**Term 1 Lecture 2**

**The Material and the Immaterial**

**10.2.2021**

I will try to make a little introduction to the topic of the material and the immaterial.

This is something that is part of my culture and also the philosophy that somehow I grew up with. It's like two worlds, material and immaterial worlds.

What does this mean for us?

What does it mean in this work?

Our manifestation in this world is through the body. We exist through our material which is the body and through the action of the body.  But also, our immaterial, that is our spirit or soul manifests itself through the material.  That's why we are alive. Because if the material disappears,  the immaterial itself is no longer living or it starts to decompose itself.

So first the material: in the work and also in the body.  This means we have to start this work with the material side. That means very clear, very concrete, very touchable, very feelable. That means for you and for me as movers, it is what we have inside of the body as structures, anatomically, physiologically but also how much we are in contact with that material side of our body. How much we’re able to work with that material. All of you work in your own way, in a very unique way. But we need to simplify and get really to the source and origin of this work of how to work that material.

For example, we start to relate to muscles, when we do workout. We know that the bones are there etc. We talked about this ability to really feel all the structures and to develop our proprioception. During this work, when we work with the material aspect, we encounter everything other than the material, that is we start to meet the abstract thing of our concrete action. That means we start to feel things we can not touch. We start to perceive things that we can not see and we may even start to hear things that do not exist but somewhere it exists. Like our thoughts, our emotions, our imagination, intuition, the thing called spirit or even the soul. Whatever you may name it. Things, we cannot see, nor touch, many things that are in the “invisible”, “inaudible” and yet “feelable”. Everything that we can feel.

If we don’t have a concrete ground that we work with we can not reach all the invisible aspects of this work.

For example:

How do I work every day? Do I surrender to my habits and I just go and do my routine or I just push myself and work? What I do is usually what I’ve started to do for many years and it has helped me a lot in my own progression as a mover is that I always start lying on the floor. I put myself on the floor and I start to breathe. Then I just start to observe my relationship to gravity, how do I feel the floor? And then I go into myself. I try to connect to the time of my body. Then very slowly I observe how my body would like to work today. Then slowly, I tune into each exercise that I choose to work with. This starting point is important and to do it regularly so that our awareness and our attention can really fall into the body. This slowing down is very very important.

It's the same for the client. When I receive a client we usually start with a little tea. We have a little chat in order to tune to each other. I give the client time to speak for a short time which means that the client can actually land into herself or himself. With that I land also into that time that I create for the client. I prepare myself to receive the other person. We can call these the little rituals.

We can also call them differently, little steps, preparations. It also marks the starting point of the work. We open the time,  the space and the attention to a common work.

If you work on yourself, it is the same thing but if you work with someone, it is very important. During this time, we tune. Usually 15 minutes is enough. Of course, it's very good also to be able to surrender to whatever comes. But the work is really in the discipline and if we create this rhythm with the client then also the client starts to become aware of the process that he or she is going through. When you become aware of the process that you go through, you internalize more your experience and you start to relate to it. Rather than ‘ I go there, consume and I have an ecstasy and then I go home, forget everything’. So it is really in our hands how to create that relationship so that a process can start. This always starts with the starting point, and the material one, the very concrete one.

We said that we start from the body and we go to the immaterial. So, we have both sides in us. Imagine that you make a movement. Why do you make this movement actually? In this work that ‘why’ is very important. Because that ‘why’ brings us to the “how”. Because our aim is not to do the movement but our aim is to liberate something through the movement. So not only do we learn how the body functions and how these structures communicate physically but we also get the chance to feel where this invisible thing is that makes us move in a certain way and from where it comes from.

How do I move? How do I relate to that movement? This relationship should be something unique and magical and beautiful. Exactly there, one word exists in Turkish which comes from the Arabic which is called *muhabbet* and it is a beautiful word because it comes from the Arabic root, *houb* which means *love*. And muhabbet is actually a conversation where love flows. It is a loving conversation.

We talked about the dialogue. The dialogue is the words going between two parts in us or with each other or between the body and the spirit, whatever you choose. But this dialogue actually should be a muhabbet, a loving relationship.

I like this notion very much. It's a whole philosophy. It's actually the conversation between me and God in Sufi philosophy.  It derives from there because we are all beings of love and created through the love of God so it has this philosophical aspect to it. But I like to take it to something very simple and concrete. Whatever dialogue I will create and whatever relation I will create with myself, movement, client and with the work, my creation, there should be a *love circulation*. Because if this loving flow is not there then we cannot be nourished. And we can not heal if we need to heal. I think we all need to heal. We don’t need to be even ill in order to heal. Also to maintain the concreteness and the reality we need this loving relationship. When the muhabbet is happening, there is no judgement. There is no competition. There is no comparison. There is no good or bad. There is just a presence, a reception and a gifting, giving and that's how we start to relate.

Beliz: Compassion and respect are also two things that really flow with the client. These make the environment very secure for everyone.

Berrak: Absolutely. Let’s take this example. You are lying on the floor and you will do the ‘waves from the centre’ exercise. You're lying there. We need to somehow initiate the wave. We need to move the material. As soon as we move, we need to find out first from where I start physically. Do I start from my breathing? Because it's already in a wavy movement. Or do I start from moving my feet? Because if I move my feet then I initiate a shift of weight in my pelvis. So from there I can start. Do I start from my belly muscle that I slowly contract and I release? With this I see that my spine is starting to move and I follow.  A lot of possibilities. But it's very important to be able to be very precise in the starting point physically. Because once we start the movement very precisely then something else starts to happen. We somehow get carried away by the movement itself and exactly there where the immaterial starts, our creativity awakens. *For me, the creativity starts there when we move material and we let the immaterial respond.*

Let's take another example: The use of the centre and the periphery. We somehow all know that the centre should be connected to the periphery. As dancers as movers we've been told since ever that we need to move from the centre. But I'm convinced that it takes quite a long time to really feel this to really feel how this is actually working. Because when you watch it, if you are good enough, you can see it. You can see when the centre is sleeping and you can see when the centre is active. You will feel it also when you are doing it. We really need to go into that origin. Where does it really start, this movement? It’s a very subtle thing. It’s not about ‘I know how to move’. But I really go there and I start very gently to move. Then I can follow until where it goes. I can activate another part. I can let another part add itself to it, relate to it without losing that inner connection with the central part. Because otherwise we start to move from the limbs which is also fine but very quickly we will get exhausted. We’ll be exhausted not only energetically but also creatively. Because there is just a limited amount of movement that a body can do. There's no other way. In order to go into this immaterial aspect of the movement, we need to start really in the origin of it.

Pavla: The starting point is in the middle of the body or could it be in some energy part of the body?

Berrak: The starting point can be anywhere. The important thing is ‘are you there?’in that starting point? Is our awareness, is our presence there? For now, for this time that we started is very very important to activate the centre. For example in the four videos that you have seen, actually it's all about that. It's all about how to somehow find a way to activate your centre and relate it to the rest of the body.  Also it helps us to start simple.

That is (starting point) concerning the movement for now. Another aspect of the material side when we work with ourselves or with the clients is also how we prepare the concrete environment. For example, our body is very important. Our body emanates the care and the maintenance that we provide it with. In this work, it is not only important to be clean but also neutral.

It is how we perceive and take care of our body. The respect we show to our body physically. Do we respect our body? Do we clean it well, do we take care? How do we nourish our body? Do we give enough time for resting? How do we relate to pain? Do we listen to it? Or do we just suppress it? Are we able to show care and kindness to our body?

The way we will be taking care of the material aspect of our body, will affect how we are perceived by the client, or other people we work with. It is a manifestation of our invisible, immaterial aspects: A clean body is a manifestation of a clean energy, it feels just different when you are working with a clean and well cared body, a body that doesn’t smell, a breath that is fresh, a person who feels well with herself or himself. It will give a more neutral impression on the other person. It will be more approachable, like a body with no traces. A clear and transparent body.

But we are not so visible because it's all about creating the space so that the other person feels well enough safe enough to connect to himself or herself.

For example, I always make sure I am clean and I always clean the studio every day in the morning by myself.  When there are many clients during the day, I also clean in between the clients to neutralize the energy. Because we release a lot of energy there, a lot of invisible things that we can’t recognize. But if they accumulate we feel them.

Just like all the experiences and emotions we accumulate in our body throughout the years because of our history. We also need to clean these.  They need to go. So our body can not be a prison for our experiences. We need to clean them so that we have space for new experiences to come. Just like the place we work in. It doesn’t need to be luxurious. It just needs to be clean, neutral and welcoming. Just like you, your body, your presence.

Even the client , when they come regularly, they change. Because all this is the immaterial communication that happens between beings. And the bodies are very intelligent. They learn from each other. Because the body is very open to being under influence. So when you go into a pleasant space, you tune into that pleasantness, naturally. Because that's how we function as human beings. Because something in you will relax when you go into a nice place as well, the opposite when you go to an unpleasant place and your body will not open.  So that is easy, concrete and simple.

But it doesn’t mean we will not get dirty.. Usually there will be times when it will be very liberating to be really dirty, but this for some other time.. We will get there as we sweat through the path.

When you work with the body in a certain way so that the invisible can manifest itself through the body, something emanates from that person. If we have gone through it ourselves and you have felt that state of being where all of the sudden everything is clear, everything is easy, everything is vibrant, then you start to see it also in the other person. So you see this magic happening. Something starts to manifest itself through the movement because you are able to feel how that movement is happening. *We don't get stuck on what that movement is but what is passing through that movement.* Then you see just the beauty in that person. *When you do it yourself you can even feel something called love and that is for me a jubilation.*

I wish for you that when you do your exercises this term that you will search for this muhabbet, search for this loving relationship, or the relationship with the movement with yourself where you can let this joy or this love flow.

When you do these exercises really deeply, you may not encounter joy or happiness. You will most probably also feel very very sad. It is very normal. You will want to cry, you will feel hopeless. You’ll go deep and you will discover that there is a lot of sadness in us. Just as much as there is Joy. We cannot get rid of this. It will always be as long as we live in this body there will be as much sadness as much joy. It's like this. Sadness and joy and then the dance starts.

It is just our judgments that always say that to be feeling sad is not good but when you feel joy it's perfect. It is the same thing. They both exist in us. And we both know we have to relate to both. We have to know both. We have to recognize both. So that we can recognize ourselves. Recognize, not understand.

Our personal experience in this is crucial. Because we must not give up in rediscovering ourselves. But rediscovering ourselves everyday in a fresh way. Not in a consuming way.

In this practise, it’s not a result oriented practise. There is nowhere we're running to. We're just going deeper and deeper into ourselves. To do this through the dance is very natural. Because we all dance. Even the clients who say ‘I can not dance’ know how to dance. We just need to create the right environment but also allow the right time.

Time is very important because we are living in a very fast world. Impatience is our everyday partner, we want to find the solutions fast. *First, we need to just face the fact that there is no solution*. How many times clients have come to me and I asked them ‘what brings you here?’. They say ‘I am disconnected from myself.’ This is 90% of what I hear. ‘I want to feel myself.’ ‘I have this problem. I’ve tried everything and I am sure you’ll be able to solve it’. And I usually tell them that there is no solution that I don't even know if it's going to be good or not good.

We need to convince ourselves a lot of this. And to cut off this impatience and to open that time we need to do it consciously. That means to allow the *time of the body to work* when we are working. Not the time of our thinking, not the time of our intellect, not the time of what we know.

We don't care about what we know. We need to allow ourselves to change our perception of time and go to the time of the body not be afraid to slow down. And not be afraid to repeat and rediscover. The body has its own time. Our spirit is very fast. We can understand and see complex things in a split of a second. But when it comes to the feeling and the doing and the action, when it comes to the body, it takes a lot of time. Because the body is so complex. And it has to organize itself and convince the mind to follow it. Not the other way around.

So don’t be afraid to slow down and don’t be afraid to trust the time of the body. Time of your body and the time of the body of your client. In the sense that you may see bad things but you cannot impose these things to your client. If that person is not ready for it, it will not work. So you have to discover how to create a better environment, better exercises, more attractive playground so that person can discover something.

**Pavla**: How do you recognize if the client is ready for this?

**Berrak:** You’ll see it. Because he/she will just do it. And you will recognize it. *Once you know how it works in you, you will recognize it in the other.* If the client can’t go over a limit or something you leave it. You can leave it or you can name it in a way that your client understands and you propose the alternative ways. This is something about the feeling of how much you can allow the other person to discover. It comes back to the recognition. You first need to recognize what’s going on and take that as a starting point and then always create little ways. Also name what you recognize, especially good things. It’s always important to name the beauty that you see in others. It's the best way of giving a person the trust. It’s from that beauty that we grow. Going through the difficulties, of course. Because we have this body. We have joints, pain, long legs, short legs. Then we have gravity. Then we have our problems etc. When we work and create this environment to unite to find this jubilation, that is what we need to allow to grow more often and often.

***Term 01 Notes on lecture 02***

***10.2.2021***

Today’s starting point: A little introduction to the material and the immaterial. What it means for us, and what it means in this work. Our manifestation in this world is our body. We manifest ourselves through the body, and the action. But our spirit manifests itself in our body. We work the body, meaning, we start to relate to the muscles, to the bones, learning the relation of our weight with the gravity, and the concrete journey goes on and on. And on this journey, or a series of actions we encounter abstract things, emotions, feelings, intuition, imagination, spirit, soul…. Many things that we cannot see, nor touch, many things that are in the “invisible”, “inaudible” and yet “feelable”.

The starting point is always very important. First in the level of myself, as a practitioner: how do I start my work. Where do I start to move? What is the beginning of my movement? Where exactly does the movement originate from in my body? I always need to clarify this starting point. For example: Today by introducing this point I clarify my starting point for today's lecture. And in the following hour I will develop my lecture from this starting point.

When I move, I don't throw myself to the warm up, or start first to “just move” my body. Instead I lie down, become aware of the floor, see how my body relates to the floor at that moment, and open myself to my body and just for a second concentrate. And I make space for my body to speak to me, I know exactly how to start. I just need a little bit more time.

And it is the same for the client:

The little talk in the beginning of the Session, helps to settle down, makes the position clear for the client, and gives the facilitator a chance to tune to the client. To open the space, and help the client to concentrate on something. Having some tea helps a lot, usually 15 minutes is enough. Facilitator needs to be clear and not get lost or involved in the client's stories. Every session it is good to define the starting point and during the session to work towards a direction, because it helps the client to understand the process, and gives a feeling of continuity, which is very reassuring in the healing process. Sometimes one can also completely surrender to a moment, because the emerging situation forces us. Remember it is the client's time and space, it is for them, not for us primarily!

And we always start from the body. The body being the basic material aspect of our being. The home of everything: of life. If you are not there is no life. So you are life.

The body and the sensation: very physical and material, the matter, the structures that move and our capacity to feel the physical and physiological motion in our body. However, no matter what we do, every one of us will do it in a unique way, not only because of the physical aspect but also the immaterial aspect. How we move is part of the immaterial.

We need to really clearly feel how it works inside our body: to know for example that the centre should be connected to the periphery is something we all know, but do we also feel it? Because the next step is to lead someone else to find it and feel it.

Another simple but important fact is the activation of the centre at the same time as the limbs and peripheral areas. Or how to release and be active at the same time… How to follow the train of movement in our body? All these questions relate to the material aspect of our body.

Other secondary but just as important aspects is how we perceive and take care of our body. The respect we show to our body physically. Do we respect our body? Do we clean it well, do we take care? How do we nourish our body? Do we give enough time for resting? How do we relate to pain? Do we listen to it? Or do we just suppress it? Are we able to show care and kindness to our body?

The way we will be taking care of the material aspect of our body, will affect how we are perceived by the client, or other people we work with. It is a manifestation of our invisible, immaterial aspects: A clean body is a manifestation of a clean energy, it feels just different when you are working with a clean and well cared body, a body that doesn’t smell, a breath that is fresh, a person who feels well with herself or himself. It will give a more neutral impression on the other person. It will be more approachable, like a body with no traces. A clear and transparent body.

(But it doesn’t mean we cannot get dirty.. Usually there will be times when it will be very liberating to be really dirty, but this for some other time.. We will get there as we sweat through the path)

Talk about the preparation of the material, the space, cleaning of the space, neutralizing, welcoming. The space and our body should be ready for the other person and for the work.

When we put order into the material aspect of our work, we also have the chance to put order in the material aspect of our life. The respect for the body is also the respect one has for one’s work: for example, feeling the limits of your capacities… preparing and creating the capacity for ourself to do this work. Finding a space...being fine with asking for the right amount of money from your clients, etc. The material aspect is extremely important, because it all relates to the physical body and our material existence.

Then talk about everything that is immaterial, the invisible… the spirit, the imaginative world, our desires, the strong emotions we can encounter in us and in our client…

To be sensitive to what emanates from the bodies

Every emanation is a light for us so that we can see more clearly.

To go beyond I like it/I don’t like it…

Be curious about the ‘how’ as opposed to ‘what’

To discover how these two phenomena meet is magical. To be sensitive and patient enough to wait for that moment when we see the union of the immaterial with the material. Or better said: to feel when the immaterial manifests itself through the material. When the anima is vibrant in the body, and goes through the body.

These are very abstract things, also things I will never be able to prove. But I don’t have to convince anyone of this. Because when I see that the client feels this union, he-she speaks about it and the whole face lights up, and it is a beautiful moment. Then I can say it, so that the client can remember and become aware of this. Once you have tasted this sensation, there is no going back, you will want to taste it again and again. Even if sometimes it is very difficult.

This is a moment of recognition. To be able to recognize, when the magic happens.

But it goes through also recognizing ourselves, when we see ourselves, when we hear ourselves, to be fine with what we are and how we are, and most important to know it, and to tune with ourselves.

You will see that, the deeper you go you will encounter sadness, sadness which is there, even if you feel fine… then you will encounter joy… we always think that when we are full of joy, it is fine and when we are full of sadness it is not. Well both are connected. And we start with getting familiar with our sadness as well as with our joy.

This is the first process of self-recognition. The step to getting rid of comparing myself to others, or dropping my ideas of how I should be.

Your personal process in this is very important. It is vital that you settle down with yourself, that you really go through and liberate what is going on in you. We all need to discover what is in us and never give up in re-discovering ourselves. This process is not very easy, because we tend to jump to conclusions, or wish to understand at all costs, why we like as we are. But most of the time there is nothing to understand. There is just a process of recognition. To recognize ourselves. Self- recognition is also a first step to start to accept ourselves and to make peace with ourselves. We can even feel love, within us. And this is a jubilation.

But as movement is our way, we can and we should make the dancing as special as possible. The dance is a very "magical" practice because it comes natural to all of us. Even the ones who say they cannot dance. When put in the right mood everyone connects to something unique and special while dancing: simply moving in an organic way to music, uniting what we hear with what we do and letting our desire touch us. So, the more you dance the more you will create exercises that will inspire others to dance. Using dance as a way to connect to oneself, and not necessarily a means of expression.

Usually there is a lot of impatience that manifests itself. We want to feel the result immediately, or we are beaten by our judgement. You will encounter clients which will do something and then say, oh I don't feel it, it doesn't happen, or they will do a lot and lose themselves in their action. It is important to preserve calmness and to trust that it will happen. Because it always happens. The body has a time of its own and it does not correspond to the time of our mind, or our spirit. And whenever we hold the space for someone, we need not to be scared of slowing down the time.  we need to change the perception of time during that hour in which we work with the client. The magic happens in that suspended time, the client is able to feel that slowness, and we have to encourage the slowness to happen. We need to find the time of the body.

Practicing to see the other, just to observe, to contemplate, and be aware of what is happening in us. if we manage to go through the obstacles that the mind throws in our way during the contemplation, then we see the beauty in each one of our clients. We need to train to have the patience to see, the patience to accept what we see without judging, and also to know deep down inside that you cannot change that person, she will change when her time comes.

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When we start to face the other clearly and make the space in us to really receive and listen, we can benefit from the principle of mirroring. We see in the other what we really have inside of us. it is a gift of the immaterial side that works in us, to recognize in the other what is hidden inside of us.

There is hardly any formula. We know only that when we work concrete exercises to get in touch with the physicality of our body, we can try some technique. Therefore, we use dance improvisation as a practical tool. But we cannot make a syllabus that can be applied to everyone. As we move on we have to use all our resources to create the exercises and the path and relation with the client. We have to keep it as fresh as we can, be flexible enough to re-bound and also to pull the client out of repetitive states of being. Therefore, start collecting your exercises as you go along, create a huge bank of experiences into which you will have to dig in to fish out the ones you need for a certain client.

It taught me that there is no solution. This is usually what I tell my clients from the beginning. Because most of the clients come with a problem. Mainly that they are disconnected and that they would like to connect. Or that they want to stop the mind (which is practically impossible). They come because they have some vague questions and they need answers. They want to be better, and they have hope that I have the solution. Which of course is not true.

This makes me think about our never-ending desire to be free. We all want freedom. From my experience, I know that freedom does not exist. It is just a concept, and cannot exist. As long as we have this body and our spirit is animating this body we cannot be free. But we can work and create in order to have more and more moments of liberation. We can feel the freedom for some time and then work towards the next sensation of freedom. And who knows with time as we master this work, we shorten the distance between the moments of liberation, and we stop doing and allow ourselves to be in the being.

We need to open more the issues of listening, and creating the space for the other. How to train yourself to make one thing at a time. For example when I listen I listen, I let the weight of the words penetrate me, and I take my time to connect to my feelings and sensation and then I choose to speak. But most of the time we are already thinking what to say as soon as we start hearing the other person. And in movement it is the same, we cannot stop yourself from projecting and reacting. Instead of contemplating and then letting our body respond, when we feel it is necessary.