EUROPEAN SEMINAR FOR KINETOGRAPHY

Paper No.14.

SHIFTS

by Christine Eckerle,1998.
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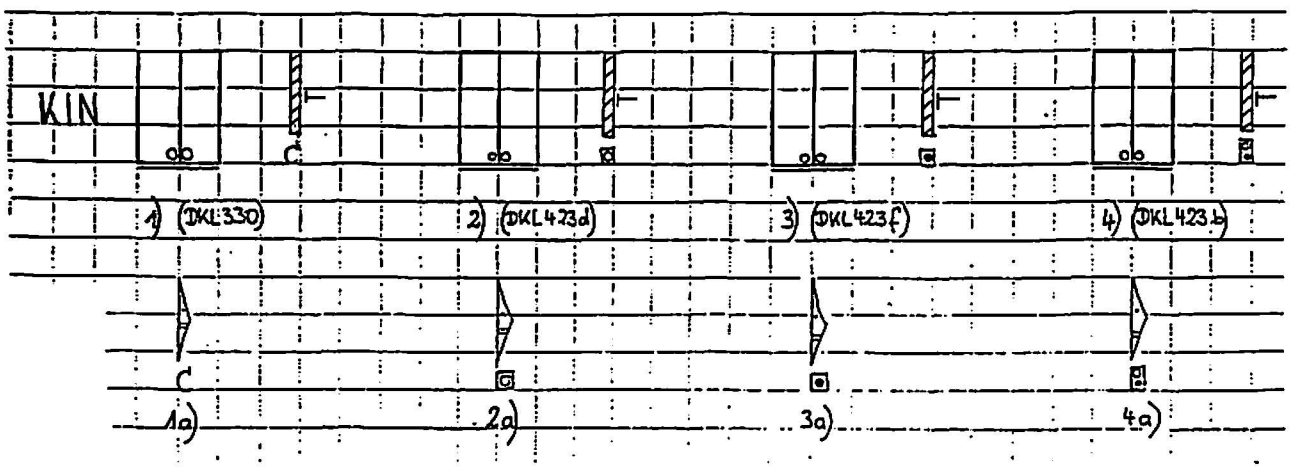
Sources: A. Knust: A Dictionary of Kinetography Laban (Labanotation),(1979,1997), **DKL**
A. Hutchinson: Labanotation (Third edition, 1989), **AH**

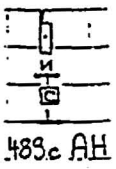
PART 1

1. SHIFTS OF THE HEAD, TRUNK AND ITS PARTS

1.1. Shifts are small displacements of the axes running through the moving part of the body (the head, chest, pelvis, and trunk), which are at right angles to the main direction **KIN**. They are indicated by a direction sign = the direction of the axis, and a position sign next to it = the direction of the displacement (ex. 1-4). In **LN** it is defined as: "a movement of a body part away from its normal alignment".

At the 1977 ICKL Conference a new way of analysing and writing shifts of body parts was proposed (ex. 1a-4a). However, this method was borrowed from the "rotation of the body part as a unit", as used in recording rotations.



Note: At the same time LN is continuing the old way of writing as shown in ex. 489 in the third edition of AH  etc.

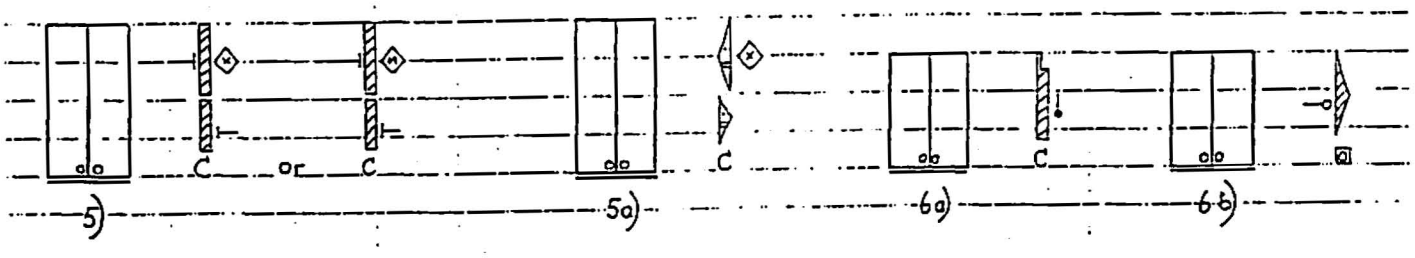
1.2. **LN** defines: *"Shifting, a movement on a straight line, can be a major action, a movement as big as the physical limitations of the body part will allow, or it can be a minor action, a very slight displacement in space"* (A.H. p.332). (Hence the usage of the path sign).

The difference between the "major action", and the "minor action" is indicated by space measurement signs (ex. 489c AH).

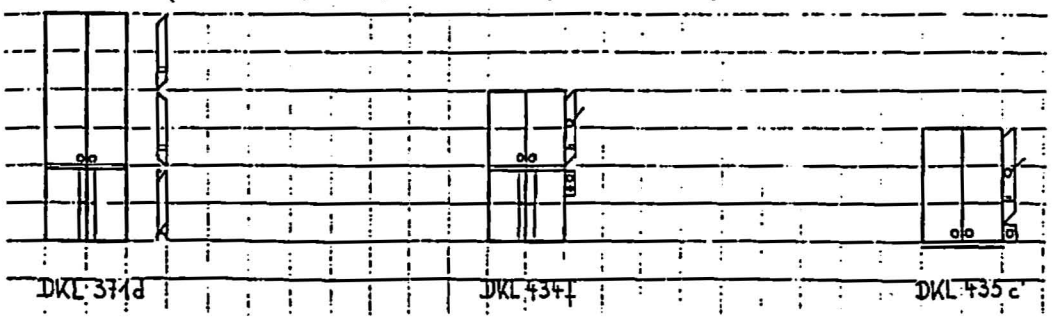
However, at the same time, the way of writing the performance on a large ("major action") or a small ("minor action") scale is recorded in the same way as in **KIN**. (ex. 5, 5a): with space measurement signs written alongside the spatial indications.

For these reasons the definition of shifting as *"a movement on a straight line"* is ambiguous with **LN**.

1.3. In **KIN** the shift is always considered a small movement, therefore pin signs are used. The performance on a "large" or "small" scale may be added. (ex.5). The angle between the direction of the axis, and the direction of the displacement is always one of 90 degrees (ex 6a,b), as it is with minute movements and deviations.



1.4. COMMENT:
The new proposed way of writing shifts of body parts (see ex. 1a-4a) was borrowed from the trunk, chest, and arms "rotation as a unit" method (ex. 371d; 434f; 435c' DKL), as already mentioned above.



1.5 This analysis is not consistent because there is a basic difference between a rotational, and a directional movement. The rotation (shown by a turn sign) is a movement around the own axis of the moving body part, a directional movement (shown by a direction sign) causes a tilt of this axis.

1.6. Also, there is a difference between a twist and a rotation: a twist being a spiral movement around the own axis of the respective body part, in which the free end is rotated to a larger degree than the fixed end.

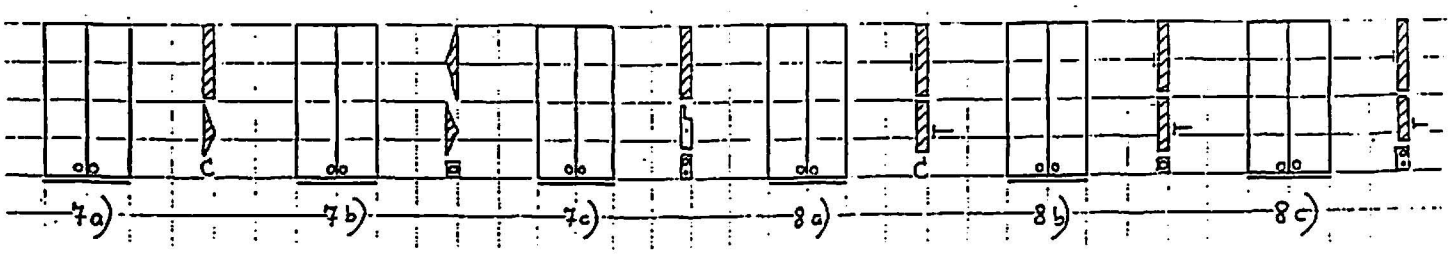
A "rotation as a unit" of a body part is a movement in which the whole part achieves the same degree of rotation from the fixed end to the free end.

A shift is in any case a movement of the whole part "as a unit", because the head, the trunk and its parts, cannot move "in parts". This new method of analysing shifts makes no sense.

1.7. For this reason the **LN** definition: *"a shift is a displacement of a body part as a unit,"* is not correct, as it is analysed as a rotation. In contrast, the way of writing a shift in **KIN**, shows the actual movement occurrence.

1.8. Ex.7 a-c) show the directional movement of the axes running through the respective part, and therefore a tilt of the part as a unit is indicated.

Ex.8 a-c) show the displacement of those axes, and therefore a movement of the body part as a unit is indicated.



PART II

1. SHIFTS OF THE CENTRE OF GRAVITY

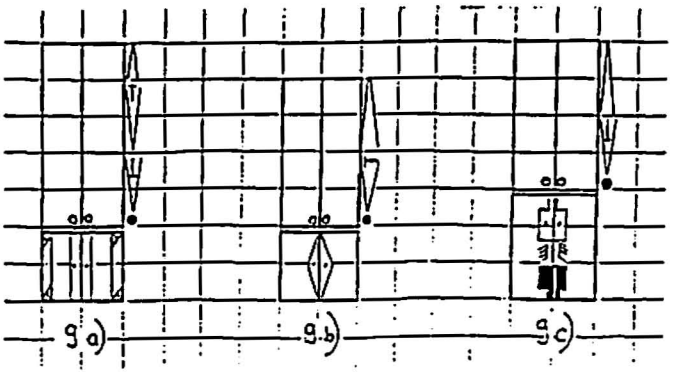
1.1. A shift of the centre of gravity is a small displacement of the weight above an existing surface of support (ex.9 a-c).

1.2. There is a difference between a shift of the centre of gravity, and the transference of weight, i.e. of the centre of gravity.

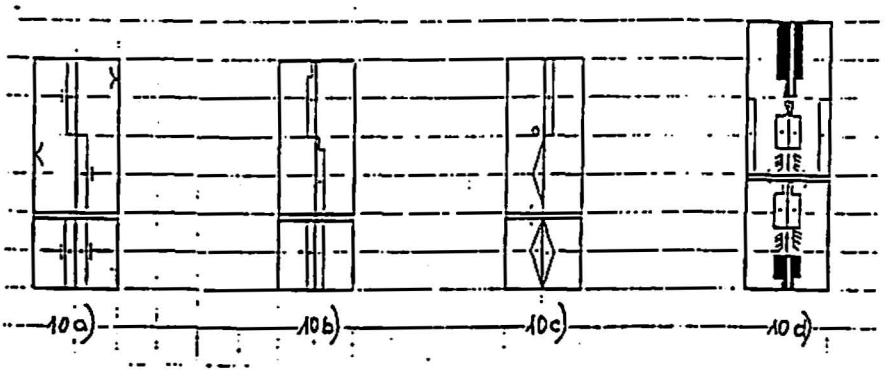
1.3. A transference of weight is a movement achieving a new stance above a new surface of support (ex. 10 a-d).

1.4. Also, in shifting the centre of gravity, there is an angle of 90 degrees between the vertical axis - showing the line of gravity - and the displacement of the centre of gravity.

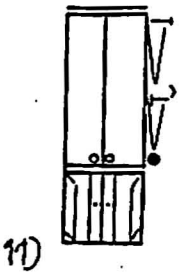
It depends on the surface of support whether the displacement is a very small one (ex. 9a) or whether it is larger (ex. 9b,c).
A small displacement is at times very similar to minute movement, if performed in the same situation (compare 1.6. below).



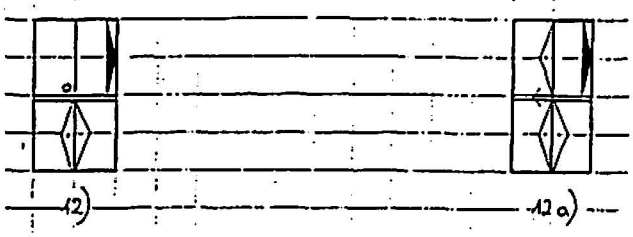
1.5. Generally, the transference of the whole weight is shown by direction signs written in the support column, even if there is no big distance between the supporting body parts. (ex.10).



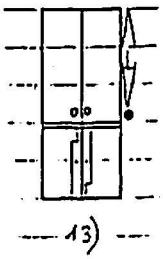
1.6. Shifts of the centre of gravity can be at times identified as minute movements (ex.11).



1.7. In lifting the right leg from an open position as in ex 12) the centre of gravity is transferred to the left leg. The analysis of this movement, and the way of writing it, is more detailed in ex.12 a).



1.8. In ex. 13) the c. of gr. is also moving but it stays above the surface of the support, the body does not reach a new stance, i.e. a new vertical.



1.9. In **LN** clear distinction is made between a "step in place" and a "shift of weight" when starting on both legs (ex. 80 a, and 80 b, p. 74 AH). To show this difference a staple must be added for the shift.

Also, two ways of writing the transference of weight onto one leg are used, when starting from an open position (ex. 80 d, and 80 e): in terms of "movement description", and in terms of "position writing". However, the position writing does not describe what actually happens with the weight.

In **KIN** a "step in place" or a "shift of weight" are indicated in <u>general description</u> as in ex. 80 a. It is left to the performer to deduce from the movement context, which way of performing it is appropriate. In a <u>detailed description</u> the caret is used (ex. 80 b, d). This makes clear that a "step" is not intended. (DKL 175 b, b_1, c, j, k, l; 205 e; 211 a, b; 244 d).

2. COMMENT:

The difference between "shifting the weight" (displacing the centre of gravity above the surface of support), and "transferring the weight" (getting a new balance) should always be made clear.

With shifts of the trunk and its parts the possibilities are few, but with shifts of the centre of gravity one should know exactly what is intended. It is important to expose the difference between a "shift" and a "transference" of weight.

It is absolutely necessary to be precise in writing movements of the weight because in a complex context the situation of "place" must be made clear, in order to orientate adequately the directions of the following supports.