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**ARTICLE BY M. HOSTA - FOUR LANGUAGES ABSTRACTS****CONTEMPLATION ON THE ETHICS OF SPORT**

This paper presents a discussion about sport as a complex phenomenon that generates ethical contradictions.

Sport involves human primal, natural, cultural and technologically acquired needs and capabilities. The ideology of technological progress plays an important role in the sports world.

According to the author, ethical reasoning in sport cannot be expected to have a convincing power, since pluralism of sporting practices (recreational, elite and extreme sport) implies pluralism of sports ethics. He attempts to avoid the slippery moralising ground that often accompanies moral judgments in sports: no ethical position can be substantiated without intuitive and culturally dependent reasoning.

The ethics of responsibility to fellow humans can also be understood as the ethics towards nature. Although the sports ethics literature devotes much of the following to the relation between oneself and others, ethics is not only a question of human-human relations. It is more and more a question of human-nature relations, since sports activities are directly or indirectly engaged with the natural environment. Based on this assumption, the author talks about "eco-ethics", the ethics of nature. It places sport within the larger context of global environmental concerns. The ethical turn, which demands the re-evaluation of our relation towards nature must also embrace sport.

The paper also discusses the development of a new theory of sport to be found in the gap between experience and reflection and between practice and theory.

Key words: sports; ethics in sports; eco-ethics; sports theory.

**RÉFLEXIONS SUR L'ÉTHIQUE DU SPORT****RÉSUMÉ**

Dans ce travail on propose une discussion à propos du sport comme phénomène complexe qui engendre des contradictions éthiques.

Le sport englobe des nécessités et habiletés humaines primitives, naturelles et acquises à travers la technologie. L'idéologie du progrès technologique a une grande influence sur le monde des sports.

D'après l'auteur, on ne peut pas attendre que le raisonnement éthique dans le sport possède un grand pouvoir de persuasion, puis que la pluralité de la pratique sportive (sports récréatifs, d'élite ou radicaux) implique une pluralité d'éthiques dans le sport. Il a l'intention d'éviter la tonalité moralisatrice qui accompagne d'habitude le jugement éthique dans les sports : il n'y a aucun positionnement qui puisse être concrétisé sans un raisonnement intuitif et culturellement dépendant.

L'éthique de la responsabilité envers les autres êtres humains peut être aussi comprise comme éthique pour la nature.

Quoique la littérature sur l'éthique sportive privilégie la relation entre personnes, l'éthique est, de plus en plus, une question qui a des rapports entre l'homme et la nature. Comme les activités sportives ont une interaction directe ou indirectement avec l'ambiance naturelle, l'auteur parle d'« éco-éthiques », l'éthique de la nature. Elle met le sport dans un contexte plus ample des problèmes de l'ambiance mondiale.

Les changements éthiques, qui exigent une réévaluation de notre relation avec la nature, doivent inclure aussi les sports.

Ce travail traite aussi du développement d'une nouvelle théorie du sport qui devrait être entre l'expérience et la réflexion, entre la pratique et la théorie.

Mots-clés: sport ; éthique dans le sport ; éco-éthique ; théorie du sport.

## REFLEXIONES SOBRE LA ÉTICA DEL DEPORTE

## RESUMEN

En este trabajo se propone una discusión sobre el deporte como fenómeno complejo que produce contradicciones éticas.

El deporte engloba necesidades y habilidades humanas primitivas, naturales y obtenidas a través de la tecnología. La ideología del progreso tecnológico tiene fuerte influencia en El mundo de los deportes.

Según el autor, no se puede esperar que el razonamiento ético en el deporte sea fuertemente persuasivo, pues la pluralidad de la práctica deportiva (deportes recreativos, de elite o radicales) implica la pluralidad de éticas en el deporte. Él quiere evitar la tonalidad moralizante que sigue un juicio ético en los deportes: ninguna posición puede concretarse sin razonamiento intuitivo y culturalmente dependiente.

La ética de responsabilidad hacia otros seres humanos también se puede comprender como ética hacia la naturaleza. Aunque la literatura sobre ética deportiva favorezca la relación entre personas, la ética es, más y más una cuestión que relaciona el hombre y la naturaleza. Como las actividades deportivas tienen interacción directa o indirectamente con el entorno natural, el autor habla de la "eco-ética", la ética de la naturaleza. Ésta pone el deporte en un contexto más amplio de los problemas ambientales del mundo. Los cambios éticos que exigen una reevaluación de nuestra relación con la naturaleza, deben incluir también los deportes.

Este trabajo aborda el desarrollo de una nueva teoría del deporte, que debe estar entre la experiencia y la reflexión, entre la práctica y la teoría.

Palabras-clave: deporte; ética en el deporte; eco-ética; teoría del deporte.

## REFLEXÕES SOBRE A ÉTICA DO ESPORTE

Este trabalho é uma discussão sobre o esporte enquanto fenômeno complexo que gera contradições éticas.

O esporte envolve necessidades e habilidades humanas primitivas, naturais e adquiridas com a tecnologia. A ideologia do progresso tecnológico tem uma grande influência no mundo dos esportes.

Segundo o autor, não se pode esperar que o raciocínio ético no esporte tenha um grande poder de persuasão, já que a pluralidade da prática esportiva (esportes recreativos, de elite ou radicais) implica uma pluralidade de éticas no esporte. Ele quer evitar o tom moralizador que costuma acompanhar o julgamento ético nos esportes: nenhum posicionamento pode se concretizar sem que haja um raciocínio intuitivo e culturalmente dependente.

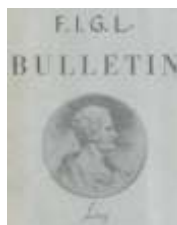
A ética da responsabilidade para com outros seres humanos também pode ser entendida como ética voltada à natureza. Apesar de a literatura sobre a ética esportiva privilegiar a relação entre as pessoas, a ética é, cada vez mais, uma questão que envolve as relações entre o homem e a natureza. Como as atividades esportivas interagem, direta ou indiretamente, com o ambiente natural, o autor fala da "eco-ética", a ética da natureza. Esta situa o esporte no contexto mais amplo dos problemas ambientais mundiais. As mudanças éticas, que exigem uma reavaliação da nossa relação com a natureza, precisam incluir também os esportes.

O trabalho também aborda o desenvolvimento de uma nova teoria do esporte, que deveria ficar entre a experiência e a reflexão, entre a prática e a teoria.

Palavras-chave: esporte; ética no esporte; eco-ética; teoria do esporte.



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## CONTEMPLATION ON THE ETHICS OF SPORT\* (E)

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## 1- ETHICS OF SPORT

When thinking about sports ethics we come up against the fundamental dimensions of sport and man. Obviously, we need to ask ourselves which is the central concern here: sport or man? However, it is about both – because it is clear to us that there is no sport without people!

It is clear at first sight that sport is a very complex phenomenon that generates ethical contradictions. On the one hand, it is pinned between moral – educational and essential-biological movement needs. On the other hand, it is trapped between the extreme exploitation and passionate images of post-modern times, and the playful innocence of body and mind.

If sport appears in many forms and has roots in different grounds, we argue that consequentially the conception of the forms manifested as sport should be 'colourful'. Therefore – to point out the pluralism of sporting practices and the pluralism of sports ethics – we can consider recreational sport from the perspective of the ethics of proper measure, elite sport from that of the ethics of maximum, and extreme sport from that of the ethics of the other or maybe moving beyond ethical towards aesthetic. These are all possible and plausible, though not single points of departure into the ethical reasoning of sport. A very important issue also arises from the perspective of eco-ethics, which places sport within the larger context of global environmental concerns and suggests the concept of sustainable development. We may witness even the substitution of subject: for in some representations and understandings of sport the focus shifts from sportsperson to spectator, which we can argue when dealing with elite sport and economically contaminated utilitarian logic.

Hypothetically, setting the game and competition as ontological categories of sport it becomes clear that many ethical situations are already prefigured and expected. The moral judgement concerning such situations is settled in accordance with rules and interpretations of the rules. If this is so, then two important questions arise. First, to whom is the athlete ethically obliged? Second, are there any situations in sport where there are no known rules or benefits that will provide us with ethical orientation? And above all, we know that the ethics of sport in the sense of the unquestioned autonomy of sport, is far from philosophically satisfactory. Although a vast amount of literature has been written within the limits of the autonomy of sport, sports ethics are given the chance to uncover the deeply rooted patterns that govern sport. We can ethically question the uniquely sporting activity in this manner.

Sport speaks about human primal, natural, cultural and technologically acquired needs and capabilities. Topical issues at this level can be formed in the questioning of technological progress and the interference of technology and pharmacology in the body – degeneration and self-construction, self-destruction, etc. We search for adaptational characteristics of the human organism and of social subsystems, i.e. the ideology of technological progress also governs the sports world. Being interdisciplinary, the interesting phenomenon of sport offers many opportunities to exhibit the achievements of non-sporting institutions that seek to use sport in the service of a society of consumption, spectacle and risk.

Since we are dealing with the pluralism of sporting practices, we cannot assure in advance the expected convincing power of ethical reasoning in sport. Since sport is not a uniform phenomenon, such a demand would be too pretentious. However, we must not be satisfied with the logic where we are constrained by a constructed reality (in the form of an institutionalised body) giving us ethical laws as if independent of the human (athlete's) will. Following this intention, we can ethically question the uniquely sporting activity, or at least part of it. Sport has to be set so as to please people, and not vice versa, in order to show some fundamental contradictions within it. Along with such reasoning, it is important to justify ethical liability outside the autonomy of sport, which is often misunderstood and misused by the sports authorities.

## 2- HOW TO THINK ABOUT ETHICS

Modern man is strongly aware that an overall ethical renaissance is indispensable to survival. The post-modern thought that anything goes in times of ultra-liberal capitalistic democracy is driving us towards the opposite. Yet we strive for the basic and universal ethical principles to live by, to survive as a species. The all-embracing threat to life not only affects humans but all living creatures. The irresponsible pollution of the environment, the increasing social and economic differences gap, and easy access to weapons of mass destruction do not guarantee anything at all. If some things seem self-evident and inertial to us, this will no longer be the case given the speed of our progress in the near future. The satisfaction of basic natural needs is becoming an increasingly important question nowadays. Drinking water, clean environment, faultless/healthy food and social peace are luxuries of life that only a few can access or afford. If at the beginning of the history of humankind the question of survival was a personal matter, it is now becoming a collective one. As O'Leary says, the problematic horizon of the extremely complex problem of the development of society is becoming a global theoretical and practical challenge of the first degree.

In order to create the conditions for the long-term survival of its own kind, mankind has to reconsider, re-evaluate and adapt its agency in relation with nature. Ecological crisis, as recognised by the present state of nature, is proof of human alienation from it. The restoration of nature as an object (being at our disposal to use as much as possible; the total instrumentalisation of all given resources, etc.) leads us to the point where our usage must become questionable because there is nothing new or more to use. Speaking about use, we also have to consider misuse. On the evolution of ethical thought, and consequently on the responsible regulation of evaluated relations, Kirn says:

"There are four important ethical relations for humans: the relation with oneself, with other people, with nature, and with god. Ecologically speaking, ethics are not only about setting the boundaries and commands when dealing with other people, but rather with all living creatures and nature in general. So far, moral regulation was concerned by inter-human relations and not by the other levels as well. The transition toward an ecological society and ecological culture is highlighting the moral restrictions of ever growing luxury in the biosphere, where no concern is given to other beings. At this transition the key role will be played by the transformation of current anthropocentric and theocentric ethics into an ecocentric one."

Ethics are therefore not only a question of human-human relations, but more and more a question of human-nature relations. Although the sports ethics literature devotes much of the following to the relation between oneself and others, we can expect a growing interest in an ethics of sport that is also sensitive to nature. Ecoethics or, put differently, the ethics of nature, are not only the trend of some new-age school of thought or caprice of some philosophers trying to go beyond the afore-mentioned post-modern motto. An ethic that ascribes autonomous value to nature and sets her as a subject sees nature as: "an absolute other that remains hidden and unattainable for our principal anthropomorphic value [...]."

Toth, following Tillich, writes that a man without morality is not a man at all. The morality is the function of the man as a human being. For Tillich, the moral act does not mean:

"[...] some act with which we would follow god's or human commands, but the act in which life is integrated within the dimension of spirit. And this means that in the community of persons it constitutes a person."

Man as a person is never constituted to fullness. Focusing on the dimension of spirit is essential in this constant openness and never-ending moral tryout. Such centralised positioning set man against the world and, at the same time, as a sole body, into the world as an integral part. This can only be gained through inner strength when the values of self-understanding are recognised and formed – the establishment of one's inner nature in becoming a person. That is why ethics work as a concrete philosophy and are accepted as such. To choose and to decide presupposes evaluation, therefore abolishing borders between mind and agency. Alongside this we have to take into account the responsibilities taken when choosing, deciding and evaluating. So, the human attitude, an ethical position, is not only theoretical but above all practical. Personality, of course, is judged through actions alone. Because of this we support the ethics that follow life – eternal and lively life. Similarly, Kovačič Perin says that since man is undetachable from other human beings one's *humanitas* is defined exactly by one's ethical posture towards one's fellows. All the content of this posture is found within responsibility. Responsibility is first and above all the acceptance of a mutual being. Such a posture is not something in general. It can only exist as a personal attitude of the human being. The ethics of responsibility to fellow humans, we think, can also be understood as the ethics towards

nature. The body as our natural maxim is closest to us. The more we think we have mastered the natural, the more power we have, and the more responsibility is laid upon us.

In our quest to develop sports ethics, obviously, meta-ethical origins have to be addressed. If we dare to listen to our intuitive voice, the establishment of ethics solely on the basis of relations between humans cannot match the concerns of today's philosophical and environmental challenges. We believe, and there is no reason to oppose it, that the ethical turn, which demands the re-evaluation of our relation to nature, also embraces sport. Moreover, many sports activities engage directly or indirectly with the natural environment, not questioning their effects and consequences. Such an approach – on behalf of sustainable development and an acceptable world ethos – cannot be afforded any more.

### 3- HOW TO THINK ABOUT SPORT

Sport is a practice where the body plays an important – even decisive – role. Coming across more or less convenient classifications of sport and ineffective essentialism, which is lost in human incompleteness, only the body is always a present and solid category. We wish, in the spirit of interpretative options, that 'game' and 'competition' can also be regarded as ontological categories of sport. But we do not dare yet jump to such conclusions without substantial argument.

We will not spend time searching for the one and only definition of sport. No definition guarantees that we are able to understand and know sport more clearly. The hope of creating a definition that is able to make a clear cut distinction between sports and non-sports activity was given up a long time ago. Strong support for our intuitive reasoning has recently been given by McFee. Detailed explication, with contextually and temporarily agreed understanding, makes much better sense when questioning sport philosophically.

What about sport as an activity? To be consistent with the epistemological process, we should leave our contemplation here and dip into the world of sporting activity. But would we then be able to talk more meaningfully about the experience? Would we feel like talking about its importance at all? Pushing even more: do we become better skilled in sport if we talk a lot about sport? None of these are secured and obvious. Time and again we witness dull answers to the questions of journalists following horrible defeats and amazing victories of obviously highly skilled athletes. But can the answer be 'dull' just in the sense of putting it into words?

At the experimental level, the impression or sensation is a huge thing to deal with, and hard to translate. Maybe Sebastian Coe had this in mind when he replied to a journalist: "I ran, you write." He was running – period [full stop]. That's it. He didn't reflect on running and didn't ask himself why he was running. In the moment, he was the run itself, the embodied run. The gap shown between practice and theory marks the interface in modes of being. It is impossible to be on both sides simultaneously and consciously. You are or you think how you are. Sometimes the alternation from mode to mode is so fast that it may seem as one. But when it really becomes one, then again, you are. When it happens, neither both nor one are there. In this manner Coe invites the counterpart to his story; some people run, some write, some watch etc. Everyone on their own, but then again, all together. Nobody asks questions, since it is clear to everyone, following Coe. But still, the task of the journalists is to question, to translate the feelings of experience into words. When Coe stopped running he didn't stop being Coe. The run was not over, when the watch stopped. Metaphorically, we will not trust sport its autonomous position. It is about human activity that always carries a narrative, whether we like it or not, of individual and society.

Sports science is interdisciplinary by its nature, and in this manner, it tries to interpret sport. The more points of view and variety of sciences there are (physics, biomechanics, biochemistry, physiology, psychology, anthropology, sociology, etc.), the more the image gets clearer, though complex. In addition, the image is all we can reach. We are trying to translate and paint on the timeless canvas of science the logic of practice that is trapped within the necessity of time. The moment captured in such a approach is a state – a matter of methodological technology and professional skill – and only by interpretation of the paint created can we move towards true scientific challenge.

Why? Because, at the very moment of interpretation the scientist is faced with the art of placing the results into the primal context of things – back into the world of sport, and back to the human being. We can never be too cautious in the scientification of practice. We should try to keep this principle in mid, for we know that often empirical results from the laboratory combined with statistics are one thing, and the actual practice another thing. If nothing else, we are left with the

chance to show the limits of our cognition and the methodology used. In order to keep in touch with practice, it is good occasionally to support our thoughts by means of concrete examples, and where appropriate to use the findings of empirical research in sport.

Paraphrasing Hocart we can say that the time has passed when sport ceased to be just practice. The cognitive capabilities of the human being are limited in time and space, subjectively and objectively. We are in the world only conscious to a certain extent; as needed in a given moment or as engaged we are, and as it is in our power (will). To know might mean to be able to identify or describe and explain something, or to have the same experience as the one we are trying to understand. Our everyday life is primarily experienced as the place for actual and possible actions, and only secondly as an object of our thoughts. We now face the challenge of bridging the gap mentioned, where Bourdieu's practical sense might show us a way:

"There is a time of science that is not the time of practice. [...] The science is possible only in relation to time, which is contrary to practice. Science wants to overlook time in order to detemporalise practice. Those involved in the game, seized within it, do not conform to what they see, but to what they foresee (pre-voir, sees in advance in directly perceived presence)."

It is believed that with the aid of scientific-logical reasoning based on the principles of formal logic man will – ever faster and more successfully – change the stock of knowledge of everyday life, a life based primarily on the rules of 'common sense'. Man tends towards the explanation of a practice, its generalisation, ordering, systematisation and rational explanation. This, however, is already a transition from concrete life to the abstract, from practice to theory, from lived to reflected or to discursive consciousness. And this is exactly the point, we believe, where attention should be placed in order to develop a theory of sport; the gap between the experienced and the reflective, and between practice and theory. Regarding this gap, an important paradigmatic shift is occurring; scientific positivism is being transformed into, or perhaps more accurately, being replaced by, the science of perspective.

Since we acknowledge our inability to embrace the whole at once, we will try to grasp it where we are able to, and where we find it appropriate. We are speaking in favour of ethical pluralism in the first part, which sounds post-modernist, and its about legitimising the primacy of little stories and small truths. For that reason we will conclude with something more challenging as we move towards the finishing line. Little stories and their truths can be a source of stereotypes, prejudices and conflicts if they are not grounded properly, and this is what we do not bear witness to. We acknowledge life to every sporting activity, but each and every one of them must be reconsidered from the firm ground of eco-ethics, and only then will the true value and subsistence in the mosaic of the sports world be given.

We are aware of some possible objections regarding this way of getting to the heart of the problem. One of these might be that we have never been seriously involved in the practice of elite sport and therefore there is not much that we can know and say about it. Even if elite or extreme sport had never been our domain, would not justify the argument that nothing much essential can be said about it. It is like reproaching the doctor who heals a disease that he never had and might never have in the future. But as the physician is aware of the relation to the patient when treating the disease, we also have to seriously consider our relation with and to athletes and sporting practice when trying to become acquainted with its logic (or logics). Accepting solipsism would mean not knowing and understanding anyone else but yourself. This would mean giving relativism an easy victory. Because to know is to grasp meaning, rather than merely to experience. To be one is neither necessary nor sufficient for knowing one. Indeed, as Fay goes on:

"[...] sometimes it is easier for those [who are] not 'one' to grasp meaning because they have the requisite distance from the experience to appreciate its significance."

Regarding this, we are aware of the importance of the sense of ethos of the game and sense for an emotional attachment to it. Since our interests are ethical, we presuppose that actors in sport are rational, although understanding that in some cases being rational contradicts the sole activity. This is one more reason for being aware of slippery moralising ground that too often accompanies moral judgments in sport. We believe that no ethical position can be substantiated without intuitive and culturally dependent reasoning. Therefore we regard the idea of pure objective knowledge and a view from nowhere as a scientific utopia. We have to stand somewhere; we have to have some footing not to be sucked into a cultural vacuum. Consciously leaving some space for unconsciousness is the core issue that we believe makes any text lively and juicy. It provides the opportunity for different interpretations. It allows us to develop a sense of sport. And it allows us, being conscious of societal reproductive forces, to express our world outlook.

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