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Abstract

Dancer's Body

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The assumption of this study is that dancer's body has been the driving force of forming the 'body culture' starting from the end of 19th century throughout the 20th century. The romantic ballerina in transparent tulle skirt wearing no underwear had shortened their ballet skirt to show up their toe works and legs. The Victorian age which is notorious with their hysterical fear of body and sex began at the same time when the romantic ballet fever spread all over Europe in the 1830s. Using the body to 'speak' visually, and not speaking, nineteenth century dance stands as the image of the unsayable or unpardonable; the woman's body. The eminent ballet critic of that time, Gautier considered ballet is a showcase of femininity: It is an art whose subject is woman. He was a hopeless lover of ballet and he idealized ballet but he didn't even realize that his writing was charged with erotic gaze and he helped to create erotic picture of ballerinas. Dancer's body represented two-sided male fantasy; some freedom within a constrained institutional framework and the visual market of desire. With the advent of materialistic view on human body at the end of the 19th century, dance has changed into a new style. The essence of human was considered as the body. People were awakened with the pleasures and the sensations of body which is revived with the advent of Dionysian spirit. The resurrected Dionysian spirit used body as his language while verbal language served for the Apollonian spirit. Isadora Duncan said her dance expresses her soul which, she insisted, is located at the solar plexus. Solar plexus is positioned at the upper center of the torso according to Duncan. Thus she spoke with her body through her freely moving torso waving and flexing with emotional expressions. She used her body to express her ideas and in that way she transcended her body. She was not the object of voyeuristic gaze like romantic ballerinas. She was the subject of her own moving will and her body was not the object of being looked at but read as the text which conveys intellectual and imaginative ideas. Her body became a pure sign of her ideas and in that way she paved the way to the 'body centered thinking' and the body culture.

keywords: body(,ö), dancer(1«çë¼ö), Victorian ethics(°öÄä,®³Æ µµ´ö), materialistic body(À¹°·ÐÀû ,ö), liberated body(½Ä½¼ ÇØ¹æ)

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