


## MOVINGNESS: A PRAISE FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT

*MOVÊNCIA: UM ELOGIO À EDUCAÇÃO FÍSICA E AO ESPORTE* 

*MOVIMIENTO: UN ELOGIO PARA LA EDUCACIÓN FÍSICA Y EL DEPORTE* 

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**Abstract:** The essay presents some of the developments of the notion of movingness and justifies its reach to think about Physical Education and Sport, as well as their relationships. Initially, some of the theoretical positions about Physical Education and Sport in our field are summarized. Subsequently, the emergence of the concept of movingness in the author's trajectory is contextualized, in order, in the next topic, to defend it as an anthropological universal. Finally, from the theory of movingness outlined, we seek to point out the scope of Physical Education and Sport as knowledge systems in contemporaneity. It is concluded that the movingness expands the understanding of Physical Education and Sport, in addition to allowing us to equate some of the recognized epistemological problems of our craft.

**Keywords:** Movingness. Physical Education. Sport. Epistemology.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

A significant part of the production of knowledge in Physical Education over the last decades has consisted in the routinization of criticism of the area and the cultural artifacts related to it. In the name of building an ideal worldview, fierce criticism was formulated of Physical Education and Sport as subsystems umbilically committed to the dominant logics, being even necessary to get rid of their specificities, to forge other epistemological identities for these fields, to weld them into a power project aligned with changes guided by critical-theoretical premises.

For this style of thinking, Physical Education is a discourse and/or a practice accommodated to the dynamics of the capital, strongly influenced by political and economic decisions, and these domains are often evoked to relativise the internal logics of the worlds of science, culture and art, through an interested, or at least questionable, reading of the model of historical intelligibility that Kuhn (1997) developed to discern the advances and anomalies of the development of scientific fields. From this point of view, Physical Education would never achieve scientific autonomy and would be at the service of a political project, be it conservative, progressive or any other.

But this does not correspond to the whole of the current scientific development of our field, regardless of which is the context of modernization in question. It is important to highlight the existence of another style of thought consolidated in the area, less radical in its premises and synthesizing a significant part of what was and has been historically accumulated of internal knowledge to our *métier*. In their own way, the participants of this way of thinking have sought to propose horizons and affirm the socially valid nature of Physical Education and Sport, without, however, deepening a praise or a discourse of internalist foundation with the purpose of marking and strengthening the specificities of these domains of human activity.

In these terms, we may say that if the critical tradition has always been ready to doubt Physical Education and its specificity on behalf of a social change guided by its theories, this second lineage of thought, by gathering positivist, pragmatic and humanist voices around the organization of the scientific-pedagogical work of the area, has not been very concerned about relationally demarcating what would distinguish our profession from the others, either at school or out of it. In the limit, it is possible that underlying the theoretical horizon of this intellectual family is a certain ontological naturalization of what socially characterises our profession. Physical Education would be what it is.

There are reasons for this picture. From my point of view, whether in countries of central or peripheral capitalism, the process followed common lines, having the same to do with the status of theoretical imports in our area in order to fulfil the social needs of certain historical contexts. In this sense, we must recognise that the logic of the construction of Physical Education as a scientifically oriented profession, academic field and science with its own object, depended initially on positivist-

<sup>1</sup> This text corresponds to the first chapter of the associate professorship Thesis defended by the author in December 2022 at the School of Physical Education and Sport of the University of São Paulo.

based knowledge, with pedagogical guidelines focused on natural sciences and the resolution of pragmatic problems, without showing, in fact, systematic concerns about the “whys” and the meanings of movement beyond utilitarianism.

Since the notion of Physical Education appeared - and was routinized by philosophers, pedagogues, doctors, military men, etc., to synthesise a process of cultural, educational and civilizational investment on the movement that had been happening among people for a long time - the fact is that, at least nominally and from the point of view of an institutionalized technical rationality, a greater connotation was given to the physical in relation to the metaphysical, to the carnal in relation to the spiritual, to the body in relation to the mind. From that context on, the growing segmentation of the human being in parts and the division of the pedagogical work in order to mould him institutionally ended up making ambiguous the recognized virtues of Physical Education, heir, as far as I know, of the gymnastic system - *gymnázzein* -, of the festivals and of the games and athletic competitions which prospered in the classical antiquity<sup>2</sup>.

In any way, it is important to recognise that, around the 1960s, especially in Europe and the United States, this panorama started to change as the dialogue with a body of knowledge that dialogued more intensely with the theoretical advances progressively made in Psychology, Anthropology, Sociology and History, allowed to put other questions to the movement. At that time, Physical Education was already in the universities with its own chair and it was no longer constituted — or, at least, not only anymore — as a practice for the students of higher education of different university courses. Our profession was opening up and increasingly questioning its past and its statute. We urgently needed to justify our place in relation to other disciplines and university professorships.

In this path, theories emerged in Europe and in the United States to supply such purpose. Kinesiology, Sport Sciences, Psychokinetics, Motor Praxiology, Science of Human Motricity, Sciences of Physical Activity are the main fronts that were mobilized to produce that justification, even if Physical Education for those aspects was no more than an applied branch of those sciences mentioned. In Brazil, in turn, there was also an important turning point in the 1980s, in a context where worldwide Physical Education itself was becoming de-traditionalized, but the efforts to open Physical Education in the country to broader views and to tune it with the modernity-world are previous.

Generally speaking, we may say that between, on one hand, those who affirm the art or science of Physical Education and, on the other hand, those who criticize it in order to align it to their political ideal of the world, there is the same difficulty to

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<sup>2</sup> The problem of movingness as a distinctive expression of *homo movens* has been with us for a long time and had formulations in the most different pre-modern social formations, without necessarily establishing a network of intimate connections among those civilizations. Independently of this assertion, I recognize, however, that classical antiquity represented a leap in the elaboration of the problem of movingness that retrospectively interests Physical Education. There are institutional and phenomenological issues underlying this argument, but there is no space here to develop them. I just want to draw attention to the high institutionality of Greek games and festivals, as well as to the ascetic and hedonistic aspects that marked the uses of bodies. Compared to other civilizations in history, it is likely that a powerful philosophy for Physical Education and Sport was yet to unfold in classical Greece, so as to free these domains (not yet called in these terms) from the conceptual and practical structures of religion and war. This is an important auxiliary hypothesis to investigate the configurations of movingness in that context.

dimension relationally the statute and the reach of the profession in what is specific and common at a planetary scale, that is, beyond the national, regional traditions and the specializations which organize the area. Without a doubt, we can say that in the context of reflexive modernity, Physical Education has been globalized, being an applied science and a profession recognized here and elsewhere, even if multiple epistemological meanings have been produced to give intelligibility to the process in different societies. The theory of movingness that I've been developing has awakened me to this diagnosis and, at the same time, it has allowed me to shed new light on the subject. Movingness, a notion-process that was missing and does not offend anyone, is par excellence a praise to Physical Education and Sport, as well as a theory of the specificity of the area and the internal justification of our craft. In this essay, I propose to deal with this aspect in the hope of offering an alternative appreciation to some of the recognized and old epistemological problems of our area.

## 2 THE GENESIS OF THE CONCEPT OF MOVINGNESS

The notion of movingness emerges from the intersection between theory and experience. Since 2016, when I established a project to re-examine the remnants of the theory of Physical Education and Sport in its most paradigmatic developments throughout the 20th century, the search for a concept inclusive enough to encompass a series of actions and practices related to our craft revealed itself as a problem. When revisiting the set of directive assumptions present in our area with the purpose of organizing the scientific work and guiding the pedagogical intervention, it occurred to me that many of these notions were antagonistic and called attention to certain dimensions of moving to the detriment of others. Some of those concepts emphasized the motor and biological aspects of human movement while others focused more on cultural issues. I thought that this antinomy was false and that human movement as the main object of study of Physical Education was a synthesis of all those looks that competed for the monopoly of the episteme that specified our métier.

Obviously, movingness does not replace the notion of human movement as that which is at the center of the existence of our profession and scientific community, but it strengthens it theoretically, adds some meanings to it and increases its scope. If my memory serves me correctly, the term movingness is mentioned in Manuel Sérgio's book *Para uma epistemologia da motricidade humana* ("Towards an epistemology of human motricity"). As far as I know, however, the Portuguese philosopher did not make use of this concept, having invested strictly in the notion of motricity. Moreover, the terms are not synonymous, having different places in the argumentative structure of the respective models of intelligibility evoked to explain the theoretical-scientific development of our field. According to the Portuguese author, Physical Education would be configured as the pre-science of human motricity, while movingness, as I gnosologically understand it, fulfils the requirements to be a pre-theory of Physical Education and Sport. In other words, Manuel Sérgio (1987) aims at enunciating the epistemological basis of a new science for the profession of Physical Education, the science of human motricity. The notion of movingness is not intended in that sense, but only to launch a universalistic look at the problem of man in movement in the

different constellations of space-time and, along with this understanding, to contribute to repositioning a problem with potential internal validation for a reflective science of human movement.

It is important to point out that in the condition of *homo movens*' distinctive quality, movingness has been with us for a long time. It is previous to Physical Education, sports, games, work, leisure, religion, etc., being a *sine qua non* condition so that such manifestations and all the others which carry the mark of the human could exist. I have in recent memory that this awareness appeared to me with more elements on an expedition through northern Argentina at the end of 2018. The 75 million years to which the events of the formation of the Cerro de las Siete Colores in Purmamarca, a beautiful postcard of northwestern Argentina, on the trade route of the ancient Inca empire, referred to the temporality of things, in this case, to geological time and the antiquity of our planet. Purmamarca, which in the Aymara language means "village of the virgin land", was a place where the problem of movingness in its relation with Physical Education revealed itself to my eyes as universal and transhistorical. The picturesque village, the children playing football in the main street, the craftsmen, the tourists' movement, the trekkers coming and going from the Cerro das Setes Cores, all of this reminded me of a *kairós* that is the time of the meaning that erupts through movingness.

It is true that in this context, the idea of reflexive Physical Education was already outlined in my investigative horizon and I knew that the meanings for the moving<sup>3</sup> were not only given but mainly inventively built by the subjects. So, I started to wonder if all those people I met in Purmamarca had an educated physique and what, consequently, would be to have — or to be with — an educated physique. By placing the reflection in these terms, I was evidently starting from a broader conception of Physical Education that went beyond the schooling experience. After all, the reflective epistemology I've been defending for our area positions it as a field of knowledge and cultural heritage concerned with human existence in its multiple dimensions and contexts of action. Therefore, I think of Physical Education as a phenomenon that cuts across several institutions, a system of knowledge that guides people's lives, being a

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<sup>3</sup> When I talk about meanings of moving, I am obviously referring to people's ability to produce meanings and symbols in space-time for the countless motor practices they perform, directly or indirectly, through Physical Education and Sport as relatively autonomous scientific-pedagogical systems, which are sometimes close to each other, sometimes far from each other. Here we must make a distinction with the notion of moving present in Kunz (2004). For the author, the moving (as something proper to the subject, a free and creative action from inside to outside) would be more present in some motor activities than in others. Dances and playful activities, according to Kunz (2004), would express more paradigmatically the qualities of moving than Sports (of high performance) or the practices that it encompasses in the notion of motor learning. I do not follow this view for a number of metatheoretical and theoretical reasons. There is no space here to develop this theme as it deserves. Without disregarding the contributions of the moving theory disseminated and expanded in Brazil by Kunz, I just want to point out that the theory of movingness I have been outlining recognizes that every motor activity related to the world of Physical Education, Sports, physical activity, that is, the culture of movement in a broad sense, is potentially an act of singular appropriation by people and groups, and the similarities or differences of this exercise of appropriation of movements through technique is an empirically open question to be investigated. Like Kunz (2004), I also have some criticisms to the approach to human movement from the perspective of an analytical-instrumental paradigm and, to fill such gap, I also seek a theoretical guidance capable of highlighting the inventive capacity of the agents in the appropriation of movements by technique. The phenomenological dimension that is implicit to the notion of movingness is, however, socially co-produced in the sense that the construction of symbols and meanings by people for the movement in Physical Education classes, Sports, gymnastics, fights, bodybuilding, etc. do not happen in an existential void. Moreover, this phenomenological orientation structurally informed in the framework I have been striving to build has no normative starting point. I recognize that a critical attitude to the world through movingness is possible, but this by no means exhausts the potential of Physical Education and Sport in people's lives.

practice and a condition of existence in several domains of human activity. From this point of view, Physical Education emerges as an organizing and synthesizing episteme of a lifestyle. Despite the individual appropriations and the inequalities of access to the multiple manifestations of movement, we can say that Physical Education is not only globally distributed but also reflects the cultural diversity and ludomotor activities structuring our existence.

As a field particularly focused on the movingness, that is, on the movement with symbolic orientations in space-time, Physical Education summons, therefore, a series of motor components to perform. Sports, gymnastics, dance, fights, games and all those activities that nowadays revolve around the English notion of fitness are some of the practices that shape the field of Physical Education in contemporaneity. The Physical Education we share today internationally through common codes is reflexive par excellence. On the contrary, the Physical Education that responded to the demands of the 19th and 20th centuries was pre-reflexive and was anchored to the model of nation-states in order to solve pressing problems of public life and character building, without, however, giving up ludic dimensions. Utilitarianism and playfulness are not enemy variables as some tend to believe. The Physical Education of the gymnastic systems, of the sports system, of the physical-military training, of the medical-hygienist approach, although utilitarian and functional, did not disregard the symbolic-emotional aspects inherent to movingness. Much of the historical criticism that has been addressed to Physical Education in the past disregards this aspect, especially because it only focused on restoring the interests underlying the social uses of these pedagogical models, giving little or almost no attention to the internal logic that gives meaning to these practices and makes them attractive to people.<sup>4</sup>

When I talk about the internal logic of motor activities, I am obviously referring to Pierre Parlebas' theory (1981), which has the merit of developing a scientific approach to the problem of human movement as it relates to our craft, a pedagogy of motor behaviors based on the science of motor action as proposed by the French author. In any case, Parlebas' model lacks a deeper dimension of historicity. What he calls the internal logic of games and sports is, in fact, the result of a process of sociocultural development, of psycho and sociogenetic nature in the sense of Elias (1994a), of the movement in space-time beyond the basic needs of survival. Purmamarca, like so many other villages and towns that retain aspects of pre-modern social formations, invited this reflection. The intertwining of traditional ways of living with the ways of being in the world coextensive with the reflexivity of modernity offered a backdrop that brought to light the continuities and discontinuities between our sports and the games of our ancestors, between our athletic activities and those of pre-modern communities, between our movingness ludically exercised in the sphere of leisure and the movingness full of meaning that humanized us and allowed us to found the social order.

<sup>4</sup> It is a reading present, for example, in some moments of the historiographical narrative formulated by Soares (1994). For an evaluation of the argument, see: SOARES, C. L. **Educação Física: raízes europeias e Brasil**. Campinas: Autores Associados, 1994.

Since in Purmamarca the notion of movingness revealed its strength and analytical power in my way of thinking about Physical Education and justifying it, it also immediately occurred to me that every human being that exists or ever existed would have his or her physique somehow educated, after all, this is a dimension through which the structure of affections and personality is shaped, the way that not only allowed us to constitute ourselves as social beings, but also the distinctive condition to bring up the material order of things by means of technique in the very long term scale. Obviously, the system of knowledge to which Physical Education refers dates back to the modern period, a notion that probably could also arise due to the contributions made in the writings of prominent educational reformers such as Rabelais, Montaigne, Locke, Rousseau (SARGENT, 1908; BERNIQUE, 1937) and the increasing differentiation of the educational process into intellectual, moral, and physical.

In summary, it can be said that the education of the physique through movingness has always existed, being this an attribute of the civilizational process, a human need through which our *métier* was possible and gained expressive contours in modernity. It is true that the senses and orientation symbols of movingness in the space-time scale have not always been the same. Nor is it possible to maintain that the social uses of movingness are invariant in the course of history. It should be emphasized that, in reflexively modeled environments like our modern democracies, becoming more and more physically educated means being perceived through movement in the context in which one lives and, therefore, allowing oneself to question the meanings of the motor practices in which one participates. As far as I could tell in Purmamarca, people were physically educated, and this was not just about body aesthetics and/or physical performance. It went beyond that.

### 3 MOVINGNESS, AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL UNIVERSAL

It comes from the epistemic minority in the process of being overcome in our area or from the autophagic relationship that we have in the academic field, the difficulty to recognize our debts with the intellectuals of Physical Education and Sport. Sometimes, the feeling is that the prestige and recognition in the academic-scientific field, especially for those who work in interface with the references of Human and Social Sciences, is only possible by alluding to renowned authors such as Weber, Marx, Bourdieu, Giddens, Elias, Foucault, Habermas, and so on. For my part, I realized that this logic goes against the scientific autonomy of Physical Education and feeds back the theoretical prejudice that we have been suffering for a long time in the social world. On the contrary, I think that there is no reason to silence our internal influences, nor to make a laudatory mention of them. Nor is it about manifesting dogmatic affiliation with one or another author in the field, although this is possible and often happens in our field. It is, rather, a pragmatic relationship with knowledge and intellectual honesty. Much of what I think about Physical Education and Sport is also due to intellectuals of Physical Education and Sport, such as Marchi Júnior, Gebara, Bracht, Tani, Oliveira, Betti, Kunz, Cagigal, Parlebas, Sérgio, Le Boulch, Renson, and, more recently, Garcia, among others.

Incidentally, it was during my stay at the Sports Faculty of the University of Porto to attend a post-doctoral course under the supervision of Dr. Rui Proença Garcia that I was able to deepen more on his thought about Sport and Physical Education. The reading of some of his books and articles, as well as the countless conversations accumulated throughout 2021, were opportunities to broaden my understanding of these fields of human action. I owe to Dr. Rui Garcia, among other intellectual contributions, the adoption of his criteria for the demarcation of the specificity of the sportive phenomenon to delineate part of the aspects through which the movingness that interests Physical Education takes shape and configures itself as an anthropological universal. As a matter of fact, I am unaware of any other model in the specialized literature that has proposed to define Sport from the elements that make it a singular human activity. Since my Doctoral Thesis, when I decided to discuss the symbolic-emotional economy of modern sport (SOUZA, 2014), I have been searching for this specificity, which I found convincingly in the theoretical argumentation of the book *No Labirinto do desporto* (In the labyrinth of sport) written by the Portuguese professor. According to Garcia (2015), playfulness, performance and overcoming are characteristics vectored in a very particular way in sporting practices, referring to a pedagogy of training<sup>5</sup> and a relationship of people with sport that is of agency and transcendence.

In fact, training refers to a distinctive feature of sport and makes it a phenomenon that largely shapes the existence of human beings. Through training, but not only through it, both biographical and autobiographical patterns of movement in contemporaneity are built.<sup>6</sup> The sportive movingness exercised either in the scope of leisure activities, high-performance level or school Physical Education implies significantly in training, in searching for performance levels, in learning techniques, values, generating feelings, and making of all this a symbol of life guidance. Sport is one of the most important scenes of modernity. The prestige it has achieved among us allied to its polysemy and polymorphism surely make it the paradigm of movingness in the universe of international Physical Education. Notice how many practices have been going through a process of sportivization of its codes. The reach of Sport in our lives is something unavoidable. In Portugal and Spain, people who go to gyms, to parks to run, walk or cycle declare themselves athletes. Training is

5 According to Garcia (2017, p. 99): "O treino, como tantas outras realidades da vida, possui uma pluralidade de formas e de sentidos, não deixando nunca de ser treino" (Training, like so many other realities of life, has a plurality of forms and meanings, never ceasing to be training). Further, the author points out that: "O treino é assim a condição para conhecermos a excelência humana, a *areté* grega, possuindo um valor muito para além de um simples adestramento técnico. O treino abre-nos as portas da existência humana, perguntando e buscando os seus limites" (Training is thus the condition for us to know human excellence, the Greek *arete*, possessing a value far beyond a simple technical training. Training opens the doors of human existence to us, asking and seeking its limits) (GARCIA, 2017, p. 102). In fact, training as it is formulated in the contexts of Physical Education and Sport allow us undeniable levels of transcendence, some of them culminating with the production of excellence of performance, just like what happens in several other areas of social activity like science, work, arts, technology, literature and so on. For the theory of Physical Education I have been defending, the notion of training is important, but it is not characterized as a pre-doctrinal dimension for the main reason of not exhausting the notion of movingness, after all, although all motor actions can be trained, they do not necessarily need a methodical action in this sense.

6 This distinction between biography and autobiography of movement was addressed in my recent book *Do homo movens ao homo academicus: rumo a uma teoria reflexiva da Educação Física* (From homo movens to homo academicus: towards a reflexive theory of Physical Education). Generally speaking, by movement biography I mean the writing of the moving that is made in the teacher-student complicity, while the autobiography of movement is the relation that the human being builds with Physical Education and Sport, regardless of the direct intervention of a teacher or professional of the area.



a verb that is increasingly part of the lexicon by which people give meaning to their lifestyles. Considering the scope of the notion of Sport in contemporary society, it can be said that it covers a good part of the movingness that encompasses the universe of Physical Education.

However, things were not always like this. When the notions-synthesis of Sport and Physical Education did not even exist, the movingness as a phenomenon was already there. It is also because it resists history that movingness constitutes an anthropological universal. Ever since consciousness awakened or meaningful measures of consciousness progressively surfaced — and this may have occurred for any number of reasons — movingness has consisted of our primary quality of being-in-the-world. When the last human being departs, the movingness, which is the word, will be removed. All that remains of architectural heritage, of printed or digital culture, will cease to have meaning from the moment human beings disappear. What we were able to build through our movements — movingness as a thing and movingness as a practice — will no longer have any meaning. In the event that in the distant future some intelligent life around us discovers the traces of our achievements and the civilization we have built, it will probably wonder how we have done so many things, but have not been able to ensure our continuity.

In the condition of word, the movingness that is human movement as a symbol of orientation in space-time is present, therefore, in all the practices and institutions we create. Aristotle, in his books *Physics* and *Metaphysics*, when theorizing about movement with some inferences, including the bodily movements he referred to as exercise, supports this interpretation. As movement is generically defined by the Stagyrian as “la realización de lo potencial en tanto que potencial” (the realization of the potential as much as the potential) (Aristoteles, 1994, p. 453), it is present both in what was moved and in the mover. The Greek philosopher says that “cuando lo producido es algo distinto del propio ejercicio, el acto de tales potencias se realiza en lo que es producido” (when what is produced is something other than the exercise itself, the act of such powers is realized in what is produced), while “cuando no hay obra alguna aparte de la actividad, la actividad se realiza en los agentes mismos” (when there is no work apart from the activity, the activity is carried out on the agents themselves) (ARISTÓTELES, 1994, p. 384-385). Evidently, not all of the consequences of this demarcation could be extracted by Aristotle to establish a theoretical basis for Physical Education or Sport. His interest was rather for Physics in general, a science that would have movement as the fundamental object of its justification.

Moreover, it was impossible, in the context in which these Aristotelian writings were elaborated and even far from the Stagyrian’s gnosiological pretensions, to associate to a theory of movement the symbolic-emotional dimension of space-time that is the addition that people confer to — and transfer to — the objects and practices they create through technique. In any case, we know from such different theoretical developments in the Humanities as the theorizations carried out by Gehlen (1987), Leroi-Gourhan (2002) or Elias (1994b) that this is exactly what happened and continues to happen — with certain additional complexors peculiar to the global space-time in which we live and act. The movingness that is at the genesis of games,

exercises and athletic competitions, gymnastics, dance, fights, and sports in the social formations of the past had this characteristic within the groups in which such practices or manifestations of movement appeared, were disseminated, recreated or abandoned due to the appearance of others. Many of these practices could even assume various functions within the perimeter of social groups, communities, and societies in which they enjoyed prestige, serving, therefore, ritual, military, therapeutic, and/or recreational purposes. Whether, however, with multiple or univocal meanings, the fact is that such motor practices and activities undeniably contributed to an education of people's physical bodies, which, at the same time, was also an education of personalities and individual sensibilities, variable and changeable throughout human history.

In my investigative path aligned with the exercise of building my autobiography of movement through walks in different places full of meanings for our history, I have had the opportunity to come across traces, signs, evidences and the monumentalization of the movingness that interests the world of Physical Education. Since in Purmamarca I was convinced that this notion deserved a more systematic investment in my research agenda, I have been using it retrospectively and prospectively, not only to objectify my own experiences translated into movement, but also to think about the place that movingness occupied in other historical configurations, being reflected in the practices that reached us and in the cultural artifacts and monuments that remained for posterity. Among some of the most significant immersions I have been able to accomplish so far in this domain are the visits I made to some pre-Columbian and Roman archeological sites. The stelae of dancers and swimmers that I could see on Mount Albán in southern Mexico, the fields of the ancient Mayan ball game that I visited in Calakmul, also in Mexico, the walks I took through Piazza Navona in Rome, where Domitian's old stadium used to be located, are examples of the movingness that took place in history. And what about the paintings by Goya or Portinari in which the theme of playfulness is depicted? There is an excess of movingness in these compositions and I was fortunate enough to appreciate them *in loco*.

#### 4 SCOPE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT IN CONTEMPORANEITY

The theory of movingness evoked here and based on my recent book "Do homo movens ao homo academicus" (From *homo movens* to *homo academicus*) (SOUZA, 2021) views Physical Education and Sport as total social facts and systems of knowledge. The ontological retreat promoted by this way of (re)placing the epistemological founding problems of our area answers both to the latent Marxism that superimposes a criterion of political demarcation to the criterion of scientific demarcation of our craft, and to the relativistic culturalism that reduces Physical Education to discourses and language games, making impossible and unfeasible any attempt of organizing scientifically and pedagogically the field from a minimum theoretical consensus. I have been defending that a strong ontology of Physical Education is centered on the notion of human movement, and that should be the theoretical unit that summons a diversity of looks and approaches to investigate and intervene in our area. In Brazil, despite the lack of consensus in the academic

field about the scientific status of Physical Education and its place in the hierarchy of knowledge, the fact is that our profession, increasingly, from a relational view of science, has presented itself as its own scientific domain with a specific object and with a methodological plurality to develop investigations that answer the pressing problems of *homo movens* in contemporaneity.

Physical Education in Brazilian society is an articulated whole and has been the theory of its practice in the most different spaces of intervention. It is true that the models of epistemological organization adopted to scientifically demarcate Physical Education in higher education, especially in the United States and in some European countries, have influenced the organization of the scientific field that guides the direction of the profession in Brazil. Here, however, making the distinction between Physical Education — a knowledge system — and school Physical Education is a reality. In other places, talking about school Physical Education sounds like a redundancy, after all, they perceive and have come to understand Physical Education as something related to school. In Portugal, either through Sports Sciences — predominant — or the Science of Human Motricity, Physical Education is the realization of the mentioned scientific domains in the school institution. These are evidently legitimate models which respond to the imperatives of Physical Education and Sport in the respective societies, aligning theory and practice towards the construction of horizons for people.

Despite the struggles for concepts in the academic field, the ontological retreat underlying this theory of movingness allows us to elaborate on the problem of *homo movens* with another scope in our area. Since movingness is understood as the movement as it gains meaning and form in Physical Education and Sport, it points to the perennality of these domains of human activity, to their approximations and their distances. With some degree of confidence, we can say that Physical Education and Sport constitute relatively autonomous knowledge systems that go on to posterity. They are phenomena that are well disseminated in the social world and that are already established in the academic field, with a broad philosophical and scientific defense. Despite the feeling of epistemological minority still present in our field, Physical Education and Sport inform life and are triggered by people through the most different platforms of information and vehicles of knowledge to compose their reflective narratives of the self and their autobiographies of movement (SOUZA, 2021). Sport and Physical Education are phenomena of recognized importance in society, and there are no more doubts about their scientific-pedagogical status in the hierarchy of knowledge.

In addition, it is worth pointing out that regardless of hierarchization that exists or tries to justify itself between Physical Education and Sport or vice-versa, the fact is that both domains of social activity deal with the need for movingness of human beings beyond the normal operating chains, that is, beyond all those other movements and gestural bases involved in professional activities and daily routines, as I wanted to argue from Leroi-Gourhan (SOUZA, 2021). Therein lies the understanding that movingness, as it is valued in the scope of Physical Education and Sport, not only has been fulfilling but can increasingly fulfill a function of cultural addition to people towards the transcendental. There is something poetic and simple in movingness that

makes it worth the training, the time, and the energy we dedicate to it. Movingness playfully exercised outdoors, in the public streets of the cities, in squares and parks, in gyms, gymnasiums and tracks, in studios, in sporting events, in clubs, in Physical Education classes, among other spaces, gives back a perspective of enchantment to human beings. Through movingness, Physical Education and Sport win people's hearts. Our condition of *homo movens* is more enhanced in these domains of social activity than in others. That's why this notion-process widens the reading horizon about the reach of Physical Education and Sport in the reflexive societies we live in, besides allowing to shorten the gap between such different views that, for a long time, dispute the monopoly of the legitimate and legitimating episteme of our *métier*.

## 5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Eu queria pegar na semente da palavra.

(I wanted to touch the seed of the word)

BARROS, Manoel de. **Poesia completa**, p. 443

Thinking about Physical Education and Sport from the perspective of movingness outlined throughout the text means, first of all, to recognize, justify and endorse the importance of these phenomena in the context of human life and existence. The movingness that in my trajectory has functioned as a theory, method, and lifestyle, allows me to equate some of the old epistemological problems present and routine in our field. It is true that the desire to dimension these problems and solve them has already been a motive for scientific endeavor. Pierre Parlebas (1981), for example, has the merit of perceiving that the interest of Physical Education is not, from the start, neither in the mind nor in the body, but in the motor action that is a synthesis of these dimensions. In my understanding, however, his model, too structuralist, by claiming to restore an internal logic of the motor activities from the practices and not from the people who do the practices, ends up leaving the problem halfway to a solution. Rightly, his model criticizes this dichotomy, overcomes it, but does not explain how this happens ontologically in the course of history.

The theory of movingness arises not only to criticize the dualism of body versus mind as false in the perimeter of our craft, but to demonstrate that human action simply dismissed the separation between the sensible and the intelligible in order to make motor practices symbols of orientation and communication in the world in the different configurations of space-time. It can be said that movingness in its ludic, performance, and overcoming characteristics would correspond to a pre-logic of what Parlebas postulated as the internal logic of sports and motor activities. The primacy of historical reasoning allows us to face some problems that would otherwise be unsolvable. Hence the relevance of investigating the antecedents of Physical Education and modern Sport and trying to understand the place they occupied in the respective historical configurations. Although the notions of Sport and Physical Education were not present in the pre-modern social formations, the problem of education of the physique, through experience and mutual learning among people, has always existed. It is an inescapable, ontological, and documented dimension. Movingness is an anthropological universal, in the sense that it crosses history and

is active among different peoples and cultures. That's why it is configured as a pre-theory of Physical Education and cements the basis for a philosophy and science of human movement, as I could argue throughout this essay.

Regarding the contemporaneity of movingness, I think that it is expressing at the current stage we live in — the first two decades of the 21st century — the existence of a new motus contract of mankind,<sup>7</sup> that is, a renewed hierarchy of sport preferences on a global scale. The emergence of this new hierarchy of supply and consumption of practices and artifacts related to the area of Physical Education as configured in the reflexive societies we have built has repositioned our profession in the social structure and considerably expanded its range of action. As a knowledge system, Physical Education has a global reach and appeal. Despite the different theoretical solutions presented to the problem of the scientific specificity of Physical Education and its justification in the context of universities, the fact is that we are internationally recognized in our practice as professionals or teachers of Physical Education. From the theoretical perspective used in this text, this is not necessarily a problem, being, on the contrary, the basis of a professional virtue, of an ethos and a telos which is justified by the sportively exerted movement towards transcendence — and the construction of meanings for life — its justification. This is the praise that I could give to Physical Education and Sport. That is the way I have been moving.

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<sup>7</sup> For more on this topic, see: SOUZA, Juliano de; OLIVEIRA, Vinicius Machado de; GARCIA, Rui Proença. Um novo contrato motor nos domínios do esporte, lazer e Educação Física? Aportes para uma teoria reflexiva do movimento humano. **Revista Brasileira de Ciências do Esporte**, v. 44, p. 1-9, 2022.

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**Resumo:** O ensaio apresenta alguns dos desenvolvimentos da noção de movência e justifica o seu alcance para pensar a Educação Física e o Esporte, bem como suas relações. Inicialmente, são sumarizados alguns dos posicionamentos teóricos sobre a Educação Física e o Esporte em nosso campo. Na sequência, se contextualiza o aparecimento do conceito de movência na trajetória do autor, para, no próximo tópico, defendê-lo como um universal antropológico. Finalmente, busca-se a partir da teoria da movência esboçada apontar o alcance da Educação Física e do Esporte como sistemas de conhecimento na contemporaneidade. Conclui-se que a movência expande o entendimento de Educação Física e Esporte, além de permitir equacionar alguns dos reconhecidos problemas epistemológicos de nosso ofício.

**Palavras-chave:** Movência. Educação Física. Esporte. Epistemologia

**Resumen:** Este ensayo presenta algunos de los avances acerca de la noción del movimiento y justifica su alcance para pensar en la Educación Física y el deporte, así como en sus relaciones. Inicialmente, se resumen algunas de las posiciones teóricas sobre la Educación Física y el deporte en nuestro campo. Posteriormente, se contextualiza el surgimiento del concepto de movimiento en la trayectoria del autor, para, en el paso siguiente, defenderlo como un universal antropológico. Finalmente, a partir de la teoría del movimiento esbozada, se busca señalar el alcance de la Educación Física y el deporte como sistemas de conocimiento en la contemporaneidad. Se concluye que el movimiento amplía la comprensión de la Educación Física y el deporte, además de permitirnos equiparar algunos de los problemas epistemológicos reconocidos de nuestro oficio.

**Palabras clave:** Movimiento. Educación Física. Deporte. Epistemología.

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The author declares that there is no conflict of interest in this study.

### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

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### EDITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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