

EUROPEAN SEMINAR FOR KINETOGRAPHY

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MINUTE MOVEMENTS

by Christine Eckerle, 1989.
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I) Introduction

The problem of writing minute movements with the help of position signs had been discussed for many years at ICKL. The difficulties encountered arose out of the question as to how to analyse minute movements.

There are now three different approaches in this respect:

- a) the proximal centre analysis (minute movements are treated like directions);
- b) the distal centre analysis (the distal point of the moving body part is used as point of reference);
- c) the polar pin analysis (abandoning the cross of axis entirely, and using "sinking and rising" movements, and "clockwise and counter-clockwise" movements).

The error committed was to introduce the proximal centre analysis, in the way it is used in analysing directions for gestures. (Knust had already abandoned this idea in his book of 1956). In fact minute movements do not involve changes of direction.

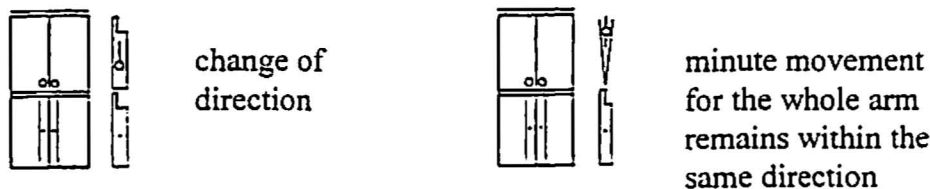
The definition of position signs states clearly that they do not describe where the active part comes from, or where it goes to. They only give information in which situation the active part is, in relation to another part of the body. [Knust Principles 1963, (German version), p.43]. With minute movements the position signs denote which relationship to the main direction the active part has established. The position signs are written above the indication for the active body part.

Minute movements involve changes of the situation, and not of direction. The moving body part acquires a new situation, which is related to the main direction (Knust Princ.1963, p.44-45).

The objection was raised some time ago at ICKL that minute movements do involve changes of directions, because if one projects them further into space, the going away ————— from the main direction will become more and more evident. However, as the movement is confined to a small distance only within our own kinesphere, this argument is without a factual foundation.

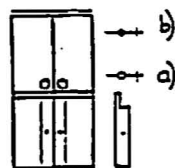
II) The three approaches to analysing minute movements

- a) The proximal centre analysis is applicable only to changes of directions, however slight they might be. The small change of direction is indicated with a position sign, written within a direction sign (ex.1.):



Thus minute movements are evidently of a smaller range than the in-between directions.

- b) The distal centre analysis. The point of reference is identical with the distal end of the moving part. It is moving away, and therefore continually changing its situation in reference to its main direction (ex.2.):



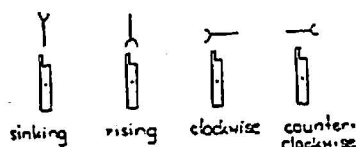
b) this indication has to be understood in reference to the situation achieved in a), therefore it is not clear how to move on: is it going back to 'forward'; or is it going to be further down.

a) the point of reference changed its direction

Thus it is impossible to remain within the main direction, as the point of reference is not stable.

- c) The Polar pins analysis. At first glance it seems to be a good and simple type of analysis. However, it is based on wrong premises. The whole idea was demonstrated to us at the ICKL Conference in 1985. With a globe as a model, the demonstrator looked at it from above. The performer, however, is standing within his kinesphere,

his "globe", with the vertical axis going through it. That means that the circles beneath the equator (the performer's waist) are going clockwise - as the performer is looking downwards. The same circling movements above the equator, however, are counter-clockwise - as he is looking upwards. This is a fact confirmed by physical experience.



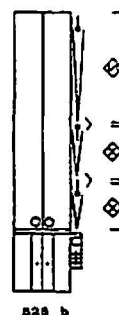
Another problem, which is not solved adequately, arises in connection with the directions "up" and "down". All movements derived from "high" are in fact sinking, and those derived from the "down" are rising. Nothing to say about the problems caused by the "clockwise" and "counter-clockwise" indications. In course of defining them, one has each time to relate to the moving body part, and its actual situation. With this the point of reference is continually changing.

III) Conclusion

From all these considerations, together with the definition given above (p.1.), the adequate way of writing minute movements is by using position signs, as movements occurring at a right angle to the main direction. This approach is consistent with this system of notation, and it is used in most cases up to date. See Knust Dictionary exs.151 a-f; 318 a-c; 354 a,b,e; 387 a,b; 419 q; 423 c; 424; 526 a; 701 b; 722 c; 724 c,d. In all these examples the position sign is used according to the definition given above.

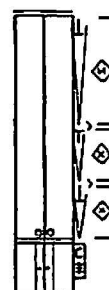
Only two examples appear in Knust Dictionary, which are not written in the way as discussed above:

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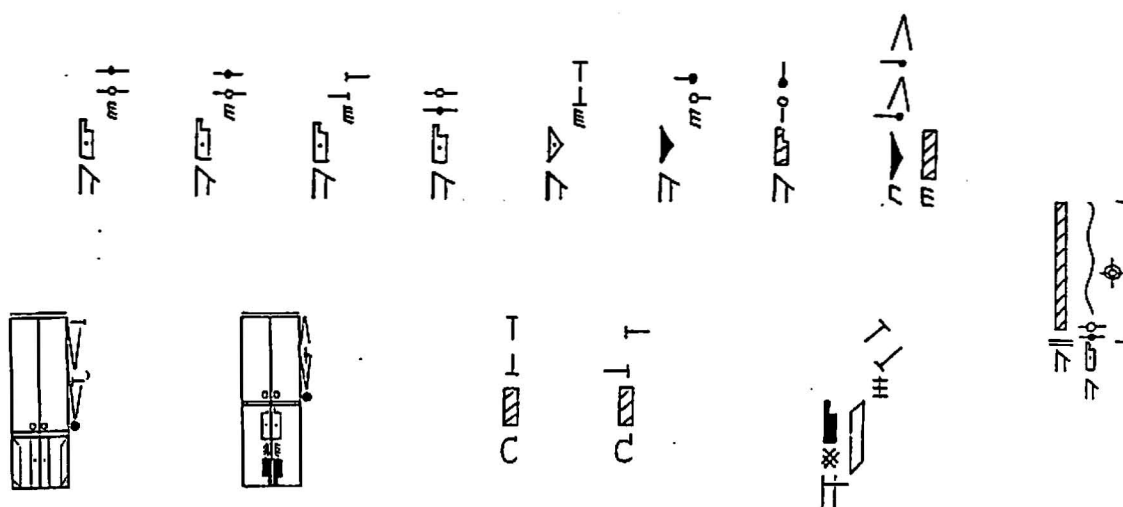
These ought to be changed into:

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526 b

Some more examples follow to illustrate that this approach works also in other instances:



The in-between directions should be identified as variants of the main directions, as the difference encountered is very small indeed.

For example:  belongs to , or  belongs to 

In using the position signs in the discussed above manner, for writing minute movements (understood as movements occurring at a right angle to the main direction of the relevant body part), and with the in-between directions included, this would cover the whole field and clear the system of many ambiguities. This approach is coherent with the whole system of analysis because it follows the definition that minute movements do not involve changes of direction. They are indeed smaller than the in-between directions.

SOURCES

The Principles and Basic Ideas of Kinetography Laban,
by Albrecht Knust, 1963.

A Dictionary of Kinetography Laban (Labanotation),
by Albrecht Knust, Plymouth:Macdonald & Evans Ltd., 1979.