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**Original research article**

# RHETORICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF PHILOSOPHERS ABOUT PHYSICAL CULTURE: THE IMPORTANCE OF EXERCISE FROM ANCIENT GREECE TO MODERN TIMES

**Dejan Milenković<sup>1</sup>, Vesna Milenković<sup>1</sup> and Slavica Cvetković<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of sport, University „Union-Nikola Tesla“, Belgrade, Serbia

<sup>2</sup>Gymnasium Pirot, Serbia

UDK 140.8.796

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## SUMMARY

Philosophers began to speak about sport during the reign of rhetoric, at the time of oratory which means ability to speak eloquently, and to master the art of persuasion and of winning over the audience. While Greek culture promoted relation to their own body, until then, the sport in modern times turned into a lucrative job subordinated to the wishes of viewers, because with the development of the mass media together with visual and communicative function of sport, its entertaining function is the most prominent. Paper deals with the importance of sport through the analysis of rhetorical considerations of physical culture from the ancient Greece to the present days. With the use of descriptive, historical, comparative, analytical, interpretative methods and method of theoretical analysis, this paper, as an illustration used excerpts from speeches and thoughts of the greatest philosopher thinkers. The results showed that the greatest philosophers were aware of importance of physical exercise they have written about. If the philosophy of sports is viewed in relation to the philosophy of law, aesthetics, ethics, social philosophy, it can be said that the sport examines each of these disciplines through various philosophical positions, because it reflects historical, cultural, ideological and political characteristics. It can be concluded that different approaches, resulting in dependence on the philosophical schools were an important part of determining discourse on sports such as thinking about winning, success, determination, risk, physical predisposition, training, the idea of Olympism, the question of mass culture and media, economic and political aspects.

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### Correspondence author

Dejan Milenković  
dejan\_milenkovic79@yahoo.com

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**Keywords:** philosophical thoughts, philosophy of sport, media, the importance of exercise.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history of civilization, man has strived for perfection of the body and beauty of the body movement. Ancient art is littered with the examples which are the confirmation for that. Along with the development of mankind on the cultural level, art has strongly influenced the development of physical culture that has constantly strived for endurance of impact of the ruling political concepts, not only visible, but also the indirect ones that were reflected on conceptual and operative concept of physical culture. In recent history, during the "cold war" and the division of the world, physical culture and sport were openly used as policy instruments, and some countries have invested vast amounts of money in the development of top sport trying to affirm their own political systems thanks to the sports results. "The number of won medals meticulously published in the media by the journalists, according to them, is the best 'evidence' of how much a nation is worth, ie how much one nation is superior to the other one"<sup>1</sup>. International competitions are often in service of showing and proving the superiority of one nation over the other, in the service of an ideological system compared to another which supports the construction of the political image of the state. The well known motto "win or die", was designed by politicians and businessmen in order to take advantage of someone else's success for their own political points or the financial gain<sup>2</sup>. Considering the fact that the image of a successful amateur, professional and top sports greatly improves the country's position in the world and contributes to the success in other fields, the physical culture has always had an important place in a society which is closely linked to all forms of sports as an agent of socialization.

About physical education as an every person's integral part of life, depending on the cultural context, from ancient Greece to the present day, different criteria of values have been established by building a relation to one's own body and outward appearance. While Greek culture promoted relation to one's own body, and neglected the thinking about the outward appearance, which meant establishing a harmony of body and spirit and favoring leisure without the need for nurturing the body for production purposes, a new century with its

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<sup>1</sup> Nenad Živanović, *Appendix to Epistemology of Physical Education* (Niš: Panoptikum, 2000), 319.

<sup>2</sup> More about this in: Nenad Živanović, *Apology of physical exercise* (Niš: Panoptikum, 2010), 20-21.

newly formed social relationships and division of labor, made the obvious difference between the spiritual and the physical under the influence of ideology and religion. Due to a new perception of physical labor as the basis for the maintenance of existence, the notion of physical culture loses its significance it had in the time of ancient Greece, and, taken as satisfying certain cultural needs, sporting activities have become necessary for the ideal of a successful life. „The desire for entertainment has made the sport moves from the margins to the center of the people's 'new life', so the interest in practicing and monitoring the sports was increased... Sports activities which had hitherto been the privilege of representatives of the rich, 'high' circles, it has become everyday life of middle and working class”<sup>3</sup>. After this one, there was the stage of the development of physical culture linked to the development of mass sports as competitions of top athletes which were enjoyed by people around the world. Today, sports games have become lucrative business subordinated to desires of viewers, so that at the end of the nineteenth century sport began attracting attention because of its many functions. With the development of the mass media together with visual and communicative function of sport, its entertaining function in which the spectators are also participants of sporting events has come to the fore<sup>4</sup>. The phenomenon of spectacle as a critique of "modern, consumer society" in which all things become commodities, according to Guy Debord occurs in societies "in which modern conditions of production prevail, and life is presented as an immense accumulation of spectacles. Everything that was directly lived through has receded into a representation"<sup>5</sup>. Specific aesthetics is implemented in different manifestations of sports performances, starting from ancient forms of spectacle such as carnivals, games gladiator, acrobations of traveling minstrels, to those always in the ongoing in media culture and society (the modern Olympic Games, World and European Championships), where the social power is represented. The power of images in the media global society which is seen in the spectacle, greatly contributes to the creation of aesthetics of 'bread and games' known even in Roman times<sup>6</sup>. Along with the reality show programs, movie events and news

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<sup>3</sup> Vesna Milenković and Dejan Milenković. „Media and development of communication in sports“ (the paper presented at Sport, Health, Environment. Belgrade, Serbia, 30-31. october, 2014).

<sup>4</sup> More about this in: Vesna Milenković and Dejan Milenković. „Violence at sport fields and responsibility of media“ (the paper presented at Security management of sports competitions, Belgrade, Serbia, 23. april, 2014).

<sup>5</sup> Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*. (Belgrade: Family library, 2003), [http://www.crsn.com/debord///Društvo\\_spektakla\\_Gi\\_Debor.pdf](http://www.crsn.com/debord///Društvo_spektakla_Gi_Debor.pdf). (found 12.5.2009).

<sup>6</sup> More about this in: Vesna Milenković and Dejan Milenković. „Violence at sport fields and responsibility of media“ (the paper presented at Security management of sports competitions, Belgrade, Serbia, 23. april, 2014).

supported with images of violence and disasters, sporting events these days, apparently, have lost their original function, and they have become, within entertainment industry, exciting emotional performances with visual, media and aesthetic function, because sport can rise people to incredible victory as well as to an unfathomable downs (sporting and moral). Just because the sport is very communicative activity, often its function of motor training of people who to deal with it is put into the background, and the sport as a powerful factor of integration is abused and used for the creation of various forms of social disintegration.

Also, instead of sporting achievements, the results are directly related to the realization of higher profits. Sports venues are used for product placement, so athletes are becoming a merchandise that can profitably sold on the market<sup>7</sup>.

Observing changes in the sport and the problems it faces in the context of the development of society, paper deals with the importance of physical exercise through the analysis of rhetorical considerations of the foremost philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome, through the Middle and New Ages thinking, to consideration of the philosophers of modern society.

## 2. THEORETICAL BASIS

During the preparation of this paper, a combination of different scientific methods and research techniques were used. Their choice is determined by the selected theme of the paper, as well as relevant research goals. The aim of scientific research in this study is to provide objective and impartial evaluation of the results and research data. Collection of data that were relevant for the work was carried out using the following research methods:

- Descriptive-explicatory method, the first and basic scientific method consisted of collecting, analysing, interpretation of data and generalization of results received by various razlichitih procedures and instruments, it answers all questions on the current status and structure of perceived phenomena.
- Historical method - by surveing of available literature, and using this method, the beginnings of physical exercise and its meaning in the context of different cultures is determined. Through three phases: the collection of historical facts, analysis or criticism of sources and exposure phase, it is led to desired results.

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<sup>7</sup> Nenad Živanović, *Apology of physical exercise* (Niš: Panoptikum, 2010), 21.

- The method of theoretical analysis looks at different information sources such as technical literature, scientific, technical papers and materials available through the Internet.
- General-scientific comparison method determines the essential differences between cultures and their perception of physical culture with comparing system.
- Analytical-interpretative method deals with interpretation of research results in order to formulate conclusions.

### 3. RESULTS

#### 3.1. Consideration about physical activity in the time of ancient Greece and Rome

The period of ancient philosophy is related to the ancient history which to the general opinion lasted for the last five centuries BC and the first five centuries AD. It is said that Hellenic civilization is "an epoch of measures, an epoch of surroundings in the human historical development"<sup>8</sup> in which occurred the gradual development of humanity from the barbarous to Human and civilized way of thinking and acting. Hellenic culture, more productive than cultures that existed before and lasted longer, can be seen in the example of Egypt and Mesopotamia. While contemplation about Eastern civilization is developed in the direction of substantial, when a man was associated with nature and with himself, the modern Western mind relies on the individual at the center of events who turns to his own existence. Hellenic philosophy, developed on the basis of natural and spiritual elements was set between these two streams. As the Greeks were the first people to who felt free in the Old Century, it was a good foundation for the development of human consciousness and the emergence of philosophy as a means of spiritual development. At a time when a man managed to rise above the usual ordinary life issues, he could deal with searching for the purpose of all existing and with seeking universality of reality itself<sup>9</sup>.

The same as the ancient period in all areas of society brought prosperity compared to their former times in the Old Century and prehistoric times, so the physical culture has experienced one of its first organized periods of existence. Since the beginning of mankind there were some forms of physical exercise, but

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<sup>8</sup> Milenko A. Perović, *The History of Philosophy (3 revised ed)*. (Novi Sad: Department of Philosophy of Faculty of Philosophy, 2003/04), 47.

<sup>9</sup> More about this in: *Ibid*.

for the first time these forms of compulsory education of every free man were implemented and also resulted in massive, organized competitions in the form of Panhellenic games in the region of ancient Greece. Physical education played an important role in the development of the personality of each individual in Greece. "Greek palaestra and gymnasiums were built in order to make it possible for the youth to learn and exercise regularly. First playgrounds and competition fields were made in natural environment, out of town, near the spring, river or sea nearby the woods"<sup>10</sup>. The system of physical exercise or gymnastics was divided in Dietetics (personal development) and agonistics (to achieve the best possible results and attractiveness) which was further comprised of palestrics (exercises for the overall development of the body) and orcestrics (dance, music, games accompanied by music).

Subsequent to Greece, Rome held its tradition of compulsory physical education for each individual. Physical training was organized within pre-military organizations, and later the adult males maintain their physical abilities because of the increasing number of military conquests. The Romans were not interested in direct participation in sports competitions like the Greeks were. Circuses and gladiatorial games were mostly reserved for slaves<sup>11</sup>. All the most prominent philosophers of the time were thinking and writing about physical culture, wanting to draw attention to what it meant and how important physical exercise was.

#### **THALES:**

"Thales was a sport events lover and at the question: Who is happy? He answered: The one whose body is healthy, who is spiritually agile and well-bred nature"<sup>12</sup>.

#### **PYTHAGORAS:**

*Describing Milo's participation in war, the famous Greek athlete Pythagoras says:*

"... and he was the first who, because of his extraordinary physical strength, forced

the other competitors lined up as for the battle to flee.

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<sup>10</sup> Violeta Šiljak, *The History of Sport*. (Belgrade: Faculty for management in sport University "Braća Karić", 2007), 44.

<sup>11</sup> More about this in: Nenad Živanović, *Appendix to Epistemology of Physical Education* (Niš: Panoptikum, 2000).

<sup>12</sup> Aleksandar Kerković, *Philosophers on Body and Spirit* (Niš: SX print copy, 2004), 5.

In fact, it is said that that was tthe man - six-time Olympic champion and physically endowed with so much strength and courage – who entered the battle, crowned with Olympic wreaths, like Hercules armed with the lion's skin and a bludgeon; and since he brought victory, he gained the admiration of the whole nation"<sup>13</sup>.

**DEMOCRITUS:**

"105. Physical beauty is only something beastly if there is no sound human mind.

179. If children are not allowed to work, they will neither learn how to read or write, or anything about music, or to exercise...

187. It si appropriate for people to take more care about their soul than the body, because the perfection of soul corrects the invalidity of the body, while the strength of the body, if it is without human mind, does not make soul any better."<sup>14</sup>.

**SOCRATES:**

*About physical training.*

"Don't you know that those whose bodies are weak, if they train regularly, become stronger in the field of their interest, and bear it easier than those who although physically the strongest keep neglecting their bodies. In my opinion, as I am trained to stand whatever happens to me, do you think that I wouldn't bear it more easily than you who are not trained?"<sup>15</sup>.

"Socrates:

- There is no trace of being well-trained in your body, Epigen! -

Epigen:

- Training, Socrates, is not for me! -

Socrates:

- Yes, it is, just as it is for those who intend to compete in the Olympia. Or you think it is easy to fight with the enemy ... and yet, aren't there those who are

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 20.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 30,31.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 40

dying because of physical underdevelopment in war dangers and they are being rescued infamously: but just because of that many are taken into captivity ... and many are embarrassed because of physical weakness since it seems that they are cowards!"<sup>16</sup>.

**PLATO:**

*A continuous care and movement.*

" Let us take, then, as the basis for one or the other, that is, for the physical and mental development of very small children that they need constant care and movement as much as possible, day and night, and that it is useful to everyone especially to the youngest ones..."<sup>17</sup>.

"Athenian:

Games are for children innate, whenever they gather together. When they are six years old, both the male and female children should be separated by gender, so from then on, the boys are with boys, and girls with girls. They both should commit to learning: let the boys practice riding, archery, javelin, shooting sling; girls, if they want, should learn how to use weapons."<sup>18</sup>.

"Socrates:

- Apart from the musical, the youth should receive gymnastics education too. -"<sup>19</sup>.

**ARISTOTLE:**

"A living being is primarily made up of body and soul; soul by nature is the one that controls and the body obeys. Therefore, you should examine the man whose body and soul are best harmonized and in which it is obvious that the soul controls the body. For the people who are wicked and prone to evil it often seems that the body controls the soul because they are in an evil anti-natural state."<sup>20</sup>.

"For good physical qualities, which citizens should have just as, for health and childbearing, athletic figure is not useful nor the one that requires too great a concern or the one that is too weak, but the one between those two. The body should be hardened, but not with excessive efforts and not just in one direction as

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 43,44.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 70

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 72

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 50.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 93.

the body of an athlete, but for all activities that fall within the scope of free people. This should be valid equally to both men and women."<sup>21</sup>.

### **MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO**

*On the beauty of body and movement.*

"For not only body movements that are in harmony with nature, cause affection and approval, but the mental movements, even to a greater extent, are also in harmony with nature. So there are two powers in the soul and human nature; the first is expressed in wish ... pulling a man here and there, and the other is in the mind which teaches and explains what to do and what to avoid. Hence arises that mind controls, and wish obeys ..."<sup>22</sup>.

### **LUCIUS ANNAEUS SENECA:**

"Children should not be burdened with food because it inflates not only the body but the spirit as well. Let the children practice working in order to reduce but not to waste the heat ... The games will certainly be a boon; moderate pleasure soothes and relaxes the spirits ..."<sup>23</sup>.

## **3.2. Physical culture in the medieval 'darkness'**

Creatorship of this period, which lasted more than a thousand years, certainly can not be characterized as an opportunity, unlike the antique philosophy when the human thought experienced its boom. Moreover, this is an unproductive period in almost all areas of human creativity<sup>24</sup>. The Middle Ages is characterized by uniformity and with the pale glint of authenticity, which originally adorned the antique times. The world experienced stagnation and regression in all aspects of life which led to one of the darker periods of human history<sup>25</sup>. It was the time when philosophy put itself in the service of religion and theology. The end of medieval philosophy coincides with the disintegration of the alliance between philosophy and God-revealed theology, and the church, which

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 96.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, 114.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 126.

<sup>24</sup> More about this in: Ljubiša Mitrović, *General sociology* (Belgrade: Professional books, 2000).

<sup>25</sup> More about this in: Veljko Korać i Branko Pavlović, *Istorija filozofije* (Belgrade. Institute for textbooks and teaching aids, 1996).

passed on religious, ethical, legal and social conceptions to young European, still uncivilized nations, was at the center of medieval philosophical thought<sup>26</sup>.

Having emerged from the first Christian Municipality during a long period of time, the church, with its caste of priests and educated believers, the caste of the clergy became very influential in the religious as well as in political life. While the wealthy class ordained because of fashion, from the need to atone for sins or to make something great in their lives, for the large number of the poor to become a monk, even though it meant giving up many benefits of worldly life was the only way out. Unlike the ancient times when the class division contributed to cultural and civilization rise of mankind, as free citizens with the help of slave labor had plenty of time to create a spiritual, philosophical, scientific and artistic value, in the Middle Ages, feudal lords and serfs in leisure time went hunting, competing in chivalrous tournaments and went to war. Thus, the role of the spiritual life was taken over by the Christian church and the clergy from whose ranks were appointed the chief priests, popes and patriarchs, philosophers, theologians and scientists. Pursuant to its position monks propagated and practiced physical and spiritual activities in accordance with their personal abilities, status in the fraternity, as well as according to their age<sup>27</sup>.

This period also reflected adversely to the area of physical education, especially in the first part of the Middle Ages (Early Middle Ages) because the strongest opponent of physical exercise was, at that time, a very strong Christian church. However, physical exercises survived and were mostly practiced in the knightly order which belonged to the aristocracy. Guild way of upbringing gave particular attention to the physical exercise, while the ordinary people, peasants, were physically active the most often through physical labor and their participation in rural festivals playing various games. Late Middle Ages covers the Renaissance period and the time of the Reformation, which mark the beginning of renewal and rebirth of Europe in every aspect, including physical education and upbringing. New schools and universities where the physical education found its place were opened<sup>28</sup>.

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<sup>26</sup> More about this in: Genadij G. Majorov, *Forming of medieval philosophy (Latin patrology)* (Belgrade: Grafos, 1982).

<sup>27</sup> More about this in: Ljubinko Milosavljević, *Medieval thought of society* (Niš: Faculty of Philosophy, 2002).

<sup>28</sup> More about this in: Nenad Živanović, *Appendix to Epistemology of Physical Education* (Niš: Panoptikum, 2000).

### **AURELIUS AUGUSTINUS:**

"The body sometimes moves smoothly, and sometimes it rests."<sup>29</sup>.

*On human body and movement:*

"That any body moves in time, is something I do understand and that's what you say; the body movement, therefore, differs from what its duration is measured ... The body sometimes moves smoothly, and sometimes it rests. In this way we measure not only its motion but its stillness as well. And because of that time is not the motion a body. I, the Time, O, Lord, in thee I measure precisely. This is precisely the habitat of God which has nothing earthly in itself, nothing which would care about physical matter, and though heavenly it is totally spiritual ..."<sup>30</sup>.

### **THOMAS AQUINAS**

"St. Thomas said that beauty was what we liked when we saw it (quod visium placet), ie. that beauty was in fact a formal cause"<sup>31</sup>.

*On the relation of body and mind:*

"For instance, while the Medieval erudition was busy again on the question - are there angels and whether their nature is physical, here the answer would be, that they are - but they are disembodied"<sup>32</sup>.

### **GIORDANO BRUNO:**

"The nature of the body, which in itself is not beautiful, takes on beauty, if it is capable of doing so, because there is no beauty that is not made up of a character or form, and there is no form that is not produced by a soul.

*Soul - the act of a living body:*

They say that man is actually what comes out the composition, that the soul is actually what is either perfection and the act of the living body, or something that comes from some symmetry of organs and parts ... nature cries aloud and assures us that neither the body nor the soul should be afraid of death because matter and form are eternal principles.

Everything changes, nothing is wasted"<sup>33</sup>.

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<sup>29</sup> Aleksandar Kerković, *Philosophers on Body and Spirit* (Niš: SX print copy, 2004), 133.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 130,131.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 132.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, 132

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 138,139.

### 3.3. New Age philosophers on physical culture

The new century brought a revolutionary turn in the feudal world, which required the establishment of a new civil era in Western civilization, whose center up to the XVII century was in Renaissance Italy, and after that it was moved further west, first to the Netherlands where the first bourgeois revolution occurred in 1609, and then to England. French bourgeois revolution in 1789 brought the most significant changes in Europe of that time<sup>34</sup>.

The modern image of the world, of the newly created civil society has rejected everything that was true of the Middle Ages and the Christian-theological world setting. Life was directed towards the practical experience of the working man. God, as the foundation of everything, was superseded by nature, it was being aspired to freedom of an individual man and his right to work in all areas of life: ethics, politics, economics, law, religion. Spiritual foundation of New Age philosophy is based on the view that one must have confidence in oneself, take responsibility for one's life and conquer one's spirit. Thus, philosophical thought and consideration, has firstly to check itself, or human consciousness, and then to move on to consider the object (opinion is at first subjective and afterwards objective)<sup>35</sup>.

Social, political, economic and technological progress was unstoppable, so in the field of physical education began to appear more or less successful systems. The progress of this segment of people's lives, followed the general trend of development. People began to criticize the attitude of the church that emphasized the study of theology, the history of the ancient times and ancient languages, Greek and Latin, and advocated for the release of science, history and modern living languages<sup>36</sup>.

#### **FRANCIS BACON:**

*On health and exercise.*

"Nobody can be healthy without exercising, neither the individual nor the state"<sup>37</sup>.

#### **THOMAS HOBBS:**

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<sup>34</sup> More about this in: Milenko A. Perović, *The History of Philosophy (3 revised ed)*. (Novi Sad: Department of Philosophy of Faculty of Philosophy, 2003/04).

<sup>35</sup> More about this in: Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> More about this in: Nenad Živanović, *Appendix to Epistemology of Physical Education* (Niš: Panoptikum, 2000).

<sup>37</sup> Aleksandar Kerković, *Philosophers on Body and Spirit* (Niš: SX print copy, 2004), 141.

"Nature has created men equal in terms of physical and mental faculties, so that even though it may sometimes be encountered a man who is obviously physically stronger or possesses more vibrant spirit than the others, though, when everything is taken into account, the difference between the individuals is not so great..."<sup>38</sup>.

**RENÉ DESCARTES:**

*What is a body?*

"A body means everything that can be limited by a form, defined by a spot and thus fill in the space so that it excludes any other body, which can be perceived, touched, heard, tasted, smelt..."<sup>39</sup>.

**JOHN LOCKE:**

"A healthy mind in a healthy body - (Mens sana in corpore sano).

Sound mind in a sound body is a short but perfect description of happiness in this world."<sup>40</sup>.

**JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU:**

"So if you want to influence the spirit of your protégés, support his wishes and ideas. Train constantly his body, keep your student strong and healthy, if you want him to become smart and reasonable..."<sup>41</sup>.

**IMMANUEL KANT:**

*On physical education of children.*

"Playing ball is one of the best children's games, because it includes running which is healthy. Generally, the best games are those in which, in addition to practicing the skills they practice their senses as well..."<sup>42</sup>.

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid, 149.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, 155

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 174,175

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 188

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 223

## FRIEDRICH HEGEL:

### *Reshaping the body.*

"We see that the interest in decorating with Homeric Greeks have already been highly developed ... But jewelry has just the purpose to decorate the human body which a man is in and which he has to reshape as something natural..."<sup>43</sup>.

### **3.4. Physical education in contemplating of philosophers of modern society**

Modern society has developed its philosophy on the foundation of Hellenic civilization. All areas of human activity are based on the idea of freedom of the human self-consciousness which brought civilization much scientific knowledge, the development of the old and the emergence of new disciplines, the development of modern techniques and technologies. With the decay of the feudal system the development of modern nations and countries with political systems that make a distinction between civil and political society began. Unlike the medieval Christian Europe, which had and also recognized only a universal church, in the modern era the process of differentiation of religious sphere of a society occurs. Splitting of man on public and private being leads to moral conflict within oneself, and the development of technology leads to subordinate relationship of natural and human resources<sup>44</sup>.

Formation of modern states and of political systems within them, leads to nationalism and ideology of 'blood and soil'<sup>45</sup>, to political alienation of man, colonial divisions are taking place, the political, economic and military conflicts and polarization of the world on the Western capitalist and Eastern communist.

Development of physical culture in the modern age is only a logical continuation of the events in the New century. There was a large number of new, modern sports and games, and what is certainly among the most important events is the Olympic movement, which has tried and after a while managed to revive the Olympic Games. One of the most deserving for the restoration of the Olympic Movement, was Pierre de Coubertin /*Pierre de Frédy, Baron de Coubertin*/, a French aristocrat who devoted his life to restore the Olympic Games<sup>46</sup>. The modern Olympic Games began in 1896 in Athens and has been held every four

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 243.

<sup>44</sup> More about this in: Milenko A. Perović, *The History of Philosophy (3 revised ed)*. (Novi Sad: Department of Philosophy of Faculty of Philosophy, 2003/04).

<sup>45</sup> More about this in: Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Dejan Milenković and Nenad Živanović, *Paralympic Games* (Niš: Panoptikum, 2010).

"Every creature that is active, and especially every human being, can be examined in all its phenomena in two basic views, in terms of static and dynamic terms, that is, as capable of acting and as the one that really acts"<sup>50</sup>.

### **JOHAN HUIZINGA**

Fitting the concept of the game in term of culture, Johan Huizinga in his book "Homo Ludens", "separates the game as an essential characteristic of a man; according to him, it represents activity rich by meaning and against the reality, the game is non-reality; it's a free activity sufficient to itself. Embellishing life, it is necessary, but it has its own space and time and it allows the possibility of repetition. The game creates order, rules, it separates from the flow of life, a child, a poet and original man are in their natural state in it. Huizinga renews issues raised by Plato by putting the concepts of game and education in close connection (paidia and paideia)"<sup>51</sup>.

### **ROGER CAILLOIS**

In his book "Games People" Caillois puts an emphasis on description and qualification of games. "He points out that the game is free, separate, uncertain, unproductive, prescribed and fictitious, distinguishing between the four main categories of game: (1) agon, ie. games in a competition, as a fight with equal conditions for the opponents (sporting events, billiards, chess); (2) Alea, opposite to agon, games in which the decision does not depend on the players, because is not a game with an opponent, but with destiny (roulette, gambling, lottery, bet); (3) mimikry, games in which the player discards his personality and impersonates someone else (acting, performing arts, an imitation of someone else); (4) ilinx, games that rely on inducing vertigo, the disorder of perception (spinning in circles, climbing, walking on rope)."<sup>52</sup>.

### **HANS-GEORG GADAMER**

"Under the game, whether it is separated from the subjective meaning as in Kant and Schiller, Gadamer thinks "a way of being of a work of art" and thus opens up completely new perspectives for philosophical reflection of work of art being. As the game has its own being, independent of consciousness of those who play, its subject is not a player, but itself, manifesting while using the player. The purpose of the game is shaping the movement of the game, and it is being

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<sup>50</sup> Aleksandar Kerković, *Philosophers on Body and Spirit* (Niš: SX print copy, 2004), 265.

<sup>51</sup> Milan Uzelac, „Game as a philosophical problem“ (the lecture was held on Spor Academy in Belgrade, Serbia, april, 2003), 10.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, 10,11.

manifested what it really is, just being. The being of the game is implementation, fulfillment; it is a process of movement, creation. The game therefore has a medial sense: its way of being is close to the movement of nature... The game is free impulse and a man's life is unthinkable without it. We also meet it where there are no entities behaving as if they are playing, it has a being independent of the awareness of players and we have the game where being-for-itself subjectivity does not limit thematic horizon and where there are no entities behaving as if they play"<sup>53</sup>.

### **EUGEN FINK**

"The mystery of the game world is not in its separation from the real world: it does not have its space and its time in real space and real time, but it has its own space and its own time; this shows that the interweaving of the real world and the game world is not to explain with some familiar pattern space and time neighboring"<sup>54</sup>.

"That is why play and art provide enjoyment in opportunities of repetition of lost opportunities. Therefore Eugen Fink warns: "we can choose whatever we want, but not really, it is only as an illusion." The game is clearly a retreat from reality and transmit to the modus of unreal"<sup>55</sup>.

"...perhaps the game world is showed as the art world, or world of sport under the brightest spotlights, but the game is an essential root-cause of entire human art, ie artistry, or, more accurately, the overall human survival; it is clearly showed as a creative overturn of open possibilities through the activity of the child and the artist"<sup>56</sup>.

### **LEV KREFT**

" I define the radical criticism of the sport as critical theory of sport that puts sport in the context of the assumed agonist and tragic crisis of humanity. In that way, if not the outermost, but at least really important place of causer of the current situation, or the pole that maintains a state of crisis is belonged to the sport"<sup>57</sup>.

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid, 11,12.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid, 13.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 15.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, 17.

<sup>57</sup> University of Belgrade, Institute of philosophy and social theory, „Radical critics of sport“ - Lev Kreft, <http://instifdt.bg.ac.rs/lev-kreft-radikalna-kritika-sporta/> (found 11.9.2015).

## JÜRGEN HABERMAS

### *About sport and game*

"The power of the professional sphere in its final form clearly shows, so far as it tries to escape into its apparent opposite....

... has long become a field of rationalization that is characteristic of work...

...sport doubles the world of work under the illusion of game and free development of power, and individuals become substrates mass unity under his hand"<sup>58</sup>.

### *About training process of elite athletes*

"It starts as manufacturing process in research laboratories....

....doctors have a vital role in achieving the Olympic victory as engineers in achieving production plan"<sup>59</sup>.

### *About sport game*

„To the extent that coach allows individual actions, 'pieces of skill' to his team, to that extent sport has to do with the game at all. What it claimed to be game, in reality, it is a professional show on one side and the consumers on the other“<sup>60</sup>.

## 4. DISCUSSION

As of a mirror of the times in which they live, philosophers have begun to speak about the sport during the reign of rhetoric, originated from ancient Greece at the time of oration, which includes the ability of eloquent speech, the art of persuasion and winning over the listeners. "According to Aristotle /*Αριστοτέλης*/, rhetoric is the finding all the possible means of persuasion, while Quintilian /*Marcus Fabius Quintilianus*/ defined it as the power of persuasion. Rhetoric is related to the spoken word although other elements are often used as well, such as the speaker himself, his looks, voice, manner of speech ..."“<sup>61</sup>. While physical education was a privilege of the ruling class which was brought up from its early

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<sup>58</sup> Ljubodrag Simonović, *Sport, capitalism, destruction* (Belgrade: copyright issue, 2014), 13,14.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*, 14.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>61</sup> Violeta Šiljak, *The History of Sport*. (Belgrade: Faculty for management in sport University "Braća Karić", 2007), 26.

youth to develop by systematic practice physical abilities and military skills in order to acquire and preserve their lands and to participate in wars, and rhetoric as a source of wisdom, courage and integrity was additional education of young people. For in the time of ancient civilizations that "left a lasting impact about their physical activities, exercises and competitions"<sup>62</sup> it was not sufficient to be just a good warrior, but also a successful orator.

For ancient philosophers, physical exercise was synonymous with happiness that one felt while built body and spirit, with force exerted on the battlefield, with physical beauty, character accuracy and perfection of the soul.

The ancient Greeks were building up their body for the purpose of athletic competition and for the purposes of war. Athletic competition have emerged as an alternative to war, in peacetime as a form of recreation. The war had greatly influenced the development and shaping of sport culture. Proving superiority was the driving force in an effort to compete with an opponent in the sport arena or the warpath. In both fields success brought fame, respect and social recognition<sup>63</sup>.

Difficult situation of physical exercise during the dark Middle Ages, the powerful Christian Church made it more difficult, and the focus of discussion was at the motion of human body, terrestrial, celestial and divine. The soul as an act of the living body produces a form that is changing, but it is eternal, it is not wasted. Giordano Bruno is binding beauty of body and spirit for it. Physical exercise in medieval culture was reduced to a mere knight games of aristocracy and village festivals of ordinary people.

By criticising the attitude of the Church, New Age philosophers reflect on inevitability of the exercise and its connection with health, commenting, at the same time, the familiar motto of Juvenal /Decimus Junius Juvenalis/ "A healthy mind in a healthy body" (*Mens sana in corpore sano*).<sup>64</sup> John Lock spoke about healthy body and spirit as the biggest desire of every man, because „the one to whom one of them is missing, he will not be much happier if he would have anything else“<sup>65</sup>. Most of the attention to physical education of children was devoted by Kant, because he felt that the culture consisting of mental strength

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> More about this in: Violeta Šiljak and Vojkan Selaković, „Syncretism of agon, athleticism and war in ancient Greece“, *Physical Education and Sport through the centuries* 1, 2 (2014): 117.

<sup>64</sup> Juvenal, <http://sh.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juvenal> (found 24. 1. 2015). This thought was isolated from context and it reads: " It should pray for a healthy mind in a healthy body " (*Orandum est ut sit mens sana in corpore sano*).

<sup>65</sup> Aleksandar Kerković, *Philosophers on Body and Spirit* (Niš: SX print copy, 2004), 174, 175.

practice, was a positive part of physical education, because this was another reason why human differed from animal. „The child should be allowed to crawl along the ground, until it learns to walk by itself... Throwing, whether it is throwing away, whether it is aiming something, it is training of the senses at the same time, especially measuring by the eye“<sup>66</sup>. According to Hegel /*Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel*/ philosophy in its historical development can be seen as a variety of social unrest, because philosophy in the passage of time is a long process of formation of the interior spirit and "its turn into knowledge," of everything that was "originally found as a substance, as the inner essence"<sup>67</sup>. Only what's spiritual is real: the essence or what subsists by itself, what acts and what has been determined, what in that definition or in its reality remains in itself<sup>68</sup>. That being actually represents a spiritual substance. His thoughts on the culture of the body and spirit of the movement, Hegel announced in his work 'Aesthetics'. He believed that "the attitude and posture must seem completely unaffected, because otherwise "it looked as if the spirit and the body were something different"<sup>69</sup>.

Development of physical culture in the modern age is only a logical continuation of the events in the New century. While Marx recommends youth physical activity in order to give the sport a mass scale, so far Comte studies living beings from static and dynamic aspects. Among other things, the philosophers of modern era speak about physical culture from the perspective of the game. Gadamer speaks of the game as "the free impulse human life is unthinkable without it"<sup>70</sup>. In his opinion, the game is also met "where there are no entities behaving as if they are playing, it has its being independently of the awareness of players"<sup>71</sup>. According to Fink, "perhaps the game world is showed as the art world, or world of sport under the brightest spotlights, but the game is an essential root-cause of entire human art"<sup>72</sup>. It should be noted the critical review of the sport by Lev Kreft who puts "sport in the context of the assumed agonist and tragic crisis of

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid, 222.

<sup>67</sup> Friedrich Hegel, *The History of Philosophy I* (Belgrade: BIGZ, 1975), 39.

<sup>68</sup> Friedrich Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit* (Belgrade: BIGZ, 1974), 13.

<sup>69</sup> Aleksandar Kerković, *Philosophers on Body and Spirit* (Niš: SX print copy, 2004), 237.

<sup>70</sup> Milan Uzelac, „Game as a philosophical problem“ (the lecture was held on Spor Academy in Belgrade, Serbia, april, 2003), 11,12.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 17

humanity"<sup>73</sup>, while Habermas "reduces sport to an instrumental activity as a reflection of industrial work"<sup>74</sup>.

From classical to big stadium arenas in the modern age, physical education and sports have always caused the attention of philosophers. By studying many meanings physical exercise had at various times, the greatest philosophers were aware of importance of physical exercise they have written about. As an activity of man who takes himself as a spiritual being, philosophy considers itself worthy and powerful to open and highlight the hidden essence of the universe, to permeate it with its own knowledge and understanding in all of its essential manifestations<sup>75</sup>. If the philosophy of sports is viewed in relation to the philosophy of law, aesthetics, ethics, social philosophy, it can be said that the sport examines each of these disciplines through various philosophical positions, because it reflects historical, cultural, ideological and political characteristics.

## 5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In the course of its historical development, sport has "often reflected the economic, social and political dimension of society. In modern times, sport has taken a very significant role as a planetary phenomenon"<sup>76</sup>. Although the roots of physical culture can be found at the time of the original community when all human activity boiled down to survival and maintenance of existence (hunting, fishing - wrestling, running, jumping), development of sport activities was related to the period of ancient cities that had developed a culture of physical exercise on athletic fields and gymnasiums, "where the body was hardened, and spirit was educated with music and literature."<sup>77</sup> In today's global society, the media promoted lifestyle implies appearance of Hollywood diva. Beautiful, thin people, whose life's greatest achievement is to stay young, are mostly presented in media. That is how media send messages which "impel people, youth and those who are not, not only in gyms and various fitness centers, but also in aesthetic surgery"<sup>78</sup>.

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<sup>73</sup> University of Belgrade, Institute of philosophy and social theory, „Radical critics of sport“ - Lev Kreft, <http://instifdt.bg.ac.rs/lev-kreft-radikalna-kritika-sporta/> (found 11.9.2015).

<sup>74</sup> Ljubodrag Simonović, *Sport, capitalism, destruction* (Belgrade: copyright issue, 2014), 13.

<sup>75</sup> Milenko A. Perović, *The History of Philosophy (3 revised ed)*. (Novi Sad: Department of Philosophy of Faculty of Philosophy, 2003/04).

<sup>76</sup> Violeta Šiljak, *The History of Sport*. (Belgrade: Faculty for management in sport University "Braća Karić", 2007), 11.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, 41.

<sup>78</sup> Nenad Živanović, *Apology of physical exercise* (Niš: Panoptikum, 2010), 50.

In modern times, sport activities are under the influence of marketing and extensive media coverage, which, thanks to the development of new technologies (digital television, Internet, cell phone, iPod) strengthened the area of sports as well. "Globalization has a very basic historical, economic, cultural, political, and social dimensions. Modern sports events such as the Olympic Games, illustrate these aspects"<sup>79</sup>. Thus, sport as a kind of social phenomenon of great interest and importance for the modern society has become a lucrative business that in addition to sports competitions includes the possibility of making a profit in the sports and entertainment industry. The relationship between sport and globalization is reflected in the application of Robertson's model with five historical stages through the analysis of claims (Wallerstein's /*Immanuel Maurice Wallerstein*/ and Sklair's /*Leslie Sklair*/ claims) in the domain of political economy, by pointing to hegemonization and heterogeneity of culture and issues of political reform<sup>80</sup>. All this leads to a conclusion that large sporting events and sports in general, viewed from an economic point of view ensure global income, cultural effects are seen through "the interaction of different sports styles and techniques, modes of dressing and self-expression"<sup>81</sup>, in political terms, the way the international elite manages the Olympic Committee, and socially, they mean meeting of athletes and audiences all around the world. While critically reflecting on issues related to sports, sports sociologists are mostly interested in the value structure of a particular society, the role of the state in the creation of top athletes, the impact of sport in the education and upbringing of the young generations, issues of fair play and violence in games, on the other hand philosophy of sports strives to create images of sport which science and experience confirm or reject<sup>82</sup>. Sport as an aesthetic sphere of social life, from the institutionalization of the ancient games in Olympia to the advantages and limitations of modern sports, has managed to achieve its goal. Thanks to new forms of global communication, the whole world knows about top athletes<sup>83</sup> like Muhammad Ali, Pelé, Nadia Comăneci, Michael Jordan, Novak Djoković who are cultural icons of their time.

Therefore, considering the significance of sport through the analysis of rhetorical considerations of physical culture from ancient Greece to the present

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<sup>79</sup> Richard Giulianotti, *Sport, a Critical Sociology*. (Belgrade: Clio, 2008), 287.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> More about this in: Vesna Milenković and Dejan Milenković. „Violence at sport fields and responsibility of media“ (the paper presented at Security management of sports competitions, Belgrade, Serbia, Srbija, 23. april, 2014).

<sup>83</sup> More about this in: Graham Scambler, *Sport and Society: History, Power and Culture* (Belgrade: Clio, 2007), 7.

days using excerpts from a speech of the greatest philosopher thinkers, it was concluded that different approaches of thinkers were associated with the specific philosophical school they belonged, but they were all aware of the importance of physical exercise especially among young people. While Greek culture promoted attitude towards own body, so far, today's sport has turned into a lucrative business subordinate to the wishes of viewers. However, in modern society, the development of modern sports, rebuilding of the Olympic Movement, contributed to popularization of sport, so the philosophers of modern society paid much more attention to physical culture in order to promote various forms of human actions improving their use of energy to foster hygiene, the formation of aesthetics<sup>84</sup> and the health of body.

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<sup>84</sup> More about this in: Ratko Božović, Symbolic culture and physical culture, *Sociološka luča* II/1 (2008): 49-61.

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## РИТОРИЧЕСКИЕ СООБРАЖЕНИЯ ФИЛОСОФОВ О ФИЗИЧЕСКОЙ КУЛЬТУРЫ: ВАЖНОСТЬ ФИЗИЧЕСКИХ УПРАЖНЕНИЙ С ДРЕВНЕЙ ГРЕЦИИ ДО СОВРЕМЕННОСТИ

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### РЕЗЮМЕ

Философы начали говорить о спорте во время правления риторики, во время ораторского искусства, что означает способность говорить красноречиво, и овладеть искусством убеждения над аудиторией. Греческая культура способствовала отношению к собственному телу, а спорт в наше время превратился в прибыльную работу подведомственную пожеланиям зрителей, потому что с развитием средств массовой информации вместе с визуальным и коммуникативной функцией спорта, его развлекательная функция является наиболее заметной. Статья рассматривает роль и важность спорта на основе анализа риторических соображений физической культуры с древней Греции до наших дней. При использовании описательных, исторических, сравнительных, аналитических методов и метода теоретического анализа, в этой статье, в качестве иллюстраций использованы выдержки из выступлений и мыслей величайших философов мыслителей. Результаты показали что философы были осведомлены о важности физических упражнений. Если философия спорта рассматривается в связи с философией права, эстетики, этики, социальной философии, можно сказать, что спорт рассматривается в каждой из этих дисциплин с помощью различных философских позиций, потому что она отражает исторические, культурные, идеологические и политические характеристики. Можно сделать вывод, что различные подходы, в зависимости от философских школ являются важной частью определения дискурса спортивных состязаниях, таких как мышление о победе, успеху, определении риска, физической предрасположенности, тренировки, идеи олимпизма, вопросе о культуре средств массовой информации, политические и экономические аспекты.

**Ключевые слова:** философские мысли, философия спорта, средств массовой информации, важность физических упражнений.

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## РЕТОРИЧКА РАЗМАТРАЊА ФИЛОСОФА О ФИЗИЧКОЈ КУЛТУРИ: ЗНАЧАЈ ФИЗИЧКОГ ВЕЖБАЊА ОД АНТИЧКЕ ГРЧКЕ ДО САВРЕМЕНОГ ДОБА

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### САЖЕТАК

Философи су о спорту почели да говоре у време владавине реторике, у време беседништва које подразумева способност елоквентног говора, вештину убеђивања и придобијања слушаца. Док је грчка култура

промовисала однос према властитом телу, дотле се спорт у модерно доба претворио у уносан посао подређен жељама гледалаца, јер је, развојем масовних медија уз визуелну и комуникативну функцију спорта, највише изражена забавна функција. Рад се бави сагледавањем значаја спорта кроз анализу реторичких разматрања физичке културе од античке Грчке до данашњих дана. Уз коришћење дескриптивне, историјске, компаративне, аналитичко-интерпретативне и методе теоријске анализе, У раду су, као илустрација употребљени изводи из говора највећих философа мислилаца. Резултати показују да су значаја физичког вежбања били свесни и највећи философи који су о њему писали. Ако се философија спорта посматра са философијом права, естетиком, етиком, социјалном философијом, онда се може рећи да свака од ових дисциплина спорт сагледава кроз разноврсне философске позиције, јер се у њему одражавају историјске, културолошке, идеолошке, политичке карактеристике. Може се закључити да различити приступи, настали у зависности од философских школа, представљају значајан део одређивања дискурса о спорту као што су: промишљање о победи, успеху, одлучности, ризику, телесним предиспозицијама, тренингу, идеји олимпизма, питање масовне културе и медија, економских и политичких аспеката.

**Кључне речи:** философска промишљања, философија спорта, медији, значај вежбања.

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