

Chapter 5

Towards Dancing Histories

In the last two chapters of this thesis I take a post-positivist approach to history. My point is to suggest with the help of Elsa Puolanne's *Loitsu* and our new constructions of it that history, as an interpretation of the past, can be danced as well as written. Dance reconstructions and constructions should not be seen as attempts at reaching the original and authentic artwork, but as part of historiography and as part of discussion on the theory and philosophy of history. A new *Loitsu* is created by using the notion of intertextuality as employed by poststructuralist theorists in their attempts to disrupt notions of stable meaning and objective interpretation (Allen 2000). This opens a possibility not only for never-ending interpretations of *Loitsu*, but it also gives an opportunity to continue the creation process with Elsa's *Loitsu* or, to be more precise, with traces of it. That is why a new *Loitsu*, always written with an indefinite article in this research, is not a fixed and unchanging work but a practice-based research process that locates issues of fact and fiction in history writing in the context of dancing and performing.¹

This chapter reveals, describes and conceptualizes the process of creating new constructions of *Loitsu*. My reading and that of my students' at the Open University as well as Leena Gustavson's personal reading of texts relating to the 'old' *Loitsu* and new constructions of it are added to and interwoven with the contextual knowledge that has been discussed in the previous chapters. Firstly, the tools to analysing and interpreting Elsa's *Loitsu* and constructing new versions of it are introduced. After the methodological discussion the structure of the chapter follows loosely the research process involved in the creation of a new *Loitsu*. It shows how I chose my dancer and started to work with her as well as how we dealt with traces of *Loitsu* by imitating, describing, discussing, analysing, exploring and interpreting them. And how issues of the theory of history were assimilated as part of our work so that a coherent modern dance solo of the 1930s gradually changed into a fragmented postmodern "pas de deux" between Leena Gustavson and me, and also Elsa Puolanne and her *Loitsu* as historic intertexts of it. The written description is based on my notes and

memories of the process and my discussion with Leena Gustavson in October 2006. A viewing of the DVD *Loitsu: Danced Histories?* at this point might help the reader to follow the argument of this chapter.

HOW TO UNDERSTAND DANCE

Nowadays there are various theories and methods available for analysing, interpreting, understanding and giving meanings for dance. All of them twine round dance from different positions and emphases. The Laban analysis concentrates on analysing and describing a moving body and its qualities in space, and relationships between them with the help of its own binary oppositions in eukinetics and choreutics. Although some scholars would like to see the Laban analysis as a neutral, value-free and universal tool for movement analysis, it is linked to the perception and values of the people who have conceptualised and developed it and those who will continue to do it. In other words it is culturally and socially constructed. In the book *Dance Analysis* (1988) Janet Adshead and her colleagues emphasise the formalist and structuralist analysis of dance, and link them with theories of interpretation and evaluation. Later, in the book *Dancing Texts* (1999a), Janet Adshead-Lansdale shifts her attention more to the spectator, the 'reader' of a dance work, and his/her struggle toward the meanings of the dance in a web of various texts, with which both the work and its creators and performers as well as its spectators are intertwined. She shares de Marinis's characterization (1993) of intertextuality and applies it to dance, which is also understood as a 'text'.

In her book *Reading Dancing* (1986) Susan Foster uses semiotic theory and regards the dancing body and the dancing subject as a location of human signifying practices. Moreover, for her the dancing body is not only influenced by social forces but it is also a creation of social forces. In their book *Dance and the Performative* Valeria Preston-Dunlop and Ana Sanchez-Colberg articulate and argue for a choreological perspective that "moves beyond theories of reading dance that place either the creator, the performer or the audience in a privileged position" (2003, 11). They suggest a choreological study

as an alternative to the semiotic notion of 'intertextuality' in which the 'text' of the art work and the 'texts' in the memory of the spectator interact, ignoring intersubjective experience"

Preston-Dunlop & Sanchez-Colberg 2003, 110.

Intertextuality has been defined in various ways (Allen 2000), and it seems to me that the intersubjective experience is actually ignored in Preston-Dunlop's and Sanchez-Colberg's definition and understanding of the notion of intertextuality. Interpreting action, appreciation and understanding are not limited to an interaction between the art work and texts in the memory of spectators, as they suggest. The intertext is not a vehicle for discovering a meaning but as a structure for generating meanings (Frow 1990), and this surely emerges in the interaction between people and their experiences. Shared understanding between people is not possible if 'signifier' and 'signified' do not get their meanings in intersubjective communication.

All theories mentioned before offer me tools for analysing and interpreting *Loitsu*. Today it is obvious that

'the' theory of dance analysis or dance history, each theoretical position is but one among many interdisciplinary traces. Neither can it be assumed that any methodology used in a discussion of a particular work is automatically relevant to the analysis of other works. Theories and their accompanying methodological constructs need to be used in as subtle a series of variations as the performance practices which each time give rise to distinctive new works. It is in this methodological sense that I find the notion of an *intertextuality of theories and practices in dance research* useful.

Adshead-Lansdale 1999b, p 109.

The boundaries of dance analysis and history are overlapping and interactive. For example, on the one hand dance analysis uses existing historical knowledge and on the other hand it expands the body of knowledge in dance history by describing and interpreting dance works. Dance analysis often starts by seeing a performance or a record of it, but when dance analysis is related to a 'lost' work an analysis has to be done without seeing the performance, the complete

work, as is the case with *Loitsu*. For my research on *Loitsu* the notion of intertextuality is essential. It allows me to use multiple methodological traces and explore and construct various meanings of *Loitsu* with the help of an intertextual web. In my analysis and interpretation of Elsa's *Loitsu* and in our construction of a new *Loitsu* almost any cultural creation is 'read' as a 'text', and intertextuality "means everything, be it explicit or latent, that links one text to other texts" (Still & Worton 1990, p 22). The socio-political and cultural contexts are included here within a broad definition of a text (Still & Worton 1990). 'Text' and 'context' are not comprehended as separate entities. The text as such cannot have meanings without context, and meanings are produced by people in historical, social and institutional discourses (Lehtonen 1996). The previous two chapters of this thesis already discussed the social and cultural contexts of *Loitsu* by introducing discourses relating to being a Finn, a woman, a dancer, and a gymnast and by reflecting on the modern and the national in dance art in Finland. The context of dance can also produce potential intertexts, rather than just external contextual pieces of information surrounding it, as Hammergren (1999) suggests, and therefore it is possible to consider the various contexts of *Loitsu* as its intertexts.

Dance analysis often moves from an existing dance toward texts around it, but in this research it also moves the other way round or upside down, from possible texts around *Loitsu* toward the 'lost' or 'old' *Loitsu* as well as toward new ones. In other words, it uses these texts and contexts not only for capturing meanings of *Loitsu* but also for producing new ones. By searching, locating and introducing intertexts that might relate to Elsa's *Loitsu* I have constructed new ones with the dancer Leena Gustavson. It is evident that our production and constructions of *Loitsu* only partially contain components and meanings of Elsa's *Loitsu*, because our constructions are connected to the contemporary context, texts and conventions of choreography. However, Elsa's *Loitsu* and a new *Loitsu* also intersect, and I suggest that even the constructing process, a new *Loitsu*, can be seen as an intertextual analysis and interpretation of old ones. This analysis is presented in this thesis both with words and with movements. However, it is important to remember that there is no single position or route in the intertextual web of Elsa's *Loitsu*, following which we could get to know **the**

meaning of it; instead, there are various threads from which to construct its meanings and similarly various ways to construct a new *Loitsu*. Our process with *Loitsu* is just one among them.

TO RECONSTRUCT OR TO CONSTRUCT

Historians have not yet paid much attention to different forms of historical representation. Written documents have had a dominant position both as a mode of presenting histories as well as proofs of traditional history (Bann 1998). This has been true even in dance history, the main concern of which are visual and kinetic art forms (Layson 1994). However, during the last decades dance history has also paid attention to representing dances of the past as reconstructions.² These reconstructions and other re-makings have challenged some scholars of finding out to what extent it is possible to repeat and reconstruct the 'original' or 'authentic' dance work and how far a modern audience is able to understand it. The past and its dances have really gone, not only the factual material of dances, movements, dancers, audience but also the social, political and cultural contexts in which dances were performed, perceived and interpreted. Performances with copied and imitated steps, movements, music, designs and dresses would not bring the past to the present. Poststructuralist thinking has even questioned the whole notion of an original, authentic, stable and fixed work of art as an intention of its creator.³ I am also strongly suspicious of reconstruction but I still suggest that history, as an interpretation of the past, can be written as well as danced. We can experience our understanding and lack of understanding of dances of the past, not as reconstructions trying to represent dance according to the 'original' dances but as constructions created in the present by using material from the past as well as contemporary modes and means of dance and choreography.

In this chapter I include myself among the scholars who want to move from dance reconstruction to dance construction. It "is also a move towards the creation of choreography that actively rethinks historical sources" (Franko 1993, p 137). This is done by constructing a new *Loitsu*. Actually, I should use the plural, 'constructions', since during my research we have created, performed and recorded several constructions of *Loitsu*. The starting points for new

constructions were the traces of Elsa Puolanne's *Loitsu* and our interpretation of them, my knowledge of early modern dance and Leena's life and experience as a dancer-choreographer. Yet, what is essential is not found in a series of historically verifiable proofs of the 'original' *Loitsu*; it rather lies in the experience which constructions of *Loitsu* permit us to have. Moreover, an experience is neither true nor false: it is always a fiction, something constructed, which exists only after it has been made and not before; it is not something that is 'true', but it has been a reality.⁴

Discussions on originality and authenticity in dance are not only limited to the issues concerning correct steps and movements. They are also questions of philosophy of history and historiography. There are different ideas of what dance reconstruction is and how it is connected to the variations in the meaning of authenticity (e.g. Thomas 2003, Archer & Hodson, Kane, Briginshaw in Jordan 2000). In her book *The Body, Dance and Cultural Theory* (2003) Helen Thomas identifies four different attitudes toward authenticity and its meaning for dance reconstruction. Firstly, some reconstructions have been made in Rankean spirit - it is to dance as it was danced. These reconstructions adopt a positivistic approach to dance performance and assume that the authentic meaning of dance resides in the work and that it can be repeated by performing dance as it was. That is to replicate the intentions of the choreographer and the original movement, dresses, sets and lighting. Secondly, authenticity might be intrinsic to the performer's imaginative act, as seems to be the case with Betsy Fischer who states:

my methodology is first and foremost dancing the dances. My understanding of each dance is based on the experience of its rehearsal and performance. Repeated rehearsals and performances lead me more deeply into the heartbeat and soul of each dance. It is the desire to dance and to perform that fuels my endeavour.

Fischer 2002, p 19.

Thirdly, reconstructions can be made from a post-positivist perspective when multiple authentic meanings are located outside the work. This is the case with Hanna Järvinen (2005 [2002]) when she argues that changing meanings are not

captured by repeating the formal qualities of dance but studying the cultural context of dance. Fourthly, authenticities can be pursued with a variety of factors. That is actually the case in this thesis. The chapters 'Existing Histories' and 'My Overture: Dance in Finland 1917-1939' created dance context for Elsa Puolanne's *Loitsu*. The chapters 'Elsa Puolanne (1906-1996): A Finnish Gymnast and a Dancer', and 'Problems of the Modern and the National in Dance Art in Finland' sketched cultural meanings and discourses of genre, modern and national that can relate to *Loitsu*. Finally, this chapter traces the formal components, qualities and meanings of *Loitsu* by Elsa Puolanne and uses dancer Leena Gustavson's imaginative acts and combines them with above mentioned factors in order to create new constructions of *Loitsu*. Then it is evident, as Valerie Briginshaw states following Ankersmit's (1994) argument about written historical narrative.

The relationship between the reconstruction and the original is also constantly destabilised through the reconstruction process, which in turn generates new meanings.

Briginshaw 2000, p 230.

However, I prefer not to call the result a reconstruction I rather use the word 'construction', since it openly includes elements not only from the past but from the present as well.

DANCERS OF *LOITSU*

In 1990 when I got to know Elsa Puolanne and *Loitsu* through photographs and her memories, my first idea was indeed to reconstruct *Loitsu*, that is, to perform the 'original' *Loitsu*. I considered and imagined myself a suitable performer for it, because my gymnastics and dance background had some common features with Elsa Puolanne. My first experiences of movement were in Finnish women's gymnastics, and at the age of twenty I began long and intensive studies in modern dance. In addition, the shape of my body resembles Elsa's body, with short limbs, strong shoulders, a long flexible back and a potential for high jumps.

My thoughts on the new possible performer changed in autumn of 2001. I began to think that perhaps reconstruction was not the best way to understand

the past of dance and its meanings. Actually, in the case of *Loitsu* a reconstruction, a search for the 'original' dance was impossible. There was not even enough knowledge and material for trying that. Besides, theoretical doubts and a suspicion of reconstruction had started to enter my mind. I thought that perhaps I should create a totally new construction or constructions of *Loitsu*. They would combine and put into dialogue the past of dance in Finland, the traces of Elsa's *Loitsu* and current codes and conventions of dancing and choreographing. A new creation of *Loitsu* might be an easier way for me and contemporary spectators to understand Elsa's *Loitsu* than a reconstruction that would only imitate the structure, poses and movements of the 'original' *Loitsu*. For a new creation or construction I needed a professional dancer, and what I required from her had little to do with her dance education or physical proportions. This time my primary concern was to find a female dancer with quite a long experience of performing and certain attitudes toward the work of a dancer. She should in her own career be familiar with tensions that the women dancers of early modern dance faced.

The solo was a common and popular form in early modern dance. Dance art was seen as a dance by its performer. As Michael Huxley (1996, 1999) states, based on Martin (1933), during the 1920s and early 1930s modern dance was a dancer's attitude or point of view, not a system of making dances for dancers. Dance was "a possibility to express their very being" as Mary Wigman (1927 quoted in Sorell 1984, p 112) put it. According to the statements of Finnish dancers in *Eeva* magazine (5/1944) I would dare to suggest that steps and movements were not that important in themselves; they were usually regarded more as consequences or expressions of inner experiences and emotions.⁵ Most dancers of the early modern dance were women who made their own solo dances, which were not performed by other dancers. The concept used for making dances, was 'composition', not 'choreography'. This was the mode both in Germany and in Finland. Programme leaflets state that *Loitsu* was composed and performed by Elsa Puolanne. The performing body of modern dance in the 1920s and in the early 1930s was an experiencing and creative dancer's body, and dancers were seen more as 'people', while a shift toward more externally defined embodiment of dancers emerged later in 1930s (Huxley 1999). In

Finland, this shift happened even later. Irja Hagfors' article (1929a) can be considered as a move towards more external embodiment in modern dance as I suggest in Chapter 4 (p 143). However, some discussions on dance technique and a lack of it among the representatives of free dance in the 1950s show that the shift had not actually occurred (Makkonen 1990). It did not happen until the 1960s when American modern dance arrived in Finland.

This shift toward externally defined embodiment was also linked to the separation of the performer and the artist. As Amy Koritz' (1995) study reveals, it was set in motion by series of shifts in aesthetic ideology inspired by ideas of modernism and symbolism relating to gender and class. The diminishing of the stigma attached to women performers at the turn of the 20th century allowed the entry of middle-class women to the stage. The new freedom was simultaneously accompanied by the devaluation of the performer as an artist, and finally the performer and the dancer became an instrument for transmitting the creator's/choreographer's ideas to the audience. This was an evident tendency in the Ballets Russes de Serge Diaghilev which had become the dominant representative of elitist art. Although Koritz' study concerned dance and literature in the early years of the twentieth century in England, the situation seems to have been quite similar in Finland. The views of Raoul af Hällström presented earlier in Chapter 3 (pp 122-123) labelled Finnish dancers of free dance after the Second World War unsuitable as representatives of real modern dance art. Above of all af Hällsteröm stated they had no technical abilities for performing artistically remarkable choreographies. At the same time he even listed choreographers of real modern dance art based on ballet technique. Of course, most of them were men.

In 2001 I was looking for an elderly woman dancer who acknowledged the strata of the past of her own as a dancer and a choreographer. She should also share some attitudes that I had found central in Elsa Puolanne and her colleagues during the 1920s and 1930s, i.e. commitment, idealism, devotion and a serious attitude toward their work as dance artists. My dancer should, however, be able to make her own decisions and not try to force herself to be Elsa Puolanne or even to follow my instructions. My choice was the dancer-

choreographer Leena Gustafson (b.1954), whose drive toward the work of an artist is as modernist as that of her colleagues in the 1920s and 1930s, but whose dances nevertheless appear as postmodern.

Leena Gustafson's (née Salminen) roots in dance were in ballet. She started her dance studies at the ballet school of Iris Salin, who was among the dancers in the first Finnish *Swan Lake*. In 1964 she enrolled at the ballet school of the Finnish National Opera and graduated in 1972. Leena Gustafson was engaged to the Finnish National Ballet as early as in 1971. Her first important encounter with modern dance occurred in 1976 when Carolyn Carlson taught the Nikolais technique and choreographed for the Finnish National Ballet. According to Leena meeting with Carolyn Carlson was a decisive moment for her life and dance.

Her lively, powerful and creative personality was something I had never encountered before, and her character was somehow able to give meaning to my whole existence.

Gustafson cited in Kukkonen 2005, p 29.

In 1977 Leena left the Opera in order to concentrate on modern dance. She returned to the Opera for one more season, 1978-79, but left again in 1979 and was for a year engaged as a dancer at the Dance Theatre Rollo. By the end of the 1970s Leena Gustafson had also made acquaintance with the Graham technique as well as the Cunningham technique and his modes of choreography through the work with Ulla Koivisto and Reijo Kela. At the beginning of the 1980s Leena started her own solo career and co-operation with the visual artist Annikki Luukela. In their performances the forms of the dancing body were confronted with visual images often taken from nature. Since the 1980s Leena Gustafson has produced small-scale performances - often solos - in various venues and galleries.

I got to know Leena in 1998, when I took part in her dance and improvisation classes in Helsinki. At that time her focus and interest were in "soft forms" of dance training, such as contact improvisation and release technique, which she integrated in movement forms that she had picked up from her earlier background in ballet and modern dance. Recently Leena has moved toward

performative and partially improvisatory events that combine movement and music with voices, words and strong facial expression.

From the 1970s Leena Gustavson's musical accompanist and sometimes co-operator in her performances and dance classes has been her husband, the musician and composer Jukka Gustavson. Leena was granted the State Prize for Merit in Dance Art in 2005. The statement of the Arts Council characterises her as "an uncompromising artist, who dares to create and perform original and authentic dance that is far away from the commercial demands or prevailing modes of dance".

In autumn of 2001 I phoned Leena Gustavson to ask if she would like to take part in my research, the aim of which was to find out if we can dance and perform history by creating a new work that is based on an old one. She accepted my invitation, and we met once before our first rehearsals. In this meeting I told her about Elsa Puolanne and showed her all the dance photographs of Puolanne's dances in possession. Our common process of creating a new *Loitsu* was started.

EXTANT TRACES OF *LOITSU*

Loitsu by Elsa Puolanne has disappeared, but its appearances during the period 1933 - 1945 have left some traces. Firstly, there are material traces - programme leaflets, a musical score, photographs and contemporary reviews - which are often called documents or primary sources in the research of the past. Nevertheless, as I suggested in Chapter 1 (p 37), documents or primary sources also contain interpretative elements of the past. They are always connected to the cultural system that has produced them. "An object is imbued with patterns of meaning already in the act of becoming a document" as Lena Hammergren states, based on the work of David Nye (1983), when she argues that "primary sources cannot be perceived as 'raw' material in comparison to the assumed interpreted nature of secondary sources" (Hammergren 2004, p 22). Secondly, there are traces that *Loitsu* had left or created in the memory. That is memories of the dancer, Elsa Puolanne, and her audience. Memories are often ambiguous

and they do not necessarily match material documents. Scholarly writings of history do not often consider them as reliable as documents.

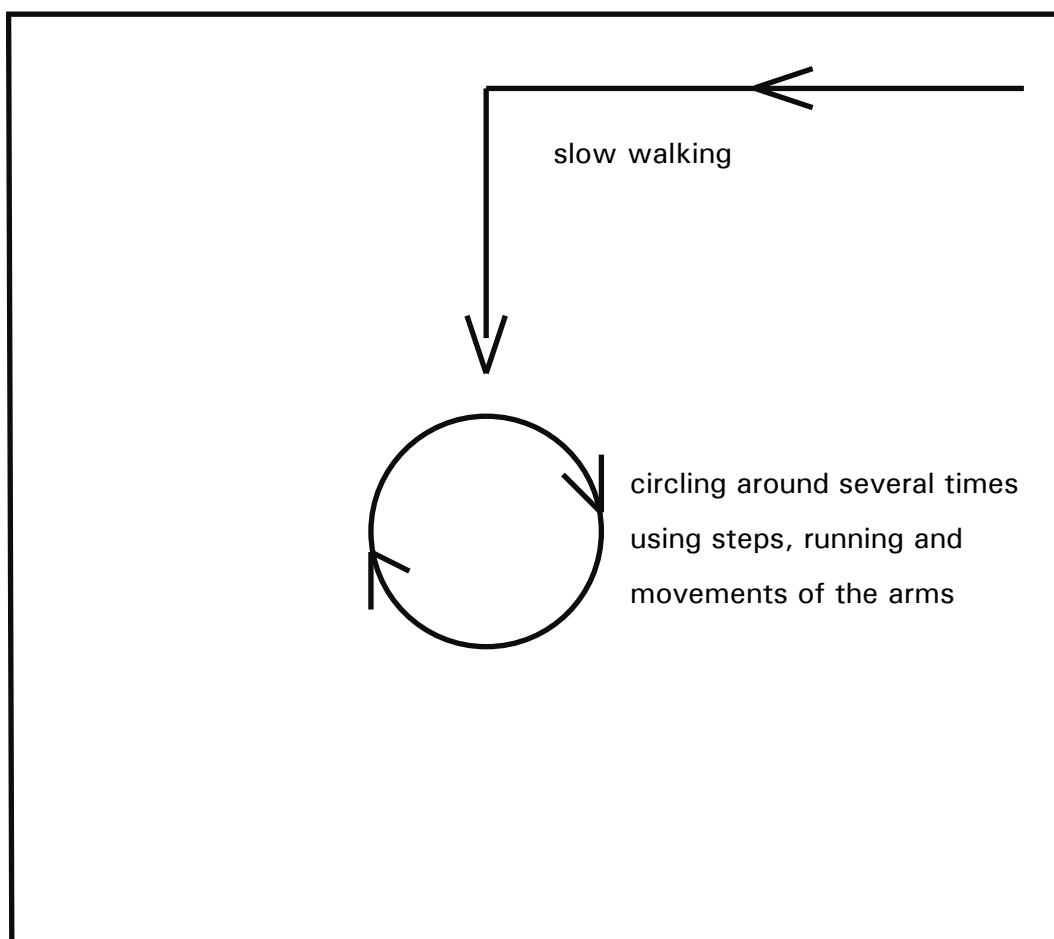
At first, I present what can be told about components of *Loitsu* on the basis of its material traces and memories of Elsa Puolanne, Mirri Karpio and Vappu Kitti. Components of dance are introduced by using the categorisation of components in *Dance Analysis: Theory and Practice* (Adshead & others 1988). Particularly the eight postures of Elsa Puolanne in the photographs of *Loitsu* are described and interpreted in detail. The truth status of any traces, documents and memories is not questioned here; all information has been accepted because my aim is to construct a new *Loitsu*, not to reconstruct the 'original'. In this case 'false' traces are equally as interesting as 'true' traces in that they have something to do with *Loitsu* and its meanings for people.

Loitsu started with a slow walk along the back wall of the stage. Movement of arms, hands and fingers dominated the dancing. One undated and unnamed review in Elsa Puolanne's scrapbook states that it "was danced by hands and arms". At the same time Elsa Puolanne was moving around a circle of light, stepping, and perhaps even running. All poses in the remaining photographs were used in her *Loitsu*. In the photographs Elsa Puolanne often stands on the balls of her feet. **Photographs 2-5** (pp 181-184) suggest that dancing took place near the wall, but Mirri Karpio (18.1. 2002) stated that all dancing with the music and with the poses of the photographs happened in the circle of light. Elsa ran with accelerated speed and her arms moved in quick spasms. The circling accelerated with the music. It included wild jumps and movements. Mostly the shape of the body was vertical, but the gaze was focused down and inward. The single vertical line of the body was often confronted by the curves of the arms, the spread fingers and the flat horizontal line of palms. Sometimes the torso was tilted lightly forwards or to the side. The body was all the time firmly grounded to the floor. Movements were tough, not violent, but full of stamina. Elsa Puolanne's naked leg appeared several times in the slit of her dress, and she hit the floor with the ball of her left foot. There was nothing soft in Elsa's dance, Mirri Karpio (22.8. 2002) said.

Elsa performed *Loitsu* on an empty stage. One white light cone formed a circle spot on the floor. A huge tambourine was used as a prop. In some performances Elsa had to perform dance without the spot of light. Mirri Karpio recounts that on a large stage, as at the Finnish National Theatre, the emptiness of space focused the sol even more on the light spot and underlined the loneliness of the solitary figure of Elsa Puolanne. She wore a long plum-coloured evening dress with narrow shoulder straps and a high slit on the left side. Her hair was cut in the style of the 1920s, but instead of a fringe, she had a parting.

The floor pattern was simple as the drawing in **Chart 11** below shows.

Chart 11 *The floor pattern of Loitsu (1933)*



The drumming of a tambourine in 5/4 time accompanied the slow walk to the circle of light, and Erkki Melartin's *Loitsu* from the Six Piano Pieces, opus 118, was played during the dance in the circle of light (Karpio 18.1. 2002). The duration of the piano piece was about one and a half minutes. It starts with the Kalevala-type melody in the 5/4 time used in many poems of the Finnish national epic, *Kalevala*. The melody is interrupted by an eruption of sounds that gradually fade away (Korhonen 1997). The music was played live.

EIGHT POSTURES IN THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF *LOITSU*

Although photography has often emphasised its essential characteristics of revelatory authenticity, Matthew Reason argues in his article 'The Revelation or Representation of Dance in Still Photography'

that it is the representational, rather than revelatory, attributes of still photography that manage to capture more of the spirit and movement of dance.

Reason 2004, p 45.

Therefore, it is possible to argue that

the photograph communicates movement beyond the moment it depicts – beyond, in a sense, what it reveals photographically to what it evokes in the mind of the viewer.

Reason 2004, p 43.

Leena Gustavson and I started our process of construction by looking at postures of Elsa Puolanne in the photographs of *Loitsu* and posing, moving, reaching and experiencing them with our bodies. As Reason suggests, the photographs refers not only to the moments they depict but to what they evoke in our minds, and not only in our minds but also in the minds of our audience, as during our *Loitsu* the audience saw also the transparencies of the photographs. Photographs evoke thoughts as well as physical experiences. When we analysed and sought with our bodies the postures of the photographs, I discovered that my physical and kinaesthetic experience of the posture and the transition to it was different when I said "I stand on my toes" or when I announced that "Elsa stands on her toes". I have my own experiences of standing on my toes, and what it means to me: an act of concentration,

balance, a risk of unbalance, determination, being taller, unnatural and so on. Often movement and dance analysis have a tendency to take a gaze as a neutral and external instrument of observation of postures and movements and description of them by using the pronouns - she, he or they. By doing so it is easy to ignore the notion that our perception is relative and constructed by the values of our dance and cultural context. On the other hand, it is also true that acceptance of the relative nature of our perception of movement offers a new tool for dance analysis; the physical and kinaesthetic experiences of the observer and describer. This tool usually remains unconscious and unused.

The pronoun "I" is used in my description of the poses of Elsa Puolanne in order to show how I reached Elsa's posture and the atmosphere of it as well as to evoke my reader's physical and kinaesthetic experiences of these postures. In this research these physical imitations and imaginary journeys are also considered possible intertexts of *Loitsu*. Intertextuality, as an exploration of texts, does not limit us to searching the texts of the time or those preceding the text but it includes also texts after it. This is our embodiment of the poses of Elsa's *Loitsu*. The eight postures of *Loitsu* are embodied and performed in a random order by Leena Gustavson in the section *Eight Postures* of the DVD.

The original order of the postures was unknown to us. There are four sets of photographs, each containing only two photos. Two sets, **Photographs 2-3** and **4-5**, were probably posed to the photographer in the studio during the 1930s, and the two other sets, **Photographs 6-7** and **8-9**, were photographed during the live performance in the 1940s.⁶ During my research and work I sorted them out on the basis of the sets and in supposed chronological order of them. The same order is used here. Leena and I also named the photographs in April of 2002 when we started to create a fictive but possible *Loitsu*. The naming of photos helped our work with them in the studio but it was also an act of interpretation introduced in Chapter 4 (pp 159-161). However, we did not share in words, photo by photo, the ways in which we had understood and experienced them. I am doing it here, but I did not articulate my experiences to Leena Gustavson during the rehearsals. Her interpretation was mainly realised through the

embodiment of the poses. Of course, my direction of her might have influenced her interpretation of the postures.

The borderline between description and interpretation is fluid. In some cases my description already contained or suggested some possible interpretations. I did not want to ignore meanings arise in descriptions, but on the following pages the text attached to each photograph concentrates on the physical embodiment of the poses. It is followed by a brief characterization of what that pose and its embodiment mean to me. The third text area contains the titles or names that the students of the Open University gave to the photographs in the spring of 2005. Among them the title in bold font is the one that we used in rehearsals and performances. The titles are not placed in a linear way, one after another, in order to give my reader the possibility to pick them up in random order that I have not decided.

photo: Helander, Puolanne Collection



I take my weight on my left leg. It bends, and my weight transfers so that only the toes of my right foot are touching the floor. My bend arms, elbows and spread fingers reach backwards, but my shoulders are turned inwards. My torso follows the change of weight to the left and bends lightly forwards. I turn my head to the right, and my chin almost touches my right shoulder. I keep my gaze down and feel the diagonal from my right foot up through my chin and head.

Photograph 2 *Loitsu: background*

It is about transition. Something is going to be left or moved away. It might be a start, but I am not sure to where, and to what direction.

	jätän tuonne I leave it there	minä lähden I leave	päästä irti! let go!
	takana behind	ehkä perhaps	pudotus falling
pois away	kallistus a tilting	tahtoisin I would like	havainto observation
	provokaatio, a provocation	tausta background	a first glance ensimmäinen silmäys
mene pois! go away!			

photo: Helander, Puolanne Collection



I stand, my feet together, parallel, the left foot more forward than the right one. I am firmly grounded to the floor. I spread out my fingers of my right hand in front of me. I twist my left arm inwards and the palm of the left hand turns to the left on my side. I spread out the fingers of my hands, and the little finger stretches forward. My left shoulder rises and touches my hair when I bend my ribs to the right. My neck is so short. I am tilting to the right and my arms are reaching forward and left. However, I keep my head straight, and my gaze is downward.

Photograph 3 *Loitsu: front*

Hands reaching, touching something that nobody, but you know. It is scary, but still you progress and go forward.

siirto removal		ehkä ei kuitenkaan perhaps not	ujo shy	
	kohtaa s/he meets			torjuu s/he rejects
	edessä front	pois away		keinunta a swing
ei liian lähelle not too close		en sittenkään not after all		
	en tahdo I do not want to		en tahdo tietää sinusta I do not want to know about you	

photo: unknown, Puolanne Collection



Photograph 4 *Loitsu:twisting*

I stand straight and I am firmly grounded, my feet together in parallel. I straighten my right arm up and twist my left arm strongly inwards at the front of my left side. I spread out all my fingers and stretch my arms and fingers to opposite directions, up and down. My upper body twists a bit to the right. I turn my head slightly to the left and focus down along my left arm.

It is a strong stretch between heaven and earth. A firmly rooted determination - I stand here and now. Nobody, nothing, can undermine it.

	sarvet horns		osoittaa to show
kierto a twist		loitsu a spell	
		kuvittaa to illustrate	vielä näytän I will show
	ukkonen thunder		minä kyllä näytän sinulle I will show you
		alistan sinut I will oppress you	
hyökkäykseen lähtö launch to attack			
			kiertäen twisting



Photograph 5 *Loitsu: branches*

I rise up on the balls of my feet, legs together. I bend my neck slightly forward, and my focus is slanting downwards. I raise my arms and design them into a tensed but balanced posture. My right arm curves over my bent head, and my muscular shoulder is up, as ordering the curve. The left arm creates another curve at the front of me, on my shoulder level. I press my palms so that my fingers spread out and curve upwards. The vertical line of my torso is opposed by the curving arms, fingers and feet.

The concentration and balance is here. I have it now. I will keep it. Is it sure?

tässä ja nyt here and now		paljas minä me naked
ja mitä se siellä and what is it doing there	oksat branches	tässä kulkee se raja the border is here
	auringonsäde a ray of sunlight	
hauras fragile	mene pois! go away!	raja a border
	katsokaa! look!	

photo: unknown, Puolanne Collection



Photograp 6 *Loitsu: you*

I rise on the very balls of my feet. My torso remains vertical, but I bend my neck forward and fix my eyes down. I am pressing or cleaving the air slowly in front of me with my curved arms and flat palms. My right hand is placed slightly above the level of the navel, and the left arm is curved besides my left ear. The level of the palm is slightly above my head.

It has been pressed down. It will stay there, I command, I have the power.

	sinä		
	you		
			kaksoisminä
			my twin
tasoitus	koonto		
to draw a level	contraction		
		menneisyys	olet vallassani
		the past	you are under my control
	puunkaltainen nainen		
	a woman as a tree		
		minä voin pakottaa sinut	
mene takaisin maan uumeniin!		I can force you	
go back under the earth!			

photo: unknown, Puolanne Collection



I am on the way up towards the balls of my feet. I look down without tilting my head. My curved arms with spread fingers are again pressing or cleaving the air in front of me. They oppose the straight vertical line of my torso. The right arm is in upper diagonal, and the left arm is in lower diagonal. I could be moving away or towards the posture in Photograph 4.

Photograph 7 *Loitsu: focus*

You will stay there, this is an order. Oh my God, she is strong and plain.

shamaani
a shaman

aamunsarastus
dawn

kohtaaminen
encounter

yhteen – erilleen
together – separated

kohdistus
focus

olen noussut
I have arisen

hiljaa, hiljaa
slowly, slowly

pysy siellä!
stay there!

tunnenko sen?
do I know it?

anna minulle aikaa
give me some time

meditaatio
meditation

photo: unknown, Puolanne Collection



I stand and look down. I sense the light on my face. I rise my left arm up and press my middle finger down so that my fingers spread out a little, and my arm curves lightly. I leave my right arm in front of me, bend my wrist and place the palm horizontally on the level of my right pelvis without locking my elbow. I feel the tension of my shoulders but I am still.

Photograph 8 *Loitsu: wait!*

I wait here still, and I have time. The latest moment is gone but the next has not yet begun.

tule näytän sinulle
come on, I show you

valta
power

loitsu 2
spell 2

voitan sinut
I will win you

leimu
a flame

tasapainoilu
balance

miksi tämä tässä ja juuri näin?
why this here and why exactly so?

malta
wait!

photo: unknown, Puolanne Collection



I step to the side on the ball of my left foot and bend my knee. My weight is on both legs, and I feel the heavy weight of my own body. The inward turn of my shoulders has rounded my back. My curved arms continue the line of the circle. I press the air with my spread fingers. The right arm stays above the left one. My head tilts towards the space between my arms. I see my own shadow in the spot of light.

Photograph 9 *Loitsu: almost*

My shadow does not exist without me. I see, it is obviously an expressive element. It is almost...

		kuuntele tarkasti! listen carefully!	
	valo light		stereotyyppi stereotype
miltei almost		peili mirror	
	kohdistus 2 focus 2		sadetanssi rain dance
	tuli fire		
karrikatyyri a caricature		uhma defiance	
	itsensä löytäminen, finding yourself	juhla celebration	transsi trance

Contemporary spectators had common interpretation of the photographs and poses of Elsa's *Loitsu*. The same words were repeated, and some words reinforced other and formed chains of meanings that were read out of the postures. Several interpretations constructed a poem or even a narrative suggesting some common meanings. For example, the following chains of words were used for the pose in **Photograph 2**,

away - I leave – I leave it there – background – behind
 go away! – tilting – let go! – falling
 first glance – observation.

They convey an impression of a personal determination to do something new and transitional. **Photograph 3** turned the situation into hesitation, perhaps not, not too close, not after all, s/he rejects, I do not want to, shy, but the atmosphere of fight or power struggle still lingers there. The presence of power can constantly be read out from various verbs used in imperative (**Photographs 2-9**) as well as direct words referring to power, such as control, force, oppression and power (**Photographs 2,4-9**). The individual pronouns 'I' and 'me' keep on appearing (**Photographs 2-9**), but the figure of the dancer also evokes meanings relating to 'primitive' Nature, such as horns, thunder, ray of sunlight, dawn, branches, woman as tree, flame and fire (**Photographs 4-9**). The unseen forces related to primitive past - typical themes of expressionism - were also read out and such interpretations as ritual, trance, shaman, a spell (**Photographs 4, 7-9**) appear. In general, the emphasis of interpretations of **Photographs 2-8** is more or less on a kind of happening or process, but the interpretations of **Photograph 9** are mostly substantives giving meaning to something that has ended or reached the goal, for example caricature, finding yourself, stereotype, focus, trance.

Elsa's *Loitsu* was about transition. It was/is located both in the past and the present. The past was the ancient past in which the forces of nature controlled human beings. The present was the present of a woman at the beginning of 2000th century fighting for her right to be herself, expressed by pronoun "I". The acts of magic rituals were not abandoned. Elsa and her contemporary dancers in Finland and all around Europe used them. The contexts of Elsa's *Loitsu* discussed in previous chapters were not just external surroundings; they

could also read out of the text, *Loitsu*. The borderline between the text and the context and visa versa is fluid and flickering, and the text and the context will never become static and fixed. Instead, there is continuous movement: the text disperses into the context and the context condenses into the text.

ONE POSSIBLE LOITSU

Photographs were the only extant visual traces that showed us short flashes of the past of *Loitsu*. In photography, at least in the photography of the 1930s and 1940s, we "can never deny that *the thing has been there*" (Barthes 1984, p 81). This means that Elsa Puolanne has taken those postures either when posing for the photographer (**Photographs 2-5**) or performing *Loitsu* in a live performance (**Photographs 6-9**). Nevertheless, the Elsa Puolanne in photographs did not move and we had to create the movement between those postures for while

it might be possible for a still image to suggest movement, it cannot reproduce it; the suggestion of movement is, therefore, unable to hold even limited claims of mechanical authenticity...The still image cannot reproduce movement and attempts to do so are instead evident transformations; it is in our ability to relate this transformation back to our concept of movement that the still photography has its power.

Reason 2004, pp 49-50.

The imitation of postures was accompanied and followed by a construction of a solo using only the components of *Loitsu* that we knew, with one exception: a short gentle breath with a spiral of the upper torso and the arms to the left after the slow walk when Leena arrives at the circle of light. It is the only movement that I choreographed in our construction. However, Leena changed the quality of the movement during the process, and on the DVD (2007) it is no more a gentle breath but rather a deep breath with a deep parallel plié.

Today I would say that as part of the process we constructed a piece that could have been *Loitsu*. We used separate 'facts', but the result was not a true or original *Loitsu* but certainly a fictive *Loitsu*. It is a 'fact' that Elsa Puolanne walked slowly along the back wall, but there are many ways of walking slowly

as I demonstrated in my description of the first moments of *Loitsu* at the beginning of this thesis. It is a 'fact' that Elsa Puolanne used the postures of the photographs, but if you have eight postures there are $1 \times 2 \times 3 \times 4 \times 5 \times 6 \times 7 \times 8 = 40\,320$ possibilities of arranging those postures!

During the process of creating a solo that could have been *Loitsu* limited ingredients of *Loitsu* were combined with the knowledge and experience that we had - I as a dance historian, a previous gymnast and a student in dance and Leena Gustavson as a dancer-choreographer. In the rehearsal studio our main principle in the construction of the *One Possible Loitsu* was to connect the movements with the rhythms, tunes and impressions of the music. Elsa Puolanne (20.2. 1992) said: "*Loitsu* was danced to the music". The first impulse to create it had come through hearing the music when the accompanist of the Esteri Suontaa School practised it in the studio of the school. Many Finnish free dancers, Elsa Puolanne among them, underlined the important role of music for the creation of dance (Puolanne 1930). Here they differed from their contemporaries in Germany, e.g. Mary Wigman and Rudolf Laban who wanted to present dance without music or without the dominance of music. Mary Wigman used percussion music for her *Hexentanz II*. Elsa Puolanne used drumming too, but more as an introduction. *Loitsu* was mainly performed to pre-existing Finnish music, and her dance used its tunes and rhythms. Our second principle of the construction was minimalism. It meant that less was better than more. Most of the filmed dances of the 1920s and early 1930s that I had seen had used very simple and plain movement ideas, often starting with a movement theme that in the case of Elsa's *Loitsu* I understood as the use of arms and hands. This is why we concentrated on arms, with legs following along - stepping or running around the circle of light.

Leena Gustavson (discussion 18.10. 2006) recalls that during the first working session in the spring of 2002 she searched for the Elsa's poses purely physically, through muscles, joints and angles of limbs, without thinking of emotions. She first tried to absorb the forms of the poses. Early modern dance has usually been characterised as "moving from inside out" (Cohen 1974, Eeva 5/1944), but in our process Leena worked the other way round - from external

poses to internal emotions. During the first rehearsal period I directed and corrected her and told her about early modern dance in Germany and Finland. Leena also asked me to show her video excerpts of the dances of the 1920s and 1930s. She was eager to see them and get some ideas of dance and dancers in the 1920s and 1930s. Leena thought it best to concentrate on physical exercises, while I was making a verbal and textual analysis and interpretation of the poses. Although she considered me as the compiler of the verbal analysis, I would say that the analysis and the interpretations of postures were both present during the rehearsals in which we imitated the poses and constructed *One Possible Loitsu*. At that time Leena and I did not consciously and systematically articulate them in the way I am doing in this thesis; instead, they dispersed and intertwined in our work and discussions.

However, when I now examine our work I am convinced that it was not only musical rhythms and minimalism guiding our work and choices but also Leena's and my interpretation of the postures and my ordering of the photographs. I mentioned above that the photographs were sorted out for the research on the basis of the supposed time of photography, but now I wonder if it all was as straightforward as that. For example, **Photographs 2** and **3** and are quite commonly interpreted as describing a start of something, and I placed them as the first photographs and decide that they would be among the first poses in *One Possible Loitsu*, after the very first pose, **twisting**. Similarly the pose **almost** referring to the end of process was placed the last **Photograph 8** and the last pose at the end of *One Possible Loitsu*.

The method for creating *One Possible Loitsu* in the studio was plain and simple. I turned the music on and asked Leena to visualise the music by performing the poses and stepping or running between them. After several hours of repetition, counting the bars and discussions, and after various versions of *One Possible Loitsu* we were both satisfied, and the following *One Possible Loitsu* was finished.⁷

During the brief silence following the drumming and slow walking Leena lifts her right hand up from behind to the posture **twisting**. During the three bars of the

Kalevala-melody she simply moves from one posture to another - **background** - **front** - **focus** - **you** - **focus** by using simple stepping and the shortest routes for arms. When the allegro and forte tunes in the fourth bar are played, Leena sharply repeats the postures **twisting** - **background** - **front**. During the bars 5, 6, 7 and 8 Leena accelerates her steps to running, and her arms grasp spasmodically the space around the circle without hitting the spot. The running ends with the posture of **branches**, kept during the bar 9. The reappearance of the allegro tunes in the bar 10 brings back the postures **background** and **twisting**. The left ball of Leena's foot hits the floor three times following the three first notes in the bar 11, and this is continued by two steps. This movement phrase is repeated three times, during the bars 11, 12 and 13. During the bars 14 - 16 Leena walks along the circle. Her hands lead the movement in the front of her, but her gaze stays on the spot. She stops her walking and press herself to the posture **almost** during the bars 17-19. Leena releases her arms during the bar 20 and presses again them slowly to the posture **almost** during the bar 21 (Appendix 19, p 247, the musical score of *Loitsu*, in which the postures and actions are marked, and the DVD section *One Possible Loitsu*).⁸

As mentioned before, there are thousands of possibilities for creating one possible *Loitsu*. However, for us our *One Possible Loitsu* become an important and necessary element of the whole process of a new *Loitsu*. In the lecture demonstrations *One Possible Loitsu* was made to look like a 'reconstruction' in order to invite or even urge people to speculate on whether this is a reconstruction or something else. At the same time we constantly deconstructed the whole idea of reconstruction with words and movements not taken from the traces of *Loitsu*.

A FRAGMENTED AND DISPERSED LOITSU

Hayden White's work, starting from *Metahistory* (1973), has drawn attention to the writing of history and its rhetorical codes and modes of narration. This has meant a shift in the modern theory of history. According to the German historian Jörn Rüsen (1998), historical culture has three dimensions: a cognitive one, a political one and an aesthetic one. Until recent decades history has mainly

been concerned with the cognitive dimension. Today the theory of history has moved beyond the cognitive dimension approaching the aesthetic one by speaking of language, poetics and rhetoric. "But aesthetics is more than only language", Jörn Rüsen continues. "It includes elements of pre-linguistic experience and communication, something as visual and sensual perception of history" (Rüsen 1998, p 158), and I would add: danced perception of history. This opens us an aesthetic experience of the past, not only by using language but also by other aesthetic means. Moreover, history can be an element in the artistic quality both in works of arts of the past and the present.

The first demonstration of our *Loitsu* was at the Summer School 'Dance in Baltic Shores' in August 2002. Leena's and my impressions and memories of it differ (discussion 18.10. 2006). Leena remembered and experienced it as a formal movement-based performance, but my memories and experience were almost opposite to that. It seemed to me that in that version Leena was trying to trace Elsa by becoming an habitu  of the expressive dance of the 1920s that she had gotten to know through videos and my stories of dance history. The demonstration at the Summer School at the Theatre Academy was loaded with several expectations and emotions. The participants of the course, Leena and I among them, had discussed for almost two weeks on the heritage of Ausdruckstanz and taken classes in Wigman, Holm and Jooss-Leeder styles, given by Betsy Fisher and Ana Sanchez-Colberg. Everyone already had some understanding and assumptions of what kind of features belonged to Ausdruckstanz. In addition, Leena had mixed feelings toward performing some excerpts from her own choreographies alongside the traces of *Loitsu*. I had decided in May 2002 that I would not choreograph movement material myself. Instead, I wanted to hybridise previously described material from Elsa's *Loitsu* and some choreographies of Leena. She accepted this but travelling in the past of her own movement material with her present personality and body made her anxious. I remember her asking: "Do we really need my material - is this not about Elsa and her *Loitsu*?" So, in the first demonstration it was not clear either for her or me what we were presenting and performing. However, the first presentation already included almost all the elements that we were to use later: I lectured and showed photographs of *Loitsu*, Leena danced a raw version of

One Possible Loitsu, and we also served a 'cocktail' mixed from the fragments of *One Possible Loitsu* and Leena's choreographies.

The charged performance at the Theatre Academy was followed by a lively debate and different suggestions of how *Loitsu* should have been choreographed, danced and performed. The preceding course combined with my lecturing before the performance perhaps opened an access to the remnants and traces of *Loitsu* and inspired participants to put up their ideas of *Loitsu*. Maria Wolska, a retired dancer, even rushed to the stage to demonstrate her own version of how *Loitsu* should end. Mirri Karpio, a colleague of Elsa Puolanne, was also present. She was stimulated by the performance to tell us some new details, i.e. the accelerated stepping and running around the circle and the spastic hands that Elsa Puolanne had in her performance. The reception of the performance at the Summer School in 2002 also assured Leena and me that

the process with *Loitsu* was not pointless. It was not only about being on the stage but also about the history of a human being. And it is not only my history, but history of someone else.

Gustavson discussion 18.10. 2006.

The confidence in each other that Leena and I had achieved during the first rehearsal period, and our common belief that our work was/is not only about Leena or me but also about Elsa and her *Loitsu* encouraged us to continue the experiment.

After the first performance of our *Loitsu* our work in the studio was interrupted for one and a half years. During the break it became clear to me that we have to be as transparent as possible concerning our way of constructing a new *Loitsu*. The following lecture demonstration (2004-2005) must reveal and openly articulate the relative and experimental nature of our work as well as the theoretical motivation behind it. The measures toward openness included showing and telling about the process of construction to the audience. The chronological order of the process was also to be used as the structure of the lecture demonstration.

Firstly, this meant that the imitation or search for Elsa's poses in the photographs, which was not done in the first demonstration, would now be shown to the audience. Leena would embody Elsa's postures one after another, and at the same time I would show the transparencies of the photographs. In rehearsals I was fascinated by Leena's vulnerable transitions, by which she searched for Elsa's postures.⁹ And it was this open search - not the postures or movements themselves - that evoked strong emotions, and connected and intersected the present of Leena, me and our audience with Elsa's past. It created an atmosphere of time travel, as one spectator commented in discussion after the lecture demonstration in the Colloquium 'A Researcher as a Player, an Artist as a Theoretician'.

Secondly, after the representation of the postures we would be ready to perform *One Possible Loitsu*. In my lecture it was now consciously recognised and articulated as *One Possible Loitsu*. However, it had a resemblance to a reconstruction, a search for the 'original' *Loitsu*, as I said before. Finally, we would move to a section called, and later entitled, *A Fragmented and Dispersed Loitsu*. In that section *One Possible Loitsu* is dispersed into fragments that alternate with fragments from Leena Gustavson's four choreographies. They are *Sade* (Rain, 1978), *Väreilyä – synesteettinen synteesi*, kohtaaus Ruskea (Vibrations – Synesthetic Synthesis, section Brown, 1988), *Avalanche* (2001) and *Nostaa ja laskea kätensä* (Raise and Put Down One's Hand, 2002). The music fragments from Melartin's original music dictate the duration of the danced fragments. When the music is played Leena performs *One Possible Loitsu* and during the silences she dances some movement sections from her own choreographies. During the silence she is free to choose which fragment of her own she performs and how she performs it, and when Melartin's music is played she has to pick up that section from the choreography of *One Possible Loitsu*. However, now she is allowed to vary the spatial directions of the movement phrases. So, *A Fragmented and Dispersed Loitsu* has a clear structure, but it is up to the dancer, Leena Gustavson, how it exists in performance.

The most prominent change emerged after the creation of these three movement-based sections. The speaking, articulating, dancing or dance-making

researcher stepped on the same stage together with the dancer, as it can be seen on the DVD. The researcher is not an external explorer but an active participant. The cooperation, not the distinction, between the researcher and the dancer as well as the collaboration and the crashes of the past and the present are constantly shared with the audience. The three lectures before the sections *Eight Postures*, *One Possible Loitsu* and *A Fragmented and Dispersed Loitsu* describe and justify the process of our research and the actions on stage. In the last section the lecturing researcher also joins the dance around the circle of light.

The 'finished' forms of a new *Loitsu*, live lecture demonstrations and the DVD, include various layers of time and understanding. When a spectator looks at the lecture demonstration or the DVD s/he lives in the present progressing linearly. In live lecture demonstrations Leena and I shared the present moments and the linearly progressive time with our audience. On the DVD this was/is not possible. Our time is not anymore the present, it is already the past. However, on the DVD we also 'are' with the audience and thus the verbs are given both in the past and present tense in the following description. The lecture demonstration and the DVD also referred/refer to the past of Elsa Puolanne and her *Loitsu* by presenting photographs, imitating her postures, discussing, imagining and making suggestions how her *Loitsu* could have been performed. However, we also pointed/point to the past of the lecture demonstration by sharing the process of construction, showing and discussing how and why we have done the performance that the audience sees. In addition, in the midst of all this Leena embodied/embodies her own past by dancing and performing her own choreographies. She also embodied/embodies and made/makes almost tangible how impossible it was/is to represent her own past by dancing. It is even more difficult to reach for Elsa's *Loitsu* that is more than seventy years old, but we still tried/try it.

I am on slippery ice when I make new constructions of *Loitsu* and include to it 'something' that I have experienced and understood from Elsa Puolanne's *Loitsu*. 'Something' that I have experienced again in some seemingly casual moments in new constructions, but which I am not able to verify or name precisely and for

sure neither in her *Loitsu* or in our new ones. There is interplay going on with the past and the present, and it happens in the present but refers also to the past. I can suggest that some moments in our performance - for example when the fading echoes of the last bars of Elsa's *Loitsu* are heard and Leena gently, but firmly, presses the air with her hands tell me some meanings of Elsa's *Loitsu*, such as her determination to be an independent individual. Or maybe it is, as the dancer-choreographer Liisa Risu (in Innanen 2004) said after the demonstration in Z-open: "Leena Gustavson is here and Elsa Puolanne in photos, but where is dance? It is not necessary in movements, but it can be the frenzy of one person." A spectator of the lecture demonstration and the DVD is able or forced to sense, feel and speculate on his/her different impressions and thoughts concerning the past and the present. The visual artist Teemu Mäki articulated his experience and thoughts as follows:

On the one hand, one watches and has feelings. On the other hand, one speculates furiously. There are the original photos, and some fragments of *Loitsu*. One must think to what extent it is possible to articulate movement with word, and how funny and interesting the situation is when movements, which were articulated in words, are tried to be embodied again. At the same time there are many processes going on, from the pure nostalgia to scholarly or pseudo-scholarly speech. And they are not in hierarchical order.

Toisaalta katsoo ja tunnelmoi ja toiselta raivokkaasti spekuloi pohtii. Tässä on nää originelli fotot ja tässä välittyy katkelmia Loitsusta. Ja tässä joutuu pohtimaan missä määrin tanssiliike on sanallistettavissa, ja mitenkä kiinnostava ja hassu tilanne se on kun sitä pyritään sanallistamisen jälkeen tuottaa lihaksi. On monta ajatusprosessia puhtaasta tunnelmoinnista, tieteelliseen tai pseudotieteelliseen – eikä hierarkisessa järjestyksessä.

Mäki in Innanen 2004.

The lecture demonstration and the DVD end in my question: "Could this fragmented and postmodern pas de deux between the dancer Leena Gustavson and the researcher Anne Makkonen with Elsa Puolanne be danced history?" Neither I nor anybody else is able to give a definite answer to this question. Our experiment with *Loitsu* has produced or presented no firm evidence that our work is danced history of *Loitsu*. My discussion and the comments refer that a

new *Loitsu* has something to do with Elsa's *Loitsu*. It gives us some experience, information, suggestions or perhaps even facts about Elsa's *Loitsu*, and it takes part in the discussion of (re)constructing dances of the past and how these issues can be dealt with in the context of recent discussion in theory of history. The creators, and hopefully also the audience of *Loitsu: Danced Histories?*, have experienced and lived through process Ankersmit describes "in historical narrative the relationship between language and reality is constantly destabilized" (1994, p 40). His view is valid also in the form of the historical performative *Loitsu: Dance Histories?*. The relationship between a new *Loitsu* and the 'original' *Loitsu* is constantly destabilised - the historical performative as historical narrative is the birthplace of meanings of the past and the present.

NOTES

¹ The process included the following rehearsal and performing sessions with Leena Gustavson:

The first session December 2001- August 2002

A work in progress was demonstrated at the Summer School *Dance in Baltic Shores* in the Theatre Academy, Helsinki. The demonstration had two separate sections. The first one was my lecture on *Loitsu* and its traces. The second and the main section was Leena's dancing that already included excerpts from her own choreographies. I was not on the stage during Leena's performance.

The second session December 2003 – February 2005

The work of this session was performed in five live lecture demonstrations.

-Z-open performance in Kaapelitehdas, Helsinki, April 2004

-Nordic Dance Researchers' Conference *Dance Heritage: Crossing Academia and Physicality*, Reykjavik, April 2004

-International Dance Day in the Theatre Academy, Helsinki, April 2004

-Research Seminar, University of Surrey, May 2004

-The Finnish Society of Aesthetic's Colloquium *A Researcher as a Player, an Artist as a Theoretician*, Helsinki, February 2005

The lecture and dance integrated as a whole and partially simultaneously activities. Both Leena and I were on the stage.

The third session August 2006 – December 2006

The slightly modified live lecture demonstration was filmed and edited for the DVD.

² For example, Renaissance and Baroque court dances by Régine Austier, Christine Bayle, Mary Skeaping, Barbara Sparti and Catherine Turocy; Oskar Schlemmer's Bauhausdances by Debra McCall; Isadora Duncan's dances by Lori Belilove; Mary Wigman's dances by Annabelle Gamson and Vaslav Nijinsky's dances by Milllicent Hodson and Kenneth Archer and Claudia Jeschke and Ann Hutchinson Guest. Especially concerning Renaissance and Baroque dances, reconstruction is linked to the Early Music movement that is interested in the use of old instruments and playing practice. The other wave of reconstruction is more concerned with recent works, which would save lost works and enlarge dance repertoire as well as help us to understand the past of dance art. In addition to reconstructions, discussion has dealt with

revivals, revisions, recreations of ballet, modern and postmodern dance and the distinctions between them. Helen Thomas's article (2004) summarises some concepts, questions and problems relating to dance reconstructions.

³ E.g. Burt (1998), Carter (1998), Franko (1993), Rubrige (1995), Thomas (2004) and Tomko (1998).

⁴ Here I borrow and modify the words of Michel Foucault. The accurate quote of Foucault is as follows:

but what is essential is not found in series of historically verifiable proofs; it rather lies in the experience which the book permits us to have. And an experience is neither true nor false: it is always a fiction, something constructed, which exists only after it has been made, not before; it isn't something that is 'true', but it has been a reality.

cited in Järvinen 2003, p 12.

⁵ Elsa Puolanne told me that she found it peculiar that someone was verifying movements for movement's sake (i27.7. 1990). For her dance was more as a "total" being and it "should wake a spectator to seek and understand the versatility of being and its meaning" (Puolanne in *Eeva* 5/1944). Many other Finnish free dancers presented similar views in *Eeva* magazine.

⁶ The environment in the photographs 2-5 refer to the studio of photography, and in the photographs 2 and 3 show even the name of the photographer Helander. Mirri Karpio told (18.1. 2002) the other photographs 6-9 were taken during a live performance.

⁷ A raw version of *One Possible Loitsu* was already part of our first demonstration in August 2002. During the second session of the work we made some changes and additions to it. It was entitled *One Possible Loitsu* and taken part of our live lecture demonstrations (2004-2005) and the DVD *Loitsu: Danced Histories?* (2007). In the thesis *One Possible Loitsu* is written italicised in order to help my reader to follow the discussion among various '*Loitsus*'. They are

1. *Loitsu* by Elsa Puolanne

2. *One Possible Loitsu*, a section in *Loitsu: Danced Histories?*

3. A new *Loitsu*, Leena's and my research process including various versions of 'finished' forms under the title *Loitsu: Danced Histories?*

4. *Loitsu: Danced Histories?*- lecture demonstrations and the DVD

⁸ In December 2006 when I read, checked and edited my thesis I realized that the posture of Photograph 8, *wait!*, was not used at all in *One Possible Loitsu*. It embarrassed me, but at the same time it was a relief to notice that one missing 'fact' does not ruin my search for the meanings of *Loitsu*.

⁹ In rehearsals I sensed that Leena enjoyed and was confident in her working with postures in the photographs, but I did not know that Leena was actually an expert in working with pictures and images. Her use of them as a tool for making dances had begun with Carolyn Carlson. This came up later when Leena told me that

Carolyn could position images into the mind of a spectator. And I started to think how she could do the image. You experienced the image physically, and it started to occupy my mind. With the help of her encouragement Carolyn's aesthetic world was transferred to the body that wanted to have it. And I wanted to experience it, without then knowing anything about time, space or form. Something started to live in me since my, desire was so strong.

Carolyn pystyi asettamaan kuvia katsojan mieleen, Ja jäin miettimään miten hän pystyi tekemään sen kuvan. Sä koet kuvan fyysisenä ja se alkoi askarruttaa minua. Hänen esteettinen maailmansa siirtyi hänen kannustamaan ruumiiseen joka halusi. Halusin kokea mitä se on, ei ajasta, tilasta, muodosta mitään hajua. Joku alkoi elää, halu oli niin kova.

Gustavson 18.10. 2006.

I was aware that a chain of dance teachers linked Leena Gustavson to Mary Wigman and to Elsa Puolanne. Carolyn Carlson was Alwin Nikolais's student, he was Hanya Holm's student and she and Elsa Puolanne studied with Mary Wigman. However, I was surprised to hear Leena's statement that echoed in my ears Mary Wigman's ([1963] in Suhonen 1991)) description of the process of how she constructed and stylised the image of the witch that started to live in her *Hexentanz*.