

SPORT AND ITS PHILOSOPHICAL SIGNIFICANCE

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This paper presents a philosophical analysis of the significance of sport from the point of view of truth in the sense of unconcealment (aletheia). The essence of sport is not a battle in the sense of war but a conflict which is a condition for truthful unconcealment. Through sport the common man can experience truth in its purest form and that is why doping is not only unethical but is also a direct verbalism of a fundamental existential lie.

Key words: sport, unconcealment, conflict, sense of the Olympic Games.

СПОРТ И ЕГО ФИЛОСОФСКОЕ ЗНАЧЕНИЕ

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В данной статье предлагается философский анализ значения спорта с точки зрения истины, понимаемой как откровение (алетейя). Сущность спорта – это не битва в военном смысле, но конфликт, являющийся условием для истинного откровения. Через спорт обычный человек может приблизиться к истине в её чистейшей форме, и поэтому допинг не только неэтичен, но и является буквальным выражением фундаментальной лжи.

Ключевые слова: спорт, истина (откровение), конфликт, смысл Олимпийских Игр.

There is a difference between conflict in the sense of war and conflict in the sense of battle (der Streit in Germany, der Streit is not identified with de Kampf). Only the second of the two is typical for sport. Conflict is a relationship which exudes truth in the sense of the unconcealment of those participating. Thus two athletes fight together and this conflict is carried out on the surface of their own deep unconcealment (uncovertness), i.e. truth. Sport is therefore not something which should merely entertain and free itself from the worries of business.

Sport gives the opportunity to encounter authentic truth, which was perhaps the sense of the first ever Olympic Games. Unconcealment of the conflict of athletes in a tournament, unconcealment of the conflict between athletes shows everybody, the athletes included, their internal truth. This truth is ripped from concealment and laid bare for everyone to see including the competitors themselves. This is how it is in the lives of us all, we hardly know ourselves; we have ideas about ourselves which are given to us by our parents, teachers in school, friends and acquaintances but these boundary situations evoke something from us which we previously had no notion of. It is conflict that permits

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truth in the sense of unconcealment. It is vital but also very difficult to understand these days that unconcealment can only be extracted i.e. torn from concealment. Why? Because these days truth is no longer conflict but judgment and opinion. We search for coherence (it means, the incongruousness is missing) and that is most often enough, but our truth is based on something which lacks any form of conflict. There is no hostility so the truth is sufficiently established through e.g. administrative hearing.

But there is the possibility to falsify many things. For this we can use the ideas of: *circulus vitiosus*, *hysteron proteron*, *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*, and wrongful generalization. All of these fallacies have been known to us for more than two millennia and Aristotle wrote of them in his work *On Sophistical Refutations*. Even in sporting conflict it is possible to falsify, we can improve our performance with chemicals but by doing this the athlete cannot reveal the truth – unconcealment, which they themselves know nothing about, only the greed of those who need to sell their performance to provide a livelihood is revealed. Why is sport so appealing and incredible for so many people? Because sport is all about unpredictability, it is a celestial game of fortuity. In the end the winner is the one who is not afraid to stand before complete unconcealment which they themselves knew nothing about, they take an awful risk. Sport gives a fortuity which was once thought to be a divine proclamation, a revelation in which we can all realize the strength of our originality. There are very few human activities where we can experience the entire essence of our authentic congenital beginning. This beginning is like Zeus' lightning bolt lighting up the landscape and disappearing in a flash. This is the joining of heaven and earth that we see during a storm. Lightning joins both poles, ominously lighting up everything around us and then disappearing with the thunder clap. It shows beginnings which have their absolute legitimacy, they are an experience of when time begins again like being reborn. Hence, whoever is able to live these beginnings does not age, they only mature. Why? Because maturity is the continuation of youth over time. Such a person may be old and wrinkled but still knows how to express joy just like a young boy, experiencing life over and over again; but it is always something deeper, more mature and more genuine. The life of such a person knows not the monotony of repeating the same old content it is always like the dawn of a new beginning. This is what we are most lacking in our lives.

Consequently, we are prisoners of causal repetition until we become old and ill and often meet a needless and an extremely illogical end – death. What do we need then? We need to live so that we mature and not only replicate what we have known for years. Surprisingly, this miracle only manifests itself through sport. Sport is based on conflict but not in the sense of war, sport is nearly the only fundamental process that leads to the disclosure of unconcealment, i.e. truth. We don't take part in sports only for our health or to be beautiful or dynamic. We take part in sports in order to encounter truth itself but this is only possible through conflict. Only through conflict does one individual reveal their truthfulness to the other and vice-versa. It is a reflection of oneself in others and that is the essence of sport.

Only a sportsman can reveal that which is the deepest in man. An actor does not act for himself, he emulates the life of someone else, but an athlete releases from himself something which he never knew he had. Sport is the best example

of how to reveal unconcealment – truth from concealment. Unconcealment is *aletheia*, with the prefix “a” being a negative and “*letheia*” representing the Greek word for forgetfulness (*Lethe*). That which is really truthful can tear the truth away from concealment. Truth cannot be revealed by merely opening ones eyes, it must be fought for, beleaguered, hence the ancient Greek word for truth is the negative expression “no-concealment” and not disclosure as it is often wrongly claimed. Sport not only has an ethical and axiological value but it also has a deeper philosophical meaning, it is a process in which unconcealment is torn from concealment through conflict. Of course this conflict is not a battle which ends in the death of the competitor but it is the seed of all things. Heraclitus of Ephesus states that war is the father of us all, king of all. Some it makes gods, some it makes men, some it makes slaves, some free. Opposites are not only a logical way of making comparisons but are moments of conflict and conflict is the birth of that which is fundamental, existence itself, and this existence is unconcealment, truth. Hence the truth of existence is the existence of truth; it is one and the same. So any discussion on conflict and not war is worthwhile and sport therefore has an educational purpose.

The Olympic Games are important from a philosophical, ethical and scientific point of view. It is not only a tournament of the very best; it is a type of conflict in which a great mass of people can encounter truth in the sense of unconcealment. It is something that man cannot experience elsewhere. As the tension between the athletes reaches a climax one can recover and live that which opposites allow, i.e. the fundamental nature of being and the world. In man’s normal everyday life he only encounters existence in time and space in order to obtain that which he needs to prolong his life and the life of those close to him. We call this work but man only occasionally experiences the fundamental nature of being and the world. This occasion is the Olympic Games. Only during the Olympic Games is the spectator torn from time which only runs forward and leaves the past behind as unwanted and needless trash. Only through the conflict between athletes on the Olympic stage does the spectator reach transcendence, totally absorbed in the moment. There is no need to prepare for this; it is the clash of individual competitors drawing the spectator into an exhilarating spectacle where the spectator finds himself in a different time, in a joyful ecstasy, i.e. removed from time. In this instant the future is not important; it is lost in its urgency and takes away the change to be fully experienced in normal everyday life. Conflict opens up a different time and space allowing us to glimpse the fundamental nature of being and the world. This is not something we can see with our eyes. It is shown to us only when it is formed and it is only formed in the tension of a fair conflict between athletes which we call the Olympic Games! It is a Greek invention of which we should be most grateful. The Olympic Games are a non-religious access to a sacred world and it is this world which is most lacking in today’s money-obsessed liberal person. The Olympic Games should be nurtured like a precious gem of humanity; they must not be left to change into a marketplace of human achievement. Therefore doping is a crime against humanity even if it doesn’t appear to be so at first sight!

Being would rather be concealed (*φύσις κρυπτεσται φάει*) – is a time-honored quote from Heraclitus that has been willingly repeated by Heidegger and many other great thinkers. Sport through conflict reveals this being; it reveals truth

by tearing it from concealment. Concealment is stubborn and must be contested if we want to extract unconcealment from it. A sports tournament provides the conflict necessary to experience and share unconcealment.

If we are asked why doping is wrong, then we can reply that doping is wrong because it prevents the extraction of unconcealment from concealment. The Olympic Torch is a symbol of purity and fair play but doping obstructs everything. The greatest nature of being manifests itself in a split second and bears a resemblance to Zeus' lightning bolt. This is why in Olympia Zeus is set in stone as the one who joins heaven and earth in an instant. Only lightning can produce this connection and bring the nature of being which was shaped by the gods into unconcealment. This bolt of lightning is nothing other than that which is exhibited by athletes when giving their all. It is the conflict of the competitors which reveals unconcealment and shows everybody, the competitors and the spectators alike, that which the gods have provided and for this we should be grateful. The Olympic Games generate a bolt of lightning and all those people present can share and witness the nature of being. Thus sport has a sense and meaning of purification in the way a historic tragedy or Hölderlin's poetry does.

We need to look at sport from a different angle. Sport is not only a practical way of keeping fit, for improving ones health, sport is a place in which man can appreciate his becomingness to all that is superior, virtuous and divine. A sportsman does not and often cannot speak of this but he knows of it nonetheless in its basic manner for which there are no words, we are not all poets like Hölderlin. This sense of sport is uninteresting to most, it is not written about even though it is the most fundamental human level of reaching transcendence and experiencing the nature of being.

A so-called little person will never be faced with such an opportunity. In order to achieve pureness in sport one must act on that which is most fundamental in a spectator. Experience is not a product of sophisticated physiological and psychological systems as it is sadly thought of these days. It is something else, it is the capture of something that beckons us, something we cannot see or measure. It is a calling that can only be envisaged or shared in retrieval. It is the whole world in its grandeur and magnificence. It is not a coincidence that these days man scorns everything, nothing is sacred for him. Everything is liberal and democratic, available to all without instruction or preparation. Such a person needs to be jolted into action; he needs to be in a situation where he no longer has to think for himself, he wants to escape from that which stifles him in everyday life. Experience is actually a type of oblivion of the monotony of day to day life but sharing the nature of being through sport is something completely different. Sadly these days we do not know how to think of it, we don't want to hear about it, we fail to understand it. This is not a reason however to write about sport only in terms of the number of red blood cells.

It is strange that these days this significance is not written about! Is it because it is so self-evident? No, it is because the significance of sport has been entirely forgotten about. Man tries to be profitable and pragmatic in everything he does thereby transforming even sport with its sacred content into practical achievement in order to make money and a living. It is a shame because through sport we can genuinely escape from normal everyday life which is something beyond compare.

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КАКОЕ ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ НЕОБХОДИМО ДЛЯ ГЛОБАЛИЗИРОВАННОЙ КУЛЬТУРЫ?

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В современной экономике более, чем когда-либо, ставится акцент на использование знания и информации. Структура знаний населения – картина зрелости страны. Обладать правом на образование должны все, кто хочет этого. Однако общество знаний, если судить по опыту экономически развитых стран Европы, не решает проблемы низкой конкурентоспособности, высокого уровня безработицы, развития демократии и гражданского общества. Необходим анализ изменений в образовании в трансформирующейся экономике – изменений, которые оказывают активное влияние на рынок труда и общество.

Ключевые слова: образование, рынок труда, безработица, квалификация, общество знаний.

WHAT KIND OF EDUCATION IS NECESSARY FOR THE GLOBALIZED CULTURE?

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More than ever, the accent in modern economy is put on the use of knowledge and information. The structure of knowledge of the population is a reflection of the country's maturity. Everyone who wants it should have the right to education. However, judging from the experience of the economically developed European countries, the society of knowledge does not solve the problems of low competitiveness, high unemployment rate, the development of democracy and civil society. An analysis is needed of the changes in education in the transforming economy – changes exerting active influence on the labor market and the society.

Key words: education, the labor market, unemployment, qualification, the society of knowledge.

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