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Dancing Rupestres: the radical of the body in intentional aesthetic movement

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ABSTRACT – Dancing Rupestres: the radical of the body in intentional aesthetic movement – The text presents a critical analysis of the roots of dance from the perspective of historical and dialectical materialism, the formulations of Marx and Engels, and of the Marxist aesthetes who followed them, proposing a study of the concept, reason and purpose of dance for the human race. It approaches themes such as work as the founding category of the human being. It then discusses human body movement as free creation work, intentional body movements of work and the process of their transition into dance movements. Finally, based on studies on human manifestations developed on the aesthetic level, it shows how the human being arrived at dance as art.
Keywords: **Body. Dance. Art. Work. Historical and Dialectical Materialism.**

RÉSUMÉ – Rupestres Dansants: le radical du corps en mouvement intentionnel esthétique – Ce texte présente une analyse critique sur la racine de la danse dans la perspective du matérialisme historique et dialectique, des formulations de Marx et Engels et des esthètes marxistes qui lui ont suivi, en proposant une étude sur le concept, la raison et la finalité de la danse pour le genre humain. Nous abordons des thèmes tels que le travail en tant que catégorie fondatrice de l'être humain. En suite, le mouvement corporel humain comme œuvre de création libre, les mouvements corporels intentionnels du travail et le processus de transition de ceux-ci aux mouvements de danse. Et, enfin, à partir des études sur les manifestations humaines développées sur le plan esthétique, comment l'être humain en est venu à la danse en tant qu'art.
Mots-clés: **Corps. Danse. Art. Travail. Matérialisme Historique et Dialectique.**

RESUMO – Rupestres Dançantes: o radical do corpo em movimento intencional estético – O texto apresenta uma análise crítica sobre a raiz da dança, a partir da perspectiva do materialismo histórico e dialético, das formulações de Marx e Engels, e dos estetas marxistas conseguintes a eles, propondo um estudo sobre o conceito, a razão e a finalidade da dança para o gênero humano. Aborda temas como o trabalho, como categoria fundante do ser humano. Em sequência, o movimento corporal humano como trabalho de criação livre, os movimentos corporais intencionais de trabalho e o processo de transição destes para movimentos dançantes. Por fim, a partir dos estudos acerca das manifestações humanas desenvolvidas no plano estético, como o ser humano chegou à dança como arte.
Palavras-chave: **Corpo. Dança. Arte. Trabalho. Materialismo Histórico e Dialético.**

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Although it may seem obvious as an initial statement, it is nevertheless worth reinforcing: everything that exists has or is movement[1]. Everything moves and generates movement. The universe, with its forms of matter and energy, as well as the totality of time and space, is movement. Among living beings, plants and animals, movement exists from micro-movements to the more notorious ones linked to the needs for survival and cycles of existence. However, in a more specific group of these beings – humans – one notices that their movements are not only marked by the natural need for survival, but also exist as a purpose.

If everything that exists moves, but of these physicalities only humans move as *telos* or finality, one wonders: what are and how are these movements? Why and for what purpose do human beings perform them? How did human movement become dance? However, other more fundamental questions seem to precede these: after all, what does one move? Why and for what does one move? The purpose of such questions is to help reflect on the radical – in the sense of going to the root – of dance, to analyze the principles and structural elements of the human activity of dance that took place before the emergence of theatrical dance and its genres, styles and schools.

In the first decades of the 20th century, these same questions intrigued Rudolf Laban. In that period, inspired by François Delsarte's formulations, who approached the body in a different way from the conventional one for the period, that is, valuing it as a mode and expression of a subject (Grebler, 2012), the dancer developed a theoretical and practical study on human body movement, which later gave rise to the complex system of movement language called Laban Movement Analysis or, simply, the Laban System.

According to Julio Mota, the conception of human bodily movement developed by Laban was treated thoroughly in *The language of movement – A guidebook to Choreutics* (1974). On its construction process, the author clarifies that:

> Through his research, Laban identified a number of basic properties inherent to movement. The identification of these properties enabled the formulation of propositions that made it possible to establish basic principles for the understanding and application of movement. [...] From these basic principles, Laban concluded that it was possible to know the purpose of a

P* Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
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> certain movement if four questions were answered: What is moving? Where does it move? When does it move? How does it move? The answers to these questions form the answer to the larger question: why does one move? Hence, by understanding movement (and its functions) Laban deduced that it would be possible to understand what motivates people to move (Mota, 2012, p. 63).

Such preliminary issues studied by him were the basis for the systematization of Laban's Basic Principles, in which, for the author, *a priori*, what moves is the body. Lenira Rengel argues that the terms body and corporal, used by Laban in his works and research, are used "[...] to deal with all aspects of the body: mind-reason/mind-emotion/sensible body/mechanical body, that is, intellectual, emotional, and physical aspects. Laban used the terms: spiritual, mental and emotional aspects of movement" (Rengel, 2005).

Starting from the premise that the body is the agent that moves, one must emphasize decisive aspects of this process, and its trajectory of conformation transformation, in order to understand the structure currently known as the human body.

For supporters of the theory of evolution, these living beings, who have the primary needs to nourish themselves and reproduce, developed the ability to perceive the suitable environmental conditions in order to remain alive, adapting to the most varied surroundings. This process has directly influenced the ways plants move, internally and externally, for example.

A similar process occurred with animals: their equipment for perceiving variations in the environment provided elements so that they could perform these readings and ensure their survival. However, the sensory cells – which occupied the surface of the body so that the animal could quickly assess changes in environmental conditions – were easily damaged, often irreparably, due to their vulnerability. In the constant search for survival, organisms became more complex and the appearance of the exoskeleton became possible. As such:

> As the degree of organizational complexity of living beings increases, nature provides the advent of the so-called exoskeletons (exo = external), [...] in an attempt, with a calcareous shell, therefore rigid, to confer greater protection on living beings (Telles, 2003, p. 80).

P* Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
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Despite the greater protection that this structure guaranteed to the animal, its rigidity and weight imposed restrictions on mobility, which still made it susceptible to threats from the environment. In the continuum of the organizational complexification of living beings, it occurred that the exoskeleton, a structure that previously protected the organs inside, moved to the center of the organism, and now it is covered by muscles, viscera, and skin. The biologist Fernando Telles (2003), using the evolutionary theory, clarifies that the cells responsible for perceiving the environment to maintain their protection, however, remained encased by the skeleton, specifically by a part of it called the spine, located in the center of the body. This, in turn, besides being lighter, due to its spongy interior, had a greater number of parts and pieces, which were now articulated, allowing a greater variation of movements, and therefore, greater mobility. Branches of sensory cells departed from the skull (brain) and the spinal column (spinal cord) and spread to the body surface, thus preserving their first attribution.

However, despite the protection developed for the animals' sensory equipment, the process of transformation was not complete; vertebrates, which until that moment used supports on four bases, gradually released the front peripheral limbs, becoming upright and bipedal. This change in the position of the spine in relation to the ground triggered a wide range of anatomical changes, but mainly, it gave the upper limbs the freedom to develop their sensitivity and capacity for movement in such a sophisticated and complex way that their reflexes became remarkable, in the way the whole neurological support developed. In this period of transformation, the hand developed the opposable thumb in relation to the other fingers, the telencephalon became highly developed, and so the being known as Human was formed. (Campbell, 1990)

About the relation of hand and brain development in the process of hominization, Bernard Campbell (1990, p. 56) emphasizes:

> There is not the slightest doubt that the ultimate refinement of the hand was not simply anatomical, but also entailed the enhancement of sensory perception and motor control, and thus a more developed brain. [...] The hand, as much as the eye, contributed to the formation of man; both organs provided him with a new perception of his environment and, through his material culture, to exercise a new control over it.

P* Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
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This is the body that moves: the human body. The human being, as described above, is a being of nature that, as such, has its own needs for survival, performing a constant exercise of adaptation. However, it goes beyond the simple adaptive process of other living beings, and starts to create new conditions by dominating and transforming the nature that surrounds it, and it does this with/in/by the movement of and for the body, through purposeful action, that is, through the Work. Based on these considerations, some questions are reiterated: why and for what does it move? In what form does this body move?

The arduous search for such answers must presuppose the choice of the ideology used to read and understand the history of the human being, the concrete reality, and the relations engendered by him/her throughout history.

To do so, it is necessary to bring to light two very significant lines of thought in the history of philosophy, which will assist in understanding the lens used here: idealism and materialism. Differently from the trivial way these terms are applied in everyday life, from the point of view of philosophy, idealism is a tendency that supposes the priority of the idea over matter: it is reason that allows human beings to create reality. Materialism, in general, conversely, asserts that all reality is by essence material, and more specifically, that human reality is so.

According to Lessa and Tonet (2008), for idealists – notwithstanding the peculiarities and specificities of each historical period – the human universe, as well as history, is the active, decisive and direct result of human consciousness. The concrete world is a kind of reflection of the world of ideas. However, for materialism – in general mechanistic and reductionist – reality is the direct and immediate result of the laws of nature, and the human being depends unilaterally on the biological being.

However, both assumptions have weaknesses in their ways of understanding human beings and history. It was from the philosophical contributions of Hegel and Feuerbach, and the historical conditions triggered by the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution, that Karl Marx was able to overcome idealism and mechanistic materialism, and systematize the historical conception called historical and dialectical materialism (Lessa; Tonet, 2008).

P* Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
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The point was not to merge these two ways of conceiving the world of human beings, but to analyze to what extent each current disregarded or considered materiality and ideation in the construction of history.

In the conception of historical and dialectical materialism, the material and the ideal are distinct, in fact opposed, but they coexist within a unity in which the material is basilar, but not reductionist. Without the spirit, matter can continue to exist, but the opposite cannot happen. In the human being, the spirit was historically constituted from the material work, and remains conditioned to it (Bhaskar, 2001). However, in the dialectical movement of human praxis – action/thinking/new action/new thinking – if, in the beginning, the action of the human being over matter (work) gave rise to the creation of his ideative capacity; this, in the process of its establishment, started to have direct repercussions on the action, delineating it and, simultaneously, being delineated by it. In this way, it becomes apparent that "[...] the world of men is neither a pure idea, nor is it only matter, but a synthesis of idea and matter that could only exist through the transformation of reality (therefore, it is material) [...]" (Lessa; Tonet, 2008, p. 43), but that, necessarily – through the consciousness of the world and of oneself (of the human individual as an agent) generated in the action/work – presents an ideative component. The human being is constituted, in this way, by his/her capacity to pre-design, in consciousness, what he/she is going to accomplish in practice, and to overcome his/her own ideas, transforming them based on the action.

From human natural needs to the constitution of art

Human beings, just like other animals, have needs that must be met in order to ensure their existence and physical maintenance. However, what actually differentiates humans from the rest of the animals is the ability to live and meet the needs they have created, beyond those imposed by their organic body: the actual Human needs.

Humans live and are part of nature; however, they do not simply coexist with it, using it as an immediate means of life, but also as object/matter and instrument of their vital activity. In the development of the world, objectifying themselves through the process of work, the human being is confirmed as a generic being; this operative production, this devel-

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opment is their generic life, their capacity to make with nature, and of nature, a conscious work, and thus, to materially and concretely realize themselves as human.

Marx conceptualizes the process of labor as objectification of the human being in the world: "[...] the object of labor is, therefore, the objectification of man's species- life; for he duplicates himself not only, as in consciousness, intellectually, but also actively, in reality, and therefore he sees himself in a world that he has created" (Marx, 2004, p. 85). This is Labor.

On work as a seminal category in human constitution, Adolfo Sánchez Vázquez (2010, p. 52) affirms:

> Man is only man by objectifying himself, creating objects in which he exteriorizes himself. One could say, therefore, that he is at the same time subject and object, and that he is only a properly human subject insofar as he objectifies himself, and makes himself an object. This becoming an object, this objectification, far from diminishing the subject, as occurs in Hegel, is precisely what makes man and keeps him at his human level.

Marx points out that labor is the crucial mediator between the material world and ideas, the element that allows human beings to produce and reproduce life in a specifically human way. Through work, the human subject produces a new reality. This new reality he produces is not something alien to him, but a reality loaded with his human condition and his impressions of it; in this way, the relationship is not unilateral. Through praxis (action/thinking/new action/new thinking), the human being gains continuity in the real world; when this new objectified concrete product is constituted, loaded with his subjectivity, it allows the subject to recognize himself in it and to perceive his Human essence imprinted on it. Thus, by transforming nature, the human being is not only creating a product external to him, but also constituting himself as a Human Being.

Humanity, in its totality, was produced in and through the process of labor, and the decisive milestone of the march of transformation from ape to human being occurred with the combined and amalgamated transformation of hands and brain, that is, of action and thought in construction. Accordingly, "[...] consciousness and comprehension are effects of the grasping of things and their manipulation, insofar as these two manual op-

P* Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
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erations imply horizons of displacement and an apprehension common to several consciousnesses, more or less cooperating" (Brun, 1991, p. 61).

> We conclude then that the hand is not only an organ of work, it is also a product of it. It was thanks to work, in a phase of adaptation to new functions and to the hereditary transmission of these acquired refinements to the muscles and ligaments, and more slowly also to the bones; it was due to the ever wider, varied and complex employment of these abilities that the hand of man could reach such perfection as to realize [...] the paintings of Raphael, the statues of Thorwaldsen and the music of Paganini. (Engels, 1990, p. 22).

Work is done by the human being, and in doing it, he does it to himself. This statement is not reduced to the anatomical aspects of human development, but also, as Engels points out, includes the development of other spheres – cognitive, sensible, social – that make up the human condition, along its path of transformation.

The objectification of the human being in the concrete world makes it real and concrete, while the human being constituted-thought by idealism is an unreal and abstract being. Vázquez ties this assumption together with Marx's clarity when he quotes him:

> In the animal, the relation between the need and the activity it satisfies is direct and immediate; '...it produces only under the dominion of immediate physical need, whilst man produces even when he is free from physical need and only truly produces in freedom thereof' (Vázquez, 2010, p. 59).

These free productions are directly linked to the need to externalize his essential forces as a human being, and they can either "[...] be humanized natural needs (hunger, sex, etc.) when the instinctive takes on a human form; or they can be new needs, created by man himself, in the course of his social development, such as the aesthetic need" (Vázquez, 2010, p. 57).

It can be concluded, therefore, that humanized needs were created, historically and socially, while the human being constituted himself as a creator of a new universe, establishing society and history, in and through collective work.

Humanized needs express the human creative impetus, which manifests and materializes the different dimensions of the human being. The essential creative force concretized in the forms of human objectification transcends those of useful character and, historically, goes on to encompass

P* Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
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those of a spiritual-human profile, such as the forms of aesthetic objectification or, more specifically, the artistic forms.

Georg Lukács (1982) states that one of the ways human beings have to reflect or apprehend reality is Art. Art, therefore, is a work of free creation and a form of knowing reality.

Unlike the utilitarian need for production, the need that drives the human being to create in art is to appropriate the given reality, enrich it with his/her worldview and human dimensions, giving him/herself and others the opportunity to know themselves and the totality that surrounds them from a unique perspective: that of an artist. However, the artist, just like other humans, is a historical and social individual whose worldview is the fruit of all previous human history, especially the social and cultural reality in which he/she lives and produces work.

It is from the fertile basis of the aesthetic aspects present in nature – that is, as they are perceived, identified and qualified by the human being – and from their reflection in the products of labor, as well as in the intentional body movements typical of this human activity, that the human being will produce the artistic language: Dance. Thus, could this be the radical of dance from the perspective of historical and dialectical materialism? Are these the principles and structural elements of the human production of dance?

At first, bodily movements and the objects produced had an immediate utilitarian character. When humans produced in a scarce way, they soon consumed what was produced and were forced to return to subsistence production, leaving little condition for any other quality of work, spiritual cultivation, for example. However, the human being only started to feel the need to produce bodily movements and objects with spiritual utility from the moment when the functional production became surplus, that is, in the Neolithic period or the Agrarian Revolution, approximately from 10,000 to 3,000 B.C. In this period, agriculture was developed, which led to the transformation of part of the nomads into sedentary human groups; from 6,000 B.C. on, shepherds replaced and/or coexisted with hunters and gatherers. Through the gradual control of nature, the human being learned, little by little, to produce his/her own sustenance: to cultivate and reproduce plants, to stock food, to domesticate wild animals and raise them in captivity.

Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
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At this moment in history, bodily movements and useful objects began to bear, in addition to functional aspects, aesthetic elements, related to beauty and the need for communication/relationship.

> The aesthetic is not only part of a physical object, but it would not exist without it. The material support, the object resulting from human objectification is the way that carries the aesthetic dimension that would not exist outside the objectified materiality [...] the aesthetic dimension is fundamental precisely to provide social communication, whether of the past in relation to the present, or between contemporary beings (Paes, 2011, p. 4).

As such, the aesthetic character of the work satisfies human needs, namely, those of objectification in the world, expression, and relationship; in it, the artist has his/her subjectivity materialized. For this reason, in the materialized artwork, the author recognizes him/herself, and his/her humanity is known/recognized by the appreciators or viewers. Once this subjectivity has been objectified, the body movements of dance, just like the objects of art, become a means of human relations between individuals for any latitude or era.

> Work, therefore, is not only the creation of useful objects that satisfy a certain human need, but also the act of objectification and molding of human purposes, ideas or feelings in a concrete-sensible material object. In man's ability to materialize his 'essential forces', to produce material objects that express his essence, lies the possibility of creating objects, such as works of art, that raise to a higher level man's capacity for expression and affirmation, already made explicit in the objects of the work (Vázquez, 2010, p. 69).

Work is not only the execution of useful bodily movements to meet natural human needs, but it is also an act of objectification and modeling of human intentionalities, ideas or feelings – to use Vázquez's terms – in a concrete-sensible bodily movement. It is about the human being's competence to embody his/her essential forces, to elaborate bodily movements that express their essence. Among such competencies is the alternative of creating aesthetic body movements, such as dances, which elevate the human being's faculty of expression and affirmation already evidenced in the productions and body movements performed in the various practical-utilitarian works. However, the bodily movement in the art of dance is not reduced to a means, but to a *telos*, a purpose or destination; that is, this

P* Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
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movement reveals itself as an expression of the human dimensions in their totality, just like in the arts in general.

Art is the materialization of the human being's need to understand him/herself as such, producing sounds (music), bodily movements (dance), and objects (visual arts) with no primary purpose, but specifically aimed at objectifying the human condition as a thinking, creative, and sentient being. "A work of art is first and foremost a creation of man and lives thanks to the creative power it embodies. In art [...], as a human product, man is not only represented or reflected in it, but witnessed, objectified. Art not only expresses or reflects man: it makes him present" (Vázquez, 2010, p. 40).

> Man elevates and asserts himself by transforming reality, humanizing it, and art, with its products, satisfies this need for humanization. Therefore, there is not – nor can there be – 'art for art's sake', but art by and for man. Since man is, by essence, a creative being, he creates artistic products because in them he feels more affirmed, more creative, that is, more human (Vázquez, 2010, p. 43).

For Marx *apud* Vázquez "[...] the objectification of the human essence is necessary, both in the theoretical and practical aspects, as much to convert into human the meaning of man as to create the human meaning appropriate to all the richness of the natural human essence" (Vázquez, 2010, p. 74). Just as the human hand was not only the organ of work, but also the result of it, art, in a dialectical way, is not only the fruit of human superior work, but also composes the human subject, as an object impregnated with humanity.

Once the reflections about the conception of art in the broad sense have been made, the question is: in the peculiar language of dance, did the historical development processes unfold in the same way?

From movement to dance: concept, reason, and purpose

It must be emphasized that decisive conclusions about the genesis of art in general have not yet been reached; the same applies to the origin of dance. Thus, what will be proposed here is the survey of pointers and hypotheses about the transition from work-oriented human body movement to the body movement that became dance, i.e. the radical, the root of dance

P* Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
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from work, the principles and structural elements of human dancing activity that precede academic dances.

In relation to this difficulty of specifying the real conditions for the emergence of art, Lukács (1982, p. 265) stresses that "[...] it is worth repeating every time it comes up: we know practically nothing about the real historical origin of art. In many important arts, such as poetry, music, dance, etc., it is useless on principle to look for documents of origin"[2], and moreover:

> This general difficulty is further increased by the fact that we are not dealing now with the origin of arts or genres, but with principles, structural elements of artistic production, which play very diverse roles in different arts, provided in these extremely varied functions and at very high evolutionary levels (rhythm, proportion, etc.), and which only exceptionally have retained their initial independence (ornamentation), without, of course, regaining in the total culture the importance they had in certain initial stages (Lukács, 1982, p. 265)[3].

The relationship between the external world and human consciousness was thoroughly examined by Lukács when he analyzed the constitution of the artistic reflection. Regarding this focus of Lukács' study, Celso Frederico (2013, p. 121) summarizes:

> The structural principles and elements of artistic production maintain links with the outside world. In order to explain these links and show how art has affirmed its autonomy based on them, Lukács addresses basic manifestations, present in nature itself, which will be developed with the resources specific to art: rhythm, symmetry-proportion and ornamentation.

The human body – this anatomical-physiological structure known today – is endowed with movement and, simultaneously, is the protagonist and result of the evolutionary process of the human being. However, from the beginning, all the movements of the human body had as a priority purpose the production and maintenance of existence.

In the process of work, components are combined in relation to the activity befitting an end, that is, to the work itself: the finality, the matter to which the work is applied, the means and the instrument of work. In this process, the body is the element that carries out the activity of work, as well as the structure that manipulates the utensil of work, and even the instrument of action itself. Evidently, the objectified means of work provide clues

P* Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
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to discover the concrete conditions of the social and economic conjuncture of the period in which they were produced, but no tool, instrument or work utensil was as rigorous in explaining such conditions as the conformation of the human body itself.

> The means of labor are not only mediators for the degree of development of human labor power, but also indicators of the social conditions under which one works. Among the means of labor itself, the mechanical means of labor, whose whole may be called the skeletal and muscular system of production, bear much more decisive characteristic marks of a social epoch of production than those means of labor that serve only as vessels for the object of labor and whose whole may be called, in general terms, the vascular system of production [...] (Marx, 1988, p. 144).

Since work is the means par excellence of changing the surrounding nature for one's own benefit, human beings began to plan their body movements, so that they could serve as a form of relating to the external world. Both the body and human bodily movement were central to this process, so that the tools of work created by humans came to meet the need for materialization of body extensions, in order for the body to act more effectively with respect to nature. Axes, spears, bows, slingshots, ramps, and levers were some of the tools created to overcome human body limitations.

When part of the simian ancestors left the forested areas and started to explore and occupy the less wooded, scrubland regions, they evolved to the bipedal form. Later, in these same grasslands, in this "[...] proto-hominid, the feet became rigid organs of support and sustenance, bringing with them the pelvic changes resulting from upright walking" (Oakley, 1990, p. 41).

With the verticalization of the skull, the greater visual concentration over a wider field, the hands liberated for manipulation and – concomitantly and mainly – the more developed brain activity (Oakley, 1990), proto-hominids started to run, for example, as a defense action against possible threats and predators. It is inferred, therefore, that when they realized that they could determine and command the act of running, they began to use it as a motor action for attacking or hunting. They were able to run to surround an animal and could change the quality and effort of this displacement to succeed in their endeavor. Thus, not only the external nature was modified through the intent of hunting, but also the body of the proto-hominid and the qualitative nuances of movement.

P* Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
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In the creation of working tools as an extension of the body and of purposeful bodily movements to change the adverse conditions of the environment – not only in the making of these tools, but also in their use – human beings began to acquire more refinement and awareness in their faculties of movement. In this way, they were able to use their movements for work: movement became the specialized means for gathering, hunting, preparing food, planting and harvesting.

In this process of overcoming the emergency conditions for survival, body movements also started to be performed with a spiritual purpose. Not only did the objects begin to have aesthetic aspects, but the body movements they performed also gained other qualities, taking on rhythm, for example.

> There are rhythmic elements that integrate nature (day and night, the four seasons), and others that belong to man's somatic existence (breathing, palpitation). All of them, in one way or another, end up being incorporated into daily habits, becoming the basis of "unconditioned reflexes", whether they guide the flight of birds or the walk of man (Frederico, 2013, p. 121).

Analyzing from this point of view, one can evaluate that there are body movements produced by humans that have a primary functional and utilitarian purpose. The squatting of a farmer to plant the manioc branch has the purpose of mastering nature, cultivating food, and producing life; the walk of a fisherman with a basket of fish on his head has the purpose of bridging the distance between the river and his village, providing food, producing life. The repetition and execution of these body movements have rhythm; not intentionally aesthetic, but unconditional and inherent to the movement of work or daily life.

According to the Marxist ontological perspective, "[...] the passage [to the category of aesthetic reflection] occurs when rhythm gains its autonomy and begins to exist outside its immediate manifestation in the labor process, when it ceases to be a moment of immediate daily life to be *the* reflex of this moment" (Frederico, 2013, p. 121).

From this analysis comes the discussion of work as a teleological activity:

> Work, like art, is a teleological activity, but in it rhythm is merely an adjunct, an auxiliary to the intended process of transformation (one need only think here of the primitive work songs). It is only in artistic reflection that

Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
Brazilian Journal on Presence Studies
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> rhythm becomes an evocative purpose. It is then brought into the world of human meanings, undergoing a conscious intensification in order to thereby take on content typical of art made by man and for man. We are now before a manifestation of human self-consciousness: the invention of rhythm in aesthetics is a human creation, and also a true and real creation (Frederico, 2013, p. 122).

One can infer then that when the human being extracts and autonomizes the aesthetic aspect of this functional movement and performs it independently, without the utilitarian purpose, loading it with sensitive forms, senses and meanings, one is producing dance. In other words, if the squatting/standing and walking of both workers is performed with emphasis on the rhythmic aspect, detached from the utilitarian purpose that this rhythm carried before, the movements become Dance.

Rhythm, when evoked to supply a demand of creative spiritual order, as happens in artistic practice, surpasses the technical condition that it assigns to daily and work movements and becomes a constituent element of a work of art.

In this process, human transformation and humanization is not only intellectual, but also, and concomitantly, corporal. Body and mind, mind and body in a complementary and dialectical relationship of human production and reproduction. The totality and unity of the human condition at the service of its self-consciousness: "[...] neither movement without thought, nor movement and thought, but rather movement thought" (Bracht, 1992, p. 54).

When bodily movements were detached from their utilitarian purpose, and directed to fulfill a human need resulting in creative work, these same movements could still be means and/or ends. The intentional movement of the instrumental musician, painter, sculptor, or writer, is a means. For the performing arts (theater, circus, opera), these frontiers of movement as means and ends are blurred. However, it is in dance that the projected, non-utilitarian and aesthetic human bodily movement finds its culmination.

As such, the raw material of dance is specifically the intentional human bodily movement without utilitarian purpose. But we may also ask

P* Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
Brazilian Journal on Presence Studies
E-ISSN 2237-2660

ourselves: Are all planned bodily movements that have no practical-utilitarian purpose dance?

Human beings have created other movements with no utilitarian purpose; look at the infinite number of games, fighting techniques, gymnastic movements, and sports that go back through the ages, centuries, territories, and past societies. All these movements did not have the primary function of producing life, but rather of reproducing it and meeting the demands of humanized needs. In the constant eagerness to challenge their limits, including those linked to the nature of the body, human beings invented ways to explore the creative motor, intellectual, affective, and social potentialities that these modalities of movement promoted (Soares, 1992).

What distinguishes the human bodily movement understood within the manifestations related to the production of body culture and dance is the concrete-sensible and aesthetic portion that it entails and projects.

The difference is in the extraction of the aesthetic aspect from the bodily movements that assume a preferential proportion of the movement, in dance. There is an aesthetic layer to all human bodily movements, whether in work movements, everyday movements, religious movements, playful movements, and even in fighting movements. However, the aesthetic dimension is not the primary interest of these types of movements.

> There is, therefore, no natural beauty in itself, but in relation to man. Natural phenomena only become aesthetic when they acquire a social, human significance. But natural beauty is not something arbitrary or capricious; it requires a material substrate, a certain structuring of sensible, natural properties, without whose support the human, social, aesthetic significance could not occur (Vázquez, 2010, p. 75).

We can see that in nature there are colors, sounds, shapes, and movements: it is a natural, spontaneous, and unconditional determination that flowers have red or yellow petals; higher or lower tones in birds' songs; rounded or angular shapes in foliage; free or interrupted flowing movements in sea waters. These factors and elements that make up the phenomena of nature, when felt-perceived as aesthetic by humans, were appropriated by them and intentionally combined in works of art. Red in itself is not aesthetic; it was human subjects, in the process of hominization and humanization, who aestheticized the color red to the point of extracting it

P* Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
Brazilian Journal on Presence Studies
E-ISSN 2237-2660

from nature or reproducing it through alchemical techniques and transforming it into a shade intentionally applied to the bodies and objects they produced. The sea does not dance; it is the continuous and intrinsic movement of its waters that possesses specific dynamics and qualities that, in the eyes of human beings, has been humanized and made aesthetic, resembling a human dance. When human beings appropriate the now aestheticized quality of water movement, they transfigure it (quality) and reproduce it in the body for a purpose other than the movement of the sea, that is, by imprinting on this movement a purpose – *telos* – of expressing perceptions in relation to life and the world, this becomes Dance.

> Like work, artistic reflection presupposes a faithful apprehension of the elements that actually make up the outside world. But, on the other hand, its evocative character requires the intensification of those traits that in reality itself remain faint. Therefore, the artistic reflection is not a mere copy of reality, but a transfiguration of reality into the world of human significations. If the reflection typical of work already presupposes a certain [sic] differentiation from the real world, the artistic reflection, in its antromorphizing transfiguration, goes further (Frederico, 2013, p. 123).

Based on these considerations, one can define Dance as a set of intentional concrete-sensible body movements through which human beings express, manifest and externalize ideas, sensations, perceptions and feelings that become real in their relationship with reality.

By what paths did the Human Being arrive at dance as an art

As for the roots of dance, contrary to the hypotheses presented so far, it may be argued that, for most scholars of dance and its history, its origin is related to magic and religion. Many authors not only point out a possible relation, but also attribute the genesis of this human activity to religiosity and magic rituals.

Statements such as 'dance was born around the fire' indicate the idealistic and abstract theory perpetuated in relation to the foundation of dance:

> Man's full mastery over fire initially ensured great magical importance, social power, and divine power. [...] The light, heat, color and igneous movements reveal the themes that are reported and developed in the body, establishing choreographies between man and the dynamic fire, which is certainly the motivator and center of the dance (Sabino, 2011, p. 19).

P* Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
Brazilian Journal on Presence Studies
E-ISSN 2237-2660

Paulina Ossona, in one of her most recognized works, *A educação pela dança* (Education through dance), begins one of her chapters, entitled *Por que dança* (Why dance), with the following argument:

> What impulse drives man to dance? Why, even in the most primitive natural state, instead of conserving his energies to keep them more intact for the moment of action, necessary for his sustenance or defense, does he waste them in physically exhausting movements? Undoubtedly, because of an inner need, much closer to the spiritual than to the physical field. The movements, which progressively order themselves in time and space, are the release valve for a tumultuous inner life that still eludes analysis. In short, they are ways of expressing feelings: desires, joys, sorrows, gratitude, respect, fear, and power (Ossona, 1988, p. 19).

The author suggests that such human feelings, still unclear to prehistoric man, in their specificity, are linked to the material needs of primitive peoples, such as the:

> Need for sustenance, shelter, food, defense, and conquest; for procreation, health, and communication. Such requirements lead them first to observe nature and the relationship that exists between the natural phenomena favorable or contrary to their need. To each of these manifestations they attribute a spirit and a will similar to their own. To force this will to bow down to theirs, they invent magic formulas, embodied in mimetic objects that translate their desires (Ossona, 1988, p. 19).

After raising initial and hypothetically plausible elements, the author concludes that:

> [...] this is how the artistic forms of expression are born: dance, painting, music, the word, and theater. In the beginning, they are all united in a single magical fact, and gradually separate with the development of culture, until the present time, in which a reflux in the search causes the path to unravel to recast them in an integration (Ossona, 1988, p. 19).

It is noticeable that, in these two cases, dance is attributed an origin, in which the human subject, the dancing being, is given the faculty to produce art. A force that 'escapes our analysis' endows the human being with the need and capacity to produce dancing as art. From such a perspective, there is almost a divine imposture for dance and the arts. The idea that the human being danced around fire, as well as in other rituals of a mystical or-

P* Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
Brazilian Journal on Presence Studies
E-ISSN 2237-2660

der, is not based on conflict, but on the conditioning of this act as an attribution of intangible forces.

Historians of dance echo in a superficial and resigned manner the evidence about the trajectory of this artistic language in human history.

> It is difficult to determine today when, how and why man first danced. Some people identify figures engraved in the caves of Lascaux by prehistoric man as dancing figures. And since Stone Age man only carved on the walls of his caves what was important to him, such as hunting, food, life and death, it is possible that these dancing figures were part of religious rituals, basic to the society of that time, whose customs would already have incorporated this type of expression. Archeology, [...] does not fail to indicate the existence of dance as an integral part of religious ceremonies, and it seems correct to say that dance was born out of religion, if not born along with it. Like all the arts, dance is the fruit of man's need for expression. This need is connected to what is basic in human nature. Thus, if architecture came from the need to live, dance probably came from the need to placate the gods or to express joy for something good granted by fate (Faro, 1986, p. 13).

It was precisely on the impasse of the genesis of art that "Lukács sought to conceptually grasp the principle of differentiation that separated art from magic and then from religion" (Frederico, 2013, p. 124). As pointed out above, such views can sometimes seem vague and confusing. However, it is known that, before the advent of religious rites, human subjects had already developed the need to communicate by virtue of work. Even in an embryonic way, the aesthetic aspects, that is, sensible and communicative, already composed human bodily movement and the objects produced by them.

According to Marxist aesthetes, in order for the work of art to be produced, the degree of productivity of human labor would necessarily have had to be high.

> Work preceded a Paleolithic art as well-executed as that of the Lascaux or Altamira Caves by many tens of thousands of years. In order for the new reality that came to life on the walls of the French-Cantabrian or Spanish Levant caves to emerge from them, it was necessary for man to assert an ever-increasing mastery of matter over thousands and thousands of years, thanks to work (Vázquez, 2010, p. 64).

It was in the dialectical labor relationship over hundreds of thousands of years that human beings developed their bodies and instruments of work;

P* Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
Brazilian Journal on Presence Studies
E-ISSN 2237-2660

in this way, not only the utensils became more elaborate, but also the movements that this body was able to perform. "Each new tool contributed to man's own hand becoming finer, more flexible and docile to consciousness; in short, more human" (Vázquez, 2010, p. 65).

With more refined work tools and a body better prepared to execute precise and delicate movements, the human being needed to consciously acquire and master the basic qualities and expressions provided in nature for the production of tools and body movements endowed with aesthetic elements that would make them more effective in achieving their utilitarian finality, as well as their spiritual purpose.

> [...] to trace an outline in clay or suggest the depth of a flat surface, the prehistoric artist had to know and recognize the natural qualities of objects – their color, weight, proportion, hardness, volume, etc. –; only in this way could he/she make effective use of them in order to endow the object with certain qualities that did not naturally belong to it, namely, what we now call aesthetic qualities (Vázquez, 2010, p. 67).

In this period, the aesthetic qualities applied to the instruments bore decorative, stylized or schematic motifs, but it was only in the Magdalenian Culture of the Upper Paleolithic (between 15,000 and 9,000 B.C.) that realistic and figurative motifs began to appear. To achieve this, human beings not only had to master the qualities of the matter on which they would print shapes, but also the qualities of the images and shapes they intended to be printed. (Frederico, 2013)

According to Lukács, in the same way "[...] as the mastery of a material is for others", in the production of work objects or instruments, for example, in relation to body movement "[...] the mastery of one's own movements, of the body itself, is a technical presupposition for a group of artists (actors, dancers)" (Lukács, 1982, p. 269).[4] Consequently, based on this statement, one can assume that the human being had also been appropriating the specific qualities of the body, its biomechanical and kinesiological nuances, and the abilities and expressive factors of the movement, such as weight, flow, time, space, strength, agility, and joint capacity, in order to also master it in the construction of the instruments. For a specific stroke, how much strength and weight would it be necessary to employ in the movement of the forearm, hands, and fingers for that stroke to be accurate?

P* Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
Brazilian Journal on Presence Studies
E-ISSN 2237-2660

The nature of the body and its movements were also being mastered." [...] This ability to reproduce and duplicate reality gives the prehistoric artist a certain power over reality itself" (Vázquez, 2010, p. 68). Thus, there was a need to be familiar with the properties of the object that was to be depicted. The more realistic the reproduction, the more control and dominion over reality the human being obtained.

Therefore, in the Paleolithic period (2.5 million to 10,000 B.C.), the fearsome bison portrayed in caves had to be as faithful a version as possible of the bison that humans encountered in their daily hunt. The shape, proportion, volume, dimension, texture, had to be applied in a very precise way.

The ways of duplicating the real in order to understand and master it did not remain only in the paintings printed in caves and caverns, but the movements depicted and all those employed in the act of painting, in a way, also remained imprinted in the very human bodies of those painters from the prehistoric period.

Paul Bourcier (2001) argues that the first iconographic testimony that presents a human in a dancing attitude dates back to 14,000 B.C.

Another significant landmark concerning the presence of dance among humans in the context of cave paintings is the figure found in the Trois Frères cave in Ariège (France), dated approximately 10,000 B.C. In it, a humanoid representation seems to dance wearing a multi-animalistic costume: deer horn, wolf ear, bird face, bear arms and claws, and horse tail merge with the legs, sexual organ and bipedal vertical body positioning characteristic of humans.

P* Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
Brazilian Journal on Presence Studies
E-ISSN 2237-2660

Figure 1 – Dancing humanoid representation in multi-animalistic disguise.
Source:http://rolfgross.dreamhosters.com/CavePainting/CavePanting.html.

This figure is attributed to the representation of a sorcerer practicing a magic rite, an animal god, or even a shaman in trance. However, what is interesting, more than the purpose of the dance represented, is the confirmation that the duplication of reality also took place in the body, and furthermore, in the body in intentional movement.

In summary, before having their possible dances printed on the walls of caves and caverns, human beings appropriated the qualities and abilities of their own body movement, initially executing work movements and, later on and respectively, movements with abstract and figurative motifs. The latter, however, as to the rhythmic element, specifically, did not display the aesthetic quality in a secondary manner, like in work movements, but as a primordial factor and a result of the refining of those movements.

> Concerning the question of work and rhythm, we have to assume that the origin of rhythmic movement is the result of an improvement in the work process, the development of the productive labor forces, that is, it cannot be determined immediately or directly by magic (Lukács, 1982, p. 274)[5].

In other words, it is through work, the diversity of work movements and their rhythmic diversity that humans shaped their bodies and were later

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Brazilian Journal on Presence Studies
E-ISSN 2237-2660

able to abstract from this reality the autonomous aesthetic possibilities – in this case – of moving as dance.

For Lukács, there was a tendency to detach rhythm from its concrete role in a given labor process.

> The more diverse the rhythms that arise from the material difference between different works, the more easily this detachment occurs and the more resolutely the rhythm can become an element of everyday life independent of the initial circumstances that triggered it (Lukács, 1982, p. 274)[6].

The author deals specifically with rhythmic expression, but from the point of view of the study and analysis of movement advocated by Laban (1978), while other manifestations and qualities of movement such as weight, flow, space, and time could also be referred to from the same perspective. It is as if, in the totality of the work movement and its intrinsically aesthetic manifestations, the human being had come to think through movements, as the author has already pointed out:

> Perhaps it is not unusual to introduce here the idea of thinking in terms of movement, as opposed to thinking in words. Thinking by movements could be thought of as a set of impressions of events in a person's mind, a set for which a suitable nomenclature is lacking. This kind of thinking does not lend itself to orientation in the outer world, as thinking in words does, but rather, it perfects man's orientation in his inner world, where impulses continually arise and seek an outlet in doing, performing, and dancing (Laban, 1978, p. 42).

In this way, the human being refined and improved his knowledge regarding his own body and the specificities of this material, on which the directed movements took place, to such an extent that, in his attempt to dominate and duplicate reality, he even managed to capture the qualities and abilities of the elements of reality that he intended to represent.

The Paleolithic human being must have observed the expressive quality weight, for example, with its nuances of passive weight (heavy/weak) and active weight (light/strong) of a bison's movements. However, not of one animal specifically, but of the genus or of the bison animal (although he obviously had no notions of weight or genus, but because he faced herds of bison, whose strength and weight destroyed everything), in order to, finally, reproduce a movement true to reality. He must have analyzed a lot of the nuances of time contained in the movement of felines, even without any

P* Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
Brazilian Journal on Presence Studies
E-ISSN 2237-2660

notion of time in the aesthetic sense. In the study and analysis of movement advocated by Laban (1978), the expressive factor time is very much related to the duration, pauses or intervals, and speed (fast/accelerated and slow/decelerated) that the movements bear. By simply seeing-observing these qualities displayed by the animals, the often frightened human being was now able to reproduce and duplicate them through dance, demonstrating a certain power over them.

> The drawing of a bison expresses the knowledge that the frightened prehistoric hunter has of this animal. If the painter from Altamira models the forms and draws the outline with great accuracy, it is because his capacity to synthesize, abstract and generalize has already considerably increased. As such, at a stage of human development in which art and knowledge are necessarily involved, man can already draw figures that reproduce or duplicate reality (Vázquez, 2010, p. 68).

Art could only reach the magnificent pictorial accuracy of prehistoric cave paintings and dances because, in a certain way, it overcame the practical significance of objects and body movements useful for survival. In short, not only in primitive peoples, but also in ancient times, dance, although already converted into art, by no means lost its original link with work, exercise and leisure, as well as the customs of daily life." (Lukács, 1982, p. 279)[7]

It is worth pointing out that, in the work process necessary to maintain life, the seed of artistic languages was contained: only by overcoming the utilitarian nature of work was it possible to develop creative work, today called art. It was in the next step on the path to hominization and humanization that art lent its relational and sensible potentialities to magic and other rites related to religiosity.

If in making art the intention is to synthesize and generalize in an object or bodily movement what is found in reality, one must highlight what is decisive and essential to be reflected upon: the traces of the thing itself reproduced must be made evident.

> Thus, it is precisely the figuration associated with magic that makes possible a realistic art that seeks above all a practical purpose. After having achieved a certain autonomy with regard to material utility – by means of magic – it [art, again] places itself at the service of a practical, utilitarian interest: the hunting of wild animals (Vázquez, 2010, p. 68).

P* Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
Brazilian Journal on Presence Studies
E-ISSN 2237-2660

It is because of this capacity for synthesis and the relational and emotional power that art carries, that it was, in turn, added to the processes of magic. The aesthetic aspects were lifted from utilitarian work movements, set to the production of movements of reproduction and knowledge of reality, and returned to meet a utilitarian demand, now in the relationship of the human being with the world through magic.

However, besides the abstract forms of reflection, another source feeds art: imitation.

> In everyday life, since primitive times, imitative speech (onomatopoeia) and mimic gestures have been present in communication, increasing the distance between the immediate reflection of everyday life [...] and the way in which it is transmitted from one man to another (Frederico, 2013, p. 124).

Imitation brings art and magic closer together. However, while magic fixes the duality of the communicative process – by preserving the correct reflection of reality and the ability to evoke feelings – "[...] art, progressively, introduces differentiations and reinforces the evocative character, the 'aura' that involves the represented fact and the feelings, values and meanings that accompany it" (Frederico, 2013, p. 124). In other words, although magic and religion initially emerged as anthropomorphizing reflections, just like art, both magic and religion believe in the veracity of their object: transcendence. Therefore, they confer the regulation of reality to the transcendent and demand from the addressee of the message the belief in a sublime and immaterial reality. In art, this logic is reversed, as it doesn't want its objectification to be confused with truth, but rather the fictitious character of its realizations to be evidenced. "The work of art is an earthly statement: the evocation of the represented is directed to the receptivity of man" (Frederico, 2013, p. 125), and takes place in the synthesis and transfiguration of reality in which human beings and work coexist.

Accordingly, specifically in relation to dance, if at first the human being found support and inspiration for its genesis in the movements of everyday life and work; if, later on, he extracted the aesthetic aspects of these movements and configured them, finally, as art of movement; if, afterwards, he lent his sensible and effective attributions of communication to magic and religion, it was in the form of late praxis that, in art and dance, the human being unveiled "[...] with resources of its own [...], the imma-

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Brazilian Journal on Presence Studies
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nent character of the driving forces that govern our reality", inaugurating "[...] behavior truly aesthetic [and freeing it] from magic and religion" (Frederico, 2013, p. 125).

Thus, we conclude that Human Beings arrived at Dance as Art when they were able to make it autonomous as an artistic language, when they affirmed the earthly character of dance and enabled its recognition as an intentional human corporal movement, whose purpose is to evoke/present remarkable aspects of the life of human subjects, as a collective construction and work of the human race. These are the Dancing Rupestres, the radical, and the root of the body in aesthetic intentional movement.

Notes

[1] This previously unpublished article is an excerpt from the dissertation *Corpo telúrico dançante: da desterritorialização do corpo e da dança até o MST* (Guilherme, 2019).

[2] In Spanish:"[...] vale la pena repetirlo cada vez que viene a cuento: no sabemos prácticamente nada del origen histórico real del arte. En muchas artes de importancia, como la poesía, la música, la danza, etc., es incluso inútil por principio el buscar documentos originarios" (Lukács, 1982, p. 265).

[3] In Spanish:"Esta dificultad general aumenta aún por el hecho de que ahora no vamos a ocuparnos del origen de artes o géneros, sino de principios, elementos estructurales de la producción artística, los cuales desempeñan en artes distintos papeles muy diversos, dados en esas funciones sumamente variadas y a niveles evolutivos ya muy altos (ritmo, proporción, etc.), y que sólo excepcionalmente han conservado su inicial independencia (ornamentística), aunque sin volver, desde luego, a conquistar en la cultura total la importancia que tuvieron en determinados estadios iniciales" (Lukács, 1982, p. 265).

[4] In Spanish: "[...] modo como lo es para otros el dominio de un material, [...] el dominio de los propios movimientos, del propio cuerpo, es presupuesto técnico para un grupo de artistas (actores, bailarines)" (Lukács, 1982, p. 269).

[5] In Spanish: "Por lo que hace a la cuestión del trabajo y el ritmo, hay que recoger como dato firme que el origen del movimiento ritmizado [sic] es un resultado del perfeccionamiento del proceso de trabajo, del desarrollo de las fuerzas

P* Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença
Brazilian Journal on Presence Studies
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productivas del trabajo, o sea, que no puede estar determinado inmediata o directamente por la magia" (Lukács, 1982, p. 274).

[6] In Spanish: "Cuanto más diversos son los ritmos que nacen por la diferencia material entre trabajos diversos, tanto más fácilmente procede ese desprendimiento y tanto más resueltamente puede el ritmo convertirse en un elemento de la vida cotidiana relativamente independiente de las iniciales circunstancias desencadenadoras" (Lukács, 1982, p. 274).

[7] In Spanish: "[…] brevemente que no solo en los pueblos primitivos, sino también y todavia en la Antigüedad, la danza, aunque ya convertida en arte, no habría perdido en modo alguno su vinculación originaria con el trabajo, el ejercicio y el juego, con las costumbres de la vida cotidiana" (Lukács, 1982, p. 279).

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