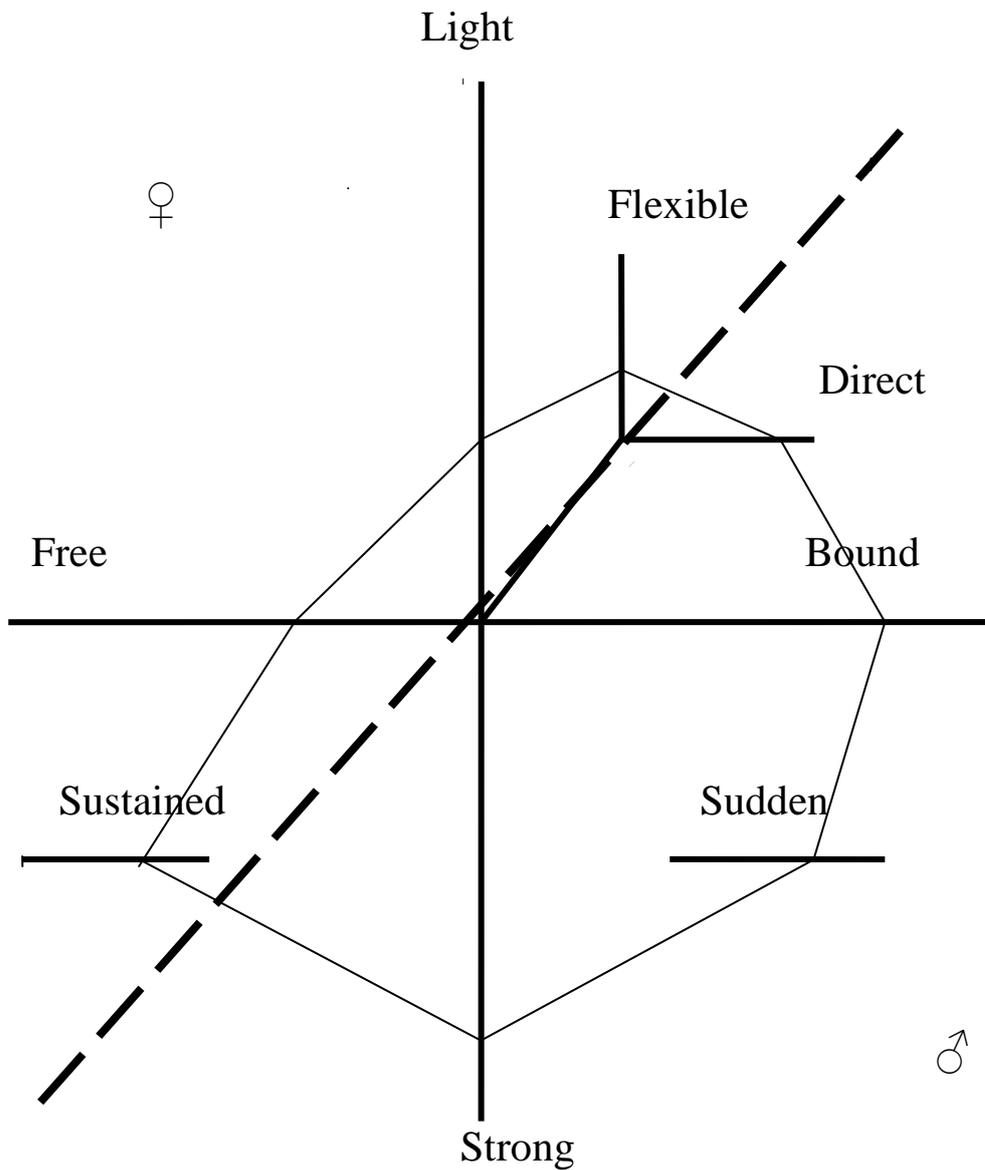
Evans (2009) discusses the notion of neutral body in his book *Movement Training for the Modern Actor*:

the misunderstandings of the concept of neutrality has generated (specifically around the notion of the 'blank sheet' or *tabula rasa*) mean that critiquing the 'neutral body' reveals the assumptions which underpin several positions which marginalize the body. The 'blank sheet' implies for instance a passive receptivity of the body (Evans 2009: 177).

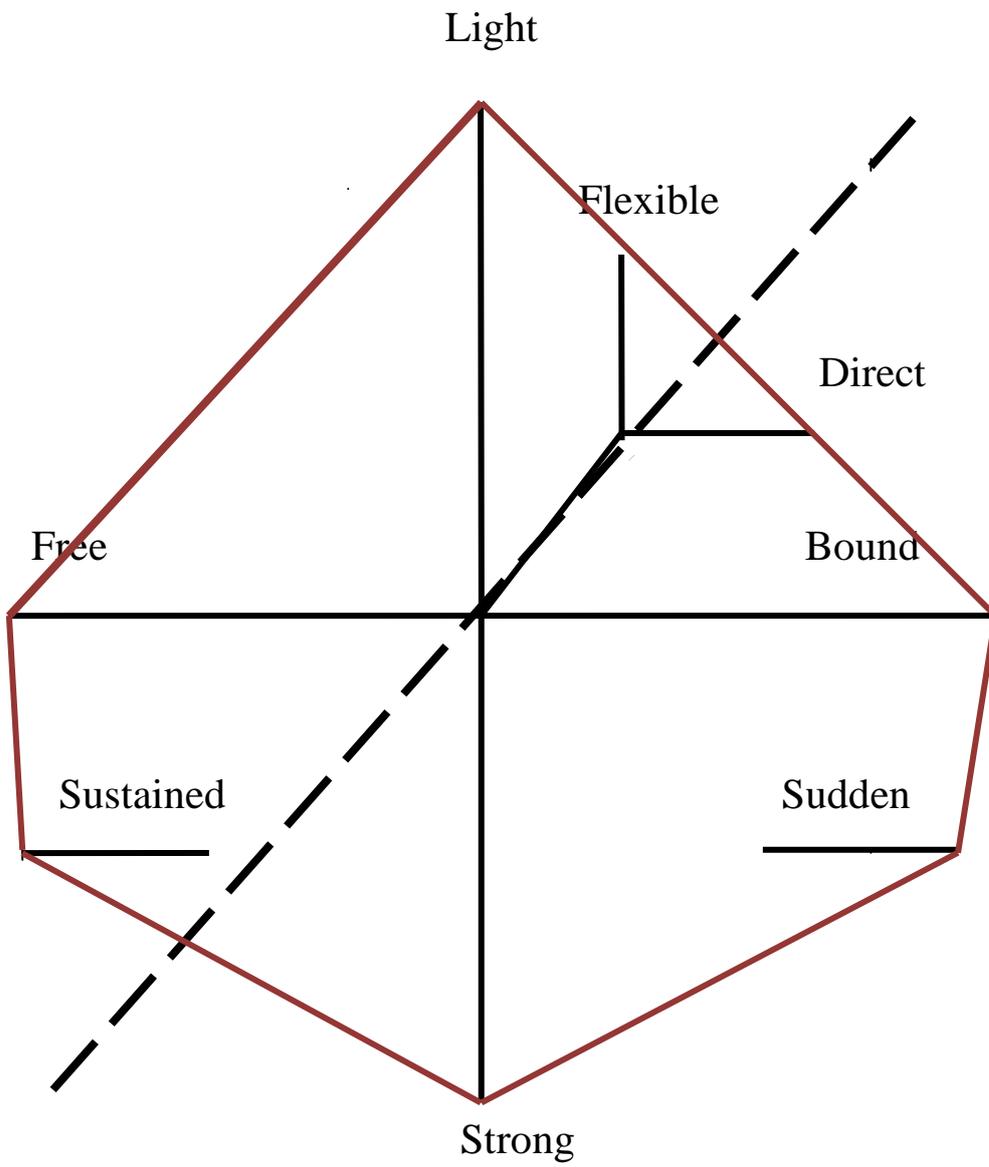
Evans contrasts the idea of dynamic body as a construction of the self and its new possibilities, focuses 'on process rather than result' (Evans 2009: 184). According to Laban, effort is the manifestation of the inner life of the human being. Humans during their growth develop an inner attitude to their environment and adapt a habitual effort that characterize them. Effort analysis, as we discussed in chapter three (Laban book) has a specific graph for documenting it. Graph 4 – below - presents an example of one man's effort diagram in a random state. What it depicts is a graph in which a man tends to be more strong than light, more direct than flexible, more bound than free and more sudden than sustain. In the case of an actor who has to act different characters, his attempt is to neutralize his own effort habits. This means that the actor has to expand his effort boundaries, as well as effort combinations in such a way that he will be capable and finally skilled in acting many different roles (See graph 5 below). This ability is gained through constant training in effort embodying a vast array of possible combinations, as well as those including all the other levels of movement analysis: actions, space, voice dynamics.

For Laban, actors possess the ability through repeated training to experience and memorize specific actions, their qualities and their combinations, simultaneously expanding in this way the boundaries of their own body's abilities. In short, to neutralize their bodies, is one of the prerequisites of the actor's profession (See chapter one section one 'The Roots of the Problem'). In Laban's terms through effort training the body is not a 'tabula rasa' but a continuous process of inscribing the 'whole written page' of effort possibilities. This idea is in accordance with Evans statement concerning the model of an appropriate movement training for actors in contemporary theatre:

As process, the 'neutral body' becomes dynamic rather than static, never fully constituted and perpetually negotiating between experience, perception and idea. 'Neutral' movement training functions to open the body/anatomy (sometimes uncomfortably) to a complex repeated re-constitution which, at least during the training, takes place on several levels simultaneously, whilst resisting any unthinking retreat into socially constructed patterns of behavior (Evans 2009: 184).



Graph 1. A character



Graph 2. Neutral Body

Laban (and his followers Stevenson, Newlove, Malmgreen, Adrian) suggests that the training of effort is based on the eight basic actions (see section 3.1) although at the same time he admits that there are a vast number of effort combinations and this classification is over simplified ( Laban 1950: 127). There are two problems concerning the training of the eight basic effort actions: The first one is that Laban does not include the factor of flow with its opposite elements, free and bound, which is one of the four factors that is always present in any movement's effort. The second one is that since there are vast effort combinations, it is preferable to concentrate on each factor and its fluctuation from one extreme to the other. All the other factors and their elements are always present in any movement sequence, but what we are practicing is focusing on one factor at a time. Laban gives examples for characters and applies to them a certain effort action as their main effort rhythms, admitting that: ' in the service of characterization are designedly crude simplifications' (Laban 1950: 127). Indeed we might ask: how an actor can be reduced to eight types of characters, as the same time effort is constantly changing in a body that moves as orchestra? The question becomes more complicated if we add the accents and the size of actions. Laban is aware of the problems arising from this perspective and gives the following clarifications:

The scheme is brought to life if one understands that: (1) No individual persists always in the same effort, but changes continuously. (2) During the changes some effort elements are (a) kept intact, while (b) some become over-stressed, thus altering the quality of the effort more or less visibly, while others are almost entirely lost (Laban 1950: 127).

My proposal is not to suggest specific characters, but to study the possible moments of synthesis of movement and voice that the actors may encounter during their career. This process occurs in the course of acting. For example, in the construction of the role of Mary Stuart (See DVD Mary Stuart) I did not try to build the character of Mary Stuart but rather to construct specific instances during specific circumstances.

Let us turn to consider how these problems can be addressed via the practical exercises I have developed below.

**Important Note: Action terminology refers always to movement classification, focusing on what the body is doing, while effort refers to the movement's dynamics; thus answering to the questions set by Laban in the beginning of Part 1, The Units of Actions: how is the body moving? It is important to create always new movement material when we are dealing with exercises of different factors, in order to cover all**

the possible combinations of dynamics. If we take the example depicted in graph 4, the body's training of the quality of time does not only depend on expanding the boundary of *sustained* but also on expanding the element of *sudden*. In other words both elements of time should be neutralized and expanded to their extreme at the same time. As Laban stresses the most important rule for the construction of the character is to 'convey [in efforts-phrases] rises and falls, hesitations and precipitations' (Laban 1950: 118). The continuous extreme use of efforts, for instance, depict insane characters.

**Step 1:** Create a two to three minute movement sequence taking into consideration the previous work in actions. Repeat the sequence until you memorize it, so to be able to execute it fluently. (Please turn to DVD Part 3 titled Movement Sequence, where the student at this stage is able to control his body to a high degree; he is able to create a longer movement sequence in a very easy way, keeping all the instructions of the previous exercise because he uses actions and their combinations both as mental and body activity since he is aware of every single movement).

Now, repeat the exercise and concentrate on time elements as speed: *sudden* and *sustained*. Then repeat the sequence concentrating on acceleration and deceleration of speed.

**Advice for teachers (tutors):** You have to assure that the students keep the balance between sudden and sustained qualities as in acceleration/deceleration, because this is the key issue concerning the neutrality of movement's dynamics. Do not forget their extremes; extra sudden and extra sustained. The same instruction for extreme elements of effort is applied to the following exercises.

Repeat the movement sequence but the emphasis now should be placed on the **Space factor, as flexible and direct**. Retain also the different speed qualities. In the element of *direct* there is only one quality, whereas in the element of *flexible* there are various fluctuations. Therefore, pay attention to the balance between the different qualities of flexibility and that of the quality of directness. Repeat the previous movement sequence concentrating now on the factor of **Weight as strong and light**. The weight factor is classified from Laban in five sub-categories: too strong, strong, normal, weak and too weak, but there are many more nuances that you have to explore. Try to keep these also balanced in their nuances. Repeat the previous movement sequence concentrating on the factor of **Flow as free and bound**. The factor of flow is the most difficult to practice, because it

requires control of the whole body. (Please now see DVD Part 3 Intro-Effort-Space, Weight, and Flow. Here you will see the teaching of the introduction of effort where what is exposed is the way in which the methodology addresses the issue of effort in a different way which is taught from the Laban's heritage in movement in acting. What is proposed is a logical order of the teaching the four motion factors and their elements from the more easy to the most difficult one. Since the student possesses the terminology of the movement, he is able to add, to remove or to correct his movement material. What you will notice here is that student changes the elements immediately, without previous rehearsal, because he has gained the control both of his mind and body).

**Important Note:** The factor of weight also includes the *accents*, because for Laban accent is a stress point that needs extra energy in order to provide an important rhythmic result (Laban 1950: 29). Their classification is the same with the weight factor. However there is a classification of accents in Preston-Dunlop (1987) book *Dance Is a Language Isn't it?* depending on when the stress occurs. When the accent is in the beginning of action, it is called *impulsive*, in the end, is called *impactive*, in the middle, *swinging*. When the action is interrupted regularly with accents, it is called *percussive*, when there are vibrations during the action it is called *vibratory*, and when there is a lack of accent during the action is called *unaccented*.

Repeat the movement sequence from the previous exercise 4 adding all the accents and their sub-categories of stressing (from too strong, to too weak). This exercise is very important in characterization since accents give the specific effort rhythm to each character. Repeat the movement sequence and apply the notion of unexpected in dynamics. For example if an action has sudden speed, and one expected it, then the following action will have sudden speed. But if you want to create the unexpected, the speed must be changed to sustained.

For exploring further the unexpected notion in dynamics, keep the previous order; first in time, second in space, third in weight and fourth in flow. The movement sequence results in asymmetry in Dynamics.

**Advice for teachers:** Ask students to include more accents than one in the same action and simultaneously a variety of accents in different body parts. This exercise is for advanced level students and the teacher needs to work on for at least for two or three classes in order

to develop the student's body awareness of different effort rhythms. Although shadow movements are very small in size, they have effort and accents; therefore you have to practice them in terms of effort exercises.

**Step 2:** Create a new movement sequence interrupted by pauses that have different durations. Concentrate on **the effort combinations in movements before and after each pause**. Apply all the above principles that concern dynamics to this exercise. The rational approach is for the body to experience the different combinations of going and leaving from a pause that is an essential element of everyday movement.

**Advice for teachers:** Repeat the movement sequence combining different rhythmic patterns (Laban 1950: 26-27). This exercise is addressed to students that are familiar with rhythm form either through their dance or their music background. It is better to spend more than one class with this exercise because rhythmic awareness of the body is essential for the actor's profession.

**Step 3:** You have to read a text using voice in terms of movement, i.e. using voice for its specific effort qualities and accents. Remember that the joint of the jaw makes it a part of the body and its movements belong to facial expressions that form a part of the action of gesture. Therefore you can apply all **the effort qualities, accents and rhythms, while reading a text**. Create a movement sequence taking under consideration all the above exercises and then add the text using different dynamics and accents in voice. The result is a devised theatre work. (Please now see DVD Part 3 Accents where the student, as in the previous exercises of effort, is able to change the accents of the movement material in a very short time after been given the instruction because he possesses the appropriate terminology of the method; strong/light, free/bound etc. Therefore the student is able to move his body in the way he wishes. In other words, he is the master of his body through mind). Do not create a character or type at this point. Investigate only the different qualities of both body and voice. Concentrate only on the functionality of the exercise.

**Advice for teachers:** Laban builds this exercise around the word 'No' for this exercise. You on the other hand, can give more words creating abstract sentences, as these do not facilitate the production of images and emotions to students. At this stage, the abstraction helps them avoid creating mime scenes.

We have said that Laban did not clearly address his method to the actor but generally to any professional worker in theatre; his book *The Mastery of Movement on Stage* Laban indicates that the job of the actor is no different from that of any worker. The actor in each character as we have noted, creates a new world that is presented through motion, including voice. Each character has a different movement behavior and the actor is obliged to learn and to usurp these movement habits. Laban states:

The correlation of movements with inner efforts makes it possible to recognize inner states of mind. These states or attitudes can be temporary or habitual. In the later case they form personal movement-characteristics, the observation of which is most helpful for the artist on the stage (Laban 1950: 90).

This statement clarifies that for Laban *presence* in acting is the execution of actions and their efforts, since it is precisely because of them that the audience are able to recognize the thoughts and emotions of the character. This also supports my contention that there is a connection in Laban's later method with Aristotle's *mimesis*, i.e. form contains meaning.

However, for the training of kinesthesia and synthesis for actors, there is a paramount issue. In acting, a professional has to repeat a particular movement behavior, every day, and often takes a long period of time habituating this specific movement pattern; as a result his body needs to recover and be brought back to balance. The continuous training of the actor's body through Laban's method can restore its balance. Laban insists that balance can happen only through effort training. However, the current methodology suggests that continuous training that refines kinesthetic awareness and brings balance to the physical body can be achieved also through the use of all principles of movement suggested in the exercises, in order to neutralize the body again.

As we examined in section 3.1 Laban offers the exercises for effort at the end of the training of kinesthetic awareness in the first chapter of his book. This happens because he will spend a significant part of the next two chapters in the same book for the significance of effort in characterization. There he will provide again the basic principles governing the structure of the character, a survey that is systematically obscured by his main descendants.

If we look again at the first graft 1 (Page 23) but this time as the effort diagram of a specific character, we will see that the character moves through a dynamic context. However, as explained in Chapter 3.1 Laban draws our attention to the fact that the effort has continued to flow and is constantly changing, so the chart gives the range of dynamic character. In

acting, as in reality, each character is not moving in a stable order of different efforts, but with continuous fluctuations depending on how he acts in certain conditions.

## 4.5 Space as Cube

When Laban discusses the training of kinesthetic experience in *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* he raises the question: ‘in which direction or directions of space is the movement exerted?’ (Laban 1950: 25). In Laban’s terms, this is defined by the execution of actions and their exertion in a cube; front, front of the body, back behind body, up, upon the head, down, under the body, right diagonal front of the body, left diagonal front of the body, right diagonal back of the body and left diagonal left back of the body and their levels, down middle and upper. This is what Laban names *body cross*. However, when we move during the performance, it is important to understand that we do not think in terms of left and right, back and forward. What we experience is action that happens *here and now*. This *here* is what Aristotle calls *topos* and Laban *locality*. This explains why Laban defines movement as ‘changes in locality’. In fact, according to Laban what happens in the body when moving through the space changing directions, is the action of turning. As Laban explains:

In the examples given hitherto the front of the body has remained in the same position, that is the direction (f) forwards pointed always to the same spot of the surroundings. The orientation or pointing of the direction forwards towards a different (new) spot of the surroundings is a change of front, a turning away from the former forwards spot, thus creating a new forwards direction (Laban 1950: 44).

What happens in reality is that during a movement that is changing the locality of the body a combination of two actions is involved: travelling and the action of turning. What sets the directions is the front of the body, since it is a stable point of reference. If we observe what happens in the body when it moves in different directions, we will find that these directions depend on the actions. For example, if the right hand moves towards the right-wing angle, then the action which determines the movement is opening. If the same hand moves to the left diagonal front, then the action which determines the movement is twisting.

The cube is a geometric solid that might explain better the coordinates of human movement and its kinesthetic experience according to the concept of the body cross, because during a

performance we do not think and communicate as when we move through geometrical solids. This usually occurs during the rehearsals in which all solid shapes could be considered. During a performance directions in space are defined by the body parts that move and what action is performed; something which Laban realizes in *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* and *Modern Educational Dance* but all his followers seems to miss. In the icosaedrical analysis of the space, which many of Laban's inheritors have supported, the kinesphere is concerned with stability and lability- something which as we discussed in section 1.1 can be applicable to dance. In acting, lability is a rare phenomenon, whereas the most prominent is stability. However, lability is interpreted by the action of inclining inside the cube.

Laban also refers to different levels within motion; for example: in going down the action of bending will be the deciding factor; you will bend your knees to go down, or else you will fall. In the first case the decisive factor is the action of bending, while in the second it is the action of falling. Therefore, action is the determining factor in moving to different directions in space. The cube directions are used verbally by the teachers/directors during training or rehearsal as it is an essential instruction for communicating spatial directions.

#### **4.6 Space exercises**

**Step 1.** You can repeat the movement sequence from step 3 the exercise of the Effort section and use the cube as a frame so as to find **actions in the cube's directions**. Repeat the same movement sequence concentrating now on creating **flexible and direct floor patterns** during the action of traveling. Because of the change of directions within the patterns the the action of turning is added in different degrees. Repeat the movement sequence and now **change levels**. Be aware of what action determines the changes of levels you created. (See DVD Part 4 Space as Cube-Floor patterns-Change Levels. Here you will notice that after having been given the terminology of space, the student is capable of adding one more instruction to the previous ones, and without difficulty he executes in a very short time the changes of his body cross in relation to standard cross of the room, then the changes of floor patterns or levels. This happens because he is concentrated on his body and uses his mind, he has the control. Thus, while he moves he is thinking at the same time in terms of movement.

**Advice for teachers:** Ask the students to execute the exercise with a body cross along with constant cross of the room and then repeat it with a contrast between them. For example, with the back of the body moving to the front of the room. You may insist on using more the contrasts between the body cross and standard cross, that is the cross of the room, since the actors use space in various combinations. Combine it with the floor patterns exercise.

**Step 2.** Create a movement sequence that changes after each action the direction of space. You will notice that the decisive factor is the action of turning for travelling or twisting in standing. The result of the sequence is **unexpected in spatial directions (turning or twisting with or without travelling)**. You return to the exercises that concern the element of unexpected in action and dynamics, and explore so as to invent new exercises that combine all these three possibilities (See DVD Part 4 ‘Unexpected in Spatial Directions’) in order to embody as much as more combinations between actions, space and dynamics.

## 4.7 Relationships

As the composition of many people on stage is an important issue for the theater, for example staging crowd scenes, fighting scenes or chorus scenes, Laban uses the term group scenes and offers specific instructions for working with and developing such scenes (Laban 1950: 149). What create group scenes is the locations of the bodies on the stage and the actions manifested therein, as well as their individual and combined dynamics. The question arising is: what relationships can be established between the actors and what are the basic principles? These relationships according to Laban must not have psychological implications; they simply have to picture the emotions through the body’s relationships in space. In acting it is of high importance to know how bodies are located in relation to each other, because such relations are also the key to understanding the ‘content’ of the actions. A relationship between actors cannot refer to a random position of bodies in space, but to specific locations that must be continuously articulated through the course of the performance. The determining factor here then is first to define the possible locations of the bodies in space and the kind of relationship articulated between them. Laban exposes their correlations:

A moving part of the body can be in correlation with something: In approaching or meeting something. In touching something, in gripping, holding, embracing

something. In carrying something. In holding and carrying something. In being in spatial relation to something (for example, above, below, etc., something'. Note- Something can be an object or a person'.....The object can be specified- either in words, say, "the back of the chair", or in drawing (Laban 1950: 81-82).

These are the basic principles of relationships that Laban mentions. The exercises below are developed in reference to them.

#### 4.8 Exercises in relationships

**Step 1.** Create a two to three minute duet keeping the form of the exercises based on actions and their dynamics, and concentrate on keeping the space between the bodies in evolving relations of **closeness and distance**, while moving. Do not watch each other but use your peripheral vision or get the signal from sounds produced by movement. Use the same movement material and **focus upon, or address, each other**. Look at each other not only in the eyes but also in other parts of the body. Then add the following categories of relationships: **touching, holding and embracing**. Be aware of the other person and avoid the use of touching only with hands. Furthermore, you have to use different parts of the body to touch each other's body on different body parts. What we observe in doing this is that in this relationship an extra action is added in order to establish contact with the other. Therefore, you have to explore what action you will use to make contact. Repeat the exercise and while moving **take the other's weight or support, or lift** the other's body. Repeat any of the above movement sequence, but now add a **spatial relation**, for example, **above, by side, in front of each other's body/object**. Do not use only the action of walking i.e. around the other's body, but make use of other parts of the body, for example, legs or hands around the other's leg or head. The costumes can also be used as moving objects (see Laban 1950: 87).

**Advice for teachers:** As in the previous exercise ask the students to explore the actions that they add when they touch, hold and embrace the other's body. Ask students to explore the ways of taking the weight, supporting, lifting, carrying and creating spatial relationships with each other's body or objects. Do all the above exercises only when you are confident that the students are able to do it

**Step 2. Space and location of the bodies in cube.** Locate the movement sequence of the previous exercise in cube directions and levels. It is better to work first in directions and then in levels and then go on to combine them both.

Now we can turn the focus of attention to creating *Group Scenes*.

**Important Note: Exercises in duet, trio, quartet, including voices and speech (text) create group scenes. The duration of the movement sequences plays an important factor. We can notice that using from the factor of weight only the element of strong movements becomes aggressive. In this way we can create fighting group scenes. Crowds are created when we present solos and then spread the bodies randomly into space. Adding text or singing to group scenes, we can create chorus, as in Ancient Greek theatre or in opera. Follow Laban's instruction in his book *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage*: 'Seek to establish the most appropriate effort sequences for every member of the group' (Laban 1950: 151)**

**Step 1.** Ask the students to create duets in certain durations (two to three minutes) using all the relationships from the above exercises and taking into consideration all the above instructions. Locate the duets in space and ask students to execute their movement sequences, however taking care not to collide with other duets.

**Advice for teachers: Provide corrections to the piece when necessary, in actions, effort qualities, accents, relationships space. Ask the students to repeat the sequence, until they can execute it with fluency. This can also be applied to the following exercises.**

**Step 2.** Repeat the group scene and ask them to create relationships between the duets using extra actions as gestures and others. You can add noises, voices and you will create a **crowd scene**. Then repeat the movement sequences and increase the speed of the movement. Add music and you will notice that what is created gives the impression of a **dance like piece**. If you add text from an Ancient Greek Chorus, you will create a **chorus piece**. Repeat the movement sequences and ask the students to add strong or very strong elements and various accents in every action; this results in a **Fight Scene**. Divide the students into two groups and place them in space in one against the other and build a **confrontation scene**. (Please now turn to DVD Part 4 Relationships. Here you will notice that students are able to add another principle, that of relationships after a short rehearsal in order to collaborate and to find their relationships and the space that they use for avoiding accidents. This exercise is

the first one that is actually an acting scene and here you will notice that the content of the group scene changes in accordance with the factor or element the students change. This explains in practice what Aristotle and Laban argue for in relation to understanding *mimesis* as the idea that the form of the action contains the meaning and that whenever the form changes the meaning changes accordingly).

**Important Note:** Be aware that this exercise must be addressed to advanced level students. You can observe that if you change the effort qualities of movements you can picture different emotional effects.

**Step 5. Reactions in a group scene.** Ask students to react to an action that comes from another source. For example, place them in the room and ask each of them to find an action, as a reaction to the entrance of another person from the door.

## **4.7 Main principles in combining- movement and textual (speech) content.**

### **Introduction**

Laban in the first page of his book *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* in 1950 raises a fundamental question about the relationship of the inner world of human existence to the external behavior as it is expressed through movement. This question is independent from the analysis of the functional capacity of the body and its kinesthesia that Laban provides through his exercises. Moreover he claims that there is no psychological involvement and that each performance is a (movement) synthesis and this is the main reason that the book does not contain the investigation later launched by Bill Carpenter and continued with Yat Malmgreen. On the contrary, its main proposition is that acting is only the absolute dedication to movement and the body, including the movement of voice- in other words for Laban it is only the actions and their effort combinations that confer and communicate the meaning of the performance. What complicates matters is that Laban categorically states that there are no definite symbols in body movements such as we find in words. The answer to this dilemma could be that Laban asks the question in relation to the observation of human movement where the inner world is connected to the movement response of the body and not to movement on stage. However, some principles must exist that establish a

connection between speech and movement outside of the functional combination of their dynamics.

In acting there is a story carried in textual format. Laban says that the text can be interpreted according to personal taste and that the artist pictures it through the movement of body and voice. He connects the movement and voice with the content of the text:

This means that in terms of speech and movement- posture, movement qualities or actions have special importance, and must be accentuated by bringing them into the foreground. This way the actor or the dancer articulates his performance. This is the creative part of his work, which must, however, be adapted to the content of play (Laban 1950: 108)

The question now focuses on how movement is related to the content of speech. It is in this connection that we must seek the basic principles. Laban in *Mastery of Movement on the Stage* in chapter two, part two called *The Roots of Mime*, which is the introducing chapter to characterization, gives some principles regarding the connection between actions and content: *shadow actions*, when the action starts but remains incomplete; *subjective actions*, when character for example must 'rub his chin' or 'pinch his nose', and *conventional gestures*, such as nodding, pointing (Laban 1950: 119-120). In chapter three, part one, of the same book, Laban provides another principle that of *practical action*: an activity such as 'household work', 'gardening', or 'operating surgeon, nurse or clerk' (Laban 1950: 136). However, a comprehensive investigation is required if we are to uncover the full implications of what is meant here.

In order to do this, we will have to investigate what happens in reality between the body's movement and speech. Let us take a sentence that does not signify any emotional situation, but just describes something: 'I went quickly to the door in front of me and I opened it'. What is happening in reality when we say this sentence? How many ways we have to move saying it? What are their basic principles?

One of the key principles is that we can describe these words with actions. As we speak we may choose to walk quickly ahead and open up or pretend that we open the door. What we observe is that we can translate the speech in terms of movement, and this is precisely what Laban requires us to do. We are travelling with a sudden time quality, in the space that is in front of the body, with actions that are not defined precisely, but are implied by the result, which is to open the door. In that case, the movement describes exactly the speech. In this

case, actions, space and their dynamics accurately describe the speech, so we can call it *Descriptive Action*. It is precisely these cases where, say in traveling towards door and stopping suddenly without reaching the door, indicating the actions, their qualities and space described by the speech content, that Laban named *Shadow Action*. When actions are completely unrelated to the content, it can be called *Abstract Action*. In other cases where movement implies the text, it can be called *Surrealistic Action*. For example, if we start to drink water and instead of drinking we pour the water into our jacket pocket. Another case is that there is a realistic complete action (related to character) without relation to a text (for example the character washes the dishes, while talking of other matters) which Laban called *Practical Action*. In other cases, movement can be performed through extension or exaggeration in size independent of the context of the text; this can be called *Expressionistic Action*. In some cases, the movement is very minimal, for instance small size movement (as we examined in the previous exercise concerning the size of movement in the first section) which can be named *Minimalistic Action*. In other cases the actor may be asked to act in a standing position. Although Laban is categorically opposed to this style of acting, we can apply the principles of movement to it, and call it: *Standing Position*.

The following exercises practice the main principles in combining- movement and text (speech) content, discussed in detail above, bringing visual examples by photos of the performance Mary Stuart on screen.

## 4.9 Exercises

**Important note: Remember that you have to take into consideration all the qualities of the previous exercises and that asymmetry/reversal and the unexpected occur in every exercise below. The use of the speech must be realistic. Choose whether you want to move while you talk, just before or soon after. In each case, you must be precise in your selection. Remember always that Laban insists that ‘There is no definite symbol! So the artistic creation is a matter of personal choice!**

**Step 1. Descriptive:** In other words, movement describing exactly the action of the text. You have to create a descriptive movement sequence based on the text and add the speech. Do not create a character or a style. Remember that this is an exploration of the combination between movement and speech content. You have a lot of possibilities in effort combinations and their nuances, intonations and sizes. All of the above can be applied to the

following exercises of this section. (See figure 2 an example from *Mary Stuart* shows how the actress uses descriptive movement. She says the word ‘one word’ and shows with her fingers the number one).



**Figure 2.**

**Step 2. Shadow actions:** Create a movement sequence that indicates the actions described by the text. Then add the speech in realistic form as in the previous exercise. In this case you have to use the previous example but without completing the action. **Step 3. Abstraction in movement:** Sometimes the content of the speech seems to be irrelevant to the movement that occurs simultaneously. Create a movement sequence taking into consideration the previous exercises and then add the speech in realistic form. Retain the different dynamic qualities of movement and the different qualities of voice. You can use different texts, for example a monologue from a play. However, it is better to use the kind of text provided in order for the student to keep a distance from the text’s content. **Step 4. Surrealistic:** Create a movement sequence that implement the text given in the previous exercise. Do not allow any story, perform the exercise in a functional way. You will notice that surrealistic movement is unexpected movement in a non logical order. Moreover it is the cornerstone in comedy, for example in the cases of Charlie Chaplin or Rowen Atkinson’s Mr Bean, for example in the scene that he is driving on the roof of a car (Youtube <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vMW3Q7TQars>). **Step 5. Metaphor:** the

movement indicates something relating to the actions that occur. (See figure 3 where the actress says a sentence referring to speech and she touches her mouth).



**Figure 3.**

**Advice for teachers:** You can create your own text or find a text that narrates a movement sequence. Ask the students to keep the flow of movement and do not allow pauses between actions. Ask them to explore the possibilities of narration in movement. Keep the text of the previous exercise or write a new one, but in the same style to the previous one. Ask students to write their own texts, but always in the form given.

**Step 6. Practical actions:** Create a realistic complete action irrelevant to the text, while you speak. Try to keep all the previous instructions. Do not create a specific character or type. If you prefer execute the exercise in specific circumstances with a real object or clothes first, and then without. (See figure 4 where the actress is tying her hair)



**Figure 4.**

**Step 7. Subjective actions.** Repeat the above movement sequence and add now actions such as scratching your head, rubbing you chin. Try to find different ways of performing each action. **Step 8. Conventional gestures.** Repeat the movement sequence and the speech of the previous exercise and add conventional gestures, such as nodding, or kneeling to an important person. (See figure 5 where actress playing Mary Stuart is kneeling to the Queen Elisabeth; a movement that is conventional and indicates respect).



**Figure 5.**

**Important Note:** Laban says that subjective actions are for ‘movement’s sake’ and are ‘vague gestures having no meaning’. However, there is an important kind of actions belonging to gestures (see Part 1 Units of Action, in Step 3: exercises on actions for characterization). In theatre, there is no action for movement’s sake. Everything is a sign that is decoded by the spectator. If the character scratches his head this indicates that the

character scratches his head and not the actor who plays it. This action may be a physical one; in that case, it adds to the scene's naturalness. Some times this depends on the text these actions suggests emotional or mental activity of the character, such as embarrassment or an attempt to remember something. Every character has also his habitual subjective action or actions and repeats them exactly or with variations.

**Advice for teachers:** Repeat the exercise and apply the *unexpected* in subjective and conventional actions, in their space or their dynamics. Keep the realistic way of speaking. Be careful in this series of exercises because it is actually an acting scene and work with students who are able to act. Ask them to keep a distance from the content of the text, and to be focused on the implementation of exercise.

**Step 9. Expressionistic:** Do the exercise taking the previous movement sequences of the above exercises (including voice) and execute them in extra large size. This exercise is based on the action of extending, and on the large size of movement. You can also create a new movement sequence. Also, you can do the same with speech speaking with a wide opening mouth, extending in eyes, eye brows, eye limbs and fingers as Laban suggests. (See Figure 6 where actress makes use of expressionistic movement stretching her arms and bending her body).



**Figure 6.**

**Step 10. Minimalistic:** You can repeat every previous movement sequence of this section changing its size to a smaller one, while you are speaking in a realistic form. You can keep

the text from the previous exercises. Retain the differentiation of movement's dynamics qualities and their intonations, the unexpected order both in action, dynamics and space. This minimalistic way of moving in acting is based on *shadow movements* and it is very useful in acting on screen as well as in minimalistic performance in theatre. Moreover, shadow movements can be used as reactions from the person who is listening to someone in the background on the stage. What is important here is the control of the body, in order to keep the size of movements. See figure 7 where actress closes slightly strong her eyes.

**Advice for teachers:** You have to insist in this exercise because is very essential in acting on screen. Do not forget the facial expressions See the previous sections of exercises and combine them in the way you prefer.



**Figure 7.**

**Step 11. Standing Position:** You can repeat one of the previous exercises minimizing the size of the movement to the smallest one, in such a way that it will be hard to be seen from a distance. Then add speech with a realistic form.

**Advice for teachers:** You have to create a certain movement sequence in order to be all the time aware and secure as the students will have the control of their bodies movements. This exercise is addressed to high level students that have gained their body's control. You have to treat this exercise as all the above, even in the extra small size, because all the principles applied to movement, exist also in the smallest one. Remember that this belongs to what Laban calls 'shadow movements'. In that way, the execution will be vivid. You can see also this exercise as the reaction of another character to the person to whom they are speaking.

So you can apply it in a duet and you can change the roles from speaking to listening. Certainly the tutor needs to direct the scene in certain circumstances, because this exercise is also an acting scene.

## 4.11 Conclusion

This chapter presented a proposed methodology, that demonstrate the application of Laban method, using as a theoretical framework, for the first time- Aristotle's principles of *mimesis*, as it is presented by the contemporary Greek philosopher Stelios Ramfos in his book *Mimesis against Form*. This theoretical approach applies to the explanatory practical work, first in the performance of *Mary Stuart* in a theatre space that demonstrates how the basic principles apply to acting and in a series of exercises in a studio that explain in detail how an actor's body is trained in order to meet the requirements of his profession, both included in the DVD. The exercises were addressed to the students from the elementary to the advanced level. This is achieved by the order of the training that begin with the first very simple exercise of actions proceeding to more complicated exercises by adding exercises of dynamics of movement, spatial exercises, exercises for the location of the bodies that create relationships and for the first time exercises for the basic principles between movement and the content of the speech. Again, I have tried to demonstrate these principles by using as an example the performance of Mary Stuart in both photos and in DVD. The result of this endeavour, I hope, demonstrates both a full theoretical and practical programme for contemporary actor training both in kinesthesia and in characterization, and which particularly offers Laban for Actors a far more detailed approach to characterization than the recorded and written practices of other Laban teachers to date.

## 5. Chapter five: Conclusion

### 5.1 Student Responses

In this thesis I have demonstrated how Laban's method - especially in the case of an actor's training- has a philosophical foundation in Aristotle's philosophy rather than Plato's, as his follower's had insisted to. This approach allows Laban's method to claim scientific validity since the methodology proposed has as its foundations principles and rules based on logical elaboration in both theory and practice. The links between Aristotle and Laban were examined through the prism of the Aristotelian notion of *mimesis* as elucidated by the Greek philosopher Stelios Ramfos. He re-examines the issue of *mimesis* as ζῶον (living thing), giving to it space-time direction, offering the opportunity to discuss the Aristotelian notion of *mimesis* in terms of performance. This theoretical framework allowed the research to address shortcomings in the legacy of Laban's training for actor's movement as identified by Evans in his book *Movement Training for the Modern Actor*. The research proved that the practitioners who comprise the 'Laban's legacy' generated a series of misapplications by connecting Laban's work to that of Stanislavsky as well as perpetuating expressionistic tones in teaching movement to the actors. This made the method appear to many –including Evans- conservative and with little to offer to contemporary theatre practice. The proposed methodology provides a series of classes on DVD, whose aim is to offer a new angle on teaching the method through actions in abstraction, applying in practice a revised approach to Laban's thinking that is compatible with the demands of the contemporary teaching *movement to* actors, as well as the larger issue of *movement in* acting. The methodology brings to light the lesser considered issue of movement for characterization that Laban discussed in detail in *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage*, and which allows for a stricter the application of the method to the techniques of acting.

In order to transfer the knowledge to the students who attended the classes presented on the DVD, my previous dance/movement background was absolutely necessary for the methodology as my knowledge of complex movement allowed me to support and protect the students' bodies from injury. Secondly, my knowledge and experience in acting, gained through two years of acting classes, allowed me to find the right way to connect movement training with acting. This research examines how the re-evaluation of Laban's method addresses the efficacy of the actor's body, for meeting the professional demands of their art. The methodology employs two dance techniques used in training for the support and

strengthening of the body: classical Ballet and Graham technique. These techniques were chosen since they combined, they provide the full range of effort elements – Graham emphasises strong and bound qualities whilst ballet focuses on light/free. Both train the muscles of body and at the same time kinaesthesia. Additionally, Graham technique emphasises effective use of the spine and pelvis, with contraction/ release and spirals that serve to strengthen the muscles that support the voice. Ballet also supports the use of gestures for period plays and in commedia dell arte. Therefore the need for the practitioner to be an actor-dancer is required not just of the student but also of the teacher.

In addition, I had to be cognizant of trends in the theatre industry, past and present. I have had to bring examples of practitioners, as well as other issues that concerned the questions that arose throughout the course of the class, including aesthetic terms, social analysis, literary examples, political issues and historical facts. Finally, I have had to develop knowledge of the screen industry from the early years of cinema because the methodology I have developed also addresses acting on screen.

The above is not meant to say that I consider myself as a “Great Master” but rather – to borrow V. A. Howard assertion in his article *The Virtuosity in Teaching* (1998) – that teachers must have a profound knowledge of the subject in a way that they can structure and command it and have sufficient virtuosity to communicate it to their students, arousing their interest and love for their art (Howard 1998: 2-3). In the case of a teacher of movement for actors, such virtuosity requires that the tutor possess acting skills. The careful reading of Laban’s book *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage* from the side of the teacher requires many years of experience, both theoretical and practical, and Laban demands also that the teacher must possess first and foremost the ability to demonstrate the mastery of movement on the stage. Additionally, Laban elevates the status of the Art of the Movement to the level of a science, declaring it to be an autonomous art. This one further reason behind the need of teacher’s to acquire a deep and comprehensive knowledge of the subject.

However, despite all the previous instructions that are given by the methodology tracing and testing the method through my own teaching and research experience, it is highly desirable that other tutors work with and through the materials in order to discover new ways of teaching movement. Having reflecting a little on my own experience, it is also interesting to note the experience of the students; these experiences there were gathered

through the course of the research to provide experiential data towards a qualitative assessment of the methodology.

## **5.2 Praxis Outcomes – An integrated Body and Mind for the Actor.**

The main idea was to explore the kinaesthetic experience of movement for the actor and the requirement to be in accordance with the key principles of the research: objectivity and clarity were the main requirements, since both are essential to the communication between actors and movement teachers/or directors. In the appendix DVD2 I have included some of the responses of the students who participated in the practical work: Vassilis Xenikakis student in drama school, Eugenia Papageorgiou a former student of mine, consultant and actress, Athanasia Triantafyllou a former student of mine, actress, Serafeim Arkomanis actor, filmmaker and Amanda Prachiali, student in drama school and voice trainer. All of them were at the same time participants and observers. At every step they observed and commented on each other's works, restricted to using only the vocabulary we had derived from Laban.

Vasilis realized the interaction of body and mind in movement which led to an improved awareness of his kinaesthesia through the method, observing that his body moves like an 'orchestra', moving the body parts simultaneously by doing so consciously. The interesting point is that he felt 'free' to choose any movement sequence and the rationalization of the terminology and of the exercises did not restricted him in any way. On the contrary, he believed that it was exactly the cognitive understanding which opened up the possibilities of moving his body practically. At this point one may recall the issue raised earlier of logic and rationalization in movement that was proposed in a previous chapter, based on Laban and Aristotle concepts. To recall the principal point: logic was understood as a transformative process. Through this approach, and following Laban there is a possibility to enrich the body's qualities and to perform not using the actor's 'natural tendencies' which, as Laban's indicates, leads to a 'borrowing naturalism'. Vassilis was of the only participant to have read *The Mastery of Movement on the Stage*. However, until he took the workshops he was unable to understand the application of the method in acting. Actually he considered the book to be only a theoretical one. One of the problems of the book is that despite the fact that it is a practical guide for the stage, in the case of acting, the written form is an obstacle but most importantly, it lacks clarity in the presentation of its central the ideas.

Vasilis, states that after completing the classes, he was able to understand the content – a statement that supports one of the core claims of the thesis about the need to re-evaluate Laban’s method through the right philosophical prism – that at of Aristotle, and with the right order of teaching the method. In this way, Vasilis realised that Laban’s concepts can provide the right supporting study in movement for acting. The missing part before starting any acting method and the interesting thing is that he mentions various different acting methods, supporting the argument of the proposed methodology and asserting that it can be understood as a supporting study in any acting method.

The second student, Eugenia Papageorgiou, who was also one of my assistant in teaching, during these years, is in agreement with Vassilis. She mentions first the issue of logic in acting, the easiness of adapting the proposed method, the vocabulary that gives them a variety of choices and the ability to set them free. Eugenia raises the issue of memory and how repetition in certain movement sequences helped her to understand how she was moving and how she was then able to expand her boundaries in movement, in a manner similar to the way that Vassilis had explained how the methodology helped him to be aware of what he was doing all the time and how he could use this improve his kinaesthetic sense.

Athanasia Triantafyllou, an actress and also another teaching assistant of mine expressed remarkably similar opinions to the two previous students. She mentions the importance of logic that is promoted by the proposed method where one chooses actions carefully (*prothesis*) working against improvisation and ‘spontaneous’ acts – an issue that was discussed in great detail in section 2.3 and provided the cornerstone of the exercises of the proposed methodology. In addition she mentions that the methodology provides the necessary tools for developing the characterization – again, an issue that this research emphasises, for the first time, at least to any great extent, in the teaching of Laban’s method to actors. What is proposed are the main principles for integrating movement and textual (speech) content, where the aesthetic approaches of the movement training are examined.

Athanasia, realized that logic does not lead to the placing of restrictions on the body and its movement; nor therefore does it produce a mechanical result. On the contrary, she felt free both in mind and body, and protected by her natural movement tendencies and repetitions when structuring a character.

The case of Serapheim Arkomanis is also a very interesting one since he is an actor and filmmaker given that this research is addressed also to acting on screen. He participated in the classes as an actor, as a filmmaker and as assistant in my research, shooting all the recordings and producing the DVDs. Serapheim discusses, as all the others above do, the very easy and comprehensive vocabulary provided by the method as a great tool for the understanding of kinaesthesia, as well as in structuring a character. He understands this on the grounds of collaboration of both director and actor when they work in the structuring of a certain character. For him it is very clear that this method can help actors and directions to create different characters and avoid mannerisms and, through repetition, to achieve a high degree of accuracy in movement even when the character moves – an issue that the practice considers as crucial for the actor. In addition, structuring the movement in characterization as this method proposes is not a matter of emotional involvement, but it can be seen through the application of certain principles that the method promotes. He, like Vassilis, confirms the idea of this methodology as a supporting study for every acting method, due to the fact that this methodology introduces for the first time abstraction in movement sequences when teaching Laban's method to actors. During the practical work in the studio I noticed that the students adapted very quickly to the proposed methodology, regardless of their background in movement or dance; it was also interesting to see how easily they started to use the English terminology from the first moment of the workshop. They were very satisfied with the vocabulary which we developed for naming their movements, and which enabled very clear communication to occur between them. All of them remarked that they now possess a tool that it is very helpful to them in their professional life. Their comments were in accordance because they used and understood a common language, and its principles – demonstrating that understanding both through the way they practised the exercises and in the way they later commented on the construction of movement (and its meaning). According to the 'students' comments, it is clear to me that they understood the art of movement for actors precisely as a poetic science; it is the knowhow of the art, in other words, which they were able to reflect upon, and not the artistic product. This lend practical support to the idea that 'logic' is a transformative process and not a restricted one, something which also supports, I believe, the argumentation of this thesis. It is in this sense that this research has sought to answer to the issue that is raised by Evans' questions in his book for *Movement Training for the Modern Actor* about the scientific approach in acting and the reluctance of actors to accept that such a logic can lead to creativity. Moreover what this methodology tried to demonstrate from the beginning is how one might approach Laban

without using expressionistic tones during the training for actors, refuting the claim advanced by Evans that Laban's method remains a problematic one due to its two main representatives Newlove and Stephenson and way they have been teaching the method as a kind of 'expressionism'. The methodology building on Laban's suggestions turns everyday actions into an abstract vocabulary, essential for avoiding any kind of mimetic behaviour, and at the same time changes the effort rhythm of the actor's body from an expressionistic to a realistic one. Expressionistic tones of movement is not a way of training the body with the exception of the case of expressionistic movement that is discussed in the section 4.7. The main goal is the execution of a variety of movement sequences by actions and rhythms that allows the body to be 'neutral' and 'natural', as well as, to be capable of presenting different characters that the profession of acting demands.

Serapheim Arkomanis discussed the proposed methodology under the prism of actor and director, bringing also the issue of the creation of large group scenes that can be presented only to cinema, or outside the limited space of the theatre. He understands the efficiency of the method not only for the actor's movement on screen, but also in relation to the camera's movement, allowing the method to be applicable in other areas, as further research. He concludes that he is now able to see practically the most important issue for which this research was designed: to establish the universality and the timelessness of movement in acting as central to the proposed methodology.

Amanda Prachiali is a very interesting case because she participated as an actress and at the same time, works as a voice trainer. She was therefore able to understand the importance of the exercises insofar as they combine the dynamics of the movement with the dynamics of voice.

The idea of embodiment as an interaction between body and mind through certain principles, provided by the method, allowed the actors to be aware all the time of practicing what they were doing. What has been implicit in the discussion thus far is the problem of embodiment which I would like to briefly examine. Laban strongly affirms that the performers have to have full dedication to the movement while they practising and performing. It is a moment of full concentration where the emotions suppressed for giving space to deep understanding and to memory. The practitioners during training/rehearsal consciously avoid any kind of emotional response since they have to connect thinking and

doing. However, during the performance or emotions return as a pleasure of execution, as was discussed in detail in section 1.1.

As Sheets – Johnston in her book *The Phenomenology of Dance* (1979) states the ‘phenomenon of the lived experience requires a consciousness which the body itself knows’ (Sheets – Johnston 1979: 12). The methodology I have sought to develop addresses as its main focus through both theoretical and practical explorations the notion of embodiment, understood as the interaction between body and mind from an ontological point of view. The same process for kinaesthetic training follows both athletes and dancer. As Arnold, P in his book *Movement and Education* states:

[the athlete] is able to attend to his own lived body experiences, [...] to his own kinaesthetic flow patterns as he engages in particular forms of contextual movement actions. As he does so he is able to ‘feel’ what he feels in this sense logically arises from his direct acquaintance of knowing how to do things (Arnold 1988: 83).

Aristotle suggests that skills and tact are the result of a process know how in the poetic science, where actions and thinking are interrelated in the unity of Ζώον (living thing). The main idea is that the first and most important thing is the training of bodily memory, using repetition, and using time not as a continuous now, but as a travelling backward and forward, repeating the same action and its dynamics a few times until it is able to be stored in the body’s long-term memory (see Schmidt, R 1982 Motor control and learning a behavioural emphasis (Champaign Illinois Human Kinetics.. page 207). When the mind acts spontaneously actions are not cultivated. There is no deep understanding of the things; there is no place for episteme – authentic knowledge. It is the memory that provides the ability of mind to go back and forward through syllogism, in a repetitive way in order to store the experience in the long term memory that produces knowledge; in this case mind can be understood as ‘nous’. For Ramfos ‘memory is the *span of time* that can grasp the wholeness of time’. This *time span* occurs in training or rehearsal in which nous through syllogism and memory attempts to improve bodily kinaesthesia. The specific memorable movement sequence then through repetition changes time into a present time that occurs in training and performance. If you have only the body’s experience then movement would be automatic and mechanical. It is the interaction between nous – through its syllogism and memory- and body. The first principles of a phenomenon and its immediate terms, including its categorization, as we saw in the theoretical approach of this methodology, are absolutely

necessary for the activation of *syllogism* and *memory*. This is because, in terms of the mode of understanding that is properly speaking ‘embodied’ the arena for connecting kinetic experience with thinking (in term of movement) as an activity of the mind will be the practice – the transformation of what was understood in an abstracted sense into an integrated, lived, embodied and performed form.

This use of time in rehearsals and training, what Ramfos refers to as ‘latent time’ (ref), allows the ‘nous’ to check, to control and to transform movement material using the vocabulary as the tool. This latent time, is required in the training of the body, and because it is an intellectual activity it requires *syllogism* in its methodology. The interaction of mind and body requires a vocabulary – even where it is a simple case of using basic words that describe the actions Of the actor as interconnected with the text; it was an issue that all the students mentioned above, as a key tool – that of communication during training and rehearsal. For example a lot of practitioners, teachers of movement or directors communicate with their actors without a certain vocabulary; nevertheless they succeed to collaborate in class producing a performance or scene.

### **5.3 Aristotelian Laban Practice and its relation to the field of Movement for Actors**

This research has taken into account recent research concerned with the phenomenological approaches of practitioners such as Philip Zarrilli. In this research the concept of *embodiment* has been examined and analysed to develop a very different approach to that advocated in Philipp Zarrilli’s book *Psychophysical Acting* in 2009. Zarrilli provides an approach that although it proposes itself as a method of acting, remains limited to the body’s awareness through its physical and psychic aspect, ‘outer’ and ‘inner’ accordingly. The methodology is concerned with activation of energy through the actor’s breath to make him be ‘in the moment’. In this aspect there are parallels with this methodology in relation to the as notion of indestructible dynamics (*Zóov*). Moreover, the repetition of the exercises as a means for the training of kinaesthesia is in accordance with the current research, although they do not share the same philosophical background and practical application. Zarrilli suggests that it is repetition per se that leads one –eventually- to the possibility of re-organize-ing oneself and one’s body mind relationship through exercise (Zarrilli 2009: 31). However, to anyone trained in dance this is a basic, common principle of skills acquisition that cannot be appropriated as being exclusive to his methodology.

However this methodology argues that Ζώον is a unity of body/mind interaction against Cartesian dualism and that through a scientific and logical approach one can reach the same goal against dualism. Moreover the methodology deals not only with the actor's body training in their kinaesthesia, but also it provides them with an understanding of the relation between movement and speech in characterization; movement for actors and in acting. This methodology –movement for acting- is an activity that is both embodied and mindful.

The methodology is not aiming at the creation of a specific character but of general rules that govern movement, analysing and categorized in such a way that has as a result a body that 'knows' how to do things. In a way it creates the possibility of structuring different movement sequences and rhythms that are tools for actors. The process of creating a certain character is a decision making matter, but the training of the body follows certain rules. The more the movement sequences and their dynamics one experiences the more different movement qualities are able to demonstrate. As Laban indicates there is no right or wrong sequence, it is the right order of the action that transfers the meaning. The methodology proved that this logical procedure may set students free, as they asserted in their interviews. According to Ramfos, 'the sense of freedom is connected with the knowing of certain general rules that allows intervention and differentiation' (Ramfos lecture September 2012).

This methodology is also aligned to the approach of Rhonda Blair which examines Stanislavsky method of acting and his legacy under the prism of cognitive neuroscience, (see *The Actor, Image, and Action* in 2008). Although the book is addressed to acting method training of Stanislavsky and his followers, an approach that as this research examined is far away from Laban's principles for movement in acting, Blair's research examines the connection between mind, body and emotion in acting both in rehearsal and performance based on action, as this methodology does, in order to support her arguments that Stanislavsky and his followers provided a scientific method of acting that can be connected with the latest scientific discoveries in neuroscience, based mainly on neuroscientist Antonio R. Damasio's research. Nevertheless, although Blair discusses in detail Stanislavsky's latest period of *Method of Physical Actions* and her approach is similarly based on the question, what is actor doing, still, it carries all the problems we exposed in discussing the difference between Laban and Stanislavsky. Laban is against improvisation, for instance, proposing certain movement sequences in repetition he introducing symbolic actions instead 'as if' in the structure of character and he avoids any kind of psychological implication.

Again, this research is a methodology of movement training the actor's body and in acting – not an acting method to be compared with Blair's research – based on scientific research, grounded on Aristotle's philosophy. Sifakis, professor of Classical Greek Literature at New York University, shares a similar philosophy and comments on Damasio's work and how it is connected with Aristotle's ideas about the function of body/mind interaction against Cartesian dualism. In his book *Aristotle on the Function of Tragic Poetry* in 2001 Damasio is quoting from his book *Descartes' Error* (1994):

Descartes' view represents retrogression from the “organismic, mind-in-the-body approach, which prevailed from Hippocrates to the Renaissance. How annoyed Aristotle would have been with Descartes, had he known” Damasio remarks (p. 251) (Sifakis 2001: 115).

Sifakis explains that Damasio's research based on an ‘Aristotelian inductive method’, interprets the connection between ‘cognitive process’ and ‘emotional process’ as an interrelated one, arguing that Aristotle in his *Rhetoric* clearly indicates that *emotions* can lead someone to lose any clear vision of the truth, in the decision making process. However, ‘if emotions are evoked, not outside the subject (εξω του πραγματος, 1355<sup>a</sup> 2), but in addition and with respect to logical arguments, they become a rightful means of persuasion and contribute to proficient decision making’ (Sifakis 2001: 122). It is made more clear that ‘logic’ is an activity that can overcome emotions for the sake of reason and vice versa, ‘which presupposes self-consciousness ( and of course memory, both long-term and short term, ‘working’, memory, necessary for self-consciousness)’ (Sifakis 2001: 115).

As this methodology has proposed during training the actor's emotional state is suppressed for the purpose of concentrating on the body/mind interaction in order to develop long term memory, working in *latent time* backward and forwards in order to reach the state of *indestructible dynamics* (ζώνον) and in order to *embody* a ‘diastolic now’ where space is determined by the movement's direction in cube perspective. That state occurs also during the performance and affirms life in the actor's presence on the stage.

The proposed methodology provides the main rules and principles of movement for actors, and offers a logical and accessible pathway to anyone involved in researching, transforming and differentiating characters from one another. The method of structuring a certain character suggested in the research is not a ‘*prothesis*’ but might be better be grasped in terms of another Aristotelian notion, that of *Phronesis*.

The notion of *Phronesis* is discussed in Aristotle's *Nicomacheian Ethics* where he considers the moment of making a decision. During this moment the man who *βουλεύεσθαι* (deliberates), engages in *phronesis* (practical wisdom) since *phronesis* is necessary for making the choice (*προαίρεσις*) that leads to an action. It is exactly in revealing this function of a human being that Aristotle's approach can be considered 'phenomenological' approach in Aristotle's philosophy. However, as George Sifakis, a Greek philologist explains:

Time and again Aristotle insists that deliberation and choice take place not in regard to 'things whose principles cannot be otherwise' (E.N. 1139a 7), 'e.g. about the universe or the incommensurability of the diagonal and the side of a square' (Sifakis 2001: 123).

In other words, Aristotle takes into consideration the freedom of the choice for each man and understands that this is a human function and he is aware that each man is different and makes his own choices depending on the character and the environment that influence him.

The question is: what is the connection with *phronesis* and a method that trains the actor's body in its kinaesthesia and in characterizations? In such a methodology is the issue of choice a central one? In fact this methodology deals with the training of the actors movement both in kinaesthesia and acting based on the basic principles of movement as they were exposed by Laban and having as a philosophical background Aristotle's principles in *Poetics*. It does not refer to the creation of a specific character, a work of a method of acting. Rather, what is at stake are the main principles that govern movement for actors and acting, in such a way that movement sequence and kinaesthetic knowledge could be stored in long term memory. In a way it provides the tools for actors for structuring different movement sequences with different effort qualities and their connection with a text's content. The procedure of structuring a certain character is a matter of making a decision, that is to say, of employing a certain practical wisdom, which it is always a matter of personal choice. Actually Laban himself agrees insofar as for him it is always a matter of personal taste how a theatre creator should interpret a specific passage. Refer. Although the proposed methodology allows the possibility of personal choices in structuring the movement sequences that one prefers, it is not interested in these choices. For it is not a matter which is the order of the sequence or its effort quality, since you have to create as many as possible different movement sequences as possible, as well as, their effort qualities for enriching one's movement qualities. Thus, the methodology is not interested in the

decision making process per se but focuses on developing the students' skills and tact, the 'know – how' of their profession. Katia Savrami in her article 'Dance in Education' (2012) 'Dance is not merely movement, but rather skillful movement of artistic value' echoes exactly what the methodology proposes about the issue of know-how in acting (Savrami 2012: 4). For example Vasilis Xenikakis in one class can choose a movement sequence and Eugenia Papageorgiou another one. The next day they may select another choice. Therefore in the case of a methodology it is the knowledge of the main principles and their application that are a main concern.

This methodology to summarise our previous discussion in Chapter Four has argued the following:

1. As in dance movements are abstract, until the specific circumstances are defined by the place, the scenery, the costumes and the story through speech.
2. The actor plays with movement rhythms like an orchestra, using different body parts at the same time in concert.
3. It is the unusual and unexpected combination of movement in a sequence that constitute the symbolic actions.
4. The dynamic of theatre is, a continuous flow of energy, a 'process' in which there are no stops.
5. What actors experience on the stage are their actions and their effort qualities; namely they are living their body's continuous flow of energy.
6. Voice is also a dynamic movement and therefore it has effort dynamic qualities that can be trained through effort exercises like the rest of the body.
7. Space is experienced in the form of a cube in the body's kinaesthetic training.
8. Actor's relationships on the stage are determined from the correlation of their actions, their effort qualities, their respective location in space and their conflicts with each other.
9. Concerning the actor's movement training it is the repetitive exercise of effort combinations other than his natural habitual tendencies that allows him to act different and distinct characters.

The methodology uses this procedure in order to train actor's body (and voice) and mind, including the principles of characterization that they are the tools of the character's structure. According to students' words, the training of their kinaesthesia as well as the basic principles offered in structuring a character provided them a complete methodology for the study of movement for actors and in acting.

The ultimate goal of the research is to contribute a new approach that can inform the way Laban's concepts are taught and provide suggestions for the structuring of technical movement classes for actors in an attempt to offer a complete methodology of Laban theory and practice focusing exclusively on characterization and not on Laban studies for dance.

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