

The Understanding of Olympic Values by Brazilian Olympic Athletes

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Abstract: *The Olympism is structured in educational and humanistic perspectives. The Olympic Games, the public face of the Olympic Movement, exposes the greatest legacy of this socio-cultural mega event which are the athlete. Besides competing, enchanted by the high level of motor skills and inspire new generations athletes are a major means of communication and promotion of the Olympic values. They represent the Olympic values that are essentially human values. The objective of this paper is to present, through the biographical narratives of Olympic athletes, the understanding of a group of seven Olympic values: friendship, excellence, respect, courage, determination, inspiration and equality. The values found in the narratives allow understand how formant understanding of the athlete's career with so many demands for victory and success.*

Keywords: *Olympic values; Olympism; Olympic Movement; Athletes.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Olympism refers to the set of pedagogical and philosophical values of the Olympic Movement, and not the formal and / or bureaucratic aspects that sustain the institution and the Olympic phenomenon (Rubio, 2006). To understand it is essential to approach it from an educational perspective (Binder, 2005). Pierre de Coubertin, founder of the movement, believed that sport was an important form of education for the youth and that could value fair and healthy competition, health and physical activity. For him, the most important thing was not to win, but participation in the contest.

Olympism exalting and combining in balance the body qualities, spirit and mind, combining sport with culture and education. Aims to create a based in a lifestyle based on the joy of effort, the educational value of ethical actions and respect for universal ethical principles, whose objective is to place sport at the service aims of human development. If sports practice was seen as an educational enterprise, moral and social, designed to produce reflected at the level of individuals, societies and nations the Olympics represented the public face of Olympism and the activity of greater visibility to the multiplication of both competition - taken as an example of excellence maximum - as the Olympic ideals.

According to Rubio (2013), the Olympic Games represent one of the most visible activities of the sporting context, representing the greatest socio-cultural event on the planet, either due to its socio-cultural value or to its artistic representation, therefore allowing stating that the Olympism is contained in the cultural history of mankind. Thus, the Olympic Values are a type of code of conduct of the Olympic Movement and seek to guide attitudes and actions of everyone involved in competitive, administrative or voluntary Olympic activities. Thus, one seeks to combine sport, education and culture, and I understand that the athlete's performance in competition is such a stimulating factor for society as is his performance in other social environments.

For us the greatest legacy that Olympic Games can leave for the society is the athlete. Herepresents the Olympic values of overcoming, respect, fair play and determination. He has been seen as a modern hero and their records, life style, and excellent performance. This person carries the symbol of heroism because, believing in yourself and your resources, trained and struggled solitary, often against all odds, even against their physical, social and emotional limitations to ultimately see their belief itself rewarded (Damatta, 2006). Thus, sports provide a context of great educational potential and can be used as an instrument of ethical attitudes and values needed to social and individual life.

The Olympic values are essentially human values. In this perspective, the objective of this work is to outline the moral values of the Brazilian Olympic athletes.

2. BIOGRAPHICAL NARRATIVES AS METHOD

For this study it was selected and interviewed 19 athletes that participated in at least one of the following editions of the Olympic Games: Mexico (1968), Moscow (1980), Los Angeles (1984), Seoul (1988), Barcelona (1992), Atlanta (1996), Athens (2004) and Beijing (2008). We used biographical narratives as Rubio (2001, 2006) based on life histories from Brazilian Olympic athletes that participated in Olympic Games.

When it is described the social substance of memory, it is clear that the way to remember is both individual and social: the group transmits, retains and strengthens the memories; and when working with them, it gradually individualizes the community memory and, what it recalls and how it recall, it keeps only what is meaningful. Bosi (1994, 2004) and Poirier, Valladon, & Raybaut, 1999 understand that all personal memory is also part of social, group, and family memories; so when you retrieve it, it is possible to capture the ways of being of the individual and his culture.

The biographical narratives include the life stories that are a particular form of oral history and an instrument for capturing and organizing memory that interests the researcher for learning values that transcend the individual character of what is transmitted and that fits into the culture of the social group to which the narrator belongs. History itself brings what the narrator considers important in his trajectory, giving an idea of what his life was and what he is right now. This reflexive attitude allows re-experiencing past situations not only from the point of view of the course of events, but by the re-signification of facts that were significant to the narrator, which allows reversing (or subverting) the narrative, obeying a chronology affectivity involved in the event, giving his text a context (Queiroz, 1988; Rubio, 2004, 2006).

When people narrate they initiate a process that gives meaning to things. Thus is built the knowledge we have about the world and yourself, decoding and predicting personal experiences, thus allowing construct meaning about who we are.

According Bruner (2014) the narrator shapes the knowledge according to their desires and fears. Weaving and share stories makes us able to imagine what would happen if. The narrative is a recount of human plans that did not go as planned, expectations were dashed. Narrating is to strengthen another human condition with regard to his imaginative ability to design many situations, sometimes hypothetical now concrete, which are intertwined with our freedom of choice. Build and rebuild our narratives constantly to meet the needs of the situations we encounter, and we do it according to the guidelines of our memories of the past and our hopes and fears of the future. Talking to yourself is to fabricate a story about who and what we are, what happened and why we do what we are doing.

The act of narrating helps the formation of meanings and knowledge that builds on the world and themselves, decoding and predicting personal experiences, allowing the creation of a significant about who we are.

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3. UNDERSTANDING OLYMPIC VALUES

The Olympic Movement is based on the commitment of people in relation to moral and ethical human values more broadly. These values and their development is a complex process which is

reflected in other aspects of human life and the athlete, and has influence of society, the family and the community where they live (Binder, 2005; La Taille, 2006).

The Olympic values that are directly related to the life of the athlete, is in the condition of training or in life in general, since the athlete has ruled his life not only by those circumstances, but also by control outside the competitive environment. They are directly related to respect yourself, the body and the opponent as well as the rules and regulations so that individuals do not use means other than their own abilities to overcome proposed objectives; friendship and brotherhood that lead to social interaction, the understanding and the understanding; the formation of character for self-knowledge, self-control and self-fulfillment that allows freedom, spontaneity, creativity and the desire to identify with the real life conditions; equality and justice.

Recognized the sport educator action to practice the Olympic values can help the individual's character building, through better search itself, both in sports activities, such as in everyday actions (Rubio, 2008; 2009).

Shown in the previous work Rubio (2013) presented the Olympic values are directly related to cultural and historical issues. If in principle they were called universal because the representatives of the Olympic movement had a Eurocentric view of the world, in contemporary Olympic movement, it has changed. A group of seven important values synthesize the understanding of the Olympic values by Brazilian athletes.

3.1. Friendship

It is the willingness to integrate, to include, to approach even with cultural differences. It involves respect and knowledge, as well as affection and loyalty, even in situations where competition is present. The concept of friendship suggests the integration among people, which is the promotion of peace.

In the speech of Olympic athletes Friendship value appears related to different aspects: both can be related as the friendly interaction with teammates, as the exchange with opponents. These different dimensions of friendship promote the expansion of technical knowledge and the maintenance of coexistence in everyday life, fundamental to overcoming the most difficult moments.

"The friends you make within sport are true and healthy, and that's something I'll never forget." Washington Luis Silva (Boxing, Athens/2004 and Beijing/2008).

The feeling of well-being of friendship makes sport an instrument of social integration, reflecting on the quality of life. Another athlete said that even with opponents that value emerges making the competition fairer.

"You learn to respect and be respected, and learn to have friends and not enemies." Luiz Gonzaga de Almeida (Weightlifting, Mexico City/1968 and Munich/1972).

Even in the face of social prejudice situation friendship plays a key role in coexistence and competition, and promoting equal access to opportunities.

"There are so many people like that (prejudiced people). We look for a link of friendship, not war." Everton Santos Lopes (Boxing, Beijing/2008 and London/2012).

In this case, the athlete says that boxing as a form of physical contact, sometimes violent, can affect your personal life, because it makes social integration look apparently difficult.

3.2. Excellence

It implies the highest degree of quality and perfection. It is the search for the best of oneself and not necessarily to overcome the other. This condition can be extended to many areas of life which would ultimately imply in social transformation.

Winning and losing are part of a sports competition, as well as success and failure in our lives, since; through our choices we can make these different paths. For the athlete to achieve the winning track he must make the right choices.

"My workouts were always 100%. I learned this in sport. I lost a game and I thought: there is nothing wrong, I always have strived for excellence in whatever I was doing." Ana Flavia (Volleyball, Barcelona/1992 and bronze medalist in Atlanta/1996).

Thus, to consider doing the best is not enough without concrete actions, the heavy load of training together with clear objectives enhances this search.

"I always strive for excellence. That is the focus. We won today, but need to prepare even more! We cannot lose attention, focus." Bernardinho (Volleyball, Moscow/1980 and silver medalist in Los Angeles/1984).

Identifying the pursuit of excellence makes the athlete not to be satisfied with average or previous performance. And in some ways, he is committed to excellence and perfection. Not referring to perfection in conduct that characterizes failure, but in an emotional state that allows the athlete to the peak of performance.

"Individual rhythmic gymnastics includes you, the audience and the board of arbitration. We work at the limit of perfection." Marta Cristina Schonhurst (Rhythmic Gymnastics, Barcelona/1992)

3.3. Respect

It is above all a feeling that takes into account another person. More than obedience, respect implies recognition of the virtues presented by another. It is the basic condition of social life, which involves not only compliance with the rule, but essentially the incorporation of values in order not to require forms of external regulation for its compliance.

Through sport, the individual's moral formation is complete, interacting with traditional and robust institutions like family and school.

"I educated myself through sport, concepts of discipline, respect, cultivation of leadership, companionship, never give up. My life history and education were formed not only in school but much through sports". Helio Rubens Garcia (Basketball, Mexico City/1968 and Munich/1972).

The dual family-school gives way to a triad now also composed is sports. Moreover, in sports whose root lies on the eastern world, respect for traditions and institutions are founded.

"We learned judo, learned to fall, learned basic strokes without forgetting learning discipline, respect for teammates or coach, the importance of hierarchy in any sector of our lives." Rogério Sampaio (Gold medalist in Judo, Barcelona/1992).

3.4. Courage

It is a condition associated with willingness for confrontation. Confrontation is understood as the act of making decisions based on the judgment that one makes of a situation and not necessarily the fulfillment of an order dictated by someone. This is perhaps one of the major developers of the individual's moral education.

A courageous person is one able to face what terrifies the common person, but accompanied by the reason and purpose for the benefit of that which is certain.

"I lived in an orphanage until I was 15 or 16. I learned a lot of bad things there. I suffered from hunger, I was angry. I started practicing athletics. I trained. In the first competition, I won two medals. I received an invitation to move to another city. I grabbed my bag and left. All I had in life was inside a suitcase." Claudinei Quirino (Athletics, Atlanta/1996 and silver medalist in Sydney/2000).

The lack of courage can lead to situations where honor is put to the test, which has honor feels embarrassed to have lost the confidence that has been deposited.

"Competition is winning or losing. We learn to expose ourselves, something very difficult for many people. When you compete, you expose yourself. That will teach you to deal with losing; there is no champion who had never lost." Jorge Azevedo (Archery, Seoul/1988).

Given the many challenges that sport has for the athlete, both in the execution of their physical abilities as to overcome the numerous social and family barriers, courage, often presents as a necessary and fundamental value to ethical quality actions, whether in sport or in social life.

*"Life is a struggle. Being an athlete is to have courage. And you don't need not be an athlete to be courageous."*Vania Hernandez (Basketball, Barcelona/1992).

3.5. Determination

It is the gesture related to the fulfillment of a goal, which involves the willingness to act, discipline for its compliance and adherence to principles that guide this action, since the trail used for its compliance may be full of proposals that are contrary to virtue.

In sports the words determination, dedication and effort are synonymous within the discourse of athletes. Despite the lack of differentiation in the use of the word, the value determination stands on the necessary obstinacy the search results only occur as a result of a life dedicated to training and the withdrawal of a common social life to other young people of the same age.

*(On the lack of training structure) I looked at them (other tennis players); they were with the coach, the trainer, and I was with my brother who did not know how to play tennis. I was already demoralized. It was a school of life for me, I am still that person.*Gisele Miró (Tennis, Seoul/1988).

To admire the possibility of someone working hard to achieve something. So the value determination is closely associated with excellence as value since the occurrence of the result is the fruit of incessant quest for the perfect movement that can only be achieved with hard work.

*(On the possibility of being Olympic champion) "From that moment, I started realizing that everything was possible, you have to have determination, focus to feel a champion for life. I dream of an Olympic medal, but the main goal is to be a champion in life."*Diego Hypollito (Artistic Gymnastics, Beijing/2008 and London/2012).

3.6. Inspiration

It is the consideration of the sensitive in task accomplishment. It is the incorporation of affective and intuitive plans as necessary to the accomplishment of a task that may be imposed by an external or internal determination, resulting from a systematic and not esoteric action.

Inspiration makes the connection between the self and the conscious mind, the communication between our acts with success occurs through inspiring moments.

*"I did not want to train to fight, to compete. I wanted to train to fight on the streets. Then, a world champion, an inspiration emerged. I started to like the sport. I decided I wanted to be an athlete."*Robson Donato Conceição (Boxing, Beijing/2008 and London/2012).

Otherwise, the athlete is judged possessor of nobility of character to inspire others, as well as the heroes of antiquity, its virtues are seen and reproduced.

"You are always the focus of attention, they admire you, you have to be the example, the mirror for children. Today I'm a coach. I always had athletes mirroring in my attitudes, seeking in you the inspiration". Agberto Correia (Handball, Atlanta/1996 and Athens/2004).

In this same situation, being an athlete is to serve as a reference and model. For the athlete the value of inspiration represent to encourage new generations to sport not only in the reproduction of gestures and made to come, but in overcoming new brands, skills and technical gestures, giving the sport the possibility of unlimited.

*(Speaking of coach career) "I can teach them, through my efforts, dedication and persistence, I managed to make my dreams come true. For them, this is a source of inspiration, a reference."*Tatiana Figueiredo (Artistic Gymnastics, Los Angeles/1984).

3.7. Equality

It refers to the right to participation. It is the search for recognition and for the belonging to what humanizes us, which is life in society. Although utopian, perhaps it is the driving force

behind many projects that have the human being as the fundamental condition for the development of knowledge, technology or politics.

Equality among different people is one of the major goals of society, that makes sports a means of disseminating this value, but it takes hard work.

(On the issue of gender equality) "You (women) have to do double, triple effort than men to give a value and to have a value" Adriana Kostiw(Sailing, Athens/2004 and London/2012).

Many Brazilian athletes have sport as a means of social mobility, but are faced with the lack of structure of the modalities:

(On women's soccer in Brazil)"The lives of most soccer players are supported on sport, they don't have other job. They should have something else. There is a lack of sponsorship and visibility. We have quality. We have to be recognized like others sports are. Cristiane Rozeira(Soccer, Athens/2004, Beijing/2008 and London/2012).

4. CONCLUSION

When Pierre de Coubertin idealized the revival of the Olympic Games, his thinking was closely linked to the original ideas of the Games of Antiquity. Thus, educational and humanistic characteristics were consolidated in current ideologies. Hence, the understanding that Olympic values are essentially human values. (Ortega y Gasset (1967) understand that it is not possible to consider the human being as an active subject without regarding everything that surrounds him, beginning with his own body and reaching the historical context to which he belongs.

Intellectual ability is not enough for humans to advance in consciousness and creativity. The interaction with the world around a person is a key part to this. It is necessary to understand the context of the times in which one lives, assigning meanings to facts. Thus, the human being does not live away from space-time to which he is inserted. From the positive image of sport, the individual can build a self-image and from it create an image that represents him, and that he can identify (Harkot-De-La-Taille, 1999).

The narrative of athletes is possible to observe the understanding of the importance of values in their lives. They express the values are closely interconnected. In addition, they assume they are your representatives to others and to society through their attitudes and especially for their thoughts. And they want to help in some way, so, for example, whether their participation in the media or in philanthropic events, becomes an occasion for spreading their knowledge and the dissemination of Olympic values.

The values found in the narratives of athletes favor the understanding of what was to be an athlete at that time of building their career. Values such as friendship, pursuit of excellence, courage and fairness gain prominence when competitive activity, characterized by the aesthetics of movement in pursuit of perfection, addresses the athlete to a condition of transcendence, and the audience to the pleasure by watching an unprecedented gesture and the reverence for understanding that this is unique and unusual for all.

It is a constant challenge for the Olympic Movement to keep alive the flame of Olympism. Seemingly more important issues such as allocation of financial and administrative resources, as well as the search for forms of self-financing of the International Olympic Committee itself, mean that other issues of philosophical and educational nature, which are the essence of Olympism, are left aside. They forget that the purpose in any action in which the human being is involved is itself thus, educate athletes and people on values are to maintain in Olympism.

So, all this was possible only through the athletes' narratives. The narrative forms mappings able to discuss about knowledge, seeking the essence of the being that makes him human and rational due to awareness, creating structures for the spread of knowledge. The narrative itself reflects a way to locate ourselves in the world we live in and at the same time to find ways and meanings for welfare and the development of projects.

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