

Artistic Strategies of a Common Multitude: Dance from Antonio Negri's Perspective

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English translation, Neil CHARLTON

Abstract

This article explores the relationship between contemporary dance and Antonio Negri's artistic theory, a relationship through which the convergence between dance and politics is recognised. Political analysis in dance is a subject widely discussed in the historiography of the studies of this art and related disciplines, as is the research on and advocacy of the processes of creation as an artistic activity, but what we propose here is a reflection on dance from the political and artistic precepts of Antonio Negri and, thereafter, to open a framework that enables the choreographic compositional practices to be considered as a space from which to create new realities. Thus, by placing dance in the field of action of social struggles, we can reassert the importance of creative processes as a truly powerful tool.

Keywords: dance, politics, power, collaborative practices

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*The world is different to what they tell us.
And, very far from extremisms, there is, despite everything,
always the simple and concrete possibility of transforming it.*

(Negri, 2006b: 114)

Introduction

It was in the year 2000 when, through the publication of *Art and Multitude*, Negri burst into artistic discourses and approached an aesthetic paradigm of art of absolute necessity. In this book, the author develops his extensive cultural and intellectual experience to produce a dissertation on the contemporary world that, as a whole, gives us an idea of transversality with which he focuses on artistic practices through a political prism and manages to activate a critical thinking that enables political thought to be considered and captured within the artistic space.

The topics covered in *Art and Multitude* consider the impact of artistic activity, not so much in the scenario of the productive market but as the invention of new ways of life and realities. Through his letters, written during his exile in Paris, Negri manages to activate a critical thinking that enables reflection on social transformation through artistic production, a critical thinking that considers the power of the imagination and the creativity of a common multitude as fundamental elements. The influence of this Italian philosopher – who works on the composition and contemporary class struggle – on academic and social movement is undeniable. His theses will be important for the future of anti-capitalist theory and practice. But what, in our case, attracts us substantially about Negri is how he introduces the artistic question into the political context.

Negri sees art from the need to confront the recovery of reality and re-conquer an action through what is real:

Through art the collective power of liberation prefigures its destiny. And it is difficult to imagine communism outside the prefigurative action of this mass avantgarde – the multitude of the producers of beauty. (Negri, 2011: 60).

That is why he will say that his work is not one of reconstruction but of constitution; constitution of a work based on artistic experience, a work that becomes more and more intellectual, that transcends market value and that is recomposed both in immaterial modalities and in knowledge, in affections and in the production of expressiveness. This is the key to his thought for the dissertation proposed here: to particularise the productive ways through which dance creations take root in order to determine where their true power resides and thus reactivate the telling of their own history.

Negri's choice as a thinker and fundamental reference of current anti-capitalist political thought stems from the hypothesis on which this research is based. But here we want to particularly emphasise his theoretical renewal adapted to the changes of a real society. The relevance of Negri's contribution in the field of dance lies in the fact that it forces us to think about the changes that have taken place in the ways of producing and creating dance through a critical and political analysis, beyond whether we completely agree with him or not.

The complex debate here is oriented towards the need to translate Negri's main ideas in order to later adapt them to our closest context: dance. The philosopher's perspective is the prelude to reflecting on politics by analysing the process through detailed awareness of what makes us human. Negri locates it through the forms of social organisation in order to intervene in the spheres of power and disseminate the analysis of how the movements we activate do or do not create power. But how can we review the dance images that appear in *Art and Multitude*? What is the origin of this concurrence?

Negri and the Dance of Multitude

As we have said, art is, for Negri, the mechanism that enables us, for an instant, to take over the world. It is the way of saying that we live in and inhabit the world, understanding this possession as a capacity that allows us to move forward, look beyond, build resistance and open new avenues.

Negri's first encounter with contemporary dance was through the German choreographer Pina Bausch and took place at the Teatro Argentina in Rome, as described in his letter to Raúl Sánchez on 15 December 1999. Negri himself explains literally how, when attending a Pina Bausch show, he was stunned by its innovative power:

[...] But what I perceived above all – particularly in the distance which I suddenly experienced in relation to things I used to love in the past – was a metamorphosis. A metamorphosis which in other times we had been waiting for, crouching like wild animals, palpitating, hungry, on the look-out. Now it has finally come about. I thought: the transition is finished [...] (Negri, 2011: 77).

Pina Bausch is without doubt one of the most influential figures of 20th century dance. So it is not surprising that it was in one of her shows that Negri experienced stage dance, since the choreographer opened borders in the postmodern dance theatre by breaking with the ontological conditions attributed to the body in order to recognise it as a territory of research and production, as a container of phenomena of public and private history, of ideological and political systems that determine subjectivity and movement (Godínez, 2014: 10). And it is precisely here that the true original meaning with which dance appears in Negri through Pina Bausch is identified: as a place of transformation, as a metamorphosis and as a configuration of what is real (Servos, 2013: 150).

This is how we see it when the creator explains that the greatest perception he feels when he observes an artistic object, in this case a dance piece by Pina Bausch, is his feeling of moving away from it. It is the experience of distancing that makes him perceive the stage act as a transmutation, as a metamorphosis, as a conversion of something that has already taken place. But what does he mean when he speaks of metamorphosis? "Metamorphosis: Art and Immaterial Labour" is the name of a talk given by Negri at the Tate Gallery in London on 19 January 2008 and, in turn, the title of the last of the letters collected in *Art and Multitude*. In this letter, he defines art from his conception of immaterial labour, and specifies metamorphosis as the face of the ontological depth of artistic labour (Negri, 2011: 116).

Therefore, Negri would say that the transition is finished (Negri, 2011: 77) and that this estrangement is what leads us to identify metamorphosis as the process of change that will mark the distance between what has been enjoyed in the past and the in-situ participation in the artistic event.

In his letter to Manfredo on collective labour, Negri describes his metaphor of the world as a spectacle, and how this spectacle is in continual reproduction and in constant movement, uniting the collective dimension and the dimension of production (Negri, 2011: 40). Thus, the author refers to the artistic question as a desire for power, and does so from the construction of the labour that art, by itself, develops. And, by "turning, then, towards a collective process of act of self-valorisation, of creating circuits of value and signification that are entirely autonomous, completely free from the market" (Negri, 2011: 41), this philosopher leads us to the creative process of dance as a powerful element of analysis.

The multitude, for Negri, will be this: an open and inclusive multiplicity of singularities, plural and multiple, composed of innumerable differences that can never be reduced to a single identity. Thus, the author manages to grant the responsibility of the production to the whole of society as a common characteristic of all individuals that cooperate in the social production: "Through circulation, the multitude reappropriates space and constitutes itself as an active subject" (Hardt & Negri, 2000).

Seeing that the multitude constitutes power in relation to the multiplicity of singularities that form it, Negri re-approaches the production not only from the field of industrial goods and services but also the forms of communication, affections and creativity, and conceives a multitude as a network

through which to expand equitably and allow meetings and exchanges that enable people to live together. Thus it is understood that a rich multitude transcends the concept of class and is situated in the field of intellectual production; that is, a multitude bearing capacities for immaterial labour. We are surprised by the lucidity with which Negri raises the idea that power falls back on the multitude. A multitude that, being able to appropriate its material asset, transforms the notion of labour through creative power.

This leads us mostly to park the idea that the creative capacity that becomes the seed is not the only factor from which the spontaneous emerges, but, beyond that, there is an intellectual activity that is created in common. By further exploring the value of the interaction and relationships that occur in research contexts of bodies in motion, we come to the fact that these relationships are a real tool of social transformation away from the dynamics of production marked by the capitalist system, which allows us to say that the creative dance process is the way in which we construct a productive gesture. As for Negri art is production, its dignity derives from the fact that it is the production of "being", of what gives shape to that "being" and that makes such a condition open and public. And this, Negri argues, always happens during the production process.

It is clear that the parameters under which the different creative processes move are merely circumstantial and, as they are subject to the reality of each process that takes place in itself, this article does not seek to explore this issue. The intention will be to approach the creative process of dance as a device of active participation, of occupation of a public space, of an activity that responds to its own language, exposed, essential and sincere. And we will do so based on the experience of the power of dance, on the relationships that are established, on who creates it and the impact it can have on the active agents of the process. In this respect, the creative process of dance as a space for the creation of pieces and the articulation of discourses, enables politics to be done based on its reality and, from its truth, the pedagogical question and the historical question are linked in a common operational unit and in an organ of collective action. But how serious, then, is a dance that is transparent in itself?

If we consider dance as the quintessential relational artistic practice, the creative process as a social ritual transcends the poetic and dreamlike conception of the concept and allows us to adopt a critical prism. The stage from which contemporary dance is created is transformed through the hegemony of immaterial labour. That is, through labour that produces immaterial goods such as information, knowledge, ideas, images, relationships or affections. And this is how we argue that the nature of the relationships that occur in a creative dance process goes beyond the normality of production situations in any other field. Non-normative relationships appear that transgress the estates of labour relations, as we usually understand them, which blur the roles between the choreographic authorship and the agents involved in the process, roles that activate autonomy and interaction through mutual support and eliminate the sense of ownership of the creative act.

But while postmodernism would have made a great effort to bring workers together in a given physical space in order to extract from them the value needed to increase their coffers, intellectuals introduce a new notion of identity. An identity that, for Negri, will be given in the commons; only here do we find our singularity in collective construction. The multitude seems to be that multiplicity of irreducible tasks of singularities which, collectively, as a whole, push power towards new forms of freedom, towards the creation of new forms of life.

Labour, which is immaterial, cognitive and affective, Negri will say, “is in the process of transforming itself into *bios*, into biopolitical labour, into activity which reproduces forms of life” (Negri, 2011: 115). When the door to labour is cognitive, the desire for artistic expression is everywhere; “when the mass of workers transforms itself into a multitude of singular workers, the artistic act invests the forms of life, and these forms of life become the flesh of the world” (Negri, 2011: 114). It would be necessary, then, to recover the creative initiative as a movement of the multitude; a creative multitude capable of activating the micropolitical dance vision.

Negri explains that labour is like a fabric and that, once it is deconstructed, the reality of very strong threads of human power remains (Negri, 2011: 36). This situation opens a horizon to a liberated imagination, to a power that allows us to glimpse new subjectivities, new fields of action, new syntheses of cooperation. The philosopher will insist on the extent to which market power has absorbed any power in order to evacuate the possibility of producing or having value for someone or something (Negri, 2011: 37).

Creativity is withdrawn. Impotence is the very fabric of discoursing, of communicating, of doing. Not emptiness, but impotence. The great circulatory machine of the market produces the nothing of subjectivity. The market destroys creativity. Potenza is withdrawn. [...] Not only is the image destroyed, but also imagination (Negri, 2011: 18-19).

Shifting to this angle enables us to approach the creative process as a shared encounter, as a story of disconnections of shared moments. In the process lies the proper sense of real transformation, the place in which the physicality of bodies in motion is mixed with the intentions of the concepts with which one works.

There is an implicit and unconscious sense of the unknown here, of what has not yet happened. From this perspective, one can glimpse the meaning of the transcendence of creative labour that begins from a place as a movement and evolves to the active search for a common language through networked collaboration. In this creative community that works in cooperation, there is a form of shared resistance from which all the points addressed and all the conversations of the bodies that relate to each other are articulated. The circulation of this message invites to sharing a common goal and the political event occurs while being part of the creative action itself. There may not even be a defined goal, but simply the coexistence of singularities, the collective creation, the visibility of the common dialogue that is the multitude

(Hardt & Negri, 2005). And so we can say that today we create active singularities by cooperating within the networks of the multitude.

If from the idea of multitude that Negri develops in *Art and Multitude* we learn that we are singularities that act and communicate socially on a common basis, the production of this daily life goes beyond what is merely everyday. Production, in life, becomes more and more common. In the phenomenological analysis of social relations, productive experiences are increasingly intense, cooperative and linked. An idea that André Lepecki also talks about in *Idiorítmia*, in an attempt to think of the event from the singular as a way of transcending the individuality that prevails in the world of globalised neoliberalism (Lepecki, 2018: 21).

On Common Processes and Powers

The arbitrariness of the dividing lines of art leads us to consider what is happening in the productive world today; obviously, it is not the same art that was produced in feudal society as in the present capitalist system. It is interesting here to extract everything that Negri focuses on so that we see not only the place, the historical moment and the way in which an artistic event has taken place, but also takes us deep into the goals of the multitude with respect to production.

One of the tools that allow him to explain this phenomenon is the broad conception of the political, a concept that he will define as a phenomenon that inhabits the realm of subjectivity. The author argues that its labour is not that of reconstruction but of constitution (Negri, 2011: 10). Constitution of a work based on artistic experience, that becomes more and more intellectual and is recomposed in modalities such as knowledge, affections or the production of expressiveness. Without denying the effort in the work of production itself, Negri recomposes his expectation, returning utopia to reality. But all of this is not something the individual art producer can do for himself. He can, on the other hand, analyse the languages of collective labour. This is the key to his thinking for the research that concerns us; to particularise the productive ways of generating dance forms that allow us to determine new categories and thus reactivate the telling of our own dance history.

As seen above, Negri presents art and politics as practices whose inter-relationship drives collective labour, with the multitude being the common subject, a multitude whose unique labour and production capacity are presented as virtual cooperation. The political problem is to reveal how this virtual multitude that the Commons contains manages to express itself. Cooperation forms the true power of the multitude, which, in addition to being productive, constitutive and political, is capable of producing knowledge that escapes individual power; that is, the commons as a power of the multitude. "We have seen how labour invests the world — spirit and nature — and re-creates everything, in a totally new form, as a second, abstract nature. It is this new, plastic and flexible reality that we observe. New aspects, new figures, new worlds are continually in construction [...] art is above all a representation of this process" (Negri, 2011: 47-48).

With these words, Negri puts art in direct relation with the productive forms. He disseminates the historical development of art while constituting it as a tool for social transformation and unravels how art has anticipated the determinations of valorisation. But what differentiates art from other products of collective labour? Negri will situate this difference in considering “artistic labour as liberated labour, and the value produced is, consequently, an excedence of being freely produced” (Negri, 2011: 48). Art will therefore be one of the products of collective labour. He explains this in his letter to Manfredo.

So here we are, in effect ready to live again the sublime rupture from the market, and to remember how, through the ethical decision, we did not abandon the terrain of art, but rediscovered its firmness within human reality. A reality constructed, reconstructed, remodelled by collective labour [...] (Negri, 2011: 34).

Thus, in this way, it would be possible to vindicate an ontology that would give meaning to the production of dance aimed at considering the reality of this space as a field of labour and social struggles. As part of a creative process, the multitude cooperates, collectivises, composes and produces.

The creative process is one of the most permeable forms of dance in the social and cultural event, as it is what places this art in the person that reproduces it and for what and for whom (at the same time that whoever sees dance formulates the same question in reverse). It confronts a landscape on which figures adapted to a material reality of spaces inhabited by bodies, voices and minds that are expressed in power are developed. But do we produce dance as we produce life? If so, could this be the space for self-defence?

Negri would say that art is the tool with which to change the world because art is anti-market (Negri, 2011: 32). And, as we explore this spiral, we see how he will argue that the most important thing in art, as in politics, is struggle. That struggle creates meaning (Negri, 2011: 50).

These assertions about changing the world through art involve, initially, understanding that the world is not as it should be; in other words, it means positioning oneself in opposition to the world as it is and that, in the artistic effort lies the struggle to capture the world and shape it. That it is necessary to take the floor again, an idea that for the philosopher is no more than speaking collectively.

Beginning to speak out again means speaking collectively – in other words expressing the value which we have produced and reconquered collectively, wrenching it from the market... Now that the division of labour has become less marked through the very fact of capitalist development (without any reduction, however, in the intensity of its exploitation), how are we to express this elementary collectivism? How are we to express the high consciousness of the fact of the resumption of speaking out is a collective act? How are we to affirm the abstract collective essence as the basis of art? (Negri, 2011: 39-40).

Negri explains that labour is like a fabric and that, once it is deconstructed, the reality of the very strong threads of human power remains (Negri, 2011: 36). This situation opens a horizon to a liberated imagination, to a power that

allows us to glimpse new subjectivities, new fields of action, new syntheses of the cooperation that in this text we locate within the activity of dance composition.

In this sphere, Negri takes us to consider these new political categories through a common analysis, through the multiplicity of singularities that make them up. While power, by producing, organises through authority, dance, by communicating, produces goods, but also creates subjectivities, relates them to each other and arranges them. Dance prioritises cooperation and shares what it builds. The process is in itself a continuous relational exchange. This is precisely where the aim is to point out its value, its power: in its forms of production and not so much in the stage result. That is, he creates a multitude, a potentially creative community.

Negri captures the first fragility of the capitalist commandment by asserting that the autonomous power of productive cooperation is creative labour as resistance; that herein lies the potential through which to explore new terrains of construction of subjectivities, so that the way is opened to link the crucial moment in which what is productive is reformulated as social.

This is Mark Franko's opinion when he states that resistance is a figure within which movement and representation are ambiguously articulated (Franko, 2006). That this is due to the fact that dance can absorb and retain the effects of political power, and resist the same effects that it seems to incorporate within a single gesture. This is precisely the hypothesis that we seek to expand: the interconnected search for common labour and the collective intention inserted into the dance process as a creative movement.

This construction of the commons today means recovering all the forces of freedom and equality that exist in our society and that are linked, take note, to the new form that labour assumes. It is not possible to talk about value without freedom, and we do not produce value without the commons. The commons and freedom are two quite interconnected things, and this is the enormous problem and the great desutopia. And I say this because it appears distant as a utopia, but it is already in everyday experience, and therefore we call it thus: a reverse utopia, a living hope and a model to build (Negri, 2008: 20).

Dance in Common and Collective Labour

“The commons is the incarnation, the production, and the liberation of the multitude” (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 303).

Negri presents art and politics as practices whose interrelation drives collective labour (Negri, 2011), with the multitude being the common subject. Multitude as a set of singularities that finds its consistency in the capacity to act in community. Singularities that, in turn, are concepts through which to produce the world, through which to renew realities. If, from Negri's reading, we move the focus towards dance production structures, we will be able to show what other ways of interpreting concepts are possible, and how, by

understanding them, and lends dance theory a consideration in terms oriented towards action.

When Negri identifies the fragility of capitalist orders he does so from the assertion that the autonomous power of productive cooperation is a space of liberation (Negri, 2006b: 174), and this idea takes us into the notion of dance labour through creative power. In the face of this process of liberation from exploitation, there is a reaction: capital reacts and invests in artistic values in an attempt to reorganise them in the market, and the moment they escape production they go on directly to be distributed. Capital, in its desire for domination, makes art a productive force with its own character, the creative act of which will constitute its original essence, and make it difficult to keep it in its dynamics of its industrial reproduction (Negri, 2011: 49).

But there is another aspect in relation to this precariousness, which is the social and cooperative power of labour. It is Negri's multitude, a unique labour with production capacity that is presented as virtual cooperation (Negri, 2006a). The political problem will come to reveal how this virtual multitude that the commons contains manages to express itself. Cooperation conforms the true power of the multitude, which is, in addition to being productive, constitutive, with a policy capable of producing knowledge that escapes individual power; that is, the commons as a power of the multitude. "We have seen how labour invests the world — spirit and nature — and re-creates everything, in a totally new form, as a second, abstract nature. It is this new, plastic and flexible reality that we observe. New aspects, new figures, new worlds are continually in construction [...] art is above all a representation representative of this process" (Negri, 2011: 47-48).

In this return to the process of dance production, the analysis of collective languages comes into play. When we are within this movement, the collective and the productive dimension are one. We manage to put ourselves at the level of value when we produce; that is, when our productive tension is realised through the collectivity (otherwise it would not be realised). "Engaging oneself in the act of production — this is the eminent form of speaking out. There is no production without collectivity. There are no words without language. There is no art without production and without language" (Negri, 2011: 40).

This is how Negri summarises the value of art as the construction of new languages, languages that, like dance, open powerful dimensions "towards a collective process of self-valorization, of creating circuits of value and signification that are entirely autonomous, free from the market and definitively aware of the independence of desire" (Negri, 2011: 41). Negri's ideas on the value of producing collectively are closely related to the volume *Éticas del cuerpo*, by Juan Domínguez, when this author states that

The idea of the collective, such as that of the worker, the factory, or the labour organisation, is transformed as a result of laws of production that are at the basis of a global system. This system affects different areas of the world unequally, as well as the different socio-cultural levels, but it is the same for everyone. The group organisation of the scenic event and its communication strategies

are transformed throughout the 90s as a reflection of these changes in the way of perceiving the social and, in terms of the social, the subject that tries to find a new space of performance (Domínguez, 2008: 42).

Thus, Negri presents us with an idea of a collective biopolitical body that operates, builds and evolves in common. If we understand, like Negri, that the collective biopolitical body has three fundamental tasks — a communicative, an interactive or interrelational task — and one of production and manipulation of affections, could it be said that the creative process of a dance piece is the place from which this biopolitical idea of body labour is articulated? This cognitive labour to which the author refers is fostered by the creative community, which generates relationships and produces situations that modify those involved, and “so art brings fully into light that ‘secret of truth’ which is that the subjects produce in a continuous interrelation with each other” (Negri, 2011: 114).

Similarly, Lepecki points this out in *Idiorítmia, o en l'esdeveniment d'una trobada*. In this research the dance theorist agrees with the objectives that have a common link in order to follow the line according to which we look for possibilities of construction and finding new forms of coexistence of the artistic practices through thinking collectively, through destabilising the normalised disciplinary order, the control of our subjectivities and the annulment of imagination (Lepecki, 2018:20).

To deal with the fact that the relationships established during the creative process of a dance creation have more power (and more politics) than the end result (message on stage), we will take up Negri's idea that power returns to fall on the agents involved (multitude), who, being able to appropriate their material asset, transform the notion of labour through creative power. If we understand creativity not only as a factor from which the spontaneous emerges but as an activity of the intellect worked on in common and that, organised, can constitute a true tool of social transformation, we can understand the creative dance process as a productive gesture in itself. Not only is this the way of producing art “but also a manner of production in general which becomes the very figure of *potenza*; in other words, of being-creative in the world” (Negri, 2011: 109).

During the creative process, affective labours are created in the form of social networks that, when oscillating between the instrumental action and the communicative action of human relations, will become forms of community and biopower. If we consider the creative process of dance as a training practice influenced and nurtured at the same time by the multiplicity of forms, techniques and tools from which we work on the relationships of bodies, its authenticity is affirmed. And with it, the power of becoming an anti-market: each creative process is unique and unrepeatable.

Thus, Negri supports the fundamental issue addressed in this text, through which we seek to highlight the categorisation of dance practices as producers of living labour and creators of new forms of life and organisation.

Dance as a field from which to be re-recognised as a social class. Dance as a space from which to resist. Resistance, Negri will say, as an affirmation

of singularity, as an opening towards the production and construction of the commons, of what is common to all (Guerra, 2000, min. 01.36). A transformation of the real into defeat, a transformation that capitalism has won. The optimism of reason is precisely to know this, to assume it. That defeat is a power relationship and not a totalitarian and immutable fact. The optimism of reason is to know that there is always room for resistance.

We are obliged to construct, through the abstract and with abstract materials, a new reality, a new movement. But a movement is the telling of a story. The future event is constructed by a story-telling. The crisis of the revolutionary event is tied to the failure of the revolutionary story-telling, and only a new story-telling will succeed in determining, let's not say a revolutionary event, but even its thinkability (Negri, 2011: 73-74).

For these reasons we argue that we need to let ideas and thoughts flow, ask questions that allow us to organise, select and discuss ideas, because, as Randy Martin says, critical writing itself serves to reference the past and present of the artistic object in question (Martin, 1998: 34). Thinking of movement outside social systematicity and, to a certain extent, even outside aesthetics, is to activate a thinking of dance from a theoretical labour of practice where movement and social event intertwine. In a creative process, active agents experience the intellectual emotion and theoretical potential of imagining dance as an important paradigm, a ubiquitous entity in the debate and production of ideas (Lepecki, 1995: 69).

The creative process of dance recreates fragments that make up, in their turn, an intentional difference as knowledge through corporality and affective relationships. A dance that deals with the mobilisation of bodies more reflexively than everyday bodily acts (Martin, 1998: 46). The reference here is subtle but effective.

Conclusions

Knowledge, in general, empowers us, but the studies on the knowledge of how the labour of creating a dance practice is approached, which is the subject under consideration here, allows the vision of the subject to be extended from the retrospective of the present of dance production. As Celia Amorós says, all power has to do with a genealogy, and this also allows us to intervene in its problems. To the extent that we see dance from the analysis of the conceptual and sensitive resources it creates, to the extent that we consider the way bodies relate — an experience without a defined form, but through that experience reality itself occurs — we can understand its true power.

And thus, already immersed in the context of the creative process of a dance piece, the collective and productive dimension emerges as one.

Here, when we are inside this movement, the collective dimension and the dimension of production become one and the same. We succeed in placing ourselves at the level of value when we produce — that is when our productive tension realizes itself through productivity (otherwise it would not realize

itself). Engaging oneself in the act of production — this is the eminent form of speaking out. There is no production without collectivity. There are no words without language. There is no art without production and without language (Negri, 2011: 40).

This is how Negri summarises the value of art as the construction of new languages, languages that open powerful dimensions “towards a collective process of self-valorization, of creating circuits of value and signification that are entirely autonomous, free from the market and definitively aware of the independence of desire” (Negri, 2011: 41).

The introduction of concepts such as “collaborative practices”, together with “circuit construction”, opens the way to introducing the creative process as a labour space, and the trace that this space leaves, as a true productive power, allows us to move in the spheres that oscillate between the representation and the object itself. And it is precisely here, in the creative process of the artistic object, where this metamorphosis of which Negri speaks takes place,

It is here that the true mutations, the metamorphoses, become apparent, these are the ones that present themselves in the form of prostheses — that is, as a surplus of physical *potenza* of bodies, obtained through the acquisition of new tools; the ones that expand in the form of networks; that is, fix themselves in the communication and cooperation of bodies (Negri, 2011: 79).

By making the dissemination of *Art and Multitude* the fundamental tool of this article, it has been possible to reformulate the political context in which to develop a whole reflection on the power of dance production to anticipate social transformations. Thus, thanks to Negri, to recover the importance of what is “collective”, of what is built in community, an image that allows us to confront the challenge of intervening in the social dimension of dance and regain the importance of creative processes as true power, because the way we move in the world is also the way we move the world. After all, as Pina Bausch said, “It’s funny that beautiful things always have something to do with movement” (Pontbriand, 2014: 304).



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