

PHILOSOPHY

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Why sport exists – and should it be considered philosophically?

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Abstract

Problem. In this essay I have been asking the question *where sport comes from* and what values justify the reason for both the Olympic and the non-Olympic athlete's activity. If sport exists as two types: the ludic and the Olympic, then two reasons must explain its origins.

Method. The purpose of the research task, which was preceded by a historiosophic query, was to explain the hypothetical reason for the existence of an athlete.

Results. The first part of the paper refers to my personal experience of playing the game of *palant*. It also includes the answer to the question concerning the reason for the agonistic destination of both the athlete of play and the athlete faced with the seriousness of the Olympic feat. The second part of the paper explains why the origins of the Olympic movement cannot be understood without knowing the social conditions in which the philosophies of moral consolation arise. Modern Olympism is a moral philosophy that opposes the evil of war and provides all nations with the possibility of creating peaceful ecumenism in friendship.

Conclusion. In conclusion, a law has been formulated, which says that if there was no moral evil of the act of war, there would be no premise to oppose the moral good in the sign-symbolic rule of peaceful coexistence.

From my first lesson in early, classical, Aristotelian *philosophy* at the beginning of my Ph.D. studies, I learnt that every being has a **reason** for its existence (*rationis sufficientis*). I found out that all beings are non-essential, therefore accidental in their reality. Having no reason for being, within themselves, they are dependent in their *to be or not to be* on the external causal forces derived from another being. At the same time I was having lessons in metaphysics, not for the sake of the philosophical studies themselves – to learn and understand – but quite calculatedly, to find out where sport comes from and what the meaning of sporting existence is. If there is only “the this”, which is equipped with the reason of being, – and the one without the reason does not exist, – then *what brings sport into existence* and *where does Olympic sport come from?*

If sport were a self-dependent being, if it is constituted by its internal cause, then to give it up (as in my case¹) would have to induce an ontic collapse; just as a marriage ceases to exist when one party on the way to

divorce refuses the other reciprocity. Meanwhile, despite the local disappearance of the existence of both entities – existence in sport and existence in a marriage – there is no annihilation of them, as a transition into a state of nothingness. In the least successful course of social events – war – where all means of existence are usually suspended, sports reality ceases to “exist”. No one goes to a stadium, when they have to get ready for a battle and no one gets married when they have to save themselves from losing their living structure, but sport not lose its ability to re-exist. Athletic existence will start to belong to social reality again, when the cause that abolishes all forms of accidental existence, – and thus the existence of this greater being, to which sport as a lesser being, owes its reason for existence, – ceases to exist.

Sport does not arise from its internal cause, although its structure can be weakened locally, which in itself is a causal action, neither can it be individually created *ex nihilo*, like an imagined way of self-deliberate existence though **without an external reason: from itself and for itself, for its exclusive use**. The existence of sport is evoked by “some” hypothetical external being, without which, – it being originally more important and higher in the

¹ I experienced a typical drop out from the sport, as a consequence of injuries, characteristic of sprint runners.

metaphysical order of things – its perfection cannot be paired or complete. What then is the more important being that evokes the existence of sport and is this very being the external cause of the existence of Olympic sport? If there are two “stadium sports”, one of which is considered “ludic” and the other “Olympic”, then there are two different reasons that must explain the external reasons for their mysterious origin. Therefore, if there are two types of sport, (and I am not yielding to an Olympian after-image), then two, and not one, reason must be the principle of its being; or more accurately – what was and is – the reason for ludic sport is not the same, because it cannot be the reason for Olympic sport. Two entities with the same name “sport”, are not the same, because what is *called* “sport”, and what is *classified* as “sport” – given a clear understanding of the essential characteristics of being – cannot be something else at the same time.

A purist linguistic definition would therefore exclude the word “sport” from the collection of names referring to the culture of Olympic agonism, and a possible approach would be to add a descriptive adjective – “Olympic” – to the word “sport”, but the descriptive adjective – “ludic” – when we refer to “sport as a sport”. Thus, in the process of discovering the essence of these two different entities sharing the same name “sport”, and learning about the meaning of their existence, we can distinguish between them thanks to the different names assigned to them: popular (ludic) sport and Olympic sport.

After years of further study, it turns out that this possible solution was more *accurate*, because it supposes a certain commonality of moral good, which is the goal of agonistic action. The lesser moral good of “fairness” exists in ludic sport, but it is the greater and more important moral good “the love of friendship” which defines the agonist’s humanity, and which exists between sport and the Olympic ideal.

Sport desires good for itself, which is the same goal as for the existence of an agonist. The reason which prompts the athlete towards purposeful action, to strive for moral good, is enough to place the subject in a closed causal cycle: from external reason, which liberates the agonistic act, to achieving the goal of moral good through which transformation into sporting humanity takes place. The athlete shares in the moral good because he undertakes agonistic actions, which he does because his actions are provided with reason releasing him towards agonist existence. As can be seen, at the point of recognising sport as two independent entities of social reality, it proves easier (though not without referring to the vastness of the premises of philosophical and empirical reasoning) to show the goal – the goodness of the existence of an agonist – than to explain the external reasons for their origin.

The difficulty lies in revealing the hypothetical reason on which the existence of the Olympian depends,

despite the misleading similarity to the sporting – game player’s way of existence. In undertaking this truly risky task of deduction, (which was preceded by my histori-osophic query on modern Olympism), I have decided to apply my personal experience of playing *palant* (a game similar to baseball), during which, having run to the end of the stadium, I posed the question about the sense of the agonistic destiny of an Olympic athlete. I used the opportunity to use the example of this common game – presented in the ethnographic scientific work by Zofia Dowgird [1966] – to apply an epistemic manoeuvre of the first question in the *first philosophy*: concerning the origins of ludic sport and Olympic sport. I wanted to return to memories of my childhood sport to understand the origins of everyday sport for everyone, just plain sport.

First encounter with the game of palant

The playground of our old Prussian school was too short for a game of *palant*, and lacked an *outfield*. While it was long enough for younger children to throw the ball, it was not for older ones, from seventh form on. When the older children started playing it would soon come to an end. They used to strike the ball easily over of the school fence, losing it, most often irretrievably, in the thickets of Dąbrowski Hills. One of the school’s “persistent offenders”, a “supersized” classmate would brag about striking the ball to the distant Poznanski Square. He was bluffing. I guess he knew, however, that we also knew that the ball would have to roll over furrows, fall into a little cobblestone ravine, and finally run down the bend in the gutter to the nearest street in the new town. From there it was still a long way to the Square. Besides, he would have been striking a bouncy ball, which could have flown incomparably further. We had a hugely long outfield at the Uhlan fields. But we played there less often. We did not want to miss the wind, which blew there so strongly from the trenches (it was once military area) that we used to fly our kites for hours on end. When I started my secondary school, which was located in the same range of the hills in the River Brda valley, I did not play with my *palant* stick any more nor did I toss the ball.

From the Bydgoszcz experience playing *palant* I learned the lesson that cheating is not allowed in the game. Those who cheated – spoiled the fun. How could I be supposed to know that every game, including one that creates a natural drive towards spontaneous play, poses a moral task, exceeding the child’s ability to fulfil the ideal with integrity. It was only when I was an adult that I learned that the moral ideals of a sport, including *palant*, as well as tennis, cricket or baseball, can be considered normatively in terms of plebeian, knightly and gentlemanly ethics, and sociologically explained and philosophically justified, in terms of the universal sense.

Thus, since the moral culture of playing a game can be examined scientifically, it must therefore in a sense be part of the moral sciences. Therefore, an ordinary game of *palant*, which is such a common component of children's play, can sometimes turn into an organised adult sport (as happens not only in my country), and can bring joy to serious scholars. Aren't scientists, when they have concluded a scientific discovery which culminates in the lightening of the mind, like children, happy about their discovery? If so, then *palant* for children and for the elderly is an equal play-in-science for serious people. Each object is worth getting to know, and so is *palant*.

Second encounter with the game of *palant*

Not so many years later, (this was all happening between 1960 and 1970) I remembered the games of *wybijak* (tipcat, giddy-gaddy) and *palant* after a journalist from Warszawa, whose name gave me no clues at the time, ridiculed *palant* and ridiculed a Ph.D. student. He was not the only one of the "bullies" who made fun of a scholarly woman who, in a country so seriously involved in building real socialism, did not join in with the collective work, choosing to follow her own path. The journalist insinuated that Zofia Dowgird praised *the game of palant in Poland*, to elevate herself, on the foundations of such a triviality, to academic dignity. This message, of the ridiculousness of science, which took *palant* as an object of knowledge, went global. An *idiot* from Warszawa decided to ridicule the dissertation about *palant* (in Pol. idiot, jerk), written at the Department of General Ethnography and Slavs in Wrocław.

I would have never learnt about the academic scandal in Wrocław if it were not for the indignation of Professor Roman Trzesniowski, who that day, (and it could have been in the winter of 1969) was lecturing us on the Philosophy of Physical Education. I would never have thought that my first encounter with the game of *palant* in childhood so important to us, – and even serious in its own way – would be validated and even philosophically justified by a former games teacher. He later became a teacher who was famous for justifying the socialising values of play and the dissemination of their patterns – producing, from 1953, ten editions of the guidebook describing 600 games and physical activities. One of them was the team game *palant*.

More than a year later Zofia Dowgird successfully defended her doctoral thesis at the University of Wrocław. Here was our lecturer from the University of Physical Education in Warszawa, defending, in a thrilling speech, not so much the game of *palant* – which, being a game cannot be serious in itself, despite the fact that the players are deadly serious about it – the importance of the scientific knowledge of *palant* as a social phenomenon, deeply rooted in the ludic culture of the Middle Ages,

and (...) "in its fundamental features, common to large areas of Europe and Asia". Eugeniusz Piasecki, who was the best informed academic about the origins of the game of *palant* was often quoted by Trzesniowski as: "the Polish version of *palant*, as we have managed to recreate it from living tradition, does not lag behind other similar games. On the contrary, in a number of details it exceeds them, for example the German *Schlagball*" [Piasecki 1935: 339].

Nowadays, we could add, quoting Norman Davis, what sounds like a sensational historical discovery, that (...) "Polish workers from Jamestown were blamed for the first industrial strike on the American continent, and also for inventing baseball because they were playing *palant* [Davis 2008: 757]". Will it ever be possible to check how this could be related to the general belief that baseball (...) "was brought from Great Britain by colonists in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (...)" – as Wojciech Liponski [2001: 40] claims, or the findings of Dowgird, who while quoting A.G. Spalding the American baseball historian said (...) "the prototype of the game was brought from Europe by the French Huguenots who travelled through the Netherlands to reach New Amsterdam in the American colonies" [Dowgird 1966: 52].

Our lecturer knew different versions of *palant*, one of which he described much later, at the lecture, recalling his bout with his school principals (...) "to whom I gave the *palant* sticks needed to play the pitching game, called *wybijanka* (kick-off the ball). My goodness, how my principals played! *Palant* sticks were sometimes used to hit a defeated area; more often they were flying diagonally left or right. With time, they improved their skills and their shots became more and more accurate" [Trzesniowski 2004: 150]. The lecturer did not stop at just describing games, or improving their classification, for the methodological needs of teachers' education. He asked metaphysical questions *about the play* and repeatedly delivered philosophical reasons, explaining their cultural singularity. He would place in the cognitive centre of his pedagogy of play and games the same questions that he had posed much earlier while he was studying the philosophy of folk culture as described by the Dutch cultural historian Johan Huizinga, and as postulated by Polish writers – in a completely different, ethnographic style – including Oskar Kolberg, Edmund Czar, Wanda Bieniewska, and Eugeniusz Piasecki, quoted above.

Thanks to my Warszawa experience with *palant*, I realised that things that are funny for some people, may be the subject of serious scientific reflection for others. At Warszawa University, where I started working after my studies, I would, every day, meet numerous academics who were seeking fulfilment in the search for the truth about *Homo Ludens*. Thanks to historians, I became acquainted with the works of the classical philosophers of play, and from contemporary sociologists and philosophers of sports culture, I learned that in sport there

is a balance between play and work. Ethnographers, of whom there were not many, provided a processed "up to the mark" description of patterns, norms and ideals of the culture of play as material for further, more advanced cognitive procedures. The methodology of the ethnographic education of play in the game of *palant* as described by Zofia Dowgird, demonstrated how to get to understand sports culture. I could see this for myself in my third encounter with *palant*, which took place in the spring of 2013, in Wrocław.

Third encounter with the game of *palant*

It is simple to work out where the name *palant* (Polish meaning – idiot, prat) comes from when you have read the scientific study by Zofia Dowgird. It is also easy to solve the problem historians possibly have in trying to determine the American origin of this game. In Warsaw, anyone who got on somebody's nerves for insignificant reasons would, be called a *palant* in the street language of insults. One could imagine that the name "broken *palant*" used allegorically as a contemptuous term to describe a person going down the path of becoming a tramp in Warsaw's dodgy district of Praga takes its meaning from a deformed *palant* stick, which has lost the value of suitability, so has become a useless thing. The derogatory term in Bydgoszcz was *luj*², while in Warszawa it was *palant*. And even to this day I would have thought that the name *palant* derives from the stick if I did not have in my hands Dowgird's dissertation, in which a dictionary analysis reveals that in Italian the *palla* is *pilka* in Polish, and that the *pallantern* from the lands of Greater Poland is compared to the German *Schlagball*.

The game of *palant* is not a Polish invention, nor is it German, as the eulogists of Germanism would have wished for, and who attributed a German origin to the word "ball" – despite its Greek origins. Dowgird writes about this, incidentally disregarding the usurpation by Schnell, who (...) "based on the false premise that this word is purely Germanic, suggests that games, in particular ball games, were most widespread among Germanians, and transferred over time to Roman and Slavic countries". Neither of these ideas is true.

Almost half a century has passed since Dowgird published her research, and I have the impression that public defence of her doctoral thesis still continues. I think I was the first to join the discussion after the laudator presented the justification for awarding Zofia Dowgird a *Laurel* for outstanding achievements in academic work. Although I did not know her, I have remembered her name – as you can see – throughout my life. And per-

haps I would not have joined the conversation if the laudator had not mentioned "the Wrocław palant" and the insinuations of a journalist from Warsaw, as well as that fact this was the last chance to grant the distinction to a such a well-deserving person at the University, and who was by then, very old. I was glad that she was still alive. As evidence that I know the case, I also discussed the Warszawa upheaval and Trzesniowski's speech. I also expressed my own opinion that at a time when doctoral students (together with their supervisors) showed off their knowledge of the quantitative form of cognition (statistical and nomothetic), it was good to see Dowgird using the methodology of qualitative research in the ethnographic recognition of sports and games. This was how much I have remembered, and I have added from my point of view that today in the social sciences, and thus also in sports sciences, the ethnological-ethnographic approach is fundamental and irreplaceable in the creation of a grounded theory. I have drawn the attention of my own and other students to the methodology of qualitative research, encouraging them to study the works of Denzin, Silverman, Lincoln, Flicka, and Charmaz. When it comes to sports science I particularly recommend the studies by Liponski, of the Poznan ethnographic school in which the "key" to understanding the phenomenon of the process of social sports games was identified. Eugeniusz Piasecki – a Lviv-Poznan historian and ethnographer of games and physical activities, was looking for this key in the 1930s. It was he, whom Dowgird had written (...) "his longest work, which was to sum up the achievements of his whole life in the study of Polish traditional games, was prepared and went into print in 1939, but was destroyed during the war" [Dowgird 1966: 3]. And he too, whose earlier works had inspired the Wrocław University Ph.D. student to search for the cultural peculiarities of the Polish sports game.

I have read Zofia Dowgird's, entire doctoral dissertation manuscript written in 1966. I have read it as if I were the reviewer of a study undertaken today, half a century later. When I have classes with Ph.D. students, to whom I teach the methodology of social research, I draw their attention to Zofia Dowgird's work, written at the University of Wrocław, in which the retrogressive reasoning about the game of *palant* in ethnographically Polish regions has – thanks to the simultaneous use of several methods: typological, cartographic, etymological and historical – been moved forward to logical perfection. I distinguish this work for its methodological diligence and theoretical reliability, manifesting itself in the erudite collection of hypotheses concerning play, and above all, the abundance of evidence (empirical), justifying the conclusion about the culture of *palant* as a source of ethnic identity.

Thanks to my Wrocław encounter with *palant* and its transfer into an academic version, I have a better understanding of myself. What should happen was that from

² I refer to the award-winning literary trilogy by J. Suliama-Kamiński, *Most Królowej Jadwigi* (*Queen Jadwiga's Bridge*), describing the changing street customs of Bydgoszcz.

the ethnographic description of the culture of a sport or game, followed by the scientific theory explaining the sport or game would come an understanding of the meaning of my childhood. If it were not for *palant*, then surely some other game – but always some game, and never none – would be the source of my self-knowledge.

This is how the Wrocław encounter with *palant* triggered in me the conviction of the importance of scientific thought in my access to philosophy and not only to my childhood. I was bound to meet Zofia Dowgird on my way – by studying her work in order to understand properly the relationship between the culture of playing *palant* and my personal identity. Poor are those who did not experience games and sport in their childhood. And poor are those who have not learnt the meaning of sport.

Towards the philosophy of sport sense

When I started my permanent job at the University of Wrocław, I already knew that the *rationis sufficientis* for the game of *palant* and every *agon* in play was work, and that the reason for Olympic sport should be sought in another place – at opposite ends of the scale between the field of peaceful coexistence of *the man of work* and *the man of play* (where the first is the reason for the second) – namely on the *Field of Mars*, where the antagonist is training to enter a war game arena³.

The dependence of “good” on “evil” was to my amazement, best reflected, by the borderline proximity of the “*Field of Mars* for war” (the ancient Roman name for the military exercise and parade ground) and the “stadium field for peace” in the former city of Breslau, which was the replacement for the 11th Olympiad in Berlin. A friend, then the Rector, showed me, not without a sense of pride, around the territory he managed. We found ourselves in a place where everything was Olympic: Olympia Hotel and Gym Hall inscribed with the Olympic motto “*faster, higher stronger*” in *agon*⁴, and finally the Olympic stadium itself with the remnants of the pedestal of an Aryan athlete – a symbol of racial superiority. The Rector then pointed to the construction in the distance of the future pride of the university.

“*And there, on the Field of Mars...*”, I interrupted him – “*on what field? Did I hear you properly – “we will build the Department of Sport Games on the Field of Mars,”* – he continued – not noticing in my query any surprise. “*No devil could have thought it better*”, I muttered under my breath, “*to surround the symbol*

of peace with the sign of war”. To the Aryan planners of the Olympics (given the mind-boggled mentality of the world’s rulers, who had had a vision of a global war since the 1930s) it must have come in handy, even if it was just a coincidence, to build an Olympic stadium in the area designed to simulate war games.

I knew that I was introducing an element of anxiety into the conversation. As we were walking round the “Field of Mars” and found ourselves in front of the university department building under construction, I added after a long silence: “*if I were the Rector, and it was up to me, I would set up a Department of Olympian Philosophy, ... not of sport games or other sports. It is ridiculous, not to say abusive to the academic ideals of the Academy, that the name of our Department of Sports Sciences should not refer to university universals. – If so, it should be the Department of Sport Games Pedagogy. Surely this place is about education, from which our students are supposed to acquire knowledge about their teaching purpose?*”

These remarks astonished my friend. I knew that I had to finish my thought. “*Every town experienced war, and was affected by it. For example my home town Gdansk was also turned to ruins so not only Wrocław can mark its participation in the establishment of Olympic peace*”.

I told the Rector that upon my arrival in Wrocław I intended to argue for the establishment of a Unit for Olympic Education in the Department of Physical Culture Education. In the pedeutological formation of students, we must take account of the philosophy of Olympism if we want the moral ideal contained in it, (which assumes the love of friendship as the act crowning life in the Olympic community) to become audible at all in the world of school violators of sports athleticism.

You could not count on the Department on the Field of Mars. When it was opened under a completely disreputable and non-scientific name, as far as the university aspiration were concerned, it became obvious that only a courageous change to the University’s mission could awaken the spirit of Olympic pedagogy in the Department of Sports Sciences.

When I used to walk along the bordering street, which separated the *Campus Martius* from the Olympic Stadium – passing objects symbolising, on the one hand, the belligerent attitude of nation to nation, and on the other, the friendly characteristics of the family of sports nations – I would often think back to the Gdansk postulate from many years ago, that every city of war should participate in making social life purposeful through the love of friendship: *Amicitiam pro Pacem*, the act of crowning the Olympic agonistic idea. As I imagined it, a five-storey rotunda in the colours of the Olympic rings would be built, in Gdansk, crowned with the rotating lantern symbolising Olympic enlightenment. In its interior would be space for a *Museion* of the History of Olymp-

³ The first version of the law of the Olympic peace was presented in: [Pawlucki 2007].

⁴ The author of the motto *Citius-Altius-Fortius* (Latin), expressing the aspirations of the Olympic act, was Henri Didon (1840-1900) – a Dominican friar, an educator and a teacher, also the mentor of Pierre de Coubertin.

ism along with the Department of Olympian Philosophy, and above it the Department of Sports Sciences. It was supposed to be the same in Warszawa and Wrocław.

I do not want to imply that the reason for Olympic sport is a straight line to war. But I am not going to deny that the wartime experience of some people, doubting the sense of existence, did not give hope to others, who would be willing to proclaim the philosophy of salvation to the world, and to peaceful ecumenism in friendship, on the principle of unconditional respect for the dignity of the opponent's actions in the stadium agonistics the spirit of contest. People who would be willing to proclaim exactly the same philosophy of moral consolation that unfortunate people experience as a result of their doubt about the world in which they live.

Moral philosophies “are the products of their times and their universal attractiveness cannot be fully understood without knowing the social conditions from which they grew” [Popkin, Stroll 1994: 27]. Modern Olympism also belongs to the philosophy of moral consolation, and it is also impossible to understand the belief in the humanity of the stadium agonist expressed in it without reference to the hateful antagonist from the field of literal murder done to each other by the civilised nations of Europe. However, the act of hatred of the moral evil of the war has its limit, and despite the misery it evokes, it does not permanently blot out social memory to awaken faith in the goodness of true love, and also to introduce the person to the path of spiritual self-improvement through the stadium. This is how an Olympic being which did not exist in itself could emerge, and which was made real, thanks to the creative genius of the moralists of humanity in order to oppose the ontic reality of the evil of war and to overcome the moral evil of militarists. The Olympic being was created, though it did not have to be. It became real, although it could remain “forever” in a state of potentiality. However, it did not arise from anything, because before it was conceived, it was recognised as a being of “reversed” moral reason (apparent good) manifested in ontic evil acts. To better understand this dependence – the existence of possible Olympism on the real existence of war – we must resort to a metaphysical explanation of the nature of the possible being. Now, if we assume that the possible being “is what does not exist, but which can exist in reality; which has no existence, but which can possess what does not belong to reality, but to which it can belong” [Dogiel 1992: 69], then it is sport Olympism as a well-conceived being – at the same time opposing the reality of war – which corresponds to this relationship of conditioning of two relationships at the same time. When it realistically emerges as a pacifist social movement, manifesting signs of moral aspiration for the fulfilment of brotherly love between its subjects, it starts, at first to oppose militarists (existing beings) and the very thinking being of war. To be precise, it should be added that the possible

status of sports Olympism – existing subjectively only in the mind of the philosopher of morality – cannot be recognised as nothingness. It is true that it does not exist yet, but by the very fact that it is a well-conceived being, and therefore objectively existing in the natural mind, also opposes nothingness [Dogiel 1992: 69].

When one is seeking the external causes of what constitutes the being of Olympic sport it may be acknowledged that if there had been no moral evil in the war deed there would be no premise to oppose the moral good by a sign-symbol rule. In the same way, in the Liturgy of the Word, there is the appeal to *shake hands as a sign of peace*. This symbolic activity for peace does not make it real – although one may not know if it does not – and only calls for life according to the rule of peaceful coexistence. **A further consequence of this is the establishment of its physical representation.**

The act of agonism in the stadium of peace could have been conceived as the *reverse* of ontic potentiality, because from the very beginning of time its *obverse* – antagonism on the field of war – really has existed. From mankind's earliest times, the bold act of choosing evil has been stigmatised and then abolished by moralists who were inspired by the revealed wisdom and called, unwaveringly, for a return to the covenant of true goodness. The *ten deeds* of righteousness conceived on the “mountain of revelation”, would have merely remained in a state of metaphysical potentiality, if they had not been *delivered* to the cheerful destroyers of moral order with a command for their unconditional fulfilment through acts of mutual respect for dignity.

And did not it *eventually* happen that the new law of mutual love (“love one another as I have loved you”, St John Ch. 13) was invoked from *absolute potentiality*, when the content of the sign of real good, which was engraved in stone, – which triggered off the deeds of iniquity was forgotten? And the stone, marked by the spirit of wisdom, was no longer a necessary artefact, and turned into sand.

Yet again, throughout the history of mankind, the potential being has resisted the real being as if the former remained in a relationship of dependence to the conditioning of the latter. This is just the same in our modern history where the being of Olympism which is opposed to war, empowers the figure of the stadium agonist (invented by charismatic moralists and placed in a mock battlefield) to acts of unconditional respect for the dignity of the “imaginary opponent”. The aim of the act on the stadium battlefield was to be the love of friendship, and became the causative entity, which lead to personal coexistence, of the entire Olympic family.

An act of moral goodness was possible because there was an act of moral evil. The Olympic act leading to real goodness could, and in fact was, conceived by a subject opposed to moral evil, because in reality there was a subject denying the liberation of man towards his

personal fulfilment in love. In the thoughts of a sporting mind judging the evil of militarists, was created the object of Olympism for peace – the physical potentiality for Olympism was activating in it). The subject of the agonistic relationship itself was born in its imagination, and summoned to a redemptive act in other words the moral potentiality of Olympism was awakened. In general, however, and not exclusively in reference to the moral act of Olympic righteousness, the act of moral normality – of the subject summoned to take it – remains in a relationship of dependency to the moral act of evil that takes place in reality. This dependence is best shown by the possibility of an act leading to real good from an actual act of apparent good for example **fratricide, which precedes the relationship of brotherhood**; the fraternal reference is normal, not fratricidal. First the evil of hatred for *fellow human beings* is realised, and then, possible fraternal love is morally recognised as the only right way of personal action; fratricidal references are abnormal, while fraternal feelings are normal. **If the evil of fratricidal wars between civilised nations had not taken place, the thoughts of the philosopher of morality about signs or symbolic opposition to its abnormality would have never occurred, and would ultimately not have manifested themselves in the collective act of Olympism of brotherly friendship.**

When it comes to awakening Olympic agonistics from their state of eternal potentiality, it looks as if the inferior side of the image of humanity – visible on the *obverse* of shame – was waiting to emboss the pattern of its humanist aspiration on the *reverse*.

Two stadiums, two reasons for a definition of sport

The source of the Olympic act needs to be sought in a subject relationship, rather than in the objectified world, in which objects only symbolise the ideas of the actions taken in them. The stadium in itself is just something that is planned. In fact, it is created by a sports entity that reveals its existence by an agonistic act. The agonistic act, as a manifestation of social life, makes sport in the stadium more realistic and thus gives the object the status of a subject condition of a competitive relationship. Without it and away from it, the sports entity could not reveal its existence in an agonistic act. The stadium object allows for the existence of a sports entity in its agonistic act, but is not its cause, let alone its reason.

While the agonistic act of sport for fun originates itself from everyday working life, the Olympic act, which also has to take place in the stadium, cannot be explained by the usual pursuit of rest and recreation. However, its similarity to play is so striking – everything in its “essence” is the same, when it comes to the existence of an athlete in the *agon*, with the exception of the ritual

decorations, acts-symbols of the Olympic ideal, that he is provided with on that occasion – that recognising the reason for the simple act, as well as the (Olympic) movement requires mindfulness in investigating the truth about the cause of its origin.

How many times have I heard from the mouths of *philosophers* of colloquial reasoning, that the Olympic act is *a feast of youth* or *a festival of joy*, or even negatively – *wasting the energy of humanity*. When I was on the way to become an “Olympian” in my youth, I did not ask myself philosophical questions. I did not even know that I was supposed to do so to get know myself better.

Stadiums are empty at times, eventually deserted and destroyed during their lifetime. The fact that some facilities *with a stage* are *stadiums*, in a nominal, not etymological sense, results from the metaphysical recognition of an agonistic act as a playfully justified act which is part the athlete’s essence – following work and preceding the next act in an employee’s existence. However, the fact that some *facilities with a stage* are *Olympic stadiums* results from the recognition of brotherly love as the highest goal of the existence of a sports agonist. **As the fairness of honesty becomes enough of a goal for his existence for an agonist in a ludic stadium, so the love of friendship is the goal necessary for an agonist to exist in an Olympic stadium.** What is a sufficient goal in making the existence of an agonist in a ludic stadium meaningful, is not a sufficient goal to make his presence meaningful in an Olympic stadium. For social love is something more than the justice of honesty. As long as participation in mutual love crowns a person’s social life – even if it is only a love of friendship or a love of kindness symbolised by the sign of Olympic *communion* – the fairness of honesty brought to social life through the popular stadium is not enough for its participant to fulfill himself in acting as a person. **Participating in the sportsman’s fair play is definitely “something” less than participating in the seriousness of the Olympian’s peace.** The first variation of play belongs to the profanity of existence, the second brushes against sanctity, in the sense that social love, – which is part a *family*, – crowns the personal fulfilment of the Olympian himself, and indirectly all his brothers and all his sisters of all nations.

Conclusion

When the very relationship is about the virtues of justice and love, it is obvious that without one, there cannot be the other, on the principle *that love works through justice*. If, then, participation in ludic sport assumes the justice of integrity, and in Olympic sport, the love of friendship – and thus a step higher in achieving moral virtue – then how is it possible to achieve fulfilment in both ideals of stadium humanity, since it is known that in life outside the stadium they are either not recognised, as in liberal

societies, or simply eliminated, as in authoritarian systems? The question concerns the possibility of meeting the *agathological* challenge by Olympic conservatism, which is constantly weakened by the ideologies of liberal moral relativism and authoritarian amoralism. The question should be asked why, despite external opposition, both ludic and Olympic sports are fulfilled according to a formula of moral conservatism. There are strong indications that it is probable that the subject of both sports has developed its own defence procedures, on the principle of an immune reaction, thanks to which – by appointing the guardians of its *ratio status* – it has retained the ability to self replicate its cultural pattern. In an earlier essay, I explained who has a causative role in the Olympic *autopoiesis* and who deserves recognition for the protection of stadium sport as a community of moral conservatism. Starting from the *first question of the first philosophy* about the external reasons for sport, in the essay *Sport as an equal opportunities utopia*, I went on to provide an answer for the reasons for the internal autopoiesis of Olympic sport, and to an answer exploring the secret of the ability to self-reproduce the social structures of sport and the entire Olympic movement [Pawlucki 2016].

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Skąd bierze się sport i dlaczego należy go rozważać filozoficznie?

Słowa kluczowe: sport olimpijski, sens aktywności sportowej, filozofia olimpizmu, edukacja olimpijska

Abstrakt

W eseju zadaję pytanie *skąd bierze się sport* i jakie wartości uzasadniają sens działania sportowca olimpijskiego i nieolimpijskiego. Jeżeli sport istnieje w dwóch odmianach: ludycznej i olimpijskiej, to dwie racje muszą wyjaśniać jego pochodzenie. Celem zadania badawczego, które zostało poprzedzone historiozoficzną kwerendą, było wyjaśnienie hipotetycznej przyczyny istnienia sportowca. W pierwszej części odwołano się do osobistego doświadczenia gry w *palanta*, w której zawarto odpowiedź o sens agonistycznego przeznaczenia sportowca zabawy i sportowca powagi olimpijskiego wyczynu. W drugiej części wyjaśniono, dlaczego pochodzenia ruchu olimpijskiego nie da się zrozumieć bez znajomości warunków społecznych, w jakich powstają filozofie moralnego pocieszenia. Olimpizm nowożytny jest filozofią moralną, która przeciwstawia się złu wojny i zapewnia wszystkie narody o możliwości tworzenia pokojowej ekumeny w przyjaźni. W konkluzji sformułowano prawo, które mówi, że gdyby nie zaistniało zło moralne czynu wojennego, nie zachodziłaby przesłanka myślowa dla przeciwstawienia mu dobra moralnego w znakowo-symbolicznej regule pokojowego współistnienia.