


## SOMATIC ATTENTION AS A PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH IN THE FUNDAMENTALS OF DANCE BY HELENITA SÁ EARP

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### ABSTRACT

The work analyzes the legacy of Helenita Sá Earp in the construction of dance as a field of knowledge in Brazil. It argues that artistic quality in dance comes from intuitive awareness, expressed in creativity and mindfulness of movement, rather than following predetermined patterns. The interpretation is based on Thomas Csordas' anthropological approach, taking the notion of "somatic attention" as central. The research highlights attention as a phenomenological posture in the Fundamentals of Dance by Helenita Sá Earp, which goes beyond a mentalist view, promoting a connective and open corporeality, where vital energies generate "germinal" movement. Each corporeality has specific practices, and this proposal, characterized by openness to infinite paths, applies to different contexts, transcending a specific emergency of time or place, in an incessant dialogue between flow and form in the praxis of performers-creators-artists-teachers-researchers in dance.

**Keywords:** Body, Anthropology, Fundamentals of Dance by Helenita Sá Earp.

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## INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Fundamentals of Dance by Helenita Sá Earp<sup>4</sup> conceive the corporeality arising from a creative power as an open system that transforms the psychic, emotional and physical energy and constant interaction with the group and the environment into the nature-culture relationship that has the ability to receive and select information in explicit and implicit multidimensionalities that the movement entertains. In this way, corporeality expresses the totality of the Being in its presence in the world as part of creation and nature. In this sense, movement, form, space, dynamics and time are presented as metamorphosed faces of the realities of the Real in the continuous exchange between vibrations of matter-energy-light in Consciousness. In this interdependent origination between body-nature and body-culture, we are immersed in a moving vortex<sup>5</sup> in this hypercomplex open dance system (Martins, 1999). In this context, corporeities are woven into a whole in networks and wefts between individual, group and environmental bodies in dynamic fields expressed as holomovement (Bhom, 2000 apud Harland; Keepin, 2016). In a certain sense we can say that we manifest ourselves as a knot of relations facing all directions and directions. In the human being, dance emerges and is built as it activates this complex of relationships in totality. (Boff, 2019). Thus we think of going to an endless bottom, so to speak, in an anthropology that places the singularity of the human – deeply linked to culture and territory – in an immanent-transcendent web<sup>6</sup>, where each action of his is interconnected with another and with everything and where each thing reverberates – resonates, so to speak, in all dimensions of his being.

The framework in which thought-movement in dance is formed, then, is one of connection with this broader principle that reverberates in this dynamism present in everything. Integration with this flow provides the dancer with a deep and comprehensive expressiveness.

Helenita Sá Earp has always pointed to the need for integration for an expression that takes life in all its power. Those who dance can, whatever the movement; express it fully: fullness in terms of detachment, attention, immersion and poetics. The central point is that the realization of dance goes through the integration of the human being with his

<sup>4</sup> Professor Emeritus of Dance at UFRJ (1919 - 2014). She was a movement researcher, performer, choreographer and introducer of dance in the teaching of Brazilian universities.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. in JOB, N. Vortex: modulations of the Dynamic Unit. Rio de Janeiro: Edite, 2021.

<sup>6</sup> See the reflections on the terms *tanzīh* and *tašbīh* in TEIXEIRA, F. A fragrance plural do Sufismo: Ibn'Arabi e a abertura inter-religiosa. Actuality Theologica. Revista do Dpto. of Theology at PUC-Rio / Brazil. Year XV nº 39, September to December /2011, p. 475-486.

innermost self, as well as with the broader cosmic movement. This idea also implies that, on the one hand, movements traditionally recognized as dance – such as sequences of rhythmically aligned steps – may not be dance at all; and, on the other hand, that movements apparently distant from the context of dance can be considered dancers in all rights. This was well expressed by Glória Futuro Marcos Dias<sup>7</sup> when he said in the documentary "Dancing: the Life of Helenita Sá Earp",<sup>8</sup> that the act of raising a finger can be a simple point, but when performed in an integrated way, invested with poetic force, it can be dance. The point here is that artistic quality in dance derives from intuitive awareness expressed in creativity and mindfulness of movement, rather than from its framing of predetermined patterns and closed stylistics

## ABOUT MOVEMENT

Perhaps the closest we can find to a definition of dance in Helenita Sá Earp is: "Dance is the ability to transform any movement into art". Although the ontology of dance proposed by this movement researcher is far beyond what this phrase can capture, it reflects fundamental parts of her thinking, providing a substantial basis for reflection. First, there is a broadening of what can be considered dance, of what type of movement can be included in this notion. The development of a deep reflection on movement is an important part of Helenita's work, pointing to it not only as a physical displacement of bodies in space, but as an immanent aspect of reality. This approach to movement implies, at first, thinking of it in broader terms than the physical movement of the human body; but it also belongs to the fields of thought and emotion, in an individual and group and environmental creative perspective. As a concept or idea, the movement also describes something more abstract, encompassing any kind of transformation in the state of things. He can then deal with subtler aspects of the world, which, although integrated into materiality, exceed it.

This also implies a conception that dance can be in human existence, in its daily life and in political engagement in social movements. We are talking about a choreopolitics (Lepecki, 2013) as a practice of mobilization and struggle, where group choreographic games are dynamos to provide the social well-being of the collectivity and political actions are choreographic games. The concept of movement, therefore, serves as a gateway to the thought of Helenita Sá Earp and her proposals in dance today. The

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<sup>8</sup> Available at: <https://www.helenitasaearp.com.br/documentario>. Accessed on: 03 Jan. 2024.

inclusion of these phenomena here is relevant because, in this approach, the integration platform on which the subject's expression is based is often constituted by crossings of the natural world, either through a logic based on metaphorical mimesis – to move as if it were – or on metonymic contiguity – to move from. It is not a dance to be performed only in halls and theaters, as established in the Western tradition; But it is a dance that is also done in forests, on beaches, in rivers, in contact with leaves, earth and animals, for example<sup>9</sup>. This practice expands beyond the domain of institutionalized, eminently urban art spaces. In order to encourage this relationship, Earp offered many classes in natural, less domesticated spaces, as well as performing in them. This contact has very relevant psychophysiological effects. First, a specific body develops, generated relationally both by physical contact with the non-human elements of the world, and by the phenomenological presence of these elements in the subject's psychic universe. In addition, this contact provides subjects with both significant levels of psychophysical relaxation (Robles et al., 2021) and vital energy charges, important in the production of integral movement.

## ABOUT BODY

And if we move on to this realm, of the experiential realization of dance, we are faced with what can be considered the field of this *praxis*: corporeality. As its foundation, corporeality is imbricated in dance: the body puts in check not only the subject of the action of dancing, but also the contextual possibilities contained in it. As already pointed out, dance occurs in many instances beyond those traditionally recognized as such. This is not only in terms of situations, but also in terms of the agents involved: the dancing body, here, is any possible ontological concretion, any individuation – circumstantial, however – of elements, however heterogeneous they may be. The body, therefore, is a collective, a relational aggregate, made up of several bodies in multidimensional layers that overlap and interpenetrate each other. In practical terms, we may be talking about something like a group, a "dance body", in which it is a group of humans acting together in a certain movement project. In this case it is quite clear how the body cannot be removed from its relations with others, at the risk of losing the sense of movement, of its poetics. We may

<sup>9</sup> See in MEYER, A. ; EARP, A. C. S.; VIEYRA, A.; et al. Dance and Nature: an Essay on the Environmental Body in Helenita Sá Earp. Rio de Janeiro: National Library, 2019; see also MEYER, A. ; EARP, A. C. S. Hybrid Bodies: Photopoetics as a support for Ecospirituality In: Collection What dances are to come? Transits, poetics and politics of the body, 4. Creative, formative and pedagogical processes in dance. Salvador: Anda Editora, 2020, v.4, p. 552-586.

also be referring, in a more heterodox example, to an aggregate of humans and non-humans: swimming in the river, walking in the forest, feeling the wind from the beach. The body that emerges there is fundamentally connected to its web of relationships, composing, with the elements in question (water, leaf, sand, etc.) a broader, more integral movement. It is, in essence, a matter of thinking about the integrality that institutes full movement from this encounter, in which the body is not limited to individual physicality.

Human corporeality transits between the micro and the macro cosmos, from the tiny particles to the great sidereal stars. In human corporeality, the micro and macro cosmos are born and reborn at all times. In the dimension of principles and possibilities, the universe is One and Multiple. It exists permeated by integration and complementarity. All fields interact with each other in a dynamic web of connections. Inhabiting the sands, stones, rains, rivers, seas, sunbeams, flowers and forests is to keep alive the presence of this hidden and revealed connection. The human being immerses and emerges his physicality, mentality and emotionality in the energies of nature. In the creative intuition, the human being establishes culture. In this dimension, nature completes itself. It is natural for human beings to live in harmony with nature. It is natural for human beings to produce culture. Nature and culture are intertwined in the human universe. (Earp, 2011)<sup>10</sup>

It is essential to highlight the breadth of this dynamic: poetics requires broad integration, in addition to the rhythmic alignment between physical movements, it also encompasses the body-mind complex. This duality, as well as that between subject/object, must be imploded in order to understand integral movement. In this sense, an anthropological approach centered on the body (Csordas, 2008) can be of great value.

Culture, which naturally includes bodily specificities, is usually seen from textual and representational paradigms, as something that can be read or represented. But, for what interests us here, it is more relevant to understand it as something embodied: the body as the locus of culture, its principle, beginning, and space of development, rather than as its object. This does not imply restricting the analysis to biophysical phenomena, for example, but proposes to approach the body in a paradigmatic way, in such a way that it encompasses cultural phenomena extensively, although taken from another perspective. Escaping the establishment of an opposition of body to mind, the analytical foundation of this paradigm is provided by experience: "experience as the significance of meaning, immediate both in the sense of its concreteness, its subjunctive opening, its unobstruction of the sensory, emotional and intersubjective reality of the present moment as well as or

<sup>10</sup> Compilation of fragments of texts from the typewritten handouts that were digitized and revised in the research developed in the Project: "Life, Body, Movement and Creation: philosophical foundations present in the conceptions of dance of Helenita Sá Earp" within the framework of the "Humanities" Notice – 2008 of FAPERJ. General coordination, organization and revision by Full Professor Elena Moraes Garcia - IFCH/UERJ.

unrehearsed of the first existence" (Csordas, 2008, p. 16). With perception and practice as central aspects of corporeality, it is simple to understand it as a principle of culture, since it is constituted to a large extent by what is practiced (behaviors, customs, traditions, etc.) and by the way it is perceived (worldviews, cognitions, likes, dislikes, etc.). Understanding practice as bodily mastery involves the notion of *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 86): "a system of durable dispositions unconsciously and collectively inculcated for the generation and structuring of social practices". And understanding perception as bodily domain involves the notion of pre-objective (Merleau-Ponty, 1962): an open perceptual state, prior to the reification of cultural objects, but rooted in the social world and in the dispositions it establishes. Importantly, both concepts highlight a body immersed in culture from the beginning: *habitus* describes a socially informed body, whose potentialities are manifested by adjusting to the objective possibilities of the context; and the pre-objective describes a body whose perceptual paths hold, to a large extent, significance given by the context of consciousness projection. In this sense, the possibility of objectification of the body – then made an object among other objects (Hallowell, 1955) – can only occur through a reflexive, secondary process, it is not given in advance. With these two notions, the conception of the body as antagonistic to the mind, or any duality formulated on the basis of an external physical and objective domain, on the one hand, and an internal immaterial and subjective domain, on the other, is escaped.

From this paradigm centered on corporeality, we can shed another light on certain phenomena of culture, especially those that are dear to the composition of a full movement. Attention is one of them. Poetic plenitude implies to a large extent a rigorous attention to the body and its relationships. For Merleau-Ponty (1962), attention is the active constitution of new perceptual elements, explicitly articulating consciousness what until then was a mere indeterminate horizon. Understanding it as an aspect of corporeality, Csordas gives a somatic interpretation to attention: "somatic modes of attention are culturally elaborated ways of being attentive to and with the body in environments that include the embodied presence of others" (2008, p. 372). This concept deals with the expansion and elaboration of the horizon of perception from "somatic" attention. As part of a paradigmatic view, this concept proposes a broad interpretation of the cultural world, although it is exceptionally apt to analyze eminently corporeal social practices, such as dance. To understand it in this way is to bring centrality to corporeality in its various cultural modulations. However, what interests us most here, this notion highlights the role of attention as a phenomenological



posture in the practice of dance, highlighting its realization through corporeality. Since the fullness of movement is also a fullness of attention and body awareness, this concept greatly helps to elucidate the approach to movement proposed by Helenita Sá Earp.

Another point of this approach is to guide movement and body action as something intuitive and imaginative. Understood from the bodily paradigm, intuition and imagination in the same way acquire another tonality. Intuition can be seen here as direct and embodied knowledge: knowledge in the sense that intuitive experience interpenetrates the empirical accumulation about a certain area of life. Imagination, in turn, is removed from its abstract representational aspect, in which the focus falls excessively on image cognition. It appears here as a product of bodily synthesis, described by Merleau-Ponty as a characteristic of human consciousness projecting itself into the cultural world. In this sense, it goes beyond the mentalist scope restricted to a vision of connective corporeality open to infinity – it is imagined with the totality of the body in its physical, mental and emotional predominances. In addition, it exceeds ocularity as the predominant sense: the visual image itself gives way to a "multisensorial" notion of image (Csordas, 2008), which is fundamental for thinking about the role of imagination in dance. The fundamental point is to note that physicality is not opposed to the mind, but is integrated with it, occupying the basis of perception and practice, products of culture. In this sense, one can speak of a somatic attention, which serves as a foundation for intuition and multisensory imagination, essential for the fullness of movement.

Corporeality manifests as energy fields in constant connection. The cause and result of this phenomenon is a permanent state of wholeness. To be aware of this unity, we need to be deeply aware of the here and now. This reverberates in an intimate Presence in every detail of the movements performed given the strength that emanates from mindfulness. In this state, receptivity expands like vortices that open up to the Infinite (of possibilities). High energy charges are released and the germinal state is established. (Earp, 1980)<sup>11</sup>

In this integrated way, human corporeity can establish significant relationships with heterogeneous elements in relation to itself, concretizing a collective, relational corporeality, in which poetics takes place.

<sup>11</sup> Reminiscences of phrases by Helenita Sá Earp recalled by Ana Célia de Sá Earp during the period of the assembly of the choreography "Natura".

## ABOUT TECHNIQUE

The meaning of creative technique is directly linked to the entire intuitive moment where the form and its qualification processes are constructed. Closely related to the topic of the body is that of technique. Another important aspect to mention is not only the use of instruments to perform a certain mechanical activity; the techniques, here, are "techniques of the body", which have already been pointed out in anthropological theory as the primordial domain of technique (Mauss, 2003, p. 407): "the first and most natural technical object, and at the same time a technical medium", as it makes possible the execution of "effective acts". Being also crossed by the level of perception, every technique of the body has its acquisition associated with somatic modes of attention: absorption and execution of effective acts depend on the explicit articulation of new contents in the phenomenological horizon through bodily attention, removing them from perceptive indeterminacy; once mastered, the techniques regress to the perceptible field of the subject (Csordas, 2008). Presenting the technique in this way, it is clear not only its association with other bodily practices, but also how the technique crosses corporeality in an integral way, it is not restricted to functional facticity. The possibility of approaching the technique in this way implies many questions, which can be put in dialogue with the proposals of the present in the Fundamentals of Dance by Helenita Sá Earp.

She did not seek to establish a new method of modern dance or a modality of body technique of her own. His project aimed, on the contrary, at the emergence of a series of phenomenotechnics (Bachelard, 1977) necessary for the outbreak of each desired bodily phenomenon, in a dance in constant nascent opening. First, there is no hierarchy between the movements. An eyebrow movement can be as fundamental as a leg opening, something inconceivable in a dance like *ballet*, for example. There is no specific movement that is valued in advance, having, on the other hand, its qualitative differentiation by the degree of integration. In this sense, the logic of "series" or "fixed codes" does not find resonance with Helenita's approach as in other strands of contemporary dance, since they imply closed relationships between movements. Helenita's proposal does not find meaning in the thoughtless reproduction of a sequence of movements listed by her. The important thing here is that the interpreter knows how to intuit, feel the movement, while being able to understand it intellectually and physically, with appropriate descriptive tools. The objective of Helenita Sá Earp's training is to give the performer-creator and the artist-teacher in dance the ability to create towards an exercise of freedom, maintaining rigor and awareness



of movement. For the teacher, therefore, technical development serves to dilate bodily possibilities, whatever they may be.

In this way, the technique that is generally seen in a strictly instrumental way, as a means to an end, a useful tool for the realization of a certain product, is seen here as the very discovery of the possibilities of the body. In the technique one can already find dance, at least its initial unveiling. When training or doing repetition exercises, the performer is not simply preparing to dance later; but a creative elaboration of activities aimed at bodily development is attempted. Technique and execution are integrated processes: at the same time that technique must establish creative processes of improvement, execution itself must be understood technically. It is important here to note the creative role of the technique. In this way, the technique is placed as a function of intuition that provides the path for the execution and understanding of movement, regardless of what it is. In this sense, this approach works on technical development based on germinality<sup>12</sup>.

With this notion we want to point to the possibilities of more basic movements of the body, given rise to its own form.<sup>13</sup> The simplicity of movement is sought at the origin of each gestural articulation, whose understanding and appropriation make infinite relational possibilities possible. When approaching movement in terms of germinal principles, what is done is to pay more attention to the unlimited potentialities of movement in the body than to a specific range of expressions. The principles of movement, the germinal situations of the body, are generative potentialities, which, opening up to new forms suggested by themselves, install a becoming of kinesiological manifestations. In practical terms, this translates into the mastery of absolutely simple movements, followed by their creative combination, when they acquire progressive complexity. But it is essential to note that already at the basic level, small differences in connection already modify the poetic qualities of the movement.

There is, therefore, an effort to make the principles as germinal as possible, because when they acquire complex connections they already take on significant specificities, they

<sup>12</sup> See SOUZA, T. F.; MEYER, A.; EARP, A. C. S. Germinations: the seed as a metaphor in dance. In: Annals of the XI Scientific Meeting of the Brazilian Association of Research and Graduate Studies in Performing Arts - ABRACE. Performing Arts in the Amazon: traditional knowledge, contemporary practices. Rio Branco: Strictu Sensu, 2023, p. 104 -117. Available at: <https://portalabrace.org/novo2022/ebooks/artes-cenicas-na-amazonia-saberes-tradicionais-fazeres-contemporaneos/>. Accessed on: 08 May. 2024.

<sup>13</sup> Working from movements suggested by the very shape of the human body does not imply inexorably adopting the traditional human form, which excludes people with disabilities (PwD). This idea refers to the basic movements of any human form. Rosângela Barnabé worked dance and body movement with PwD based on Helenita's approach, and encouraged by her. Barnabé pointed out that it was the freedom of bodily action presented by Helenita that enabled her to carry out this work (Meyer; Earp, 2019, p. 116).

delimit themselves. The germinal principles are like seeds, open to cultivation, while the connections also need to be elaborated in a creative way so as not to lose their germinality. In this valorization of germinality there is an attempt to find a common base, from which to develop various body modalities, not restricting the technique to a single pattern. Approaching technique in this sense, the specificities of the elaboration of movement are less a prior kinesiological systematization, and more aspects of the particularities of the creator – individual and collective – integrated into his poetic impulse, then expressed in particular forms – technique as a function of creation. From simple to complex, from potentiality to manifestation and coherence with the content and objectives to be developed in a given context. The establishment of a systematic understanding of basic movements, with attention to the richness of detail of each part of the body, is therefore central to Helenita's approach to technique. The study of these movements can be done in different articulations, bases of support and Dance Families<sup>14</sup>. The important contribution of Helenita Sá Earp on the issue of dance technique is the denial of kinesiological hierarchy through the valorization of germinality.

## **ABOUT PEDAGOGY**

The pedagogical principle is systemic, dynamic, open and adaptive,<sup>15</sup> which seeks to offer a broad body work for everyone, in such a way that the singularities that each performer can bring to the scene are explored. Its approach - absolutely didactic and open - allows the generation of artistic and pedagogical knowledge and doing in dance that articulates objectivity and freedom.

In general terms, it is important to provide bodies with a greater breadth of bodily possibilities, which is done through the mastery of the body's germinal situations and creative complex associations in different schemes and progressions of movement. Taking into account the context means, yes, the physical, institutional and human environment in which the class takes place, but also the previous bodily experience of those involved, with specific potentialities and limitations. The construction of the class project must be, therefore, relational. It is important to highlight that the teacher, here, is not a mere trainer, who professes the teaching, but rather an interpreter-creator: the ministry of the class

<sup>14</sup> Situations where the body moves as a whole, studied around principles that have common links. These are the studies on the creation and variation of Transferences, Locomotions, Turns, Jumps, Falls and Elevations.

<sup>15</sup> See MORELO JÚNIOR, I. Pedagogy of open and adaptive dynamic systems (PSDAA) – a relationship between: education, systems theory, complexity and cognition. São Paulo: Scortecci Editora, 2019.

necessarily implies an exercise of creation, precisely because it is an open approach, in which the teaching is not given in advance.

This pedagogical principle may well be based on the anthropological paradigm of the body, already mentioned. The notion of pre-objective perception that we have evoked already points to the immersion of the body (the basis of experience) in the social, but it is the concept of *habitus* that best demonstrates this relationship. This is a concept that breaks with the duality between action and structure in the understanding of practices, interpellating them through the socially informed body as "the generating and unifying principle of all practices, the system of inseparable cognitive and evaluative structures that organize the vision of the world according to the objective structures of a given state of the social world" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 124).

The *habitus* thus brings together the total set of practices of a given context, both from the psychic structures that give them meaning and from the objective conditions whose principle is also their product. Csordas (2008) points to the Bourdieusian concept as a system of durable dispositions, of unconscious and collective operation aimed at the generation and structuring of practices and representations. As such, the practices are highlighted in their contextuality, dependence on the collective *habitus* from which they start, since their realization implies adaptation to the behavioral environment (Hallowell, 1955).

Individual corporeality, therefore, emerges from a certain experiential context and brings with it an eminently social generative principle, a set of collectively acquired dispositions – the subject's life and experience of the world are in the body, inseparable from it. In this context, the requirement of a single movement pattern in technical training does not make sense, or at least makes full expression more difficult, since the pattern is often not contained, initially, in the subject's bodily possibilities. Presenting body diversity from the perspective of *habitus* is a way to complement the most obvious physical diversity: differences in bone structure, cavities, musculature, tendons and ligaments, which determine the range of motion and particularize the possibilities of body movement. In addition to individual physicality, there is, therefore, the cultural level, whose dispositions are collectively established that particularize tendencies and possibilities of the body. The acceptance of this plurality of bodies and their specificities of movement is a central part of the pedagogical foundation of this approach to dance. An open proposal that seeks to provide technical preparation for all corporeities.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

We spoke earlier of an anthropology that places the singularity of the human as a relational being – deeply connected to culture and territory. It is an approach to movement that proposes a body work for all, both in the sense of availability and exploration of individual uniqueness. We tried to make this clear from the way in which teacher Helenita Sá Earp thought about movement, body, technique and pedagogy, adding some possible anthropological basis. In addition to pointing to the general openness of this approach, it seems important to highlight in a more detailed way the problems involved in the adaptation of corporeities to a standard whose rigidity and closure structures the normativity of the rules of how to move.

When we address dance as a practice of cultural bonding, we highlight the double dimension that crosses it, general and particular: at the same time that it is a phenomenon present in the most diverse human groups (if not in all), each one has a very specific way of doing it. And the same goes for kinesiology in general, which is a latent form of dance: everyone moves, but the muscle mobilization, the symbology of the pattern and the very conception of the body that moves is particular. In terms of the paradigm of the body to which we refer, this differentiation of bodily practices occurs through the previous immersion of the body in a certain social dynamic, in which the perception starts from an already existentially socialized body to expand its phenomenological horizon, as well as the possibilities of structuring practices start from the system of collective dispositions. Especially if we focus on a dance based on integrality, it is difficult to think of any bodily practice that is not crossed by the subject's perceptibility and the objective conditions of its realization. The issues involved in a dialogue between very different corporeities in the field of dance, then, become clearer.

The fact that this discussion is located in a context of the meeting of different corporeities – whatever the scale: Brazil, public university, urban space, etc. – makes it especially relevant. These are places where very different ways of moving, perceiving and practicing coexist. Of course, this is also reflected in the specific scope of dance, especially with regard to its institutionalization. As already mentioned, Helenita Sá Earp's proposal appears to some extent as a counterpoint to pre-coded techniques (Jazz, *Ballet*. Tap Dance, Modern Dance etc.) formally available approaches, which have greater permeability

in gyms and clubs even today, for example<sup>16</sup>. This is evidenced to a large extent by the place that *ballet*, with an eminently European historical tradition, occupies in dance: it is valued as an "erudite" or "classical" dance in the social imaginary, and used as a standard technical methodology for other dance proposals, forming a series of derivations that try to move away from it, but remain rooted in its bodily matrix. And since this is a text that starts from a historically colonized territory such as Brazil, the dimension of power cannot be excluded from the analysis. This difference in the place that each somatic manifestation occupies in the social imaginary and its corresponding institutional insertion is due to the long process of marginalization of non-white cultural manifestations that has gone through the last centuries. Even more acute is the case of practices in which the body occupies the foreground: a visible marker of racial difference, which throws the subject into a "trade of looks" (Mbembe, 2018, p. 199), this evaluative circulation of the senses that is racism.

The situation of cultural dominance and kinesiological rigidity established in Brazil, but with a significant degree of generalization by the West, make it complicated to coexist between very different body modalities, which naturally includes dance. In this sense, it may be interesting to promote an open approach, which does not establish *a priori hierarchies* of one movement over another, such as the proposals developed by Helenita.

An open corporeality spills out in infinite paths. The creative state is the central axis of his existence. The possibility of stagnating in rigid and fixed models is constantly broken. All possibilities are welcomed in an organic way. The generative potentialities are discovered and revealed. He always puts himself at the disposal of intuition. From this perspective, knowledge is variational and has in itself the principle of non-closure. The inclusion of everything and everyone forming a complex unity between flow and form. It works from the perspective of specificities open to dialogue with transformations from immanence with generative forces. Integration with the diversity of contexts is part of the nature of the creative state. The juxtaposition of models, the cultural imposition and the valorization of one culture over another is eliminated at the root, since in the creative state, infinite paths always welcome the specificities that occur between people in space and time. (Earp, 2011)<sup>17</sup>

The fact that his proposal is characterized by openness to infinite paths, it is absolutely applicable to other contexts that are not restricted to a specific emergence of a

<sup>16</sup> We emphasize that this disparity is more significant in the institutional sphere precisely because in everyday life affective allocations work differently, as we transit in spaces of multiple belonging, in which black and indigenous dances can acquire the value of the center, not the margin. We are talking about samba schools, favelas, suburbs, villages, etc., places that, although they have not been rooted in themselves so much power to climb, are absolutely relevant in people's lives, especially because of the body grammar they use.

<sup>17</sup> Idem note 7.

person or group in a certain time and place, as has already been done<sup>18</sup>. What this text seeks to do is to point to the opening of new studies and horizons to this possibility in a more emphatic way and to provide reflections that point to this path.

It is essential to highlight that it is not a matter of subsuming non-Western dances to a universalizing approach, in which everything fits. On the contrary, it aims to highlight the uniqueness of each body manifestation and to take advantage of these specificities to establish a fruitful dialogue artistically and pedagogically adequate. In addition, it is important to note that the concrete application of this dialogue implies that there are qualified professionals for the teaching of these body modalities in incessant dialogical development between flow and form in *the praxis* of performers-creators-artists-teachers-researchers in dance.

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<sup>18</sup> I am referring to the work of Professor Tatiana Maria Damasceno from UFRJ, where she coordinates the Center for Research in Afro-Brazilian Dance and Culture (NUDAFRO) that develops a work of creation, direction and interpretation in contemporary dance, guided by the integration between the study of the Fundamentals of Dance by Helenita Sá Earp with Afro-Brazilian manifestations and the concept of the dilated scenic body.



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