

The Dance of the Now—Poetics of Everyday Human Movement

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Key words:
embodiment,
phenomenology of
everyday move-
ment, aliveness,
dance of the now,
art of life

Abstract: The inspiration for this paper comes from an interest in the living movement of everyday life and from an interest in the stories of the felt sense of embodiment, subjectivity and culture. A phenomenological approach is used to get an embodied and experiential understanding of sensitive form and meaning. How are embodiment as performance of expressive form and cultural identities interwoven? How are intersubjectivity and culture performed? The living body images are analysed from an aesthetic-phenomenological perspective highlighting the living body as an inter-subjective, "vibrational" field that deepens the experiential understanding of everyday movement as performance of dynamic repertoires of existence. These become everyday events expressed as the dance of the now.

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1. Introduction

"What strikes me is the fact that in our society, art has become related only to objects and not to individuals or to life. That art is something, which is specialized or done by artists. But couldn't everyone's life become a work of art?" (FOUCAULT, in DREYFUS & RABINOW, 1983, p.236)

FOUCAULT's way of thinking of life and art seems very inspiring because it is a way of highlighting the creative dimension as a common ground of freedom both in life and art and as a radical possibility of understanding forms-of-life as possibilities of "making something special" (DISSANAYAKE, 2002, p.98) and as an intensification of life (BACHELARD, 1994, p.xxxiii). It points to life and art as something that cannot be separated from form. I understand this quite

pragmatically in the sense that all embodied practice is functional and expressive. Embodied form is articulation as feeling, relation and meaning making. I have always been attracted to images of movement as the lived images of how it is possible to be human and I have also always been curious about what it would be like to move in different ways¹ and if it would make a difference to our experience of self-world-other. Form-feeling-relation-meaning are intertwined as poetics of movement and imagination (BACHELARD, 2002; ENGEL, RØNHOLT, SVENDLER NIELSEN & WINTHER, 2006). [1]

The bodily narratives of everyday situations that I have chosen for this study are all everyday events where the movements have attracted my attention. They are embodied micro-stories. They are ordinary everyday activities, like travelling between home and work, moments of being in-between, moments of waiting or taking a break. You might interpret these as "nothing special going on". They are, in a way, kinds of "non-events". But you might also say the opposite: that these everyday moments are the fabric of life, and, (especially for the children) it is obvious that each moment is precious. Each moment encompasses the possibility of intensification. All scenes are randomly chosen. They happen and you can find them all the time and everywhere, in unlimited repetitions and variations of the same themes. I feel attracted to them; in the words of Arnold MINDELL (2000), you can say that they "flirt" with me. I characterise these moments as moments of everyday events characterised by a feeling of free space, a kind of "in-between space"; everyday events that could be characterised with a continuum of experiential qualities of freedom—since there are no practical intentions or purpose. They are moments where the normal western attitude of purposefulness is put on "stand by". I find it interesting to look specifically into all these "in-between spaces" of embodied expressions of modern urban culture and civilization because they seem to tell body stories of cultural and social embodied practices and identities as living enactment of the now (DESMOND, 1997). [2]

The aim of this paper is to describe and analyse everyday movements as dynamic articulations of forms-of-life as relational styles and as a continuous personal and cultural co-creation of possible dynamics of the lived here-and-now. Cultural and personal styles of everyday movement are performed as possible repertoires of kinetic and kinaesthetic melodies of the body-mind-event. Style is both the style of appearances and the causal style of if/then relationships (SHEETS-JOHNSTONE, 1999, p.159). It is the dance of now as a kinetic dynamic—a certain qualitative dimension embodied in the kinetic flux (ibid., p.161). The movement styles incorporated in personal and cultural performances of everyday life are expressed as bodily narratives, living non-verbal stories and movement images of post-modern life. A consequence of this is that any body technique or style, any genre of movement, whether everyday movements, sports or dance styles, is an embodied choreography of life (SHEETS-JOHNSTONE, 1999; FILMER, 1999; FRANKLIN, 1996; BATESON, 1972). The dance of everyday life is a personal and cultural expression of situational, existential and cosmic perspectives. My main theme of interest in this paper is on the bodily

1 I think of movement as something musical e.g. especially the rhythmic and tonal qualities that makes a difference to the felt sense of the movement.

expressions of the quality of "aliveness". How does "aliveness" come to expression in everyday life? To understand the multidimensionality of human everyday movement as aesthetic practices of life several questions can be asked:

1. What movement repertoires, qualities, expressive forms, styles and energies/dynamics are characteristic in contemporary everyday in-between events?
2. How do these movement forms, styles and energies relate to experiences of embodied space, intersubjectivity and meaning?
3. How are the living body and movement dynamics interrelated in the embodied aesthetic production of inter-subjective rhythms, tonalities, images, themes and metaphors of postmodern life? What meanings are danced? What dreams and visions are told? What norms and values are symbolically expressed? What realities come to expression? [3]

2. An Experiential Approach to Movement Analysis

My way of working with the phenomenology of movement and cultural analysis is inspired from a depth hermeneutic cultural analysis where embodiment and embodied narratives are the basic existential ground. Body, movement, space and time create interdependent figurations that can be described through unified, scenic wholes (LORENZER, 1988, pp.11-99, p.165), and lived experience (MERLEAU-PONTY, 1962, 1964, 1968; SHEETS-JOHNSTONE, 1998, 1999; TODRES, 2007) as phenomenology of the event. The scenic descriptions are not to be understood as dramatic or as the "setting"—but as the poetic of the event. It is an embodied enquiry where the phenomenology of living movement is interwoven with the event. It has to do with the creation of a dynamic between active-passive as giving and receiving. [4]

The French philosopher DELEUZE also talks about the necessary awareness of a new approach to movement analysis. His examples come from film and from sports, such as surfing, windsurfing and hang gliding, which are about the art of entering an existing wave (1992, p.282). The important perspective is that movement is not just about time as a narrative of before and after with succession, it is much more about the living expression of moving forms as coexistence, ordering and transformation (ibid., p.283). How do we make an embodied inquiry into the living movement event? When we work with mindfulness toward the feeling of dynamic patterns of movement we are—in the words of the American dancer and philosopher SHEETS-JOHNSTONE—dependent on our resonant tactile-kinaesthetic body (1999, pp.143-146). It is a bodily weaving of the visible and the invisible through sensitivities and dynamics of movement as continuous creation of modalities of attention and possible form-feeling-meaning. Some helpful questions can be:

- What rhythms and dynamics are felt?
- What does the situation feel like using aesthetic empathy (DISSANAYAKE, 1999, pp.140-193)?
- What is the feeling tone?

- What catches your attention?
- What is going on?
- What is the atmosphere?
- What is characteristic of the situation and the ways of moving?
- What movement forms and dynamics come to expression? [5]

The experiential approach is multi-sensual and open: it is equally visual, kinaesthetic, acoustic, tactile, olfactory and enacted. It is important to move into the scene with an open, multi-sensual awareness, avoiding evaluating "this is good"—"this is bad", "I like"—"I do not like" and so on. The key point is that the experience and expression of the event always is unique: it is this unique movement in this lived moment, and every lived moment is related to a movement as ontology and epistemology of the poetics of the now. To experience movement as poetic images intensifies phenomenological inquiry as embodied experience, imagination and creativity. It is a phenomenological inquiry on the level of simple everyday movement images that I want to describe and analyse (BACHELARD, 1994, p.xxv) The special and singular is not reducible to a general type, but the singular is always the potential of a collective to come. The experience of the event can be experienced and brought into expressive form—verbal and nonverbal—as the feeling of life. [6]

When I ask myself why these body narratives have stayed with me, it has to do with memories and experiential qualities of how it is possible to be human, to be a child, or to be a woman, to be a man, to be young, to be grown up. It has to do with experiential qualities of moving and being moved in different ways and how different ways of moving create different ways of being bodily present. Bodily presence has an unlimited variation of possible experiential and expressive dimensions of aliveness and rhythms of existence (MERLEAU-PONTY, 1962, p.248). Aliveness is grounded in movement and the feeling of it is an important existential quality of embodiment and our kinetic repertoires (SHEETS-JOHNSTONE, 1999, pp.135-136). It is also important for me to stress that it has to do with the embodied rhythms of the living now of everyday life and can be expressed as such in a variety of ways both in movement and stillness, e.g., in the unlimited tonalities and rhythmic varieties of the breath of stillness. MERLEAU-PONTY (1962, p.246) uses the metaphor that our "body is in the world as the heart is in the organism" (ibid., p.235) or with the words of SHEETS-JOHNSTONE, "we are simply infused with movement" (1999, p.136). Our breathing rhythm is of radical importance for the qualitative feeling of aliveness, awareness, bodily attunement and emotional tone. I understand this metaphor of the living body as the heart of the organism and as a tactile and kinaesthetic quality of moving and being moved. This multidimensionality of the living body-world chiasm is important for the practice of bodily inquiry. It is necessary to work on an embodied *epoché* that comes to expression through bodily attunement and embodied awareness (DEPRAZ, VARELA & VERMERSCH, 2003). We can open and vary our embodied inquiry into an open-focused multidimensional awareness married to movement imaginations, intuitions and dreams. Qualitative experience is dynamic and as such intertwined with our bodily sensitivity and kinetic and

kinaesthetic repertoires of being. The embodied inquiry is a methodology that choreographs the felt meaning in a variety of formal languages. [7]

MERLEAU-PONTY writes that our rhythmic repertoires are like personal-cultural tonalities and styles. An experiential research process must open us into the "rhythms of existence" (1962, p.248) and become aware with a certain "living pulsation" (ibid., p.249), and "the process of expression brings the meaning into being or makes it effective, and does not merely translate it" (ibid., p.213). This is the same as writing that the experience process is a dynamic creation of possibilities and meanings. Sensory experience is always interwoven with bodily expressions that open "on a world of inter-acting senses" (ibid., p.262). This means that we, as embodied qualitative researchers, must attune ourselves to the event as openly and fluidly as possible, and then express the felt meaning in relation to human practices and possibilities through embodied scenic description, inviting a critical dialogue and embodied understanding in relation to human practices, possibilities and existential meaning. [8]

3. Style

Style of movement has to do with movement dynamics as kinetic and kinaesthetic repertoires and it is a qualitative repertoire that is foundational to our experience of self and world. It has to do with interdependencies of dynamics of body, space and time as a certain way of being alive. It is about a qualitative continuum of dynamic form-feeling-meaning. MERLEAU-PONTY writes, "To understand is not an intellectual process, it is to come to grips with a style of living and existing as a way of doing and becoming the culture" (1964, p.239, my translation²). It has to do with habits, methods, gestures or practices that characterise a mode of existence. It is grounded in the practices of the living and relational body. The focus is on the dynamic perspective, the qualitative experiences of possible transformation and change of states. [9]

The German sociologist SCHULZE works with a theory of the hermeneutics of style (1997, pp.93-123) from three basic perspectives: 1) "Pleasure" (*Genuss*)—the psycho-physical dimension as the body-mind interaction and bodily experiential dimensions as enactment of dynamic patterns of joy, calmness, tension, contemplation, etc. —the whole aspect of varieties of human experience (JAMES, 1902; LUPTON, 1998). This aspect is interpreted through psycho-physical effects and feelings and it has to do with the creative processes of intersubjectivity and is a mutual interdependent dynamic relation of body-mind-world. It is a kinetic-kinaesthetic communication or, in the words of LOWEN, "a person is in a state of pleasure when the movements of his body flow freely, rhythmically, and in harmony with his surroundings" (1976, p.28). The focus is on the multi-modal bodily experience and on possibilities of radical aliveness; 2) "Difference" (*Distinktion*)—the symbolic representation of personal and social differences and cultural identities (style is not just something felt but also something visible. It is a

2 "Comprendre n'est pas constituer dans l'immanence intellectuelle, c'est saisir par coexistence, latéralement en style, et par là atteindre d'un coup les lointain de ce style et de cet appareil culturel".

kinetic-visual communication. Today this has become a very important aspect of modern life, e.g., it is possible to hire a personal style advisor); and 3) "Life philosophy" (*Lebensphilosophien*)—this aspect of style is not only about visual kinetic differences, but about basic values, motifs and dimensions of being. It is style as an expression of basic existential attitudes, ideas, beliefs, values and cosmologies. According to the symbol theory of LORENZER, styles are understood as "*Erlebnisengramme*" that can be interpreted as traces of embodied experiences or memories (1988, pp.13, 42). These "*Erlebnisengramme*" are like kinetic and kinaesthetic multi-modal memories of a continuum of embodied rhythms as expressive form of the living now, situated personal and cultural expressions of how it is possible to live. [10]

I remember one strong experience of movement on an afternoon in Copenhagen, waiting at a bus stop, on my way to a modern dance performance. Others waited for the bus. Most of them were caught up in their own thoughts. A small boy was there with his mother, smiling at her. It started to rain a little bit, but he did not seem to care. He began experimenting, moving in small circles, leaning into off-balance positions, spinning around and jumping up and down. He looked beautiful, very light and very alive. I admit that the image of the small boy moving freely while waiting at the bus stop has stayed with me as a radical expression of the beauty of the essence of a dance where there is an expression of totally non-judgemental involvement. The overall quality was not only a radiance of radical aliveness and joy of being, but also a nuanced lived quality of movement that was a kind of movement art, within DISSANAYAKE's concept of art—"making something special" (1999). The boy made the moment special. He intensified his relation to being and expressed, in a unique way, a radical aliveness through his experimentation with the rhythms and tonalities of living movement. He was totally absorbed. He tried out fine nuances of differences which, in a very extraordinary way, changed the simple movement form of hopping up and down into a multidimensional dancing embodiment of the living now. [11]

4. Scenic Descriptions of Body Images of Everyday Life

I have chosen five scenes of movement images from everyday situations as examples of different embodiment and different relational styles of the dance of the now.

Scene 1

In between spaces

ladies with big cakes and
big cups of chocolate
buried in cream
talking mouth
in contact with spoons
silent mouth around cigarettes

distant eyes
veiled by spirals of smoke
empty faces, tired faces
lips meeting the warm sweetness of
chocolate and for a moment it disappears
the longing

they rise slowly
heavy, unmoving backs and hanging arms
ending in an unbelievable bundle of bags
they leave with empty faces
the ladies [12]

This scene, from a Copenhagen patisserie some years ago, is repeated everyday with small variations in urban coffee spots all over the world. In my example, there were more women than men and some in pairs, but most of them by themselves. I sat down and looked around. I felt like I was looking into silent body stories. I was present, they were present, and yet none of us were visible. In a way we were all part of an invisible everyday non-event. I was attracted but also repelled. It is easy to see this scene as an image of a traditional female role in that the women, not young and not old, were just sitting there, doing nothing, passively waiting, hoping for something to happen. It could also be seen as an urban contemplative space. Secret places in the city, opening into dreamscapes through rituals of the steam of coffee and smell of sweet chocolate cakes, allowing the stillness and invisibility of the in-between. Nevertheless it is also a body narrative of western urban civilization that reveals associations of feelings of pressure, tiredness, expanding into embodied knots of heaviness and frustration with a gentle mellowness of unexpressed longing. It is as if the smells and tastes of bitterness and sweetness are opening into dreamscapes of sensuality, laziness, the joy of doing nothing and the openness and fluidity of being in a hidden in-between-space. [13]

They then walk out into the dark winter afternoon, their arms are hanging heavily down and their backs are unmoving, embodied images of frustration, exhaustion and loneliness. I tap into the felt quality of the unmoving back. I feel the immobility of the back as an expression of stress, heaviness and sadness of unexpressed life. Their movements seem to express repertoires of routines and a certain qualities of heaviness and compactness. I see the drooping bodily shapes and rhythmic qualities of non-movements. The after-image is one of passive waiting and lack of initiative-taking. This is for me a key image of the opposite of aliveness and also a strong bodily resonance of the felt sense of a certain mood and even a cultural identity of passive waiting.

Scene 2

A kind of ball game

"They had a break at around eleven o'clock and they used it to play a kind of ballgame on the top of the broad landing of the stairs. It was a kind of soccer, but they also used the wall in their game like in squash, and in this case the wall was indeed curved. When the ball was out, it was really out, bouncing down all the stairs and rolling a hundred meters down the slope where an eager boy rushed down after it, between cars, busses, scooters to some place at the grand obelisk"
(RASMUSSEN, 1989, p.16, my translation from Danish).

This is a completely different movement story. It is a small scene of boys playing an improvised ball game. When I first read the scenic description I found it to be another key image of radical aliveness, this time experienced through the quality of spontaneous and free improvised play. This is a completely different kind of quality of the "in-between". The boys meet the possibilities of the now with total involvement and creativity, intensifying the felt sense of radical meaning and aliveness. The involvement of the boys playing soccer comes to fruition through spontaneous, strong and flexible movements expressing a bodily aliveness and total dynamic flexibility toward the complex now of body-city-other-ball-game. The ability to accept the conditions as they are and use them as a living space for creation of possibilities resonate with associations of freedom as embodied intensification of presence, involvement and meaning. I associate the scene with strong feelings of being active, taking initiative and going toward a chosen and desired goal and at the same time being open to free improvisation of body-space-time. The way of moving expresses the playful attitude of being totally present, improvising and adapting to the complex event of playing ball in a city. The contrast to the former scene is extreme, and it widens the understanding of everyday "in-between" events as a continuum of bodily dynamics and experiential dimensions here expressed through a strong and intuitive bodily presence intensified through moments of playful interaction. [14]

Scene 3

A dog and a man

One early morning a dog is walking softly through green grass. Soft and undulating waves are running through the spine of the dog as it is walking. It's a beautiful and very alive movement of rhythmic waves that I feel and nearly can hear as a kinetic song of joy of moving—a sensual joy of being. At the side of the dog walks a middle aged man. His back is leaning a little bit forward. His bodily attitude is formed in the style of a tortoise shell. The rigid backs of adults have many causes; I am not trying to investigate or describe all possible explanations from this. Rather, through kinaesthetic empathy I attempt to feel the living stories that come to expression through the rhythms and tonalities of the body narratives. [15]

What is it like to walk? The repertoires of walking are a continuum of personal, cultural, situational and unique forms condensing into a variety of forms of life. They are living embodied images of aliveness and identities. The movement dynamics are expressive forms of possible body scapes, both animal-like and civilized. It is the dance of the now—being woven into continually changing patterns of enlivening and deadening rhythms. It is easy to find these movement images in any modern urban scene. But the stiff and unmoving back is more often the case than the rhythmic fluidity of "animality". The rigid back can be seen as a sign of sedentary life styles, an expression and a sign of embodied stress or just as a personal or cultural attitude or habit. It can also be seen as a cultural sign of seriousness, responsibility, status—a sign of being concerned with serious matters—and not just play, fun or dance. The undulating back can also be a sign of sensuality and intense aliveness that can be interpreted as an open expression of sexuality. There are always cultural norms and ideals where bodily gestures and patterns of movement are expressed as signs of status, gender, race, age and so forth. No matter what the context, the movement repertoires of the back are important silent expressions of identities and life, as well as rhythmic and dynamic expressions of the embodied now. The movement patterns of the back are an important rhythmic dimension of embodied attunement and meaning. The human back is telling tales of kinetic and kinaesthetic songs of ways of being. Modern urban cultures often seem to invite non-moving modalities of bodily repertoires. Walking and waves of movements are basic forms of animality and aliveness in human movement (ENGEL, 2007). [16]

Scene4

Riding a steel horse in Rome

Rome is, among many other things, also the paradise of scooters. Lots of young men and women use the scooter not just as a swift and practical transportation in the city, but also as an extra dimension of staging youth, gender, and freedom and sexuality. The girls are dressed exactly as the boys in tight jeans and tight, short T-shirts—a unisex style. Bodily auras and attitudes express a very self conscious way of being present in public space. They seem to be very aware of

how to express themselves in the possible best way to stand out and be perceived as special. If the concept of art is defined as "making something special" (DISSANAYAKE, 1999) these young people certainly are performing themselves as art. They want to be seen and to be admired. The girls are flirting in a very direct way. They are continuously looking around using the gaze in a very active and outgoing way. They are sitting on the scooter leaning forward with very straight back and with a proud attitude and suddenness in every change of direction. They express a strong will to be admired and also a will to take initiative. [17]

The style of the young girls sitting on the scooters is very different from the middle-aged Italian women that are performing the more traditional female role of "mama" and "housewife". The middle aged women are leaning back on their heels with a heaviness that makes the energy of the body move downward—but face and hand gestures are very alive. The body mirrors heaviness and immobility. In spite of the heaviness, the middle-aged women still radiate a sensual aliveness, but in a tamed way performing the cultured body stories of civilized, middle-aged femininity. The young girls radiate the cultured body stories of a sexualised femininity and a strong outgoing energy of youth: their bodies are lifted slightly leaning forward riding astride on these urban steel horses. They radiate action, freedom and sexuality. Even if both cycle and scooter invites a bodily attitude of just sitting and somehow being fixated—they also have possibilities of freedom at the same time as the possibility of expressing power, control and will to take initiative. The scooter seems to be even more inviting to a feeling of riding and in this way imitates or associates mythic dreams of wildness and freedom of riding a live horse. These urban body images of youth express a polarity between straight lines, the direct, the outgoing, the strong and the desire and will to take initiative and have control—but also the curved, round, spiralling, waving expressing qualities of aliveness, spontaneity and sensuality in an open more playful and unpredictable way. They are primarily images of youth and outgoing sexuality coloured by the specific situation and culture. [18]

Scene 5

At the beach

A newly married, young German couple goes to the beach every day. Their verbal communication, repeated several times during the week, stays the same. She repeats every now and then: "Immer dieses Ordnen" ("Always this shaking up"). The man is very active, like a little boy playing at the seashore. His body is slim and strong. Her body is soft and curved. She leans back a little when she walks in a very lazy, very passive way. She keeps herself busy by observing, organising and controlling all of the things that they have brought to the beach. She moves in a very traditionally feminine way, keeping her feet on one line, keeping her steps small and swinging her hips in a very self-conscious manner. He embodies a western traditional masculine picture of a young man—muscular, strong and active. He strides with long energetic steps, holding his upper body and hips very firm, very tight. The overall emotional tone of his activity is one of

impatience and restlessness. The emotional tone of her bodily movement is one of frustration, continuous order and control of the surroundings. [19]

5. Discussion and Reflections on the Five Scenes of Everyday Life

The different situations such as if people sit, walk or run are not so important; rather, it is much more about how everyday movement expresses repertoires of activities as well as the emotional tone, the involvement, aliveness and uniqueness of certain personal, but also cultural, bodily habits and attitudes. All the expressive dimensions are kinetic and kinaesthetic strings of an interwoven field of body-mind-event. It is creating a certain tone and rhythm that colours the event and the ways we relate to self, other and the world. [20]

I have highlighted some experiential qualities that seem to be typical expressions of how postmodern civilization is embodied and what kinds of kinetic and kinaesthetic songs come to expression. It is not about form-feeling as a linear causality; rather, it is about the felt significance of the poetics of the dance of the now. These movement repertoires and styles embody the personal and cultural co-creation of how it is possible to perform everyday life. The varieties of expressive forms are possibilities of expressions and co-creations of ways of being—personal and cultural bodily narratives of aliveness as lived body, lived space, lived time and lived meaning. [21]

There seems to be a certain repetitive pattern that mirrors cultural and situational bodily norms and habits of being a civilized, grown-up person. Ways of walking and sitting in everyday events are quite common in all western countries. Children's movement dynamics are more spontaneous, more fluid and more radically alive than the movement of adults. To be grown up seems to mean that the body repertoires are much more stereotyped. Stiffness in the movements of ankles, knees, hip, spine and neck are very common. Furthermore, the children in the scenic descriptions seem to attack the "in-between" moments and—movements in a manner that transform them by making up games, movements, pure play, thus being in the dance of the now effortlessly and yet with radical aliveness and embodied creativity toward an intensification of being-becoming. It is easy to interpret the living body forms as polarities between aliveness-deadness, order-chaos and activity-passivity and, at the same time, see them as choreographies of attunement and emotional tone. The bodily rhythms become personal and cultural patterns of background feelings of dynamics and vitality. It becomes a kind of bodily articulation of living a postmodern life. If this is so it seems quite far from FOUCAULT's initial provocative question: "*But couldn't everyone's life become a work of art?*" The answer could be—yes of course, but to make life special, for example, by expressing radical aliveness—one possibility seems to be "to become like children" in the best sense. It could also mean to be bodily present as a way of being radically present. It seems that the dynamics of existence as lived has to do with a basic bodily aesthetic dimension of the art of being (SHUSTERMAN, 2000, 2004). [22]

6. Living Movement as Kinetic and Kinaesthetic Melodies of Life

One possible way of understanding the feeling of aliveness is through the concept of energy (LOWEN & LOWEN, 1977, p.4). The energetic processes of the body are related to feeling states of aliveness in the body. The more alive, the more energy is available for action and feeling. Rigidity or chronic tension diminishes one's aliveness. We cannot totally avoid the rigidity that comes with life, but can we avoid unnecessary chronic muscular tensions resulting from bad habits or unattended conflicts and problems? Stress of all kinds produces tension in the body. Normally the tension disappears as soon as the stress is released. Chronic stress and tension persists as an unconscious bodily attitude diminishing our energy, bodily sensitivity and creativity. The living movement and experience of movement dynamics have great importance for our relation to the now and to our experiencing and understanding of self and world. The dynamics and the bodily sensitivity and attitude are key points toward creation of bodily sensitive presence and awareness. This bodily sensitivity and presence can also be understood as kinetic and kinaesthetic songs of our embodied practices as a ground of embodied ways of expressing and co-creating possibilities of life (SHEETS-JOHNSTONE, 1999). [23]

Our embodied rhythms and movement repertoires influence our experience directly. All our movements, physical as well as psychological and sociological, are ways of doing, thinking, feeling and relating through our sensitive moving body. It is articulated as expressive form, as functional and expressive rhythmic patterns of the event of the now. We can recognise each other on the rhythms of our walk and on the bodily attitudes. The way we open the door can tell a story of our presence right there in this very moment, but also stories of our existential life story, of our special biography and culture. These patterns can change, but often we get into predictable and unnecessary fixed and, therefore, also unnecessarily fixated and predictable patterns. Somatic and somaesthetic practices work with this embodied dimension of personal and cultural identities and embodied existential meanings (SHUSTERMAN, 2000, 2004; ENGEL, 2001, ENGEL et al., 2006) The living body is, at the same time, both a giver and a receiver that is actively experiencing and expressing processes of being and becoming. It is a process that is a dynamic articulation of chiasms of body-world-self-other as co-creation of a qualitative continuum of enactment of the possibilities of the living now. [24]

Everyday movements are sensory and creative practices transcending traditional ways of separating the experiential and the expressive, the practical and the functional, the mind and the body and thus pointing at creation as a dynamic balance between the passive and the active. Experience is not just passive perceiving. It is the very essence of radical aliveness—the art of human movement as somatic and creative processes of form, experience, relation and meaning. Living movement becomes a sensitive and active dimension interwoven with ontology and epistemology. This ontological and epistemological aspect of movement is basic to the phenomenological understanding as, for example, expressed by SHEETS-JOHNSTONE in her book, *The Primacy of Movement*

(1999). In her words, movement is the very ground of our ways of relating to self and world and of getting knowledge.

"Infants live in a in a unified perceptual world, one that is not artificially or linguistically divided into seeing, hearing, touching, and so on, ... we come to know the world intuitively, precisely in the way we intuitively knew as infants on the basis of our tactile-kinesthetic experiences ... Such knowing is a manner—or perhaps better, a style—of cognition that may be difficult for some adults to acknowledge since it is nonlinguistic and nonpropositional and, just as significantly, has no solid object on which it fastens" (SHEETS-JOHNSTONE, 1999, p.270) [25]

7. The Art of Life

The art of life has to do with our embodiment as rhythmic expressions of attunement to the event and how that influences possibilities of life. It is also important to remember that rhythms here are used as the pulse of felt life expressed through the total embodied being. We are expressing our life through repertoires of everyday movements, but the tonalities vary—not only as a mirror of the situation, but also as a creative action in relation to possibilities of the living now. The tacit choreographies of everyday events create situational, personal and cultural expressions of life. Gestures and movement sequences are co-creations of multiple kinds of expressiveness. Poetics of human movement in quite ordinary everyday events create dynamics of form as a special circulation of energy and life in the heart of a situation, a person, a group, a culture (GIL, 1998). Movement dynamics are bodily practices that colour our sensibility and imagination as a dynamic and intersubjektive continuum of expression-experience-meaning. MERLEAU-PONTY is pointing directly at the close interdependency of body dynamics and expressive-experiential dimensions. He writes: "Sensations, 'sensible qualities' are then far from being reducible to a certain indescribable state or *quale*; they present themselves with a motor physiognomy, and are enveloped in a living significance" (1962, p.243). [26]

Living movement is an active unique and cultural co-created part of the human ground of experience. MERLEAU-PONTY combines this with the interrelationship of the sensible with a certain rhythm of existence and a certain living pulsation articulated through bodily presence and a kind of dynamic co-creation of the lived now. When these aspects of human movement become conscious, they can be understood as a key to personal and cultural processes of change and transformation. It is this dynamic quality of movement that colours our ways of experiencing self and world. This qualitative dynamic is a co-creational dimension of the vibrational field of every moment as sensual production of relational styles and lived possibilities. This is the source of human movement as the chiasm of body-mind-world as bodily dynamics of expressive form. Our corporeal attunement has its roots in our basic embodiment and experiences and gives us a certain style of perceiving and expressing ourselves and the world. [27]

8. Some Afterimages and Thoughts

The dance of the now is not just personal, but a transpersonal co-creation of expressive fields of being and becoming. I see three important concerns of human movement as the basic creative medium of expression-experience continuum:

1. the living body and the living movement dynamics as the common ground of experiential and artistic, kinetic and kinaesthetic sensitivity and creativity;
2. embodiment as techniques and methods of working with the experience-expression as co-creation of individual and collective consciousness, as forms of energy, feeling, emotion and understanding;
3. aesthetics of movement as personal and cultural repertoires of living movement as symbolic form- languages of the art of life. [28]

All three perspectives of movement are of basic concern to the question of how it is possible to live one's life and to become sensitive and aware co-creators on individual, cultural and existential performance levels. It is this dynamic expression of our movement dynamics that colour every moment of life as a continuous co-creation of a vibrational field of every human event and at the same time point at human life as grounded in somatic, aesthetic and cultural performances of being and becoming. It is learned and can be changed. The dance of the now has all kinds of bodily dimensions intensifying and co-creating our possibilities as performance of everyday event. The in between moments of everyday life are part of the human condition in post-modern life and the experiential qualities of aliveness are articulated as all kinds of rhythmic tonalities and relational styles of the dance of the living now. [29]

Acknowledgements

Thank you for helpful discussions with my colleagues Rikke SCHOU JEPPESEN, Helle WINTHER and Charlotte SVENDLER NIELSEN and to Mary GERGEN as my patient editor.

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Citation

Engel, Lis (2007). The Dance of the Now—Poetics of Everyday Human Movement [29 paragraphs]. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 9(2), Art. 35, <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0802355>.