

DRAFT: Meeting, moving and writing between formlessness and form

Anita and Håkon

This collaborative writing experiment was inspired in shared workshops in August 2014 at the Norscenlab, arranged at Grönekulle Gård, Sweden, which was to explore different approaches in acting and moving. Since then, we, Anita Valkeemäki and Håkon Fyhn, have been writing, wondering and asking together what happens when a form arises from formlessness in moving and writing. Located in Finland and Norway, we have shared our experiences and thoughts inspired by our daily life actions, by each other's writings and engagements, by texts we read etc. Anita, a dance teacher, explores corporeality, materiality of body and movement in improvisation, theatre, dance, and daily life performances. Håkon, a social anthropologist, having spent much time exploring what it means to be present, developing an understanding based on his practice in the martial art aikido.

The writing of this have included a number of different modes of meeting: It started with e-mails we wrote to each other and responded to when we had time. After a while we met in a studio and moved together, experimenting with different approaches that revolved around improvisation. We also met to write sitting face to face in a summer cottage in Finland writing together online, sometimes discussing, sometimes in silence. The collaborative writing continued as Håkon went back to Norway, still online, but now our contact was reduced to the cursor on the screen, deprived of gestures, expressions, we were just relying upon the appearing words and letting the story/narrative/thoughts become expressed. This is how the sentences you now read are made.

Invitation

Anita: I got interested in that topic and especially the way you Håkon were reflecting in your article about the challenge of writing:

‘Whenever I write something difficult I do not already know, it seems to take form in the tension [between

what has to be said and what cannot be said]. It is as if I try to write something that I cannot write. Like a *koan*, what's on my mind keep slipping away from the words. However, the repeated attempts to give form to the unknown, still seems to bring me closer to an understanding' (Fyhn 2011, p. 1).¹

I connect this idea with my own wondering about meaning and a need of words (language) in a learning-teaching situation in dance, especially when **it** revolves around improvisation. We seem to do many things in a mode of unwitting knowing and I put to question why then speak so much during a dance lesson? Why have this urge to get students to understand my ideas? Why the need to get to form in order to recognize something as learning in movement? What is this form and what is its relation to understanding or to seeing or to perceiving more generally?

Or, as you pointed out in your workshop that comprehension between people **tends to** happens, especially in academic discourse, from form to form. I understood from your example that the word 'form' means something already known and done, which we encapsulate to use it then later in different discourses. In this sense the form has a negative sense. I agree that we live in a time where everything has to be knowledgeable and that is so pervasive that we forget that much of our day-to-day existence is guided by intuition, sensations, feelings, emerging thoughts and unexpected encounters. We constantly need to rely upon our body-memory, body-knowledge, kinaesthesia, and training and practice (Max van Manen 2014, p. 48).

This reliance makes me think of my own attitude as a dance and movement educator:
I feel that my body knows. I feel the moments when I am ready and aware in my perceptions. I feel that in those moments I see and perceive in a way that allows me to be free to empathize at that moment. I feel that my body knows, and somehow I still hesitate. In this moment of knowing the words revolve around, never really explaining, but rather narrating the movements I am witnessing and experiencing.

¹ The quotations stand out from the dialogue as they in some cases serve as unexplained associations.

Inspired by your workshop, your article and ideas, I wish we could meet and discuss more about the way of writing/moving/being between formlessness and form.

Håkon: Yes, I really think it would be nice if we could meet sometime and explore this more. In particular, I am curious to learn more about how your experiences with improvisation fit this way of thinking.

Anita: I have one suggestion for you. We could share our different encounters between formlessness and form through writing emails - whenever we feel like it and without any requirement for the other to respond. We might find something interesting that we want to publish.

During the autumn of 2014, we have shared our thoughts, perceptions, feelings, and experiences about moving, writing, listening, improvising through writing. We asked, searched, and researched that moment before and when the unformed turns into form. We now ask: How can we reflect upon such a practice where movement is not articulated in thought or words before it arises. And can this practice be reached through language?

Breathing through language - reaching towards formlessness

Anita: I want to share one thing with you... Today, I was improvising in dance and I found that there is a breath on the way ... I would say from formless to form. I felt how my awareness turned towards my breath just before my movement reached out; just before the form formulates itself towards recognition (towards a moment I became aware of my movement). It was, as if the breathing was a moment where movement opened for a diversity of possibilities in decision-making and my action moved towards form, or something more articulated in motion.

Håkon: What you write about the breath is exactly the sort of thing I am curious about. It is about exploring what might precede the form that arises, and how can we sense and describe it? I wonder, when you write 'breath', do you mean the actual physical breathing or

do you mean 'breath' in wider sense? And is the moment you describe a moment of stillness before the motion, or is it already in motion? This is so exciting.

I have experienced in aikido that sometimes there is a *ki* (chi) movement in the body or in the room that it is possible to follow, so to speak. It can feel like a breath; sometimes it is identical with the actual breathing, but it can also be separate from breathing. I have not thought about it as a movement from formlessness to form; whether it opens many possibilities or if this feeling already has decided upon a particular form. I think maybe there is an openness here.

Also in writing I find a similar situation. Sometimes I have a sense that there is something I should write; an idea on its way. But it has no form. What does it feel like? I can describe it as a movement on way. A stream I can connect to (as I write). Maybe a wave...I think of Virginia Woolf:

'A sight, an emotion, creates this wave in the mind, long before it makes words to fit it; and in writing (such is my present believe) one has to recapture this, and set this working (which has nothing apparently to do with words) and then, as it breaks and tumbles in the mind, it makes words to fit it' (Letter cited in Le Guin 2004, p. vii).

I think also such a wave can be described as a kind of breath, which I can choose to follow. By following it, it becomes stronger until it has 'breathed out' so to speak. In this case I am quite sure it comes with an openness of possibilities.

Well, that's the best way I can formulate my experience right now...

Anita: Your questions about my purpose with the breath (which I am not certain about) brought to me the following thoughts: breath is a physical action of inhalation and exhalation, yes, we breathe in and out, but I want to imagine this further... While breathing in, we open ourselves to the world; and when breathing out, the world opens for us. I would

say that breath is 'the life-giving basic flow' (Hackney 2002, p. 13). Breath is here-now-flow of movement, any kind of movement. I believe that whenever our awareness turns towards breathing, especially whilst moving, our movement and perception will seamlessly be interwoven. I believe that seamless moment is one of the spaces/places to be in the heart of improvisation. That place is a passing moment, it is a dynamic moment, without divisions to inner or outer, sooner or later, beginning or ending. Following Maxine Sheet-Johnstone:

'[...] improvisation is process through and through, a form which lives and breathes in the moving flow of its creation, a flow experienced as an ongoing present, an unbroken now [...] that is, an ongoing flow of movement from an ever-changing kinetic world of possibilities' (Sheet-Johnstone 1998, p. 485).

You mentioned *ki*, which feels like a sensual moment. So, can we think that the formless exists in between and in nature? It would be interesting if you could write your feelings about the moment when an idea is on its way.

Håkon: In order to hear the subtle whispering of that which is not yet formed, I think the moment needs to be silent. Sometimes I feel in writing and speaking a movement on the way. Just like a *ki*-movement in aikido practice; subtly felt in the stomach or in the room, moving before the whole body moves. This is the feeling of the moment where words *are about to* be born. If I try to describe this as it happens, I lose it, as I disturb the silence the words arise from. Having said this, I think it is very possible to speak about it afterwards. Then the words are needed. But I miss a proper vocabulary. It doesn't make complete sense in the grammar of language either, as grammar normally supposes that we speak of *something*. But what we try to speak of have a different nature than the things already existing. Therefore it might be a good idea to have an open relationship to language allowing poetic innovations. I fear we might end up destroying the subtlety of the breath, by trying too hard to describe or categorize it.

Anita: I agree, yes, allowing for poetic language, allowing a poetic way of moving. You wrote about the silence... as I wonder... silence... shh... insight ... sensing, hearing, feeling, no beginnings and endings, just altered silence and stillness.

I found it always very challenging to verbalize an experience, especially when it revolves around movement/dance improvisation. The more I try to articulate what is happening, the more reflective it becomes, and the more it seems to falter and fail. I feel that in that particular moment when I decide to verbalize an open movement I already close, set, put things in order rather than create space, stillness, silence...

*And now, with writing...
This feels great, this
writing...*

A new page is opened...

I have usually struggled so
much with writing... And
now... I can't stop... ~~Writing~~
~~is reflecting.~~

*I keep wondering...
in the autumn.*

Håkon: Reading the call for papers from TDPT, I got some ideas regarding how we could style a contribution to the issue. One idea is to use our correspondence here as an example. When you say, 'and now I can't stop writing' I think there may be something to report on here.

Another point is to emphasise the more poetic approach. At least for me, what makes writing worth the effort is when I actually feel the contact with what I write about. This brings me to something I am very concerned about: our language should not be treated one form representing another form, but rather something independent that springs up from the

formless impulse just like movement. It is not a matter of representing movement in writing but of writing from the same place as the movement springs forth. Or something like that.

Anita: You brought up very important issues with what I have been busy as well. Especially representation gives me difficulties, because everything done with language is representational in some way, but to break this and mess around and challenge own language is ... the thing! As Norman K. Denzin writes with Derrida (1972):

‘[...] language, both its written and spoken forms, is always inherently unstable, in flux, and made up of traces of other signs and symbolic statements. Hence there can never be a clear, unambiguous statement of anything, including an intention or a meaning’ (Denzin 2014, p. 2).

If we think that language is already form, where would it lead us?

Håkon: I don’t think we go anywhere if we believe that language is already form. It is exactly that way of thinking which leads to rigorous statements like: ‘This is beyond words’ or ‘language can’t reach this’; such thinking leads us to give up trying.

Anita: So, we need to believe that language is not set form and accept that it is in becoming. Then we can jump into its potentiality.

We agreed that in this writing, we do not try to let language represent the movement. Rather it relates to the movement by taking form from the same unformed potential, giving another voice, another view that may help us see what was, and is, going on at the point where formlessness meets form. We seek to let language show rather than tell².

² Here we agree on the role of language both for this paper and more general in training.

Anita mumbling : ...Maybe in moving and writing, or among, or living in, or being in writing and moving. Being in helps me situate myself in writing like in moving and then my speech (writing) may become poetic, not representational and not yet formed.

Returning to the question about the meaning of form. Is it like Georges Bataille says, that for academics to be happy, 'the universe has to take shape' (Bois, Y.-A. & Krauss, R. E. 1997, p. 5)? Or following Paulo Freire's (2014, p. 37) thoughts: 'Forming is needed precisely to change the great and beautiful critical mind of ours: to increase intuitive curiosity which characterizes us as human beings'. The forming could mean something like internal change that happens through curiosity, criticality and creativity. Melinda Buckwalter (2010, p. 34) elicits that 'the recognition of form is a way we make sense of the world around us'. I ask: is form something we do not accept or that we deny or just something that we reach towards without setting it beforehand?

Håkon: Form, when you ask about it I really don't know what it is. But I have approached it from the point of view of formlessness. This is a topic that Japanese philosophy has been concerned with for some time. Robert Carter writes:

'Another central image of modern Japanese philosophy, [...] is that of the form of the formless. It is also one of the most difficult notions to comprehend. Within it, however, are the seeds of understanding and comparative contrast which may help those of us brought up in the West to make sense of, and even to learn from, the Eastern emphasis on the epistemological and metaphysical priority of nothingness over being' (Carter 1997, p. 81).

Maybe it is a good idea keep using the word form to see what kind of meaning it gathers in the end, rather than trying to define it now.

Anita: I feel that we need to move together, so I suggest that we arrange a meeting to move and write.

*We met in Trondheim on a Wednesday, March 11th, and worked together a few hours every day until the 13th. The first day in a studio at the university campus: A practice of moving with a set form with contact through the back of our hands. The second day in an aikido dojo³: We stepped in and began to move together, without knowing how and what to do. We opened ourselves for an encounter starting with the same task as **the** day before. But we quickly moved out of that, because the hand contact started to feel like a restriction preventing us from following the desire to move, to explore, to flow along with what we felt emerged, we welcomed more and more surprising moments and movements. The third day back in the studio, we invited more participants to the workshop. While moving we occasionally stopped and spontaneously discussed experiences/feelings/thoughts or we grasped a pen and paper to engage in spontaneous writing. The dojo was more familiar to Håkon than to Anita which experienced it as an unsteady, strange material-floor, while the moving with open improvisation, without tasks was more familiar to Anita than to Håkon. Somehow this revolving relationship also is a kind of essence in our writing.*

~~Spelling out of t~~ **The experience of the dojo**

Anita (**writing an e-mail to Håkon, reflecting on the second day of moving and training**):

Sitting in the sun on the bench at the riverside, watching the walls of the houses in the water. Not being present and still feeling here, sitting, hearing the sirens of an ambulance. I watch the water, moving, in its entirety. I cannot ask it to stop. I feel the silence, even though the city noise. My mind moves to the dojo, remembering the sounds we listened to, or just remembering that we listened the sounds of our moving. Endless moving in my imagination, bodies, bodies moving and being moved.

³ *Dojo*, is Japanese for training hall often connected to martial arts. It is an open room with floor covered with soft mats and an altar (*Kamiza*). In the dojo we were training, there was only a bench right under the clock on the wall serving as the altar. During aikido practice we place a picture of the founder of aikido on the bench and maybe some flowers, making the altar come alive. In Japan there is always such an altar in a dojo.

Poing... second round... Fight, play, sweat, reach...touch, sigh, laugh....

Poing... Third round... Move, move, move...eyes closed, eyes opened, feeling, sensing, wondering, surprising... This feels boring, this excites me, this is interesting...hand on hand...no touch...sense...react...no we do not need that advice...we move and there it happens, everything we can imagine and everything we cannot imagine...and all between...becoming...we drop it away in the moment it begins to structure itself into a system. Institutional academic play... Crawling... children's games... no we do not want to grow up if we need to give these playful moments away! I rally for a playful training... Where practice is unformed vivid matter in our embodied actions in a variety of encounters.

I sigh, I sit down, usch! And we just moved around for a few hours. I already miss moments on the tatami... in the dojo... Playing, moving, exploring, feeling, sensing... how good it feels when moving feels good!

Formlessness

Anita: I moved unexpectedly, and with manners and habits which I ~~could not~~ ~~cannot~~ avoid even if I would like to. I wonder: is formlessness without form, or a moment of waiting the form to emerge, or just a moment of becoming? Georges Bataille proposes that:

‘[...] *formless* is not only an adjective having a giving meaning, but the term that serves to bring things down to the world, generally requiring that each things have its form’ (Bois, Y.-A.& Krauss, R. E. 1997).

He also proposes that formless is the operation that displaces the term form (Bois, Y.-A.& Krauss, R. E. 1997, 15). ~~To~~ ~~interpret~~ this idea into dance/movement improvisation, ~~where~~ I see bodies moving and being moved, with and through the human shape, ~~which is~~ already formed by movement patterns, where ‘our human capacities for perception and behavior have already been shaped’ (Gallagher 2005, p. 1). From here I ~~can~~ ~~could~~ imagine that the movement, an operation ontologically parallel with human shape, is the formless in its whole.

Håkon: Maybe we can approach this in terms of what the Japanese philosopher Nishida Kitaro describes as “basho towards nothingness” as opposed to “basho towards being” . Basho can be translated as place or a subject, a readiness for action or understanding (Yuasa 1987, p. 56; Carter 1997,p. 31). As I understand him, turning towards the formless is to be ready for any form. The formless is not the lack of form, but the potential that can be any form...turning towards not knowing, where not knowing is not exactly the lack of knowledge, but rather a potential for knowledge that is not yet there.

Writing together in a private Finnish summer cottage by the coast of the Baltic Sea: We are moving around, just moving around and moving around... No, we are not just moving around! We feel that something is about to happen!

Anita: Can I say that we feel?

Håkon: Yes, definitely we!

Anita continues: Moving is about THAT thing even if we do not know what THAT is. We jump in; in something not yet formed. We reach through space, we form the space and reach/grasp each other's movement through shapes of our bodies. I yours, you mine, I mine, you yours, ours not just anybody's, but no one's own because at each moment the movement appears I lose its ownership and its form. Is this a purpose of moving: to find out that nothing is mine?

Håkon: I really think this is worth pondering: My experience from our work is that moving between formlessness and form seems to mean a lot of things. I think about how many different kinds of impressions I got from our improvisation. Trying to find the point where form arises make me suggest that this point may be dependent on me explicitly thinking about it and reconstructing it.

At certain times it was obviously possible to identify an explicit point or moment where movement took form, when the improvisation was restricted to the hand contact. When we started to let it fly out, I am no longer sure. Sometimes form emerged by itself. Other times I had to 'invent it' or pick up an old pattern, or just try out something. There were many

moments where I stopped and waited and listened to see what kind of movement that would arrive. These were probably connected to such a point; definitively between formlessness and form. Other times we would run around like mad, chased by the emerging movement. I am not sure how to reflect upon it; it all went so fast. But also this was a way of being between formlessness and form. Yes I think so. And then there were these moments when I felt I had to interfere intentionally for some reason, for example to find a solution to the situation we had improvised ourselves into. Somehow movement also emerged from that. Was this another kind of movement?

Anita: This makes me think of a challenge that intuition poses for improvisation, and by intuition I here mean embodied thinking, imagining through the body. I believe that while improvising, it is natural to call upon all the resources of our earlier performances (from our daily lives), and, yes, moments pass quickly. Maybe this helps... according to Danielle Goldman:

‘[...] improvised dance involves literally giving shape to oneself by deciding how to move in relation to an unsteady landscape. To engage oneself in this manner, with a sense of confidence and possibility, is a powerful way to inhabit one’s body and to interact with the world’ (Goldman 2010, p. 5).

Håkon: It is not only about the body shapes and patterns, but also the formless, maybe we reach also for an unformed potential...

Conscious formlessness

Håkon: I wonder; just when I made a conscious decision about form, was I present in that moment between formlessness and form? I don’t know. The conscious decisions took place within the meeting with you, never in isolation. As such it **was** definitely also part of improvisation. And the form which was initiated consciously and intentionally also led us into movements that in the end were living themselves.

The movement lost ownership as you write. I experienced also another kind of conscious decision: This was from within the flow of movement. It was not 'I' that took control, but it was rather a way of guiding the flow without stepping out of it; a consciousness arising within the flow?

Anita: What do you mean by a consciousness? Please write through aikido, because I saw you doing the same movements and gestures when you were explaining your feeling in writing as a *ki*-movement?

Håkon: Ehh...First, when the flow stopped and I had to interfere intentionally, I experienced one kind of conscious awareness, about being there and having to make a decision. But in this second kind the flow is not broken, still I recognize a similarity in the sense of seeing the situation from outside, only it is not from outside! It is from inside the movement, still overlooking the movement so to speak. I call it consciousness because it is a self-awareness. But it is in a way the self-awareness of the movement rather than of me as a person separate from the movement... Does this make sense? In aikido there is something called *sumikiri*, it is described as the stillness in the motion, like the centre of a spin top. It is clarity in the midst of motion. It strikes me as a kind of consciousness awaking while being totally consumed in moving.

Anita: I will have to rely on my intuition here and borrow some words from Max van Manen (2014, p. 48): '[...] a nonconscious consciousness [...] seems to reside and operate directly in and through our body'. A second quote comes from Sartre (1956, p. 323): 'I am not a relation to my hand in the same utilizing attitude as I am in relation to the pen; I am my hand'.

Håkon: And then we had the talking and writing as we stopped. When the two of us worked, I think it was both more natural and more effective to talk than write when we stopped. From time to time I felt I had to discuss what just happened; right there when we still could feel the movement in our bodies. It seemed like our discussions contributed to bring the moving forward in some direction. After having talked I always felt we had something new to try out.

Anita: Also thoughts, ponderings, feelings, words and all we sensed, heard, felt and said created new tastes and colours and sensations in moving, stopping and talking together.

Håkon: Yes, and the stopping was a continuation of all this, the discussion continued our exploration, connected to the same source. When we came to the workshop with more people I felt it was very necessary to write, not to let the instant connection with the movement they had engaged in disappear in a large group with many voices. It seemed to me that the introduction and framing we gave at the beginning worked all right and that the texts people wrote somehow was tuned in the same direction.

Anita: The workshop's atmosphere was completely different than just the two of us working. Suddenly we needed to invite back exercises we had excluded and the moving practice no longer arose only from us meeting and connecting. We set a form and a plan for it, and at least for me that was a bit irritating, even though the participants found enjoyable moments therein.

Boundaries

Håkon: Reading your mail from the riverside, I think about the boundary between you and me in the movement, how it changed, disappeared in the movement that did not belong to any of us, and moved around. Maybe the whole idea of boundary and self is something to discuss more in light of this kind of movement on the edge for form? Maybe the boundary only exists in the sphere of forms, and in what is yet unformed, also the boundary is not yet formed? Maybe we are already in trouble when we think of it as something? Maybe a boundary is something we have to act out and do, so to speak? I don't know.

Anita: Interesting! I have never thought of the word 'boundary' in the relation between two movers... Maybe the boundary is resistance, a kind of surface against which we are able to lean, face, turn and hold in order to be able to sense the clarity (that you mentioned earlier) 'in the midst of motion'. I turn (my attention) to the body and to affective relationships in moving that, according to Goldman (2014), exist at the heart of dance practice. Our bodies affect and are affected, as a body disturbs another body, and movement is to mess around

and shake and shiver and challenge all the clarity that we are seeking. Despite all of the hesitation that arises while improvising, we trusted the moment and we kept moving in the dojo, me affecting and being affected by you. In accordance with Massumi's thinking:

‘When you affect something, you are at the same time opening yourself up to being affected in turn, and in slightly different way than you might have been the moment before. You have made a transition, however slight. You have stepped over the threshold. Affect is this passing of a threshold, seen from the point of view of the change in capacity’. (Zournazi 2002, 212).

I would say that every single moment moving through time and space we stepped over the threshold and made transition between formlessness and form. Continuing with Massumi:

‘[...] affect is thinking, bodily—consciously but vaguely, in the sense that is not yet thought. It is movement of thought, or a thinking movement’. (Zournazi 2002, 217)

What you mentioned earlier about experiencing different kinds of awarenesses during our improvisation, I think it relates to the double swing of affecting and being affected, where the movement returns back to movement, our bodies (beings) are slightly different while spiralling from one step to the next.

I keep returning to the dojo..., not only as a memory but as actions and perceptions I empathize all over again. Your leg passing while you were jumping over me. The colour white and sound of the movement, of trousers, the tatami ... schuee, shhuaa (the voices of movement)...

My history in dance improvisation and capoeira and your history in aikido met, discussed, connected and found the nature of moving:

~~I slide straight towards your legs and you needed to jump over me, and what surprised me, was that you ended up doing ukemi, which I was able to recognise/react to and the same time I saw your leg passing by...~~

Håkon: I remember that moment. Our movement had speeded up and I was laughing from joy. I felt that this jumping and rolling just had to happen....

Silence

Anita: Breathing together... I feel that I can learn from you a silence, a special way of silence, to not have a continuous urge to say everything immediately, to let things stay in the body until experiences are ready to be spoken and written about.

Håkon: I am so glad you liked what I said about stopping in silence, keeping it in the body and waiting to let things be expressed in their own speed. It really means much to me. Thank you.

Anita: I have found some solutions that calms this turmoil regarding silence. I suggest that this silence is a kind of place where one can prepare to welcome not knowing.

Håkon: Yes, and I experience that silence is necessary for formlessness or emptiness. Hmm. Being empty is a way that I might be ready for anything. By not preparing for anything particular it is possible to be ready for just anything. In aikido, there is a position we call *mugamae*, the position of emptiness, or the no-position. In *mugamae* I don't lift my sword or prepare for any particular attack, just stand and try to be empty. Nishida's concept of 'Basho towards nothingness' points to this. Stilling the thoughts is not easy, but it helps to de-focus the eyes, so that I don't see the sword in front of me as a sword, I just see shapes and avoid forming thoughts like: 'help that's a sword aiming for me'; thoughts tempting me to move too early. Being silent and still like that makes it possible to hear that subtle whispering of the *ki* movement about to take shape, sense it and move with it, not against it. When I embrace passivity, the movement on its way is allowed to become active. 'Manifest *yin*', the teacher may say, and the movement that is not yet formed is allowed to become yang. Stilling intention awakens intuition. The Japanese philosopher Nishida Kitaro wrote:

~~'A true absolute passivity gives rise to a true absolute dynamism' (Nishida 1987, p. 102).~~

~~What I talk about is not passive in the lazy sense. I need to be ready to act fast. It is an active passivity, as the Chinese expression *wei wu wei* (action in non-action) points at. The readiness always is some kind of potential. For example in the position of emptiness, *mugamae*, there is a readiness for bodily movement, but it is open, you don't know if your partner is coming to cut you with a sword, or give you a big hug, you don't know and the only thing you can do is wait. But there is some kind of skill, folded into the potential. A similar situation is when I put my pen down to a blank sheet of paper. The paper invites to writing. But it is blank, and I may have no idea what will come. But some form will take shape in that point where the pen meets the paper.~~

~~**Anita:** Like, while improvising I trust my intuition, I trust the moments to become, I trust that decisions will be made, I trust an act to emerge, I trust listening, perceiving, feeling, sensing... I trust that I am ready.~~

Forming the end

Håkon: I have been thinking about the conclusion to our text. It would be nice to say something about what we have achieved, or tired (**Anita:** do you mean here tried or tired?) to do.

We have been talking, moving and writing together for a long time now, but I see it all as the same meeting. What is it we have achieved through this? What have we learned or created? Trying to say it, once again I experience that the words hesitate to come. It is not easily pinned down. Maybe it is more of a potential we can tap into the next time we meet? Or bring with us to other meetings? A potential that in a way is unformed until it takes form in some situation?

Maybe an answer is in the way itself, the way we have walked rather than something we can extract from what we have written? In that case, maybe also a reader can get a sense of it by walking through this text?

Anita: I certainly feel that our writing and moving has been a way as walking through our thoughts, ponderings and learning. We have been ‘spinning’ this text by dancing, moving, writing, and learning, and the answer is still on its way, but something new always opens when you do ... what you do...when you walk (or dance, move, write) through the landscape.

I would like to emphasize how important it is to ‘move in relation to an unsteady landscape’ (Goldman 2010, 5). From this position (maybe) we could see more clearly our relation to the world and learn the importance of respecting each individuality; and thence to support each other’s interests in moving and writing. Merleau-Ponty proposes:

‘In this dialogue I am freed from myself and the other person’s thoughts are certainly his, they are not of my making, though I do grasp them the moment they come into being, or even anticipate them’ (Merleau-Ponty 1995/1962, 354)

This I connect to our steps in this collaboration. We come from such different backgrounds and our vocabulary for moving and writing springs from that situationality of our life. Our language stems from that entity/individuality: and when writing/talking/moving together it comes to pass without distrust or disbelief. We wrote together the practice we did together. I feel that this work will resonate in my studio practice as well in my pedagogical approaches. Things we could not reach with words continue forming in our bodies. This writing and moving has stroked straight to habits of doing. I hope it will keep reminding us of an importance to open space and opportunity for the entry of open-ended learning experiences (that support the individual embodying processes) in our life-long education.

One more thought inspired by your suggestion: I am tired (this emerged from the misunderstanding, because you wrote ‘tired’ and maybe you meant to write ‘tried’) ...I am tired of the necessity of explication. This takes me back to the beginning of our collaboration and this text; where I wondered about a need for words in a learning-teaching situation, in order to make myself understood. I feel that the tiredness I am pressing out here, somehow relates to a desire to do differently and to the question of how to do, without going against,

but in between(s) (like between formlessness and form). It is beautiful that there is a word, *misunderstanding*, to mitigate that demand for explication... and maybe misunderstanding is another aspect of understanding?

Håkon: Yes, I think it is understanding, only it stumbles. And this desire to understand; I feel it all the time. But I agree, it is necessary to let go of it and accept things as they are whether we understand them or not. Maybe this is also a kind of trust as you have spoken of; being in it and having the trust to wait and let be? Even here, at the end of the text I don't think we should force out some premature understanding or misunderstanding. Rather acknowledge what has not yet formed into understanding, and let the mystery be mystery.

Anita: Let the mystery be mystery... I cannot ask anyone else to see exactly as I do or to say the same things I say. I cannot ask anyone's thoughts to be similar to mine.

Håkon: I have learned that we don't say the same, and I am quite sure we don't see the same. Still, I think we have met from time to time in formlessness, and both of us held a part in the form that aroused from this meeting. Seeing the same? No. But sharing something? Yes. And I think the formless aspect of reality is the key to see this.

Anita: Maybe formlessness is another side of form and one does not exist (does not appear) without the other? ... Suddenly I imagine that 'the active passivity' (action in non-action) you used when describing the moments we were waiting for each other's actions, as if it is situated in the heart of conversation, bodies meeting... It is there where the change or transition or transformation happens. It is at the threshold... from formlessness to form. Even if I am not keen of the necessity of explication I love the moments of comprehension.⁴

Håkon: ~~The text needs to end in some way. Just like improvisation, it is always going to end in some way but I never know how before it happens.~~

⁴ **Håkon:** The text needs to end in some way. Just like improvisation, it is always going to end in some way but I never know how before it happens.

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