Usar la filosofía de Wittgenstein para eliminar conceptos erróneos en la práctica de la danza. Un enfoque cuádruple

Using Wittgenstein's Philosophy to Erase Conceptual Misconceptions in Dance Practice. A Fourfold Approach*

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Abstract

A fourfold use of Wittgenstein's later philosophy in order to tackle fundamental conceptual misconceptions in the domain of dance practice is proposed: the extension to dance of the insights of his remarks on other arts, the application to dance instructions of his method of examination of the use of language, the extension to dance of the insights of his remarks on aesthetics, and the use of some of the fundamental concepts of his later philosophy, such as "aspect-seeing", or "form of life".

In the first section, Wittgenstein's paragraphs on Shakespeare are used in order to clarify the nature of representation, his remarks on archi-

Resumen

Propongo un uso cuádruple de la filosofía madura de Wittgenstein con vistas a abordar confusiones conceptuales fundamentales en el ámbito de la práctica de la danza: extender a la danza aquellas de sus observaciones perspicaces sobre otras artes que sean relevantes, aplicar a las instrucciones de danza su análisis del uso del lenguaje, extender a la danza sus observaciones sobre la estética y usar en el contexto de la danza algunos de los conceptos fundamentales de su filosofía madura, tales como el de «ver aspectos» o el de «forma de vida».

En la primera sección, se usan los parágrafos sobre Shakespeare de Wittgenstein para clarificar

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tecture are used to shed light on the gestural character of a dance movement and to differentiate dance movement from mere bodily movement, and his remarks on music are used in order to elucidate the relationship between a movement and its so-called meaning. In the second section, an analysis looks at how language is used in the dance studio to tackle the problem of affectation in dance practice, and to propose measures to overcome this tendency, such as awareness of the use of the mirror in the studio. In the third section, Wittgenstein's understanding of aesthetic satisfaction as something that clicks is understood as a tool to fight dualistic tendencies in dance practice. The fourth section discusses how insight into Wittgenstein's concepts of "aspect-seeing" and "form of life" can contribute to superseding affectation. In dance, aspect seeing involves directing one's gaze back to the movement in question. Instead of blaming the incorrect execution of a movement on a lack of dramatic skill on the part of the dancer, an approach that reinforces the idea of dance performance as a dualistic process, it can be attributed to aspect blindness, allowing for the redirection of the dancer's attention to the movement. In this regard, it is proposed that dancers be helped to appreciate that a movement is charged with the atmosphere of a whole form of life. By understanding this relationship, it should become clear for dancers that expressivity is something that depends neither on their mental state nor on their ability to transfer the latter to the movement in question.

Keywords

la naturaleza de la representación, sus observaciones sobre arquitectura para arrojar luz sobre el carácter gestual del movimiento de danza y para diferenciar un movimiento de danza de un simple movimiento corporal. Asimismo, sus observaciones sobre música se usan con el fin de dilucidar la relación entre un movimiento y su presunto significado. En la segunda sección, analizo cómo se usa el lenguaje en el estudio de danza con vistas a afrontar el problema de la afectación en la práctica de la danza y propongo una serie de medidas con el propósito de superar esta tendencia, como, por ejemplo, tomar conciencia del uso del espejo en el estudio de danza. En la tercera sección, la comprensión de Wittgenstein de la satisfacción estética como algo que hace *click* se propone como herramienta para encarar las tendencias dualistas en la práctica de la danza. La cuarta sección enfoca cómo la familiaridad con los conceptos de Wittgenstein de «ver aspectos» y «forma de vida» puede contribuir a superar la afectación. En la danza, ver aspectos supone reencauzar la mirada, enfocando de nuevo el movimiento en cuestión. En lugar de echar la culpa de una ejecución incorrecta de un movimiento a una falta de talento dramático por parte del bailarín, idea que refuerza la imagen de la representación de danza como un proceso dualista, se podría atribuir a la ceguera para los aspectos, y así reorientar la atención del bailarín al movimiento. De igual modo, se propone que los bailarines deberían ser llevados a apreciar que un movimiento ha de participar de la atmósfera de toda una forma de vida. Tras comprender esta relación, para el bailarín debería resultar evidente que la expresividad no es algo que dependa de su estado mental, ni de su habilidad para transferir ese estado mental al movimiento en cuestión.

Palabras clave

Two fundamental concepts in Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, those of «surveyable representation» (Übersichtlichkeit*)*, and «family resemblance», remind us of the need to take differences into account. One ought not to forget that he considered using King Lear's statement «I'll teach you differences» as a motto for the *Philosophical Investigations*[1]. I shall focus on contemporary dance, in particular non-representational dance[2]. Nevertheless, my intuition is that much of what I shall say about non-representational contemporary dance also applies to other dance forms, even ones that are heavily codified, such as ritual dances or ballet. After all, grasping the content of a work of art involves being able to move within a particular world, that is, within a certain practice: being able to interact with a fellow dancer, understanding a pause, being able to interpret the implications of heavy breathing in a dance partner, knowing when to dance as if one was part of a duet and when to dance as if there was nobody else on the stage even if one is surrounded by fellow dancers, and so on.

My reasons for applying Wittgenstein's philosophy to the field of dance are to a great extent pragmatic. Unfortunately, many of what Wittgenstein characterised as philosophical tangles are in full force in contemporary dance practice. Furthermore, how the difficulties of the discipline have been addressed in philosophy has added to these problems. Wittgenstein's philosophy is rarely used in those circles, and often, when it is used, it is misinterpreted. Take the case of Anne Pakes' approach to the embodiment of the mind/body problem in dance[3]. She has used §621 of part I of the *Philosophical Investigations*[4] in order to make room for mental causation, and in particular volition. However, as it is generally accepted among Wittgenstein scholars, the aim of such paragraphs is to leave volition out of the picture[5].

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1. Maurice O'Connor Drury, "Conversations with Wittgenstein", in Rush Rhees, *Recollections of Wittgenstein*, Oxford Paperbacks, Oxford, 1984, 157.

2. For a clarification of what I mean by contemporary dance, cf. Bojana Cvejić, *Choreographing Problems. Expressive Concepts in European Contemporary Dance and Performance*, Palgrave, London, 2015, 5.

3. "Dance's Mind-Body Problem", *Dance Research*, Volume 24, Number 2, Winter 2006, 87-104.

4. «But there is one thing we shouldn't overlook: when 'I raise my arm', my arm rises. And now a problem emerges: what is left over if I subtract the fact that my arm rises from the fact that I raise my arm?» (Oxford, Blackwell, 2009).

5. Cf. John Hyman, *Action, Knowledge, and Will*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015, 16-18.

I shall propose a fourfold use of Wittgenstein's philosophy in order to tackle fundamental conceptual misconceptions in the domain of dance practice: the extension to dance of the insights of his remarks on other arts, the application to dance instructions of his method of examination of the use of language, the extension to dance of the insights of his remarks on aesthetics, and the use of some of the fundamental concepts of his later philosophy, such as «aspect-seeing», or «form of life».

1. Applying the insights of Wittgenstein's remarks on other arts to dance

Wittgenstein's paragraphs, his remarks on art, in particular about performance, can be used in order to clarify certain aspects of the practice of dance and of the discipline. Let us begin by considering one of his remarks about Shakespeare.

> Shakespeare, one might say, displays the dance of human passions. For this reason, one has to be objective, otherwise he would not so much display the dance of human passions—as perhaps talk about it. But he shows us them in a dance, not naturalistically. (I got this idea from Paul Engelmann.)[6]

There is also a reference to dance in a previous passage, in which piano playing is characterized as «a dance of human fingers»[7]. While referring to Shakespeare's plays, Wittgenstein proposes a sharp contrast between the kind of arrangement that is typical of a dance, and for that matter, of the arts, and a naturalistic display[8]. We find a similar contrast in a passage from 1930, in which he refers to a letter from Engelmann, where the latter explains to him that the enthusiasm that he feels when he rummages in a drawer full of his own manuscripts vanishes as soon as he imagines them published[9]. Right after, Wittgenstein relates this experience of Engelmann to art's capacity to place the object in question in the right perspective, and transform it into something outstanding that has nothing to do with the same object seen from a naturalistic point of view. All the difference lies in the point of view that one adopts:

> When E. looks at his writings and finds them splendid (…) he is seeing his life as God's work of art, and as such it is certainly worth contemplating (…) But only the artist can represent the individual thing so that it appears to us as a work of art; those manuscripts rightly lose their value if we con-

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6. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, Oxford, Blackwell, 2006, p. 42e (MS 162b 61r: 1939-1940).

7. Wittgenstein, *Culture and...*, *op. cit.*, 42e (MS 162b 59v: 1939-1940).

8. Wittgenstein also presents a parallelism between displaying the dance of human passions and objectivity, while opposing the latter to charlatanism. I have studied this elsewhere (Carla Carmona, "Wittgenstein, el guiño arquitectónico y el espíritu de una civilización", in *Textos fundamentales de la estética de la arquitectura*, Valencia, General de Ediciones de Arquitectura, 2015, 40-1).

9. Wittgenstein, *Culture and...*, *op. cit.*, 6e (MS 109 28: 22.8.1930).

template them singly & in any case without prejudice (…) The work of art compels us (…) to see it in the right perspective, but without art the object is a piece of nature like any other.[10]

Ultimately, it is a shift in perspective that transforms a piece of nature into something splendid. In the same remark, Wittgenstein explains that the right perspective is the eternal one, and compares it to the way of thought, «which as it were flies above the world and leaves it the way it is, contemplating it from above in its flight»[11]. The right perspective, the artist's point of view, has to do with seeing the object as if from above, from a distance, the distance that leaves room for aesthetic experience. Let us go back to the remark on Shakespeare. We are now in better place to understand what Wittgenstein means when he says that Shakespeare showed us human passions «in a dance, not naturalistically». He uses dance as a metaphor to point to representation, to the artist's rearrangement of the material. When we watch a dance performance, we literally view things from a distance, and the distance is reinforced by the denaturalized specific dynamics of the dance in question, understood as a whole. We shall further explore this idea later.

Paying attention to his remarks on art forms that seem to be more alien to dance than performance is also enlightening. For instance, Wittgenstein's insight into the gesture-like character of architecture could be applied to dance movements. In the following remarks, he writes:

Remember the impression made by good architecture, that it expresses a thought. One would like to respond to it too with a gesture.[12]

Architecture is a *gesture*. Not every purposive movement of the human body is a gesture. Just as little as every functional building is architecture.[13]

While waiting in my hotel lobby yesterday, the movements of a little girl reminded me of these quotations. In a very striking way, she moved from the sofa to the ground, gracefully, without touching the ground, once and again. I immediately asked her whether she danced, whether she took dance lessons, and her reply was as eloquent as her movements: a concise «Yes», and a perplexed look in her eyes that communicated that I, a complete stranger, had a piece of information that I should not have. However, she, or her movements, had conveyed all the information that I needed to reach such a conclusion. Her movements were (like) gestures, and I felt like *responding to them with a gesture*, with a gesture in the same language. However, given that I am not a little girl anymore, my gesture to her was in the form of the question, «Do you dance?»

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10. Wittgenstein, *Culture and..., op. cit.*, 6e-7e.
11. Wittgenstein, *Culture and..., op. cit.*, 7e.
12. Wittgenstein, *Culture and..., op. cit.*, 26e (MS 156a 25r: ca. 1932-1934).
13. Wittgenstein, *Culture and..., op. cit.*, 49e (MS 126 15r: 28.10.1942).

Like architecture, dance is also a gesture. Dance movements gesture to their public, even those that wear an inexpressive mask, or those that have been extracted from our everyday actions. Think of what is called «task performance», when the sequence of movements introduced in the dance is the consequence of fulfilling an ordinary task: that movement, in principle random and insignificant, is a gesture, precisely because it has been incorporated into the dance, and in that non-naturalistic background, it shines, in its ordinariness. However, not every purposive movement of the human body is a gesture. Therefore, not every purposive movement of the human body is a dance movement.

At first sight, it appears that Wittgenstein's remark on architecture can be easily extended to the field of dance because it seems to make more sense to compare dance and movements of the human body than architecture and movements of the human body. However, we ought not to forget that Wittgenstein is making distinctions between architecture and mere construction. Wittgenstein is saying «Look at this building, *this* is architecture», and «Do you see that building? *That* is not architecture, it is just a building». Extending Wittgenstein's remark to dance would imply to make distinctions between several things that we generally refer to by the noun «dance». A number of those actions that we call «dance» would not be dance in the way we are using the word in this context. Only those actions that have a gestural character would enter now into the domain of what we mean by «dance». By contrast, unexpectedly, it is easier to make distinctions in such a way in the case of architecture, and that tells us a great deal about the nature of dance. The fact that in dance the human body is involved, that it is fully alive, and is generally expressive, makes it hard to imagine one of those things that we ordinarily call «dance» without much hesitation as a non-dance.

Furthermore, the affinity between dance and bodily movements makes it necessary to draw a distinction that was dispensable in the case of architecture: not every purposive movement of the human body that is a gesture is dance. In fact, most of our bodily gestures do not belong to the domain of dance. Think of our repertoire of gestures of apology or pain (which, nevertheless, can be incorporated into dance, and are in fact incorporated in some forms of contemporary dance). So Wittgenstein's remarks on other arts can help us clarify what is at stake in dance practice due to both what they share with dance and how they differ from it.

Wittgenstein's remarks on music can shed light on a tangle that is all too present in dance practice, the relationship between a dance and its meaning. Let me quote the parallelism that Wittgenstein noted between the understanding of a sentence in our language and the understanding of a musical phrase:

> What we call «understanding a sentence» has, in many cases, a much greater similarity to understanding a musical theme than we might be inclined to think. But I don't mean that understanding a musical theme is more like the picture which one tends to make oneself of understanding a sentence; but rather that this picture is wrong, and that understanding a sentence is much more like what really happens when we understand a tune than at first sight appears. *For understanding a sentence, we say, points to a reality outside the sentence. Whereas one might say*

«*Understanding a sentence means getting hold of its content; and the content of the sentence is in the sentence*».[14]

Consider in particular the sentences in italics. Understanding a sentence involves getting hold of its content, and the content of the sentence is not a reality outside the sentence, in fact, it is *in* the sentence. Understanding a sentence is similar to the spontaneous understanding of a musical tune. How do we show our understanding of a tune? Often, by being able to repeat it, or just hum it. In most cases, certainly in our everyday activities (unfortunately, not so often in philosophical contexts), we do not associate the experience of understanding a tune with being able to make its content, understood as an external element, explicit.

Wittgenstein used music in order to deepen our insight into the language of propositions. Wittgenstein's remarkable musical abilities and background are well known. Presumably, these factors explain why he chose such a domain to clarify our understanding of ordinary language. However, what appeared as crystal-clear to Wittgenstein in the context of music is not self-evident to many, including music practitioners and theoreticians. In fact, many scholars have used Wittgenstein's parallelisms between music and language the other way around, with the purpose of clarifying what is at stake in the understanding of music. In his lectures on aesthetics, Wittgenstein himself did so in order to spell out the misconceptions behind the idea of the «effect» of a work of art.[15] One could also use such parallelisms in order to shed light on the nature of understanding a dance movement. In fact, if the practice of dance underwent thorough clarification, we could find in it excellent examples to elucidate the relationship between a proposition and its meaning. But like in the case of music, dance is also in need of conceptual clarification.

I shall show in the next section how a close look at how language is used in the dance studio can elucidate the relationship between understanding a dance movement and getting hold of its content.

2. On how language is used in the dance studio and conceptual misconceptions: the case of affectation

Looking at how language is used in the dance studio can clarify fundamental aspects of the practice. I shall be looking in depth at the dualistic misconception behind the phenomenon of affectation. I have already drawn attention to the tendency toward affectation in the practice of dance, and how it is related to how language is used in dance instructions[16]. Affectation

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14. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *The Blue and Brown Books*, Oxford, Blackwell, 2008, 167.

15. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1966, IV, §2, 29.

16. Carla Carmona, "More Insight into the Understanding of a Movement: Using Wittgenstein for Dance Education", in *A companion to Wittgenstein on Education: Pedagogical Investigations*, edited by Michael A. Peters, and Jeff Stickney, Springer, 2017. In the present article, I shall develop some of the ideas that I dis-

is a product of one of the most fundamental confusions in dance practice. Although the tendency is stronger among immature dance practitioners, it is all too present in the everyday of the dance studio, both at a formative and a professional level. In most cases, it is related to the problem of obtaining expressivity, to the attempt to communicate something in particular through the dance, a specific idea, or content.

Dance instructions can lead to exaggerated movements, to overdoing a movement, or a sequence of them. Wittgenstein's method of clarification through the examination of the use of language can be useful in order to address the deep-rooted dualistic misconceptions that lie behind doing in excess. Having in mind his distinction between depth and surface grammar shall prove useful[17]. Take a simple instruction such as «Dance with expression». It can be read as if there was something one ought to add to the dance, as if there was something external that ought to accompany the dance movements in question. It is the structure of the sentence that makes room for such a misconception. The verb and the noun are connected by the preposition. But when we understand dance and expression as two different things that have to be connected by the dancer, we stay at the surface of the grammar of our language. Nouns have an enchanting effect on us. In the dance instruction in question, «expression» might be understood as an entity, rather than as a quality, and even if it is understood as a quality, the structure of the sentence invites us to think of it as something independent from the dance that one ought to add to it.

One could rephrase the instruction, and say «Dance expressively». It is apparently a small change, but the fact that we do not have two nouns connected by a preposition anymore, but a verb and an adverb, might make us move in a different direction. The use of «Dance expressively» instead of «Dance with expression» shows a deeper understanding of the grammar of our language, and of the workings of dance. I have opted for «expression» because it is more general. The same would apply to instructions like «Dance with delicacy», «Dance with vigour», or «Dance with melancholy». Working at the formulation of dance instructions can have a positive and direct impact in both dance learning and execution, given that it can deepen the understanding of the fundamentals of the practice. In the dance studio, language also *goes on holiday*. Unfortunately, many of the problems that Wittgenstein attributed to philosophers are also common among non-philosophers, and have a serious impact in our practices. It is particularly so in the case of activities which require serious reflection, like in the practice of the arts.

The choreographer[18] could also deepen the dancer's understanding of the workings of dance by conceiving exercises directly related to the analysis of dance instructions. Let us take the instruction «Dance with melancholy». In order to make the dancer reflect on what it means, in particular the relation between «dance» and «melancholy», the choreographer

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cussed in that piece, study in greater detail the examples that I already used, and offer new examples and suggest 'experiments' that hopefully will further clarify the problems and provide alternative ways of looking at them.

17. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, I, §664.

18. It would also apply to the dance trainer, as in most of the examples coming.

might ask her to dance in two different ways. Firstly, the choreographer might ask her to think about melancholy, and to remember the last time that she felt melancholy herself. Next, the choreographer could ask her to dance as if she was in that particular mood. Secondly, the choreographer could ask the dancer to think about movements that remind her of melancholy, that she would consider melancholy, and to produce movements of this kind through improvisation.

«Dance» and «melancholy» are connected in a different way in each part of the experiment. In the first part, they are understood as two different things. In the second, melancholy is understood as a component of the dance. It would be interesting to expose the dancer to the result of the experiment, maybe by filming it and comparing the movements of the two parts. The results are likely to be surprising in all kinds of ways. Most probably, the movements in the first half of the experiment will be more affected. Nonetheless, there will be similarities that might indicate that the intended separation in the first part of the experiment is in fact impossible.

There are dance instructions that make explicit the intrinsic relationship that exists between understanding a dance movement and being able to perform it[19]. It is particularly the case of expressions where the use of language is figurative. Think of dance instructions such as «Break yourself», «Cut the movement», or «Lose gravity». It is the role of the choreographer to make the dancer realize that she is engaged in an experiment. There is not a unique response to that kind of instruction. The dancer has to play with the instruction, and improvise around it. Her engagement with the instruction will take place in her movements, and the quality of her movements will be a reflection of her understanding. The dance trainer ought to point out to the dancer that achieving these kinds of qualities in her movement is ultimately not a question of thinking in abstract terms about the concepts involved in the instruction and acting in consequence. Getting acquainted with a theoretical concept, like the concept of gravity, might be only a dimension of the first step to tackle a complex dance instruction. In fact, things often happen the other way around. One might acquire the concept through the practice of dance. A dancer with no clue about the concept in question might gain insight into it from how her fellow dancers play around it.

The quality in question, like the loss of gravity, has to be achieved in the movement itself. And when it does not show in the movement, it is not there, no matter how intensely the dancer is thinking about it. In the case of the expression «Lose gravity», the dancer would have to experiment with the feeling of not being brought toward the ground. She might move her arm as if she was floating, and try to extend that kind of quality to her torso even if ultimately she needs the support of the ground. One of her tactics might be to *balance* the actual force of gravity that attracts her mass to the ground with the airy quality of her movements. By emphasizing the latter, she might be able to make the spectator focus on them, so that

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19. Wittgenstein pointed out the connection between understanding and performance in relation to music in the form of a rhetorical question in §1130 of volume 1 of his *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1980): «Would it make sense to ask a composer whether one should hear a figure like *this* or like *this*; if that doesn't also mean: whether one should play it in this way or that?»

the floating quality prevails over the awareness of the principles of physics in the viewer's aesthetic experience.

Another feature supporting the non-dualistic approach to a movement and its content is that the meaning of such figurative instructions will depend to a great extent on the movements that they are referring to. The choreographer is likely to give the instruction in relation to a specific set of movements, such as a particular moment of the choreography that the dancer has to learn. In a learning context, the choreographer might use the instruction as an experiment, but the dancer is likely to relate it to the kinds of movements that she has been taught, or that she is familiar with. In each case, the dancer's interpretation will depend to a certain extent on the movements that constitute the starting basis of her experiment.

The general terms in which dance instruction takes place can be understood as an indicator of the fact that the qualities addressed by the instruction are a component of the movement and not something independent of it. Dance instruction very rarely takes place only verbally. In fact, when it consists of verbal comments, suggestions or corrections, it also includes movements, or even the trainer's execution of the dance step in question. The non-verbal aspect of dance instructions generally prevails over the verbal statements accompanying it. Wittgenstein pointed out the fundamental role that demonstratives play in conversations on aesthetic matters. Among the examples he gave, we find the following in the context of music: «You have to see it like *this*, this is how it is meant»; «When you see it like this, you see where it goes wrong»; «You have to hear these bars as an introduction»; «You must listen out from this key»; «You must phrase it like *this*»[20]. Even when the commentaries are more descriptive, they are generally accompanied by an exemplification of the movement.

One of the most common commentaries that one can expect from a choreographer is «Don't do it like *that*, do it like *this*!», or «Exactly! Like *that*!». They refer to specific movements that have been executed and/or that are executed at the time of speaking. They play a secondary role that consists in drawing the dancer's attention to a particular aspect of the movement in question. Experienced dancers might not need words in order to understand why the choreographer is executing the movement in that particular way. The qualities of the execution of the movement might be able to draw the experienced dancer's attention directly to the aspect in question that needs to be changed, developed or emphasized. In some dance practices, for instance in flamenco, it is sufficient that the trainer repeats a movement to show to the dancer that there is something to be changed, and experienced dancers are able to understand the repetition as a commentary on the movement in question. For instance, the choreographer might tap her feet in order to draw the dancer's attention to an aspect of the *zapateado*[21] that was missing in her execution. The choreographer will expect the dancer to answer back with a new execution. If the choreographer feels that the dancer has not got it yet, she will repeat the *zapateado* time and again until the dancer's execution is satisfactory. These examples support Wittgenstein's idea that language emerged from instinct

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20. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, II, §178, 213e.
21. It refers to the striking of the dancer's shoes in flamenco dance.

and not from a reasoning process, and how much he emphasized its gestural character[22]. He understood aesthetic appreciation as a clarifying domain in that respect, since our aesthetic reactions are basically gestural and still conserve much of their interjectional primitive character[23]. What appears as a simple and short-worded judgment «is a gesture accompanying a vast structure of actions not expressed by one judgment»[24].

The tendency towards affectation is related to another dualistic tangle, that of the distinction between the inner and the outer, against which Wittgenstein battled so much in his later philosophy. Overcoming affectation goes together with the realization that the inner is the outer. It is true that the result of figurative dance instructions will also depend on the dancer, that each dancer is likely to interpret it in her own unique way. Nevertheless, the fact that the dancer ought to face figurative dance instructions as experiments should not confuse us into thinking that she goes through a highly introspective private inner process. Affectation can be a result of the following misconception on the side of the dancer: «I have to make extra effort to make sure they see what it is going on inside me».

By contrast, in dance practice «the invention of interiority»[25] becomes particularly obvious. Consider how the dancer relates to the mirror. While learning a movement, or while perfecting it, the dancer stands before the mirror. Even with experienced dancers, a movement is most often acknowledged as true from the outside, after the evaluation of the image one sees in the mirror. The dancer still checks with the mirror even if she feels that she has got it right. In fact, while the dancer repeats the movement in question and examines closely her image in the mirror, one often hears in the dance studio expressions such as «I got it, I think I got it! Let me see». Not for nothing does dance training generally take place before a mirror. The pupil is taught from the very beginning to trust what she sees in the mirror more than her feeling for the accuracy of her movement. In fact, at some point dancers have to go through the stage of overcoming the kind of dependence of the mirror that usually develops as a result. For that purpose, learners are often asked to dance with their backs to the mirror, or with mirror curtains drawn. Trainers also have to remind dancers time and again not to look at their feet in the mirror, and to keep their heads and necks straight, with a forwarded and slightly low gaze (but not as low as to focus only the feet). It is worth pointing out too that professional dancers generally learn the choreography in question in the dance studio, with the help of the mirror, and only when they have mastered it do they rehearse on the stage of the theatre where the performance is going to take place. In fact, when a dancer cannot check with the mirror, she often feels the need to confirm with a fellow dancer that she has got the movement right. Thus expressions such as «Please, check! Did I get it right?» or «Does it look alright?» abound in the dance studio.

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22. Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1991, §475.
23. Wittgenstein, *Lectures and Conversations*, I §5, 2.
24. Wittgenstein, *Lectures…, op. cit.,* I §36, 11, footnote no. 2.
25. It is a term of Jean Pierre Cometti, who used it as the title of one of the chapters of his *Ludwig Wittgenstein et la philosophie de la psychologie*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2004.

All these cases are examples of the fact that the dancer uses outer evidence to make sure that she is on the right track. The relevance of this kind of evidence shows that both the distinction between the inner and the outer, and the picture of the execution of a movement as a complex internal process, are wrong and confusing. If the dancer herself examines her movements from the outside, it does not make sense to think that a competent spectator needs help to understand the workings of the movement in question, and appreciate it in a full manner. This kind of insight leaves little room for affectation. In fact, a competent spectator could be compared to the fellow dancer that confirms whether things are working out.

To a certain extent, that is part of what the public does at the end of a performance when it expresses appreciation or displeasure. In this sense, the inner of the spectator is also open to view. Wittgenstein had much to say about this. In fact, on aesthetic matters in the context of music, he did not differentiate between hearing and playing[26]. One is used to a certain kind of bodily movement from the public in a jazz concert. One could associate a particular way of shaking one's head with jazz appreciation. Dance viewers' movements also resonate with the dance, and respond sympathetically to it. The competent spectator might be sensitive to the speed of the dancer's breathing, and react to it by controlling her own breath. That kind of empathy might be behind many of her physical reactions, like when the viewer is extra-careful not to interfere in a choreographic pause, or when she smiles at the right moment as if acknowledging the dancer's fragility and the need for the halt.

The dancer does not only check with the mirror whether her movement is accurate. She also checks with the mirror whether it has the right qualities. Let us go back to the discussion about the statement «Dance with expression». The fact that the dancer has to check with the mirror whether her movement is lively enough and in the right direction, whether it has the textures that the choreographer is after, can be taken as an indicator of the fact that the expression in question does not accompany the movement, that it is in the movement, that it impregnates the movement and therefore cannot be separated from it.

3. Applying the insights of Wittgenstein's remarks on aesthetics to dance

Wittgenstein's understanding of aesthetic satisfaction as something that clicks might prove useful to fight the already mentioned dualistic tendencies in dance practice[27]. What happens before the mirror, when the dancer finally feels that she has got the movement right? One could well use Wittgenstein's image of «something clicking» in order to explain it. Suddenly, everything seems to fit together. If asked what has changed, why her movement now appears different to her, the dancer could say, «Well, it is finally the right tempo» or «It is elastic enough». If we are after a more complicated explanation, we are likely to feel disappointed. In most cases, the dancer, when asked again by a puzzled viewer, merely repeats her statement and says something like «Don't you see? Now it is "elastic" enough». We will only feel satisfied

26. Wittgenstein, *Culture and..., op. cit.*, p. 80e (MS: 137 20b: 15.2.1948).
27. Wittgenstein, *Lectures and Conversations*, III §1-7, 19.

if we are able to notice the quality that the dancer is pointing out, the one that she recognizes in the last execution of her movement and that was missing in previous executions.

«Clicking» is a metaphor. In Wittgenstein's words, «we are again and again using this simile of something clicking or fitting, when really there is nothing that clicks or that fits anything»[28]. We do not hear a click. We suddenly notice an aspect that was not there before (in the case of the dancer before the mirror who finally gets the movement) or are able to recognize an aspect that had passed unnoticed to us until that moment. In both cases, the clicking is intimately linked to the visual examination of the execution of the movement in question and indicates that the uniqueness of the movement is in the movement.

We also learn from Wittgenstein that aesthetic appreciation has more to do with correctness than with beauty. As a result, he viewed art criticism as one of the core dimensions of aesthetics[29]. One ought not to forget that a movement has a context. Its immediate context is the choreography to which it belongs. Therefore, one could speak of another kind of mirror that the dancer has to check with in order to make sure that she is on the right track regarding the movement in question. I mean the choreography as a whole. In that sense, I do not share Wittgenstein's idea that «there is nothing that fits anything». Aesthetic satisfaction, in the case of a dance practitioner, is often related to the feeling that the movement finally fits the choreography as a whole, that it shares its nature, or that it is charged with the same kind of textures. The resonance with the whole could be understood as a criterion of correctness. In many cases, getting the right movement means to produce a movement that is coherent with the movements coming in before and after it, and with the choreographic material as a whole.

The awareness of the subtle relationship between a particular movement and the rest of the choreography might be useful in order to overcome affectation. How? It means not picturing a single movement as something independent, on its own, that has to communicate its meaning at once. By contrast, the movement is understood as a part of a whole that is able to confer meaning on it. This kind of understanding has a lot to do with the insight that the «meaning» of the movement in question is intimately related to the role that the movement plays in the whole structure, or to how it relates to other movements. For instance, consider the differences in meaning of the same movement in the following two situations: a) it is part of the main sequence of movements that occurs repeatedly as a *leitmotif*, and b) it appears only once in the composition. By gaining insight into how the composition configures a movement, the dancer's tendency toward affectation is likely to decrease. It might help her dismiss the idea that conveying the meaning of the movement is a *quasi*-mystical responsibility on her shoulders.

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28. Wittgenstein, *Lectures…, op. cit.,* III §5, 19.

29. See Kjell S. Johannessen, "Wittgenstein and the Aesthetic Domain", in P. Lewis (Ed.), *Wittgenstein, Aesthetics and Philosophy*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 1990, 18-20. Cyril Barrett also pointed out how relevant Wittgenstein considered art criticism, and proposed that we approached his work as that of an art critic in his contribution to "Symposium: Wittgenstein and Problems of Objectivity in Aesthetics", *British Journal of Aesthetics* 7, no. 2 (April 1967), 159.

The consideration of the resonance between a movement and the rest of the perform-ance includes paying attention to the interpretation of one's fellow dancers. The correct-ness of one's movement will depend on how the movement is performed by one's fellow dancers. Each execution of a movement ought to relate harmoniously to the rest of its executions. In fact, the opposite can be so disturbing that choreographers often use it as a turning point in the work in question. A clearly deviated execution of a movement that has played a relevant role in the choreography could be understood as a signal that the rules of the game are changing and that things of a different order can be expected from that point onwards. This idea is supported by the fact that in the dance studio, when preparing for a performance, it is often the case that in order to make a dancer improve her execution of a movement, the choreographer asks her to observe carefully how the movement in question is executed by one of her fellow dancers.

I am aware that in contemporary dance practice there is to some degree an urge to over-come choreography. In fact, there are revered artists who do not have a choreographic lan-guage, who prefer to refer to their works as shows or performances, or are even happy to use the expression of «a total work of art». From that kind of perspective, my approach might be considered old-fashioned, and stuck in modernism. I would say that even in the cases where it does not make sense to speak in choreographic terms of a dance performance, the move-ments and actions that take place on stage still have an immediate context, that of the whole performance. In these cases too, the context will confer meaning on every little component, which will resonate with the whole too. Resonating must be broadly understood, since in this kind of context it might involve some form of dissonance. For instance, a movement might be used as a catalyst, to alter dramatically what is going on in stage at a given moment. However, such a movement can only function as a catalyst in relation to the performance as a whole. Dance movements coexist with all kinds of actions and elements from other media, such as film. (We ought not to forget that this is also the case of traditional dance forms where choreography plays a fundamental role, such as ballet.) In this kind of context, the dancer (or performer) also has to pay attention to her fellow performers.

Nevertheless, there is a wider context that this kind of approach to dance performance forces us to take into account. One of the objectives behind this kind of approach is to tran-scend the composition, in such a way that certain elements in the performance refer time and again to the outside of the piece, and transcend the immediate context of the representation, uniting performance and life. One could understand this goal as an attempt to overcome the modernist idea of the autonomy of art. We shall get back to this wider context when we approach Wittgenstein's concept of «form of life» in the next section.

4. The benefits of taking into consideration concepts such as «aspect-seeing» or «form of life».

A good number of Wittgenstein's concepts have appeared by now in this article. We shall now see how the insight into «aspect-seeing» and «form of life» could reduce the tendency toward affectation in dance practice.

The recognition of aspects in art works could be used as a tool to supersede affectation in art. In the case of dance, aspect-seeing involves directing one's gaze back to the movement in question. Instead of blaming the wrong execution of a movement on a lack of dramatic skill on the part of the dancer, an idea that reinforces the picture of dance performance as a dualistic process, one could ascribe it to aspect blindness, and redirect the dancer's attention to the movement in question. Expressions like «Notice the melancholy of the movement» aim at pointing out to the dancer a particular aspect of the movement in question that has passed unnoticed to her, and that is missing in her execution of the movement. In dance, expressions related to aspect-seeing are often accompanied by the execution of the movement. The choreographer might ask a dancer whose execution is right to perform the movement and say to the dancers who still have to refine theirs something like «See? Notice the melancholy!». She might add tips of the following sort: «Notice the tempo». These expressions imply that the right execution of the movement needs further understanding *of the movement*, that the aspect missing in the poor execution is *in* the movement when it is fully understood. In this context, understanding involves the closer observation and a thorough examination of the movement in question, and not getting right a mental picture of the movement.

Likewise, the concept of «form of life»[30] proves useful in order to minimise, and ultimately eliminate, affectation in dance practice. One ought to communicate to the dancer that a movement is charged with the atmosphere of a whole form of life. The penetration into the concept ought to make crystal clear for the dancer that such thing is not something that merely depends on her mental state, and her ability to transfer the latter to the movement in question. According to Wittgenstein, it was impossible to describe aesthetic appreciation, because «to describe what it consists in we would have to describe the whole environment»[31]. By «the whole environment», he did not mean the immediate context in which the aesthetic appreciation in question took place, not even the complete context of the art in question, or the entire art world. What he had in mind was a whole culture:

> The words we call expressions of aesthetic judgement play a very complicated role, but a very definite role, in what we call a culture of a period. To describe their use or to describe what you mean by a cultured taste, you have to describe a whole culture. What we now call a cultured taste perhaps didn't exist in the Middle Ages. An entirely different game is played in different ages.[32]

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30. For an update of the recent discussion on Wittgenstein's concept of form of life, cf. the volume of the *Nordic Wittgenstein Review dedicated to the concept*: Moyal-Sharrock, Danièle (ed.), *Form of Life*, *Nordic Wittgenstein Review*, Special Issue, 2015. The volume can be accessed online at: https://www.nordicwittgensteinreview.com/article/view/3362/pdf [accessed January 10 2019]. I have recently presented my own interpretation of the concept in the context of architecture, cf. "Toward Intercultural Architectural Practices Able to Map Cultural Diversity: Making Use of Wittgenstein's Tools to Enhance Intercultural Dialogue", Ápeiron. *Estudios de Filosofía* 10, 2019, 91-104, pp. 96-98.

31. Wittgenstein, *Lectures and Conversations*, I §20, 7.

32. Wittgenstein, *Lectures and Conversations*, I §25, 8.

Immediately after, Wittgenstein introduced the concept of «language-game», and he stated, «what belongs to a language-game is a whole culture»[33]. The idea is that a whole culture is behind our aesthetic judgements. Therefore, in order to describe how they are used, what they mean, one ought to engage in an endless exercise of description. Wittgenstein understood a culture as a way of life, the characteristic features of everyday existence shared by a people in a place and time. The language games that are part of our aesthetic practices, and language games in general, have as a background an integrated pattern of shared attitudes, values, goals and practices. For instance, appreciating the tailoring of a suit is related to understanding when a suit is to be used, for what purpose and in what context. Also, one has to consider the kinds of activities one is supposed to perform while wearing such a suit, both the ones that are directly related to the use of the suit (such as attending a meeting and sitting for a period of time around a table, or attending a wedding, where apart from sitting down and eating, one might also dance, or chat with other guests while standing up), and those that are in the margin (such as getting into a taxi in order to reach the place in question, or how often one will have to take it to the dry cleaner's). It also means to understand the social and economic values associated to certain fabrics and colours, and so on.

If that is true of our aesthetic judgements, what about art works? There are authors that have extended to art Wittgenstein's concept of a language-game. Garry Hagberg is probably the one that has pursued the idea furthest and most consistently[34]. Behind such an application lies the understanding that art is a language[35]. One could speak of the language-game developed by an artist in his mature oeuvre, for instance, of Schiele's language-game from 1910 onwards, or of the different language-games that make up Picasso's oeuvre[36]. Although I believe that such an extension of the concept of «language game» can be insightful, for example in the context of modernism, we do not need to exaggerate the parallelism between art and language to show that in order to understand Picasso's *Meninas* one has to understand a whole culture.

There is a more basic notion at the core of Wittgenstein's language-games, and that is «game». Observe that when talking about different historical ages he says that «entirely different games» are played in them. In fact, language constitutes only a dimension of such games. One could understand the overall game of a culture as a web consisting in the most varied and numerous games. Many of these games are non-propositional, and in those that involve language, this is a component that is interwoven with other components. The idea

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33. Wittgenstein, *Lectures..., op. cit.*, I §26, 8.

34. See Garry Hagberg, *Meaning and Interpretation: Wittgenstein, Henry James, and Literary Knowledge*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1994, pp. 9–44.

35. Garry Hagberg, *Art as Language: Wittgenstein, Meaning, and Aesthetic Theory*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995.

36. The many different games developed by Picasso show that rules and limits do not imply monotony, but coherence, consistency. In fact, the creative process is in continuous transformation. Sometimes, the transgression of rules gives rise to more interesting ones, the work in question being able to grow in contradiction, as was the case of Schönberg's compositions.

of a limit is essential for understanding the notion of a game. Behind Wittgenstein's concept of language game is the view that language has intrinsic pragmatic limits, as is the case with other kinds of games. And the concept of limit is essential to his understanding of the grammar of a word. What is the grammar of the colour «red»? How the word is used in the different language games in which it appears.

In any game, there are moves that are permitted and other moves that are not[37]. In checkers, the pieces cannot be moved either vertically or horizontally. In chess, one cannot move the tower diagonally because the rules of the game do not allow it. Likewise, artistic practices create a sphere of possible moves, and as a result, a series of impossible ones. In order to illustrate this idea, consider whether it would make sense for an object to go through one of Mark Rothko's mature canvases, in the way Wolf Vostell's Cadillacs go through walls or crash into rocks? Evidently not. It is a question of consistency, of coherence. And it is the kind of coherence that enables us to attribute a picture we see for the first time to the oeuvre of a particular artist we know well[38].

Behind the game(s) played by an artist, there is an entire culture. In order to understand Picasso's *Meninas*, one has to learn about the principles of cubism, and its meaning in art history. One has to consider what Velázquez's *Meninas* meant for the history of portraiture, and which of its principles Velazquez respected and which he didn't. One has to know what it means to pose for a portrait, the kind of attitude the sitter is supposed to have. It is fundamental to take into account what is to be expected of a portrait of nobility. Who is expected to be included, who matters and who doesn't matter. How the nobility used to dress in 17th century Spain, and what manners they were supposed to have. In addition, one has to consider how the aristocracy was viewed in the second half of the 20th century in Spain, and also in France. One has to learn how the public received the series, whether it was acclaimed or rejected, and by whom. And so on.

Likewise, a whole culture is behind each one of our dance movements. Reflecting upon our ordinary movements might provide some insight into this idea. What do we understand as walking? Does any moving along on foot do? Consider someone who moved along by giving little jumps. Would we call that «walking»? Is there a specific attitude that one ought to have? Are there attitudes one ought not to have? Why do we say that someone walks *beautifully*? Why do we say that someone does not know how to walk? Do people walk in the same way along the Louvre's corridors as along the crowded streets in Old Delhi? Could we speak of different grammars of walking in those two cases? Why do we sometimes feel that people do not know how to be in a museum because of how they walk? How can we recognize a tourist in the distance by simply observing how they proceed along the street? Do we expect different patterns of walking in men and women? Do people in different cultures walk in the

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37. Hagberg, *Meaning and Interpretation,* pp. 17-24.

38. I have developed these ideas in detail in several places. See Carla Carmona, "Ethics and Aesthetics are One: Egon Schiele in the light of the Philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein and the Theory of Musical Composition of Arnold Schönberg", *1. Egon Schiele Symposium im Leopold Museum*, edited by Hans-Peter Wipplinger, Vienna: Leopold Museum, 2017, 120-133.

same way? Why is the Westerner so surprised the first time he enters India and sees so many men holding hands while walking down the street? A people's gestures are also determined by the whole culture they belong to. That explains that we might not be able to understand gestures of a foreign culture that we see for the first time.

For instance, it takes a while for a foreigner to understand the characteristic Indian head shake[39]. One of the reasons why it is so confusing at first sight is that it is closer to the widespread gesture of «no», which also involves the shake of one's head, than to the widespread gesture of «yes», nodding one's head up and down. Understanding the Indian gesture involves knowing how and where it is used, how the gesture is accomplished, how it is slightly modified according to the context and the people involved. It also means knowing how Indian people relate to one another, within the same social groups or across different social, gendered or ethnic groups.

Everyday movements and gestures constitute a substantial part of the material used in dance research and creation. For instance, the «jump-like-walking» described earlier could be a result of an examination into how a specific people walk, and in the context of a dance performance it could be described as a particular form of «walking». However, although dance movements are partly constituted by our ordinary movements and gestures, there is much more to a dance performance. Dance movements, and in general all the components of a performance, are ultimately rooted in a form of life. The shared imagination in question plays the leading role in understanding a dance performance, given that ordinary movements and gestures, as well as dance movements, are part of such an imaginary and a manifestation of it. In fact, it is that shared imagination that makes room for communication. We can conclude that the communion behind art and life is behind every art form. Understanding a dance performance, whether traditional, modernist or postmodernist, involves understanding a whole culture. Each practice has its roots in a form of life. In Kjell S. Johannessen's words: «To establish the identity of a particular practice cannot be done solely on the basis of the semantic rules assumed to be immanent in it. Its relations to the surrounding practices have to be included in any reliable procedure for establishing the identity of practices.»[40]

Let us return to the idea that in contemporary dance practice there is an urge to overcome choreography and to unite performance and life. It is a whole culture that transcends itself, and not just a performance. The 21st century has made self-evident that understanding a culture involves understanding other cultures—not to mention the efforts of deconstruction and postcolonial theory to convey the principle that meaning is differential and to shed light on postcolonial identities. Nowadays it does not make sense to identify a culture with the frontiers of a country, if it ever did. Understanding a particular practice involves understanding surrounding practices, but these may not all belong to the same

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39. A side-to-side tilting of the head that can mean «yes», «OK», or «I understand», depending on the context.

40. Kjell S. Johannessen, "Rule Following, Intransitive Understanding and Tacit Knowledge. An Investigation of the Wittgensteinian Concept of Practice as Regards Tacit Knowing", *Daimon* 2, 1990, 151-173, p. 168.

culture, those of different cultures might be completely interwoven and imbued with elements or the character of each other.

Long before Wittgenstein delivered his lectures on aesthetics, it was clear in the art world that a culture extends beyond itself. Consider the avant-garde. Can one understand Picasso's cubism, i.e. his *Demoiselles d'Avignon*, without being familiar with African sculpture and masks? Don't we need to consider Cambodian dance in order to fully understand what Rodin was after in his drawings? Likewise, African bodies, and non-Western dances in general, have contributed enormously to contemporary dance practice. In light of this interdependence, it is high time for a revision of Wittgenstein's concept of «form of life». Against those that propose a single *human* form of life[41], I should like to suggest a rich picture of interwoven forms of life[42], of which the arts in general, and different forms of dance in particular, prove to be a wonderful example

5. Closing remarks

This paper does not intend to exhaust all the ways in which Wittgenstein can be valuable regarding dance practice. Besides, each of the four paths proposed can be subject to further examination.

For instance, there are many more remarks that Wittgenstein produced regarding other art forms that could be relevant and helpful in the context of dance practice. Likewise, Wittgenstein's method of examination of the use of language can be further applied to dance instructions and in general to other kinds of verbal exchanges that take place in the dance studio or in other dance contexts. Similarly, I have made use in this article of a very small number of Wittgenstein's remarks on aesthetics. The same is true of my usage of the concepts from his later work. A systematic analysis of the application to dance practice of the later Wittgenstein's fundamental concepts would have been beyond the scope of this article. I restricted myself to two key concepts of his mature philosophy, those of «aspect-seeing» and «form of life», which I hope to have explored in the context of dance to a sufficient degree. Nonetheless, in the different sections of this paper, a good number of Wittgenstein's concepts did appear. Unfortunately, they could not be tackled in the same degree of detail.

I hope to have shown how insight into Wittgenstein's philosophy and remarks on arts and aesthetics can be beneficial to the dance practitioner and in general to those who study, take part in, and care for dance practice.

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41. Danièle Moyal-Sharrock, "Wittgenstein on Forms of Life, Patterns of Life and Ways of Living", *Nordic Wittgenstein Review*, Special Issue, 2015, 21-42, https://www.nordicwittgensteinreview.com/ article / view/3362/pdf [accessed January 10 2019].

42. I have developed this idea in a forthcoming publication, cf. Carla Carmona, "Sociedades contemporáneas y formas de vida. Una revisión del concepto wittgensteiniano de forma de vida a comienzos del s. XXI", *Certeza, límite y animalidad. Sobre los escritos del último Wittgenstein*, ed. by Carla Carmona and Vicente Sanfélix, Sevilla, Athenaica, 2019.